



*Biographical Research Committee Monthly Report*  
May 1996

## John Murphy Found

John H. Murphy, who fashioned a 5-12 record pitching for Altoona and Wilmington in the Union Association in 1884 has been found by Jay Sanford. For this, Jay wins the *May Find of the Month* award.

We had Murphy listed as being born March 8, 1867 in Philadelphia. Jay's first clue on him was an article in the April 6, 1890 Denver Daily News stating that manager Mutrie of New York had signed John H. Murphy for his team. "He was born in Fitchburg, Massachusetts March 8, 1867. He is 5 feet 11 inches in height and weighs 165 pounds." From this, Jay was able to obtain his baptismal certificate listing his parents' names. Jay began calling cemeteries in Fitchburg to locate the family. Murphy was buried in St. Bernard's Cemetery (which has nothing to do with Marge Schott). The cemetery records listed his death as being September 12, 1930 in Hartford, Connecticut. Jay then was able to locate the death certificate in Hartford. The obituary did not mention baseball; however, it listed among the pallbearers John Keefe and Thomas Hart, both former major leaguers. A nifty piece of research.

Now for the more interesting question. John H. Murphy is not listed as playing for New York in 1890. However, two other Murphys did play for the 1890 Giants. Patrick J. Murphy was a catcher, outfielder, and shortstop. And Robert J. Murphy (one of our missing players) pitched three games for the same club. Is it possible that any of these appearances was actually John Henry Murphy?

### William Sullivan Found

We have yet another outstanding find this month. Bob Richardson has tracked down 1890

Syracuse pitcher William F. Sullivan. Bob has been tracking Sullivan for quite some time and his search was made doubly difficult by there being two William Sullivans who pitched in the 1880s and 1890s, both born in Providence, Rhode Island. Bob was able to identify the 1890 Syracuse pitcher as William F. Sullivan, who pitched for Lowell from 1887-89 and Providence in 1891. Unfortunately, there were 3 William F. Sullivans listed in the Providence city directories and it was impossible to determine which one was our ballplayer.

Bob's big break in the case came when he found an article in the Providence Journal stating that Sullivan was left home from a May road trip because his father was injured in a mill accident. Bob then located a news article (someone actually reads the other sections of the paper?) from earlier that week that said the a Daniel Sullivan had been severely hurt in an accident at the Dexter Mill on May 19, 1891. There was only one William F. Sullivan who had a father named Daniel and Bob was able to track down his death on October 8, 1905. Great job!

### A Possible Clue

One of our missing ballplayers is John Dylar, who played one game in 1882. We list Dylar as being born in Louisville, Kentucky. I discovered through the directory search that there are only three Dylers listed in the United States. I wrote each of them in hopes that they might be related to our ballplayer. One wrote me back and said that all of the Dylers he knew were Canadian (as was he). He said that there are quite a few Dylers in the Calgary and Vancouver areas. Perhaps that is the place to look.

### Committee Meeting

Don't forget about our committee meeting at the convention. It is at 9:45 AM on Friday. See, you don't even have to get up early. Please let me know if there are items you would like to

discuss. I hope to pass out a new missing player list at the meeting. By the way, there is no truth to the rumor that I will be providing free Gates barbecue to all attendees. For those of you who have never been to Kansas City, Gates is probably the outstanding barbecue place in a city renowned for its barbecue.

## Gillespie

We presently carry James Wheatfield Gillespie with a death of September 5, 1921 in North Tonawanda, New York. Bob Tholkes wrote to tell me that this information was listed on the March 1980 biographical report and then retracted in the July 1980 report with a note that this was the wrong man. Does anybody know about this guy?

## James McDonnell

According to the Social Security Death Index, James McDonnell died April 24, 1993. Death benefits were sent to Detroit, which is where we list his last address. However, no obituary appeared in the Detroit newspaper and when I sent to the state of Michigan for a death certificate (a mere \$13.00), they were unable to locate a certificate. Anyone have any ideas?

## Birthday List

There are 3 nonagenarians celebrating birthdays in June. Be sure to send a card.

June 4	Ed Marshall	90
June 21	Arthur Smith	90
June 25	Lief Erickson	94

## Maybe We Should Look In A Pear Tree

Our *Mystery of the Month* for May is George (Partridge) Adams of the 1879 Syracuse club. Notes are provided by Bob Richardson.

George Adams is usually listed as being born in Grafton, Massachusetts, but there is no record of that birth nor is there a George Adams there in the 1870 census. That connection probably stems from his play with the great Grafton team of 1874-75 (state champs). However, his first engagement was with Webster, Massachusetts in 1873. Unfortunately no birth or census match there either. Webster is not far from Grafton, but enough of a rival that a Grafton boy wouldn't have played for Webster without some attention

being payed in the papers and his arrival is barely mentioned.

Still, these were town teams and Bob believes Adams must have been from central Massachusetts somewhere. Checking all George Adamses born in Massachusetts is quite a task as there were 45 births recorded in Massachusetts between 1849 and 1856 and that doesn't preclude a birth in another state or country.

Bob tracked his career from 1873 to 1881 when he was released by Buffalo. A middle name, age, or hometown was never mentioned. He was named captain in 1877, so he quite likely wasn't a kid. He spent the winter of 1877-78 in Lynn, but there is no record of a marriage or family connection.

Thereafter, there is little mention of Adams. There is a New York Clipper note that J. Adams (Syracuse 1B) moved to Helena, Montana in 1881 but he's not in the 1900 census there. The Syracuse Historical Society has an undated note that Adams was in business in Chicago and an 1899 Worcester Spy recollection of the Websters says Adams is from Syracuse, New York.

The Syracuse city directory shows a George Adams, laborer, who disappears after 1900, but there is no matching death. Other George Adamses proved to be the wrong man and none of the Syracuse George Adamses in the 1900 census are the right age.

The 1900 Chicago census produced several possibilities and Richard Topp was able to find a George Dunbar Adams (B: 1848 Mass.) who died in 1928 in La Grange, Illinois. He may match a Spencer, Massachusetts birth (which is not far from Webster), but it isn't precise and there's no confirming obit. There were also two good college players named George Adams in New England in the 1870s - at Tufts and Dartmouth - but neither is our man.

### The Scoreboard

	IN	OUT	PCT
Total Complete Names	14450	71	99.511
Total Complete Births	13771	750	94.835
Total Complete Deaths	7204	469	49.611
Total Assumed Alive	6848		47.159
Total Bats	13166	1250	91.329
Total Throws	13412	1004	93.036
Total Heights	13409	1007	92.932
Total Weights	13347	1069	92.587
Total Debut Dates	14521	0	100.000
Total Questionnaires	9977	4544	68.707
Total Completion			92.1977

## New Monthly Data

### Questionnaires Received:

None

### New Information Received:

1939 Berardino, John	D: <u>May 19 1996</u> <u>Los Angeles, California</u>	(M4)
1949 Biasetti, Henry Arcado	D: <u>Apr 20 1996</u> <u>Dearborn, Michigan</u>	(S3)
1891 Cassian, Edwin	TR	(S5)
1941 Conway, Jack Clements	D: <u>Jun 11 1993</u> <u>Waco, Texas</u>	(S3)
1883 Doyle, Cornelius J.	B: <u>1862</u> <u>Ireland</u>	(C1)
1911 Duggan, James Elmer	B: <u>Jun 1 1885</u>	(C2)
1941 Freiburger, Vern Donald	D: <u>Feb 27 1990</u> <u>Palm Springs, California</u>	(B1)
1939 Gantenbein, Joseph Stephen	Name: <u>Joseph Steven Gantenbein</u> B: <u>Aug 25 1915</u> D: <u>Aug 2 1993</u> <u>Novato, California</u>	(C1)
1958 Geiger, Gary Merle	D: <u>Apr 24 1996</u> <u>Murphysboro, Illinois</u>	(D7)
1948 Kellner, Alexander Raymond	D: <u>May 3 1996</u> <u>Tucson, Arizona</u>	(C1)
1942 Lapihuska, Andrew	D: <u>Feb 17 1996</u> <u>Millville, Rhode Island</u>	(S3)
1908 Marquard, Richard William	B: <u>Oct 9 1886</u>	(C1)
1884 Mulligan,	Name: <u>John Mulligan</u>	(S5)
1884 Murphy, John H.	Name: <u>John Henry Murphy</u> B: <u>Fitchburg, Massachusetts</u> D: <u>Sep 12 1930</u> <u>Hartford, Connecticut</u> Height: <u>5-11</u> Weight: <u>165</u>	(S5)
1935 Myers, William Harrison	D: <u>Apr 10 1995</u> <u>Carlisle, Pennsylvania</u>	(C1)
1969 Rios, Juan Onofre Velez	D: <u>Aug 28 1995</u> <u>Mayaguez, Puerto Rico</u>	(S3)
1987 Sharperson, Michael Tyrone	D: <u>May 26 1996</u> <u>Las Vegas, Nevada</u>	(C1)
1890 Sullivan, William F.	B: <u>Dec 1868</u> D: <u>Oct 8 1905</u> <u>Providence, Rhode Island</u>	(R1)
1884 Sutcliffe, Elmer Ellsworth	TL	(S5)
1943 Wheaton, Elwood Pierce	D: <u>Dec 11 1995</u> <u>Lancaster, Pennsylvania</u>	(C1)
1946 Whitman, Walter Franklin	D: <u>Feb 6 1994</u> <u>Maryville, Illinois</u>	(S3)