

Searching US Records for John McCabe of Galway, Canton Massachusetts and Coxheath and his wife Lavinia Andrews McCabe of Coxheath and Canton Massachusetts

By Joe Petrie

Linda J. MacDonald, a CBGHA member, contacted Friends of Irish Research (FIR) in Brockton MA (a CBGHA affiliate) to help find information about Lavinia E. Andrews and her husband John Henry McCabe of Canton MA. For background, FIR conducts research for affiliates. I am one of the three (of seven) FIR founding members who usually volunteer to assist Nova Scotia clients. Please note that FIR members focus is global. Members have searched lots of countries.

Linda's focus was on John, who was from Galway, County Galway, Ireland. She wondered when he arrived in Boston, the ship etc. I searched FamilySearch for John in the US Census of 1900 because it contained the year of arrival. Then I searched for McCabe arrivals in 1888 in the Massachusetts Archives Passenger database. Unfortunately, because of "known gaps" in the Archives database, the exact arrival date and the ship could not be determined. I searched the Castle Garden database and used the Steve Morse technique on Port of Boston Arrivals without success. Please note that Linda is still working on finding the information.

By now I was hooked and I decided to find something new for Linda. I retrieved the 1900 Census record again. In Family Search, The information follows:

Name: John H Mc Cabe
Event Type: Census
Event Date: 1900
Event Place: ED 1027 Canton town (all west of r.r.), Norfolk, Massachusetts,
United States
Birth Date: Oct 1865
Birthplace: Ireland
Relationship to Head of Household: Head
Father's Birthplace: Ireland
Mother's Birthplace: Ireland
Race: White
Gender: Male
Marital Status: Married
Years Married: 7
Marriage Year (Estimated): 1893
Immigration Year: 1888
Page: 20
Sheet Letter: B
Family Number: 406

Reference ID: 53
GS Film number: 1240669
Digital Folder Number: 004113854
Image Number: 00438

	Household	Gender	Age	Birthplace
Head	John H Mc Cabe	M	35	Ireland
Wife	Lavinia Mccabe	F	31	Cape Breton Eng
Daughter	Mildred Mccabe	F	5	Massachusetts
Daughter	Maria E Mccabe	F	3	Massachusetts
Son	Walter A Mccabe	M	1	Massachusetts
Brother	James Mccabe	M	23	Ireland

Note that there a few very interesting facts in the 1990 Census. First, John and Lavinia were married in 1893. Second, John's brother James was living with John's family. Obviously finding John and James parents and siblings in Ireland became easier. (I did not know that .Linda had already found them.) Finally, the Census taker noted that John's family lived west of the railroad tracks. Another record indicated that they lived on Neponset Street. In Canton, the railroad passes over Neponset Street via a railroad viaduct, a wonderfully scenic bridge – slightly marred recently by the addition of a second line and electrical wires for the Acela Express. (Initially, the family lived on Church Street.) In 1901, there was a trolley line between Canton and Norwood. (There were no paved roads.) Stores were within walking distance. The McCabes could catch a trolley to Canton or Norwood to shop. They could walk up the Chapman Street hill to the railroad train to Boston. I'd describe the trolley and railroad train as lots of transportation.

About the childrens' births: Their first son Clarence John or Clarence B or John Clarence was born on 6 March 1894. (He is not shown on the Census because he died in March 1897 and is buried in plot 663 in the Canton Cemetery in Canton); Eliza Mildred (Mildred) was born on 4 October 1895; Maria Ellen (Nellie) – Linda's direct line- was born on 11 July 1897 and Walter A. (Andrews) was born in 14 August 1899; (Note that I cannot find a US birth record for Walter – the date was provided from Linda from his burial program); and Lavinia Bright (Brighty) was born in November 1901 in Canada. Only Brighty was not a dual citizen.

The Canton marriage register record for John and Lavinia indicated that they were married on June 7, 1893 in Canton by an Anglican Priest from the Church of Good Shepard, in the Oakdale Square Section of Dedham. (The church was a block from parents' home in Dedham where I lived for over 20 years). The marriage was in Canton at the house of the Tate family. The marriage was recorded in Canton on February 8, 1894. The marriage register indicated that John's parents were John McCabe and Ellen Bright. Linda has a copy of the certificate.

Linda has provided me with a copy of a newspaper article about the marriage that lists the attendees. In the newspaper article, John's brother James is listed as the best man and Lavinia's cousin Dora Lewis is listed as the maid of honor. There were two Andrews listed that I could not identify- I assume that they are Andrews relatives. On the Certificate from the Church of Good Shepard, James Tate is listed as best man. (Maybe James McCabe was not listed because he was a Catholic.) There were no other McCabes listed in the newspaper article. Maybe John's McCabe relatives in Canton did not attend non-Catholic ceremonies. (Even in my generation, that happened. I am glad that those days are over!)

There were lots of McCabes in Canton. The Irish Cultural Center of New England and FIR has six McCabe grave stones listed in Old St. Mary's Catholic cemetery in Canton. I wonder if there are McCabe relatives still living in Canton.

I was still hooked. I decided to do some research using Irish records. Using John's Marriage and Census information (and his brother James' Census information), I searched FamilySearch for information on parents and siblings. Family Search Collections List has a large database of Irish Births - one of 7 or 8 Irish databases. I found John's parents: John McCabe and Ellen Bright. The following is a list of John McCabe's and Ellen Bright's children arranged by birth date:

12 Oct 1865 John
20 Jul 1868 William
30 Jun 1873 George
20 Jul 1875 James
03 Oct 1876 Alfred
18 Aug 1878 Elizabeth Jane
10 Jun 1880 Ellen

Still hooked, I decided to search for John's brother James McCabe. James lived in Canton where on June 8, 1904, he married Annie Millicent Bulmer from Canton (originally from New Brunswick).

In Ancestry Library, I found John McCabe's Index card for becoming a Naturalized US Citizen. It lists his: address as Neponset St. Canton; birth in Ireland on October 13, 1865; and naturalization in the Stoughton District Court on October 28, 1889. (Stoughton and Canton abut - Canton was once part of Stoughton.) In 1889, when a husband became a citizen, his non-citizen wife automatically became a dual citizen (for Lavinia a citizen of Canada and the United States). I suspect that John eventually became a triple citizen: Ireland, United States and Canada. Linda has provided a copy of his US Citizenship Certificate. Linda wrote:

"We have a lot of information about McCabes, and more documents especially about Lavinia since she lived to be almost 102, and about my grandmother (Maria Ellen) and her siblings. My great Aunt Minna (Mildred) became an Anglican nurse/teacher/jack of all trades missionary to the North of Canada and we have journal entries, letters and essays she wrote while there, for instance. I would like very much to share this.

“I also have relatives in Ireland who are McCabe descendants, whom I am in touch with, albeit sparsely.

“Walter A. McCabe served in the Detroit police service during prohibition and beyond, and his son was decorated at Iwo Jima. We have documents to share, and photos from him and his wife and two sons and their descendants. Linda provided a copy of the burial program which identified the exact date of death.)

“I have info on what they did when they moved to Cape Breton. JH (John Henry) worked for Dominion Coal and Steel Company, running the pumphouse for the Steelmill that supplied water to the mill from the Sydney River pumphouse across the river from Coxheath. I am wondering if the opening of the Steelmill (1901, Sydney) was the instigation for their emigration, or whether it was circumstantial, i.e. if the previous death of their firstborn or homesickness on Lavinia’s part – or other family matters called her home. I have not yet taken note of when her Coxheath Andrews parents lived and died, so it is possible that she was also called home for such reasons.

“Interesting to add to the story – while John Henry sadly only lived to be 65, (died in 1931 in Coxheath, Cape Breton), Lavinia Andrews McCabe lived to be close to 102 years old and died where she lived most of her life – in Coxheath, Cape Breton.

“Brighty is buried in St Mark’s cemetery down the end of Coxheath Road, under the name (Lavinia) Bright Peters.’

In summary, I am glad that I volunteered for the assignment. It took me a little while to remember that Linda and I are Boutilier cousins. (Don’t get old!) Also, I am glad because recently I have been researching Jacques James (James) Boutilier’s move from St Margaret’s Bay to Coxheath in 1811 with most of his children and grandchildren; including his son John James’ wife, Mary Andrews (and family) and his daughter Susannah’s John Andrews family. I am hoping to construct a passenger list for the three boats.

Also, I have been working on the Andrews families in Lunenburg because the two Andrews family members married two of the children of Jacques (James) Boutilier. I have always wondered whether the two Andrews individuals (Mary and John George) were sister and brother or just first cousins – the latter based on what looks like 2 Johns with a birth year of 1784. In one family Mary had a brother John Henry who some claim was the John who married Susannah Boutilier. If on the other hand, John Andrews and Mary Andrews were first cousins, then the subsequent Andrews - Boutilier marriages were not of closely related people. (Remember that most Churches –including Catholic Churches with dispensation – allow marriages between first cousins.)

In addition, two of Jacques (James) sons married Peach sisters from Port Morien, Cape Breton. (By the way, Jacques (James) is on my Dad’s direct line.)

Finally, Linda and I had corresponded in the past about her Andrews roots. When I initially searched for Lavinia in my database and looked at her record, I knew instantly that Linda and I were related. When I looked at Lavinia's Pedigree Chart, I knew that we were related on my mother's direct line. When I looked at some of Lavinia's children's records in my Notes, I had previously recorded Linda as the source of the information. In fact, John Henry McCabe was already in my database with a paucity of data. Now there is more information!

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