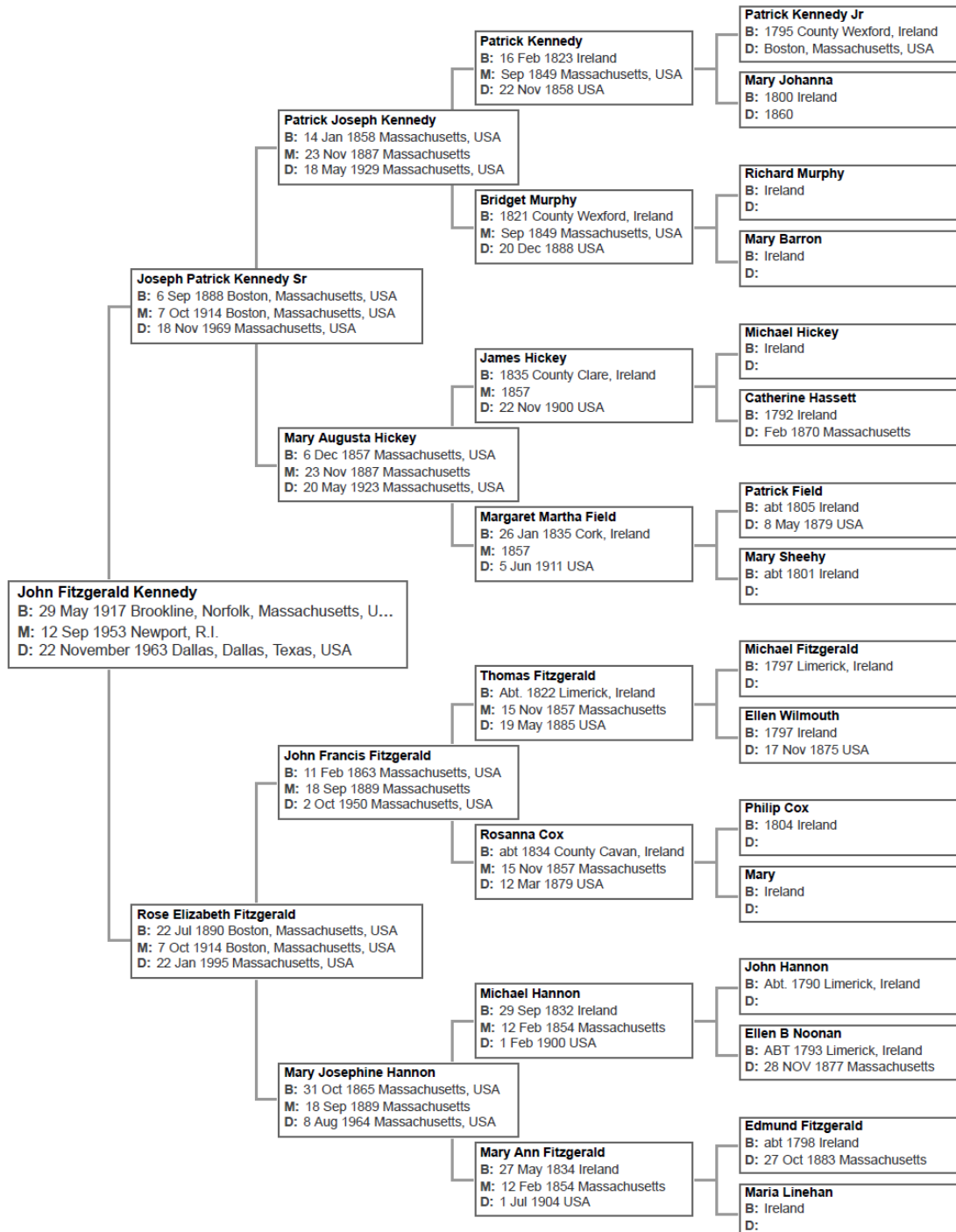


John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born on May 29, 1917 in Brookline, Massachusetts to Joseph Patrick Kennedy Sr. and Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald. This report will cover the genealogy of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who was commonly known as JFK, by looking at each of the main branches of his family tree. We recommend you refer back to the tree below, while reading the report.



Paternal Grandfather – Patrick Joseph Kennedy - The Kennedy Lineage

Patrick Kennedy

Patrick Kennedy, the great-grandfather of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, was born in 1823 in Dunganstown, County Wexford, Ireland to Patrick Kennedy Jr and Mary Johanna. Dunganstown was a rural village located near the southern coast of Ireland. In June 1963, while he was President of the United States, John F Kennedy visited the Kennedy Homestead during an official state visit to Ireland and, today, the homestead is a public museum.



Image 1. Kennedy Homestead in Dunganstown, Ireland

The only sibling of Patrick, identified, was an older brother, John. Local history from Dunganstown indicates that Patrick's father died before Patrick reached adulthood and his brother, John, took over management of the family farm.

Patrick immigrated to the United States in 1847, at the age of 24, in order to escape the Irish Potato Famine, which was causing mass starvation across Ireland. Between 1845 and 1849, the Potato Famine would result in over 1 million deaths in Ireland. And the population dropped by 20-25% due to a combination of death and emigration.

Bridget Murphy

Meanwhile, Bridget Murphy, great-grandmother of JFK, was born around 1821 to parents, Richard Murphy and Mary Barron. Recently discovered records indicate that Bridget was born less than five miles from the Kennedy homestead in the town of Cloonagh. It is unknown if the Kennedy and Murphy families knew each other. However, like Patrick, Bridget immigrated to the United States sometime during the Potato Famine.

Patrick and Bridget

It is believed that Patrick and Bridget met after they both arrived in East Boston, between the years of 1847 and 1849. And, in September of 1849, they got married at the Most Holy Redeemer church in East Boston. It was designed and built only a few years earlier by Irish immigrants. Most Holy Redeemer played a significant role in the Kennedy family history. All of Patrick and Bridget's children were baptized at Most Holy Redeemer.



Image 2. Most Holy Redeemer Church, East Boston

Patrick and Bridget settled in the Irish immigrant community of East Boston. Patrick worked as a cooper, someone trained to make wooden barrels and caskets. A few years after getting married, Patrick and Bridget had their first child, Johanna. And between 1852 and 1858, they had a total of five children, including JFK's grandfather, Patrick Joseph Kennedy, born on January 14, 1858. Tragically, one of their children, John, died from cholera before the age of two.

Patrick Kennedy died of cholera, himself, in November of 1858, leaving Bridget alone with their four remaining children. The young children ranged in age from only 10 months to six years old. As of the 1860 US Census, less than two years later, Bridget had a personal estate of only \$75 and had taken on two lodgers; no doubt to help cover living expenses.

Bridget and her children moved around a number times over the next two decades as she attempted to make ends meet. By 1880, Bridget remained widowed and was living with her daughter, Mary, and son, Patrick, on 25 Border Street near the waterfront in East Boston. Her profession was listed as "bakery." And JFK's grandfather, Patrick, was now 21 years old and working as a "brass polisher."



Image 3. 20 block of Border Street in 2019 (courtesy of Google Maps)

Paternal Grandmother – Mary Augusta Hickey - The Hickey Lineage

James Hickey

James Hickey, the paternal great-grandfather of JFK, was born in Newmarket-On-Fergus, Clair County, Ireland in the fall of 1835 to Michael Hickey and Catherine Hassett. Although not much is known about his parents, the limited records imply that they, too, were born and raised near Newmarket-On-Fergus.

Newmarket-On-Fergus was a small village located a little over ten miles to the northwest of the city of Limerick. In the 2006 census, the population was 1,542.

James appears to have been the youngest of his siblings. He was born when his mother, Catherine, was already approximately 43 years old. He was baptized on October 5, 1835 at Kilnasoolagh Church. The building was built in 1815 and still stands today.



Image 4. Kilnasoolagh Church, Newmarket-On-Fergus

Around 1851, following the Irish Potato Famine, James Hickey immigrated to United States. He settled in Brookline, a charming, picturesque suburb of Boston. It is unclear whether other family members immigrated with him. However, by the 1855 Census, James's mother, Catherine, was also living over in Brookline and his father, Michael, was deceased. Therefore, it may be that the death of his father led to the move.

Margaret Martha Field

Margaret Martha Field, the great-grandmother of John F Kennedy, was born in January 1835 in Rosscarbery, Cork, Ireland to Patrick Field and Mary Sheehy. Rosscarberry was a small beach town on the southern coast of Ireland. During the time that Margaret was living there, the town was dominated by two structures –Ross Cathedral, one of the smallest cathedrals in Ireland, and Castle Salem, located just outside of the town. Until 1853, Castle Salem was the home of the descendants of William Morris. Morris was a leading Quaker and good friends with William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania.



Image 5. Aerial view of Rosscarberry, Cork, Ireland



Image 6. Castle Salem and Ross Cathedral (Rosscarberry)

Not much is known about Margaret's time in Rosscarberry or her family. However, we know that around 1852, at the age of 17, she left Ireland and immigrated to Boston. It is believed that her parents immigrated with her.

James and Margaret

Margaret Field met James Hickey in Boston and they got married in 1857. On December 6th of that same year, they welcomed their first daughter, Mary Augusta Hickey, the grandmother of JFK. They lived in Ward 10 of Boston (as shown in Image 7) near the freight depots and James worked as a "steam engineer". According to the census records, they had another five children between 1859 and 1870.



Image 7. Map of Boston Ward 10 in 1860

By 1880, the family had moved to 2 Marion Court in East Boston, near where the Kennedys were living. James was now working as a machinist and his two eldest sons were working as “shoe dressers.” Mary, now 22 years old, was still living at home and helping her mother take care of the house.

Patrick Kennedy and Mary Hickey

Patrick Kennedy met Mary Hickey in the 1880s and they got married in Boston on November 23, 1887. At the time of the wedding, records state that Patrick was working as a “trader.” Based on family history, we are told that he owned a saloon in Haymarket Square in downtown Boston. At the same time, Patrick Kennedy was becoming heavily involved in state and local politics. As an up-and-coming player in the Democratic Party, in June of 1888, he delivered a speech at the Democratic National Convention in St. Louis. Mary was six months pregnant with their first child.

On September 6, 1888, Joseph Patrick Kennedy, JFK’s father, was born. And, over the next ten years, Patrick and Mary had three more children. During that decade, Patrick Kennedy continued growing in power and wealth. He acquired a whiskey importing business, an interest in a coal company and a significant amount of stock in the bank, Columbia Trust Company. By the 1920 Census, his profession was listed as “President” of a bank. And he, Mary and their two daughters were living in an oceanfront home at 97 Washington Ave in Winthrop, Massachusetts. They had risen from poverty to wealth.

Maternal Grandfather – John Francis Fitzgerald - The Fitzgerald Lineage

Michael Fitzgerald and Ellen Wilmouth

Michael Fitzgerald and Ellen Wilmouth were both born in Ireland around the turn of the 17th century.

In 1822, Michael and Ellen had a son, Thomas Fitzgerald, who was born near the town of Bruff in County Limerick of Ireland. They married, soon thereafter, at a Catholic church in Bruff and took up residence in the town. They continued to live in Bruff and grew their family there for the next several decades.



Image 8. Bruff, Ireland in 2017

Sometime around 1850, at the peak of the Irish Potato Famine, a number of the Fitzgeralds began immigrating to Boston, Massachusetts. It was during this time period that Michael and Ellen's oldest son, Thomas, decided to leave Bruff and join his relatives in the United States of America.

Rosanna Cox

Rosanna Cox, the great-grandmother of John F Kennedy, was born in County Cavan, Ireland around 1834 to Philip Cox and his wife Mary. Not much is known about her childhood or family. However, we know that sometime before the age of 22, she left Ireland and immigrated to Boston.

Thomas and Rosanna

Thomas Fitzgerald met Rosanna Cox, or Rose as she was sometimes called, in Boston in the 1850s and they got married on November 18, 1857. Thomas worked as a laborer and he and Rosanna lived in Ward 4 of central Boston. The next year, they welcomed their first son, Michael, who they named after Thomas's father. Over the next two decades, they would have a total of twelve children, including John Francis Fitzgerald (JFK's grandfather) in 1863. However, most of the children died in infancy or of childhood disease. And only three of the twelve children lived healthy lives.



Image 9. Map of Boston Ward 4 in 1860

In 1879, Rosanna died at the age of 45. John Francis was sixteen years old at the time of his mother's death. By that time, Thomas was now a grocer and the family lived on 465 Hanover St in the North End

of Boston. Their home was only a couple blocks from the famous Old North Church, where Paul Revere began his historic ride to kick off the American Revolutionary War.

Thomas died in 1885, six years after his wife's death. John Francis was 22 years old and enrolled in his first year at Harvard Medical School. He dropped out following his father's death.

Maternal Grandmother – Mary Josephine Hannon - The Hannon Lineage

John Hannon and Ellen B Noonan

John Hannon (2nd great-grandfather of JFK) was born around 1790 in Knockainy, Limerick, Ireland. Ellen B Noonan (2nd great-grandmother) was born in 1793, a few miles up the road in Herbertstown. Both of these towns were located less than 5 miles from Bruff, where the Fitzgerald's were living.

John and Ellen met and got married on February 12, 1827. JFK's great-grandfather, Michael, was born in 1832 in Lough Gur, also located within five miles of Bruff. Although they may have had additional children, we have not located any of those records.

Edmund Fitzgerald and Mary Linehan

Around the same time period, in Bruff, Edmund Fitzgerald was born. Edmund was the younger brother of Michael Fitzgerald, who had married Ellen Wilmouth. The younger Fitzgerald would marry Mary Linehan in 1828 and settle in Bruff near his brother's, Thomas's, family. He and Mary had three daughters, that we are aware of – Honora, Brigida, and Mary Ann (JFK's great-grandmother born in 1834). There is evidence that Mary died sometime following the birth of Mary Ann and that Edmund remarried.

Michael and Mary Ann

Michael Hannon immigrated to the United States in June 1849, at the height of the Irish Potato Famine. And, based on census documents, Mary Ann Fitzgerald arrived the following year.

Michael and Mary got married in February 1854 and lived in Acton, Massachusetts. Acton was a railway town located a few miles west of Concord. The Fitchburg railroad was routed through the town in 1844 in order to access to the many mills in the area and it created plentiful new railway jobs. The population of the town in 1850 was 1,685.



Image 10. Acton town center in 1879

A year after getting married, Michael and Mary Ann had their first child, a boy they named John. Between 1857 and 1877, they had at least another seven children, including Mary Josephine, grandmother of JFK, born on October 31, 1864.

According to the 1870 US Census, Michael supported his large family by working as a railroad repairer in Acton. Their personal estate was valued at only \$100 (equivalent to around \$2,000 today).

John Francis Fitzgerald and Mary Josephine Hannon

By the late 1880s, John Francis Fitzgerald had already lost both of his parents and was living in Boston. According to *An Unfinished Life* by historian, Robert Dallek, John had returned home to support his siblings, following his father's death in 1885, and went to work in Boston's ward political system. Meanwhile, his second cousin, Mary Josephine Hannon (their grandfathers – Michael and Edmund Fitzgerald – were brothers), was living with her parents in Acton. It's not clear how they met and fell in love. However, in 1889, with a special dispensation from the archdiocese of Boston, John and Mary got married.

They started immediately on a family and welcomed their first child, Rose Elizabeth (mother of JFK), 10 months later on July 22, 1890. They had another five children between 1892 and 1904. They lived in the North End of Boston, residing at 8 Unity Street in the 1900 US Census. Their place was across the street from the Old North Church and only a block away from the building in which John grew up. According to Boston history, he won a seat in the Boston Common Council in 1891 and the Massachusetts State Senate in 1892.

In 1894, at the age of 31, he began serving in the US House of Representatives. He served from 1894 to 1900. According to the 1900 US Census, his occupation was "real estate and insurance." But, according to Boston history, after three terms in Congress, he chose not to run for re-election in 1900, in order that he could run for mayor of Boston.

Based on his ability for smooth talking and penchant for singing, he earned the nickname of "Honey Fitz." He won the Boston mayoral race in 1905. He ran for re-election in 1907 and lost. However, he won the office back in 1910 and served until 1914. As mayor of Boston, Honey Fitz threw out the inaugural pitch at the newly constructed Fenway Park in 1912.



Image 11. Fenway Park – opening day April 20, 1912

Joseph Patrick Kennedy and Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald

By 1914, the Kennedys and Fitzgeralds were powerhouses in Boston and Democratic politics. Patrick Kennedy had amassed significant assets in whiskey and banking. And he operated as a behind-the-scenes, party boss within the Democratic Party. Meanwhile, John “Honey Fitz” Fitzpatrick was the charismatic second term mayor of Boston and former US Representative. Therefore, there is no doubt that they, and their children, ran in the same social and political circles.

Joseph, the oldest son of Patrick Kennedy, graduated from Harvard University in 1912 with a degree in economics. On October 7, 1914, he married, Rose, the oldest daughter of “Honey Fitz” and united the two powerful political families.



Image 12. Wedding of Joseph Kennedy and Rose Fitzgerald (October 7, 1914)

At the time of the wedding, Joseph Kennedy was the youngest bank president in the United States and he quickly amassed a fortune in stock market, real estate, and commodity investments. In 1957, Fortune magazine estimated his net worth as between \$200 - \$400 million (\$1.8 - \$3.7 billion today), placing him amongst the wealthiest people in the United States. In 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt named him the first chairman of the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The year after they got married, Joseph and Rose welcomed their first son, Joseph Patrick Kennedy Jr. They moved their family to the wealthy Boston suburb of Brookline, Massachusetts. And two years later, welcomed their second son, John Fitzgerald Kennedy (born May 29, 1917). Between 1918 and 1932, they would have another seven children, including two future US Senators, a US ambassador, and the founder of the Special Olympics.

Their son, John Fitzgerald, the descendent of Irish immigrants who had fled the Irish Potato Famine for prospects of better lives in Boston, was elected to the US House of Representatives in 1946, the US Senate in 1952, and on January 20, 1961 became the 35th President of the United States of America.

Additional Images



Patrick J. Kennedy
(1858 – 1929)



Mary A. Hickey
(1857 – 1923)



John F. Fitzgerald
(1863 – 1950)



Mary J. Hannon
(1865 – 1964)



Joseph Patrick Kennedy (1888 – 1969)



Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald (1890 – 1995)



John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917 – 1963)