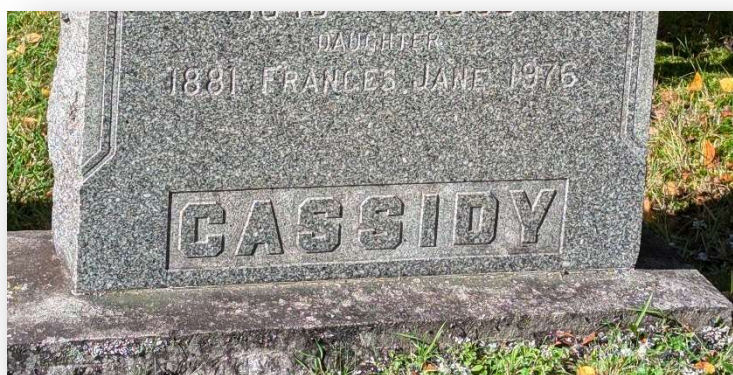


Frances Jane Cassidy – Her Story Discovered



By Anne L. Renwick

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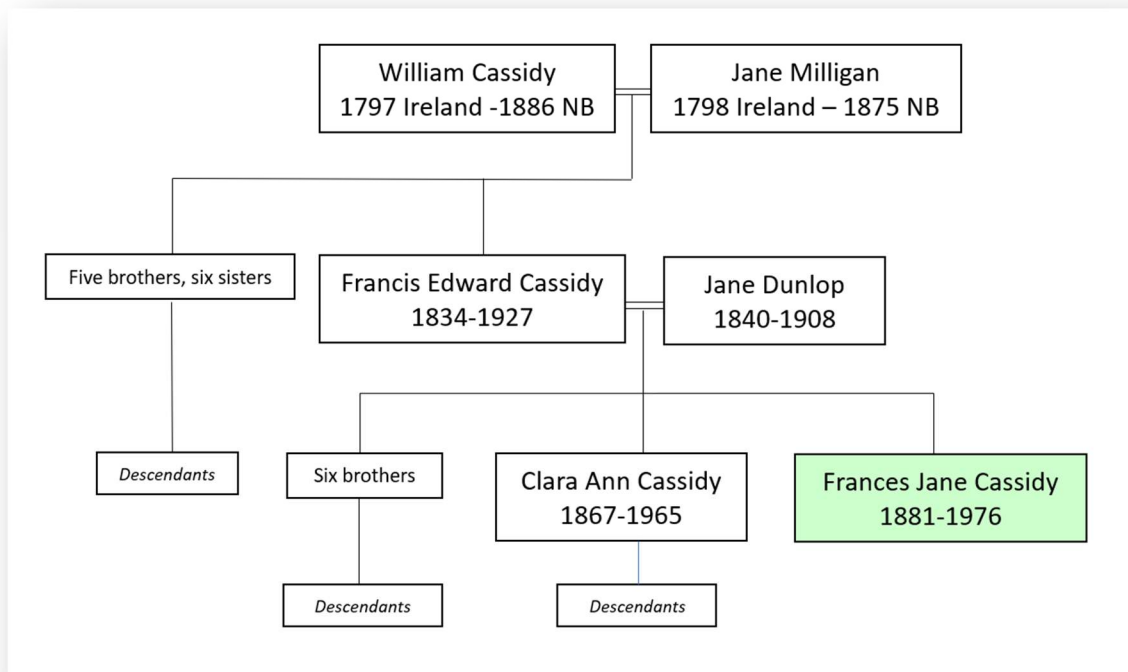
July 2026

Introduction

On a family tree there are branches, which have branches, and yet more branches, but sometimes on a tree there is a branch by itself. Such is the case with an ancestor who does not marry, and therefore has no direct descendants. Oftentimes, these ancestors' stories are not passed down or forgotten as the person was "only" an aunt or uncle. But sometimes, just sometimes, a few tidbits will make their way down the generations to a family historian who will be curious enough to find out about that ancestor and bring them back to life through research and writing.

Such is the case with the ancestor my generation knew as "Aunt Frances." Because she was a nurse, her nursing school diploma and graduation ring were passed down to my mother, her great niece, also a nurse. A tiny amethyst brooch, a silver handled umbrella, and a handmade crazy quilt were also inherited.

As one of the family historians in this, the third generation from Aunt Frances, I now have her diploma, ring, brooch and umbrella. It occurred to me that I never heard much about her. What was Aunt Frances' life like, what did she look like when she was young, and why did she go to nursing training in Massachusetts from rural Kings County, New Brunswick? Through researching multiple and varied documents such as directories, censuses, and family records, as well as reaching out with questions to various archives, these questions were answered. Aunt Frances' lone branch on the family tree now has a leaf with her story.



Early Years

On January 29, 1881 a baby girl was born at the Cassidy family homestead at Cassidy Lake in Kings County, New Brunswick.ⁱ She was named Frances Jane after her parents, Francis and Jane Cassidy. Now there were eight children in the family, two girls bookending six boys, her siblings ranging in age from 21 months to 13 years. They lived in the large farmhouse her grandfather and father had built on a hill overlooking the lake. Also living with them was the patriarch of the family, Frances' paternal grandfather William, by then a widower. He and his wife Jane had come from Ireland in the early part of the century and settled the homestead, building up a thriving diverse farm and raising a family of 12 children.

As a child, Frances would have been taught early the elementary tasks of collecting eggs, feeding animals, helping out with the gardens, as well as learning handcrafts such as knitting, and sewing from her sister and mother. There is a crazy quilt of hers that has been handed down that shows her proficiency as an adult at decorative stitching.



Figure 1 - Frances' crazy quilt (private collection, Jennifer L. Renwick)

Her sister Clara, thirteen years her senior, most likely took on the role of teacher and second mother to her little sister, and indeed, they appear to have been very close throughout their lives.

Formal Education – the beginning

Frances' primary school years would have been at a little one room schoolhouse, or at someone's home. In 1881, around the time Frances would have started school, there were six districts (schools) that were in use in Hammond Parish.ⁱⁱ Whichever school she attended, there would have been quite a walk down the hill and across the countryside, with household chores before and after.

Sitting side by side at wooden desks with slates and chalk at the ready for any writing tasks, Frances and her fellow classmates were taught the following lessons in their first year:

Reading.—Wall Cards—Primer. Sounds and names of letters, and building up words. Special attention to be given to pleasantness and brightness of tones, and fluency, clearness and correctness of pronunciation.

Composition.—Careful oral correction of wrong forms of speech used by the pupil. Repeating substance of Reading lesson.

Form.—Common solids distinguished, ball, cube cylinder. Developing ideas of surfaces and lines. Drawing lines on slate. Printing words in common print, and when able to build up words, in Print-script. (The requirement in Form in Standard I of the Graded Course may be followed if the teacher prefers it.)

Rote-singing.—Simple songs selected from the Canadian Song Book or Curwen's Series.

Number.—Developing ideas of number from 1 to 20 inclusive, and performing operations in Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division with these numbers.

Oral Lessons.—Upon familiar objects and animals.

Color.—Distinguishing and naming common colors.

Figure 2 – Excerpt from the 1888 Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick

In the school year of 1888, when she was 7, Frances and her school-age brothers may have been among the students who had “irregular attendance”, due to “unprecedentedly wet weather, which interfered with the attendance of smaller children, and compelled farmers to keep their larger children at home to assist in gathering the harvest when an opportunity did occur.”ⁱⁱⁱ At this point, school attendance was not compulsory, and few children actually attended full time.

One of the highlights of the school year was the annual Arbor Day on a Friday in either May or June. The day was “devoted...to the improvement of the school grounds and premises, also in cleaning, decorating and whitewashing the school buildings...” and planting trees, shrubs and flower gardens.^{iv} It appears to have been quite popular and beneficial, though not observed by all schools, as the annual reports of the local school inspectors for 1888-1891 all remarked on Arbor Day participation^v.

The following table shows the extent of the work done on that day, which was to many pupils, one of the busiest, most pleasant and instructive days of the year :

Inspectorial District.	No. Dis. observing Arbor Day.	No. of Trees.	No. of Shrubs.	No. of Flower Beds.	No. of Dis. where there was general improvement.
No. 1.....	54	663	80	53	8
No. 2.....	49	1,031	65	54	3
No. 3.....	59	813	118	29	6
No. 4.....	111	1,305	294	106	5
No. 5.....	44	1,025	..	..	4
No. 6.....	109	1,734	93	151	1
Total.....	416	6,571	650	393	27

The country has gained financially and esthetically from the observance of Arbor Day.

Figure 3- 1888 New Brunswick Schools Annual Report, page lvi – Arbor Day Statistics

With the education they received both at home and in the school room, Frances' brothers went on to become carpenters and farmers, and her sister Clara a dressmaker.^{vi} Frances was the only one of the siblings to go on to higher education and a profession.

College

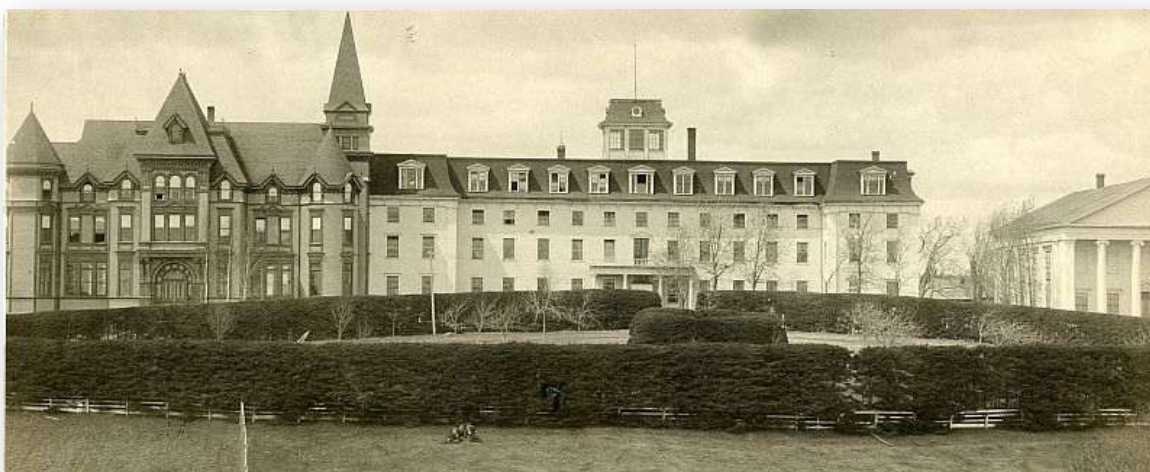


Figure 4 - Frances Jane Cassidy photograph, c 1902; digital image 2026, privately held by Clifford Cassidy, Ottawa, ON, 2026. Clifford is a descendant of Frances' brother Thomas.

In September 1902, at the age of 21, Frances enrolled at the Mount Allison Ladies' College in Sackville, New Brunswick^{vii}. The college was renowned for being a progressive educational institution for women, and “cater(ed) directly for women who wished to be trained for a professional career.”^{viii} It had been founded in 1854 by Wesleyan Methodists (of which her father, a staunch Methodist, most likely approved).

Far enough from home to necessitate living on campus, Frances may have boarded in the college's white clapboard building, known as The White House. “The apartments [were] exceedingly commodious, and are all tastefully and comfortably furnished, so as to present a most inviting home for a large number of resident students.”^{ix} Surrounding the college were landscaped grounds with beautiful walking paths and gardens, strategically separated from the view from the adjacent Mount Allison Male Academy and College.

Students from both academies were given chaperoned opportunities to meet and mingle at social events (though unchaperoned encounters frequently occurred).^x



*Figure 5 - Mount Allison Ladies College – The White House residence, middle building
(Image used courtesy of the Mount Allison University Archives
MtAU Archives – Picture collection – 2007.07/45)*

Frances chose a liberal arts program of study lasting from 1902 to 1904. For her first term, she enrolled in classes in English, Essays, Piano, and Studio (painting and drawing). The following term, she chose a heavier course load: English, Essays, French, Grammar, Penmanship, Piano and Studio.

For her second year, 1903-1904 she selected Biblical History, English, Essays, Piano, and Studio, followed by English, Essays, French, Piano, Studio, and Violin.^{xi} Though these courses were demanding, “most of the students of the ladies’ college would not receive (nor, presumably, seek) diplomas at the end of their studies.”^{xii} After graduation, Frances returned home to Cassidy Lake rather than immediately go on to pursue a professional career.

By 1911, however, the household had dwindled to Frances, her two brothers, a sister-in-law, and her father. The other siblings had married and moved away, and in 1908 their mother had died. The farm was thriving and there didn’t appear to be an urgent need for Frances to contribute to the family economy. Frances herself was single and most likely felt in need of a change and a profession of her own that would challenge her mind.

Nursing Training

She may have seen in local newspapers mentions of other New Brunswick girls attending the Anna Jaques Hospital nurses’ training program in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Could these have piqued her interest?^{xiii} Perhaps she knew someone who had already become a nurse, as “single Maritime women flocked to nurse-training programs in Boston in such numbers that fellow student nurses commented on their predominance in the city’s hospitals.”^{xiv}

“Several factors contributed to the popularity of nursing for single women from Maritime families. Perhaps the most compelling was the belief that nursing was a “calling”, an occupation that combined selfless service with professional status.”^{xv}

At 30 years old, Frances was still eligible to enrol at Anna Jaques. The hospital literature stated that “The most desirable age for candidates is from 23 to 35 years.”^{xvi} She applied, and in the Fall of 1911, Frances left Clover Hill to begin thirty months of nursing training in Newburyport. Though far from the homestead, she still had family relatively close as her brother Frank and his wife were now living in Boston, about 40 miles (64 km) away.



Figure 6 – “Anna Jaques Hospital, Newburyport, Mass”. Photograph. [ca. 1840–1987]. Digital Commonwealth, <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/tq57px65m> (accessed July 12, 2026).

The program of study and professional etiquette was rigorous:

“...two months probation...At the end of the first month, probationers, if considered satisfactory, are permitted to wear the cap and enter upon the regular course of training, but such probationers are not permitted to join the school formally until the end of the second month when, if accepted, they sign an agreement to complete the prescribed course of thirty months...”

Instruction will be given in anatomy, physiology, etc., and the general care of the sick ; special nursing in medical, surgical and obstetrical cases, taking and recording of observations, and how to act in the various emergencies occurring in hospital and private duty. A course of special lessons in massage and invalid cookery is given by professional instructors.”^{xvii}

The student nurses had daily duty time of twelve hour shifts 7-7, with two hours of “rest and recreation” for the day shift, one-half day after 2 p.m. each week, and four hours on a Sunday.” Even what the students wore was regulated^{xviii}

themselves on the emergency list. When coming to the hospital they should bring with them the following articles: Three plain blue gingham or calico dresses, made plainly ; eight large aprons made of light weight sheeting, aprons to be gored and two yards wide at bottom, hem to be five inches in depth and two inches from bottom of dress ; band two inches wide and fastened in back with two pearl studs ; two bags made of unbleached cotton, for soiled clothes ; one pair of scissors ; a shoe bag ; a watch with second hand ; a napkin ring ; a good supply of plain underclothing — every article to be distinctly marked with woven names or with indelible ink, with the owner's name.

Nurses must bring suitable outer garments for stormy weather, and they are required to wear boots with rubber heels. If the teeth are out of order in any way they must receive attention before coming for the probationary month. Nurses are required to wear the training school uniform after they join the school.

Figure 7 - Excerpt from 1915 Anna Jaques Hospital Annual Report

Most of the nurses boarded at the school, or at nearby boarding houses and Frances would have many other Maritime girls as fellow students.

Challenging as it was, she and four other women achieved the necessary marks of 70 percent or over, to be the graduating class of March 1914. As well as her diploma and graduation ring, she would have been awarded the prestigious black velvet band to affix to her starched white nurse's cap signifying her as a Graduate Nurse.^{xix}

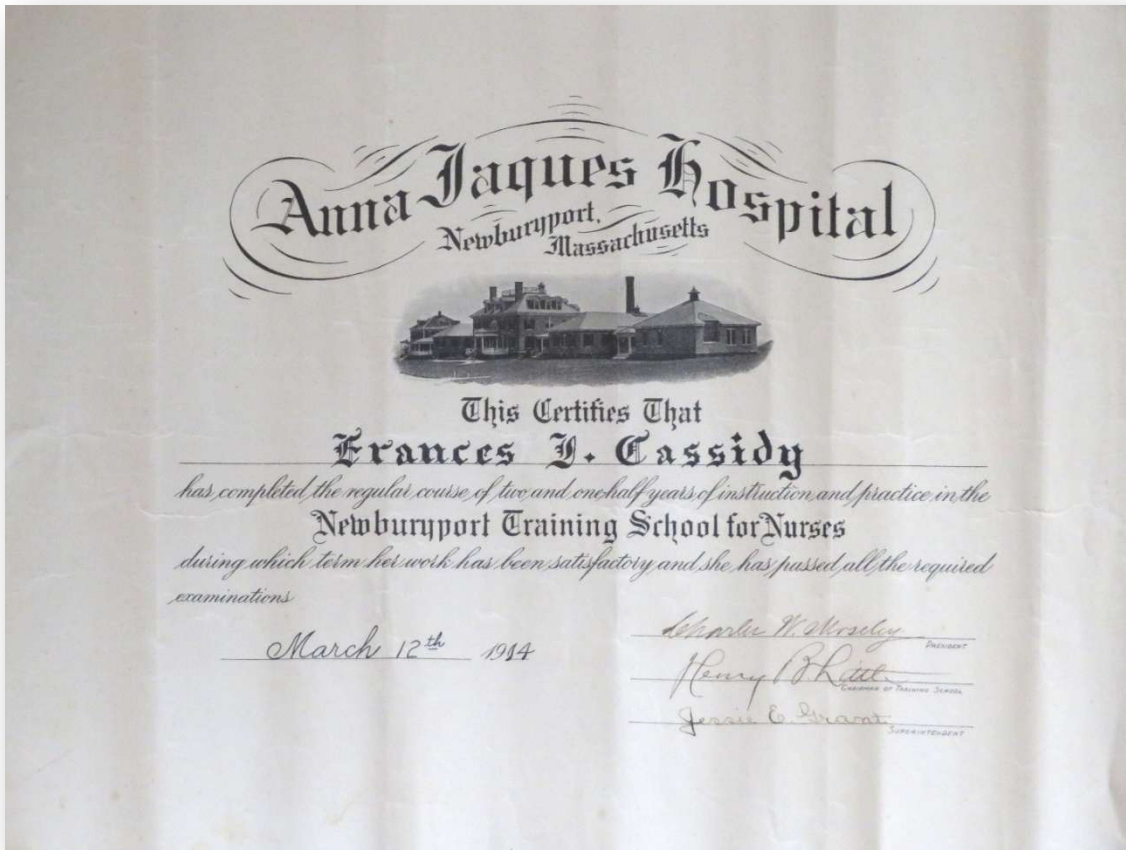


Figure 8 - Frances' diploma and graduation ring (author's collection)

In-Between Years 1914-1924

Frances' whereabouts are a mystery for about a decade after graduation.

When the First World War began hundreds of nurses signed up on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border, but no evidence was found that Frances was one of them. She may have volunteered with the Red Cross or another agency. Certainly, with her training, she would not have remained idle and perhaps aided in the war effort from her home at Cassidy Lake.

There is a brief mention of her in 1915: on June 26 she was recorded as returning to Boston via ship from Halifax.^{xx} She stated on the "Alien Certificate" (the border crossing record) that she had previously been in the US from 1911 to Feb. 1, 1915 which corresponds mainly to her time in training. She must have been at home in New Brunswick when the news came that her sister-in-law Euphemia in Boston was seriously ill from a pregnancy complication, and Frances went by ship as the quickest way possible to get there.

Euphemia was the wife of her brother Frank (Francis Edward Jr.) and they had seven living children, six of whom were between the ages of 16 and 4 at the time. The eldest, Edward Jr. was then 20. Though Frances arrived in time to see her sister-in-law, Euphemia tragically passed away shortly after her arrival.^{xxi} Frances no doubt stayed on for a while to help her brother and the children.

After that, Frances' specific whereabouts continue to be a mystery. She could not be found on either the 1921 Canada nor 1920 U.S. censuses, or any Boston area directories, or newspaper notes in New Brunswick or Massachusetts.

She may have been travelling at the time the censuses were taken: she did have Cassidy relatives in San Diego, San Jose, and Napa, California. Another family story says she lived for a time in Los Angeles, but this could neither be proven nor disproven.

In 1924 a November 11 record completed in Saint John, revealed that Frances was returning to Massachusetts from New Brunswick via train. She stated on this Alien Certificate that she had been living in the U.S. from 1911 to October 31, 1924^{xxii}. This would seem to indicate she had stayed on after Euphemia's death, but had been back in New Brunswick for a couple of weeks. She stated her address was 515 Crafts Street, West Newton, Mass. (More on this later).

Another record corroborates her living in the U.S: in 1941, Frances filed an "Intention to Naturalize" (acquire U.S. citizenship) on which she stated she had arrived in the U.S. via train on Nov. 22, 1924 and had "not been absent from the United States for a period or periods of 6 months or longer."^{xxiii} From this and the 1915 record, it can again be surmised that she had stayed in the Boston area from the time of her training, travelling back and forth on visits to Canada, most likely N.B.

ORIGINAL
(To be retained by
Clerk of Court)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

297606

DECLARATION OF INTENTION (Invalid for all purposes seven years after the date hereof)

No. ✓

District of Massachusetts In the U.S. District Court
of Massachusetts at Boston

(1) My full, true, and correct name is Frances Jennie Cassidy
(2) My present place of residence is 7 Parker St., Newton, Middlesex, Mass. my occupation is nursing
(3) I am 57 years old. (4) I was born on Jan. 29, 1884 in Clover Hill, N.B., Canada
(5) My personal description is as follows: Sex female, color white, complexion fair, color of eyes grey
color of hair red-brown, height 5 feet 4 inches, weight 139 pounds, visible distinctive marks none
race Scotch-Irish, present nationality British
(7) I am not married; the name of my wife or husband is _____; we were married on _____
(8) I have no children; and the name, sex, date and place of birth, and present place of residence of each of said children who is living, are as follows:
(9) My last place of foreign residence was Clover Hill, N.B., Canada (10) I emigrated to the United States from
St. John, N.B., Canada (11) My lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States was
at Vanceboro, Me. under the name of Francis J. Cassidy
on Nov. 22, 1924 on the OPR
(12) Since my lawful entry for permanent residence I have NOT been absent from the United States, for a period or periods of 6 months or longer, as follows:

DEPARTED FROM THE UNITED STATES			RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES		
PORT	DATE (Month, day, year)	VESSEL OR OTHER MEANS OF CONVEYANCE	PORT	DATE (Month, day, year)	VESSEL OR OTHER MEANS OF CONVEYANCE

(13) I have NOT heretofore made declaration of intention: No. _____, on _____ at _____
(14) It is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States and to reside permanently therein. (15) I will, before being admitted to citizenship, renounce absolutely and forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which at the time of admission to citizenship I may be a subject or citizen. (16) I am not an anarchist; nor a believer in the unlawful damage, injury, or destruction of property, or sabotage; nor a disbeliever in or opposed to organized government; nor a member of or affiliated with any organization or body of persons teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government. (17) I certify that the photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a likeness of me and was signed by me. I do swear (affirm) that the statements I have made and the intentions I have expressed in this declaration of intention subscribed by me are true to the best of my knowledge and belief: SO HELP ME GOD.

Frances Jennie Cassidy
Subscribed and sworn to (affirmed) before me in the form of oath shown above in the office of the
Clerk of said Court, at Boston, Mass.
this 13th day of March, anno Domini 1941. I hereby certify that
Certification No. 1 325635 from the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization,
showing the lawful entry for permanent residence of the declarant above named on the date stated in
this declaration of intention, has been received by me, and that the photograph affixed to the duplicate
and triplicate hereof is a likeness of the declarant.

(DO NOT ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH TO THIS
COPY OF DECLARATION)

(SEAL)

James S. Allen
U.S. District

By Agnes M. Farrell Court,
Deputy Clerk.

Form N-315
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
(Edition of 1-18-41)

410-19119 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

Figure 9 - Frances' Declaration of Intention to Naturalize

Working Years

If Frances was in the Boston area from 1915 to 1941, where was she living and working?

As “student nurses in the hospital-based training programs... were little more than indentured servants”^{xxiv} Frances most likely sought private duty assignments after graduation. To assist nurses in finding work, their names could be included in the annual city directories, and/or in a Central Directory of Nurses published by the Massachusetts Nurses Association. Indeed, Frances was listed in 1926-28, 1930, 1926-1940 Boston and area directories under the category for Nurses.

She may also have belonged to the Massachusetts Club for Public Health. This group of nurses met quarterly in Boston

“...for the purpose of bringing into more intimate contact all the nurses doing public health work in the City and in the smaller outlying towns and cities. At these meetings supper is served, after which there is a short talk on some subject of general interest. A social evening follow[ed].”^{xxv}

Private duty nurses were sometimes live-in at the homes of their clients, or they resided in boarding houses. Some of the addresses found for Frances were:

1924-1925

515 Crafts Street
West Newton, Mass.

Frances gave this as her residence when she crossed the border in November 1924.^{xxvi} She may have been a companion or friend to the woman who lived there, Mrs. Susan F. Morrill, a recent widow.^{xxvii}



Figure 10 - Google Maps. (2026) 515 Crafts Street, West Newton, Mass., [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps) : accessed 25 May 2026.

1926-1931

26 Minot Street

Dorchester (Boston), Mass.^{xxviii}

This was the home of Frances' brother Frank and his second partner Jennie.^{xxix} Frances may have worked elsewhere in the city.

In 1927 while she was at this address, she received an inheritance of \$2,000 from her uncle John Jamieson in New Brunswick.^{xxx}

Perhaps Frances had nursed him at some point which lead to this bequest.



Figure 11- 26 Minot Street, Boston, Mass, ibid Google Maps

1933-1942

7 Parker Street

Newton, Mass.^{xxxi}

The Parker Street address was a boarding house for elderly widowed women. It was owned and run by Eleanor Compton, a nurse from P.E.I, and her sister, a dressmaker.^{xxxii} Both Eleanor and her sister Minnie were also widows. The 1930 US census showed seven boarders there between the ages of 65 and 85^{xxxiii}. The 1940 U.S. census enumerated seven different lodgers, all widows between the ages of 59 and 91, with Frances, age 48 listed as a nurse working 52 weeks a year and earning \$1200.



Figure 12 - 7 Parker Street, Newton, Mass, ibid Google Maps

In 1942 Frances received a bequest of “bonds and \$100 extra for each year of service since 1933” from one of her patients at the home on Parker Street, which not only shows how long she worked there, but is a rare testament to how respected a nurse she was.^{xxxiv}

Though she remained in the Boston area until the early 1960's, no other evidence of where she worked could be found in directories, censuses, or newspapers.

Family Ties

Frances never married, though all but one of her siblings did and she was a special attendant at three of their weddings:

- On January 1, 1903 she was asked to be a signing witness to Clara's marriage to John Garscadden^{lxxxv}.
- On September 30, 1908, she was bridesmaid to her brother Thomas' bride Annie Gertrude Cochrane. At this wedding Frances "...was attired in pale blue silk..." and was given a gold chain as a gift.^{xxxvi}



*Figure 13 – Wedding Day, Thomas and Annie Cassidy
L-R, Herb Cochrane, Thomas A. Cassidy, Annie Gertrude Cochrane, Frances J. Cassidy (Note
Frances is wearing the gold chain) (source: Cassidys.ca)*

- Then on April 17, 1911 she was attendant to brother Robert Allan's bride, Edyth Freeman.^{xxxvii} This couple would be the next generation to raise a family at the Cassidy homestead.

¹ John had been living in New York City, but was originally from Glasgow. In fact, he was Clara and Frances' first cousin, their mothers Jane and Elizabeth Dunlop were sisters. Elizabeth had married and moved to Glasgow before Jane emigrated to New Brunswick.

Over the years, there were also family members' deaths, some tragically unexpected. Besides her sister-in-law, Euphemia there were:

- Frances' nineteen-month-old nephew Ralph, who died in 1902 after contracting meningitis. He was the son of her brother Matthew and his wife Roberta, who were living in Boston at the time.^{xxxviii}
- Just two years after Clara's wedding to John Garscadden, and a year after the birth of their son, John died suddenly while in New York, in February 1905.^{xxxix} He was brought home for burial next to his grandmother in the family cemetery at Cassidy Lake.
- In 1908 Frances' mother Jane passed away suddenly at age 68 from pneumonia (her father would go on to live to the age of 94).^{xl}
- Then in 1930, Clara and John's son Edward, passed away at age 26.^{xli}

Frances did make happier annual visits to friends and family in New Brunswick. An exceptional time was in the summer of 1949 when she took part in the first Cassidy family reunion at the Clover Hill homestead. One of the many photos taken captured the rare gathering again of Frances and her four remaining siblings.



*Figure 14 - 1949 Family Reunion at the Cassidy homestead, Cassidy Lake, New Brunswick
L-R Frances, Allan, Matthew, Frank, and Clara (author's collection)*

As well as trips home, Frances also continued to visit friends in Massachusetts, Quebec, and Florida,^{xlii} and later on travelled occasionally with her niece Nellie McDowell, Clara's daughter from her second marriage.^{xliii}

Later Years

Frances continued to live in Massachusetts at least past 1960 when she was noted in the obituary for her brother Matthew as being "from Boston."^{xliv}

Around 1962, Frances decided to return home to New Brunswick permanently. First to the homestead at Cassidy Lake to live with her brother Allan and sister-in-law Edythe for a while, then to live with Clara in Gagetown.^{xlv}

At this point, it must have become evident that Frances' birth had not been registered. It would not have made any difference until she needed proof of having been born in New Brunswick for various official forms. Finally, in July 1962 at age 81, a "late registration" form was completed, with Clara attesting to having been "in the house at the time of birth and (had) distinct recollection of said birth."^{xlvi} They must have laughed that Frances was now officially born!

26161

(Read carefully instructions on other side of this form)

DOMINION OF CANADA
PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK

TO WIT:
In the matter of the Registration of a Birth which has not been registered within one year after such took place; or which took place before 1920 and was not registered at that time.
And in the Matter of the Vital Statistics Regulations.

Name of Child in full Frances Jane Cassidy Sex: Female Date of Birth January 29, 1881

Place of Birth of Child (City, Town or Village) Glover Hill County of Kings N.B.

Name of Father in full Francis Edward Cassidy Birthplace of Father Glover Hill N.B.

Address of Father at time of said Birth Glover Hill N.B. Occupation of Father at time of said Birth Farmed

Maiden Name of Mother Jane Dunlop Birthplace of Mother Dublin Ireland

I, Clara McDowell of Gagetown
In the County of Quincy In the Province of New Brunswick

Do Solemnly Declare as follows:

(1). That I am the Sister of the aforesaid;
(relation to child)

(2). That I have personal knowledge of the matters herein set forth, and this information is true in substance and in fact;

(3). That my knowledge of the fact and date of such birth is based on the following circumstances: (See examples on other side).
Both parents are dead. I am the elder sister of Francis Jane Cassidy, I am 13 years his senior. I was in the house at time of birth and have distinct recollection of said birth.

AND I MAKE this solemn declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath.

Declared before me at Gagetown

In the County of Quincy

Province of New Brunswick

this 23rd day of July, 1962

Signature Harold R. Cameron
Notary Public, Commissioner, etc., of Justice of the Peace

(For use of Reg.-Gen. only)

Registered
Sept. 28, 1962

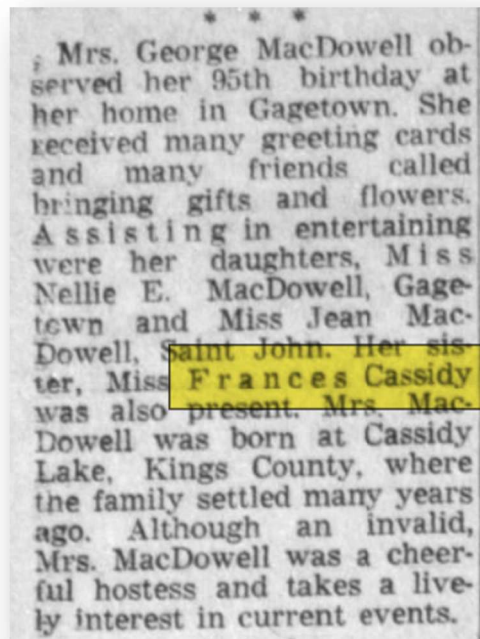
Signature of declarant Clara McDowell
Registrar-Gen. J

OUTSIDE OF NEW BRUNSWICK, this declaration must be made before a Notary Public who shall affix his notarial seal. In New Brunswick before a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for taking affidavits or Notary Public.

1881-C30

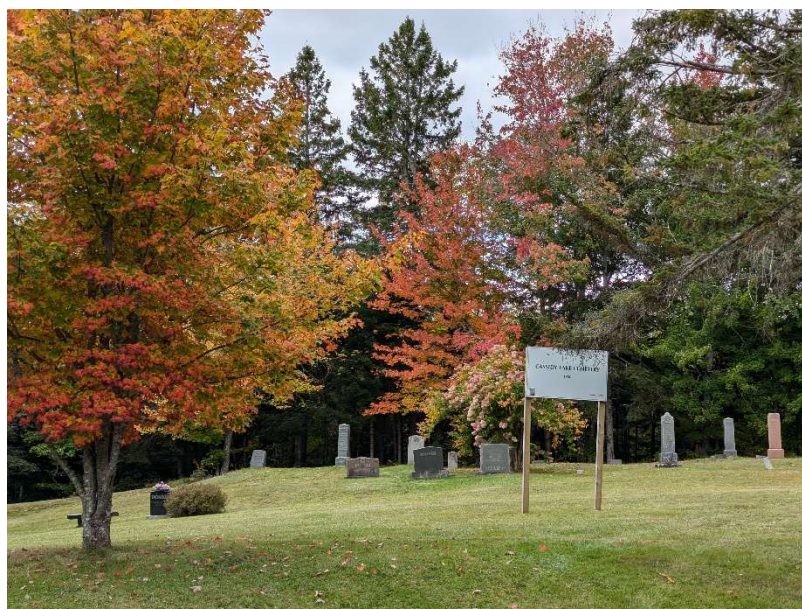
Figure 15 - Frances' Late Birth Registration

Two weeks later with friends and family, they celebrated Clara's own 95th birthday.^{xlvi}



Frances continued to travel into her late eighties, back and forth between New Brunswick to Massachusetts.^{xlvi}

Her beloved sister Clara passed away in 1965. A few years later, in 1971, Frances moved into York Manor in Fredericton, "...a modern nursing home for the Fredericton area" which had opened in three years earlier."^{xlvi} She passed away on 23 September 1976, and was buried at Cassidy Lake Cemetery, on the old homestead where she was born¹.



Epilogue

Without first hand reminiscences, we can't know Aunt Frances' personality. However, from this research, we do know that at five feet five inches^{li}, Frances Jane Cassidy was a tiny woman with curly brown hair and sparkling blue eyes. My grandmother said Frances always dressed well. She was a smart, well educated, and caring person, with a good sense of humour.

She maintained close family ties and friendships in both New Brunswick and Massachusetts, supporting her family through good times and bad. She loved living in the Boston area for most of her life, and almost became a dual Canada/US citizen.

From her rural farm beginnings to a respected professional, she forged her own way in the world, while keeping close ties with her New Brunswick roots. Travelling until well into her '80s, Frances showed independence and strength of character.

A lovely person in the family tree to now have a leaf with her story.



*Figure 16 - Frances' amethyst brooch
(author's collection)*



Figure 17 - Frances' silver handled umbrella with her engraved initials (author's collection)

Author's Note: Though my generation knew her as “Aunt Frances”, she was in fact our “first cousin 3-times-removed.” Her grandfather William, was our 3x great grandfather. She was specifically Aunt to our grandfather. Much easier to remember her as Aunt Frances.

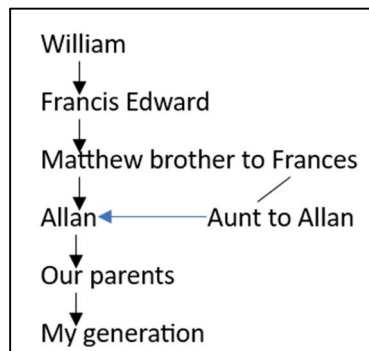


Figure 18- Basic descendancy chart indicating to whom Frances was Aunt

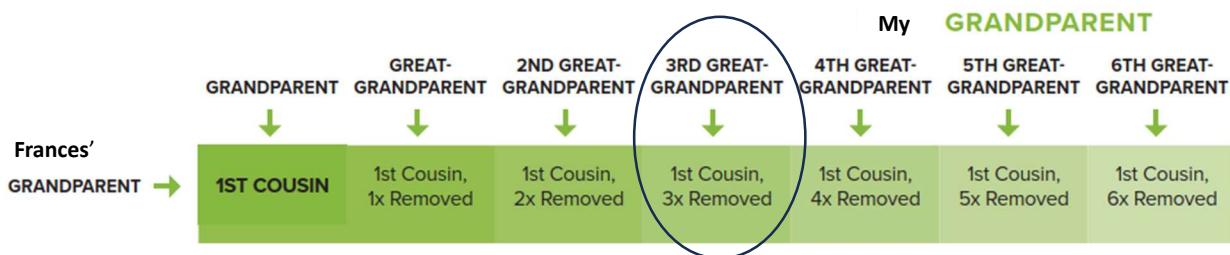


Figure 19 - "Cousin Calculator" - Frances Cassidy to the author

ENDNOTES

- i Late Birth Registration for Frances Jane Cassidy, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Vital Statistics from Government Records (RS141), Index to Late Registration of Births (RS141Ab), Code 1881-C-30, Microfilm F18768, archives2.gnb.ca, accessed 17 Jan 2026.
- ii Annual Report of the Schools of New Brunswick, 1888, by the Chief Superintendent of Education, St. John, N.B., Daily Telegraph Book and Job Press, 1889, page 20, Google Books, Books.google.com, accessed 4 July 2026.
- iii Ibid page 19.
- iv Ibid page 14.
- v Ibid page lvi.
- vi 1901 Census of Canada for Francies [sic] J Cassidy, New Brunswick > Kings > Hammond, page 2, image 2 of 18, line 21 ancestry.ca, accessed 9 Feb 2026.
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