

Jessie Leighton (Webster) Haddleton: My Brick Wall - Frank B. Haddleton 6/20/21

Anyone who spends time researching family history eventually learns that records of births, marriages, and deaths often contain incorrect information. You know for sure that records contain errors when records about the same people contain absolutely inconsistent information. The errors can simply be mistakes made by the recorder (the person making the record, or “record-keeper”), mistakes made by the person who reports the facts to the recorder, or intentional misrepresentations made by that reporter. (For example, the 1910 U.S. Census reports Jessie Haddleton’s age as 44, putting her birth year at about 1866, but in fact she was born in 1863 – I think this age-reduction technique may have been employed a lot.)

It is almost needless to say, but family trees on Ancestry.com and other genealogy sites contain huge amounts of incorrect information. Many people working on their trees simply copy information entered by others without seriously questioning the reliability of that information. I, myself, am guilty of doing that with respect to some branches of my family tree, but where I come across obvious issues I stop and look very carefully.

Jessie Leighton (Webster) Haddleton (1863 – 1922) was my great-grandmother. She presents the least distant (she’s only my great-grandmother, and was born less than 100 years before I was) and most frustrating brick wall in my genealogical research. I don’t know where she was born, and I don’t know who her parents were, though I have some confidence about the identity of her father.

With respect to records for which Jessie or a family member was the reporter of the facts, Jessie’s parents are consistently indicated as Richard E. Webster and Isabel (Ray) Webster. However, Richard and Isabel were not married until Jessie was six years old, Isabel appears to have been a citizen of Canada until Jessie was at least four years old, and it was the second marriage for both Richard and Isabel. All of this means that it is extremely unlikely that Richard and Isabel, together, were Jessie’s parents.

It’s hard to imagine that Jessie had no recollection of her life before the marriage of Richard and Isabel, so it seems that she simply decided to tell everyone, when asked, that her parents were Richard and Isabel, the people who raised her from the age of six.

As an example of mistakes in the records, the birthplace of Richard E. Webster is reported as New York (sometimes New York City, specifically), Indiana (in the 1900 Census as the father of Florence Webster, showing Isabel then as a widow) England, and, in one case (1915 Rhode Island state census), France. I go with New York City as his birthplace, since this is the birthplace indicated in multiple records for which Richard was himself the one reporting the facts to the recorder. The other reported birthplaces were in records for which the reporters were his descendants.

Some of the most relevant records about Jessie and her husband are presented here, along with my discussion of what they seem to show. Significant questions remain unanswered at this time. And I could have this wrong. Somehow.

1. 1870 U.S. Census

5	Colburn	11	F	W	attending school		Mass.	/	/	/	
6	Sarah	13	F	W	attending school		—	/	/	/	
7	John	9	M	W	attending school		—	/	/	/	
8	Frank	6	M	W	attending school		—	/	/	/	
9	Mary	4	F	W	at home		—	/	/	/	
10	William	1	M	W	at home		—	/	/	/	
11	576 Webster Richard	35	M	W	Carpenter		Mass.	/	/	/	
12	Isabel	30	F	W	Keeping house		Nova Scotia	/	/	/	
13	Jessie	7	F	W	attending school		Mass.	/	/	/	
14	576 577 Oliver Richard	63	M	W	Pressman	5700	100	England	/	/	
15	Agnes	41	F	W	Keeping house		England	/	/	/	
16	Martin	20	M	W	Shoemaker		Mass.	/	/	/	
17	Richard	17	M	W	No Occupation		—	/	/	/	
18	Margaret	14	F	W	attending school		—	/	/	/	
19	John	6	M	W	attending school		—	/	/	/	
20	578 Hallahan Daniel	28	M	W	Type Setter		Ireland	/	/	/	
21	Colburn	27	F	W	Keeping house		Mass.	/	/	/	
22	John	1	M	W	at home		—	/	/	/	
23	575 579 Handick John	38	M	W	Carpenter	5700	125	Ireland	/	/	
24	Annie	40	F	W	Keeping house		—	/	/	/	
25	Mary	15	F	W	at home		Mass.	/	/	/	
26	Margaret	8	F	W	attending school		—	/	/	/	
27	570 Adams Adolph	50	M	W	Shoemaker		Prussia	/	/	/	
28	Mary	52	F	W	Keeping house		—	/	/	/	

This record reports the basics about Jessie and her family in 1870. [An 1870 Boston directory lists Richard Webster, Carpenter, at 100 Camden Street.]

Jessie is 7, meaning that she was born about 1863, and this record says she was born in Massachusetts. The head of the household, Richard Webster, a carpenter, was born in New York about 1835. The woman of the house, Isabel, was born in Nova Scotia about 1840. All of this information presumably came from Richard and / or Isabel, and I have no reason to doubt any of it. Note that there is no statement regarding the biological parentage of Jessie.

2. Birth records for Jessie, Richard, and Isabel

I am at this time unable to find any record of Jessie's birth. The closest I can come to a birth date is May, 1863, which is what is reported in the 1900 U.S. Census. (On the tree I maintain on Ancestry.com, I have her birthdate as 8 Jun 1863, but at this point I have no idea where that date came from.)

I have also been unable to find any birth record for Richard E. Webster or for Isabel Ray, nor any death record for Richard E. Webster. I do know that Richard died no later than 1893, since there is an entry in the 1893 directory for Chelsea, Massachusetts, indicating that Isabel is then a widow.

3. Jessie's 1883 marriage record.

No.	DATE OF MARRIAGE	NAMES, SURNAMES, AND COLOR OF GROOM AND BRIDE.	RESIDENCE OF EACH AT TIME OF MARRIAGE.	AGE OF EACH IN YEARS.	OCCUPATION OF EACH.	PLACE OF BIRTH OF EACH.	1853-1854	1855-1856	1857-1858	1859-1860	1861-1862	1863-1864	1865-1866	1867-1868	1869-1870	1871-1872	1873-1874	1875-1876	1877-1878	1879-1880	1881-1882	1883-1884	1885-1886	1887-1888	1889-1890	1891-1892	1893-1894	1895-1896	1897-1898	1899-1900	1901-1902	1903-1904	1905-1906	1907-1908	1909-1910	1911-1912	1913-1914	1915-1916	1917-1918	1919-1920	1921-1922	1923-1924	1925-1926	1927-1928	1929-1930	1931-1932	1933-1934	1935-1936	1937-1938	1939-1940	1941-1942	1943-1944	1945-1946	1947-1948	1949-1950	1951-1952	1953-1954	1955-1956	1957-1958	1959-1960	1961-1962	1963-1964	1965-1966	1967-1968	1969-1970	1971-1972	1973-1974	1975-1976	1977-1978	1979-1980	1981-1982	1983-1984	1985-1986	1987-1988	1989-1990	1991-1992	1993-1994	1995-1996	1997-1998	1999-2000	2001-2002	2003-2004	2005-2006	2007-2008	2009-2010	2011-2012	2013-2014	2015-2016	2017-2018	2019-2020	2021-2022	2023-2024	2025-2026	2027-2028	2029-2030	2031-2032	2033-2034	2035-2036	2037-2038	2039-2040	2041-2042	2043-2044	2045-2046	2047-2048	2049-2050	2051-2052	2053-2054	2055-2056	2057-2058	2059-2060	2061-2062	2063-2064	2065-2066	2067-2068	2069-2070	2071-2072	2073-2074	2075-2076	2077-2078	2079-2080	2081-2082	2083-2084	2085-2086	2087-2088	2089-2090	2091-2092	2093-2094	2095-2096	2097-2098	2099-2100
1	January 14, 1883.	Demul J. Sullivan Margaret A. Hagarty	Needham Needham	36 38	Manufacturer Dressmaker	Needham Needham	Thomas Margaret (Parker) Samuel Margaret (Parker)	First First	Rev. Michael Pelegy Rev. Michael Pelegy																																																																																																																									
2	January 22, 1883.	Amos Hammersley Eliza Morley	Malden Needham	38 20	Knitter Operative	England England	William Mary (Hall) George Elizabeth (See)	Second First	J. A. Mudge Clergyman																																																																																																																									
3	February 4, 1883.	Charles Monahan Julia Hollandi	Needham Needham	46 47	Laborer Domestic	Ireland Ireland	Thomas Bridget (Paddy) Thomas Elizabeth (Margaret)	Second First	Michael Dalton Pastor of St. Mary's Upper Falls																																																																																																																									
4	March 10, 1883.	William Aleney Agnes Morley	Needham Needham	21 18	Spoolster Amuseuse	England England	Thomas Elizabeth (Betty) George Elizabeth (See)	First First	Edith Cheney Clergyman																																																																																																																									
5	April 5, 1883.	Francis Miller Margaret Ellen (Kee)	Needham Needham	21 18	Laborer Domestic	Massachusetts Somerville	John Catharine (Benard) Thomas Annie (Jane)	First First	P. D. Cowden, Pastor Cong. Church, Walsby, Mass.																																																																																																																									
6	April 19, 1883.	William C. Perry Irene Rimmell	Needham Needham	24 17	Barman Dressmaker	Needham Needham	Oren Lucy Perry Edward Elizabeth (Pinner)	First First	E. A. Reed (Needham) Minister of the Gospel																																																																																																																									
7	April 27, 1883.	George James Carlton Maggie S. Spaulding	Needham Needham	23 22	Knitter Operative	England Boston	George Jennie (Hunt) Charles Edward (Lawson)	First First	Edith Cheney Clergyman																																																																																																																									
8	April 28, 1883.	Oliver Cornelius Haddleton Jessie Layton Webster	Needham Needham	23 19	Wagon Driver Operative	England Springfield	Alfred Elizabeth (Hough) Richard Isabel (Ray)	First First	J. A. Mudge Clergyman, Customs Receiver																																																																																																																									

This Massachusetts marriage record indicates that Jessie married Oliver Cornelius Haddleton on 28 Apr 1883. The marriage took place in Newton, Massachusetts (another version of this record is from the city of Newton), and both of them were then living in Needham. Jessie, not yet 20, reports that she was born in Springfield, Massachusetts and that her parents were Richard Webster and Isabel Ray. [Other records, such as the 1883 birth record for Alfred William Haddleton – Jessie's son who was born in Somerville, Massachusetts, suggest that Jessie was born in Boston, not in Springfield – Jessie or Oliver would have been the reporter then too, so why the change in birthplace?]

Here is another record of this marriage:

41	April 25 1883	Mary W. S. Covel Nelle C. Sincant	Newton Milton	25 25	Unemployed Teacher	Wisconsin Montpelier	S. D. 1844 S. D. 1844	Seaman S. D. 1844	First First	Newton Milton
42	April 25 1883	William E. Pope Sarah E. Comier	Boston Newton	23 22	Engineer Book Binder	Albany Newtown	Eng. E. of Milton	Adeline C. Mary A.	First First	Rev. O. S. Walker Boston Mass
43	April 26 1883	John Haggard Kate Cady	Newton Andover	29 29	Blacksmith Domestic	Ireland Ireland	John John	Mary Mary	First First	Rev. M. H. Harkins Andover Mass
44	April 28 1883	Oliver C. Haddleton Jessie S. Haddleton	Newton Newtown	28 19	Mechanic Operator	England England	Richard Richard	Isabella Isabella	First First	Rev. J. S. Mearns Newton Mass

This reports the same information, except that Jessie’s mother is listed as “Isabella”, not “Isabel”. I have seen both versions of this name, plus a third version – “Isabelle” in the records, and I conclude that nobody thought the differences were significant. Isabel may herself have used all three versions of the name. (For clarity, I will always refer to her as “Isabel” here, even if the record in question says “Isabella” or “Isabelle”.)

4. Jessie’s 1922 death record



Rhode Island, Death Index, 1630-1930

Name:	Jessie L Haddleton
Relation:	wf
Kin 1:	Oliver C Haddleton
Kin 2:	Rachaedee Y Haddad
Death Date:	20 Nov 1922
Age:	59 Yrs

Source Information

Ancestry.com. Rhode Island, Death Index, 1630-1930 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2000.

Description

This database is a collection of death records for the U.S. state of Rhode Island between 1636 and 1930. Each record provides the decedent’s name, death date, age at time of death, and name of some relatives. [Learn more...](#)

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I don’t have the actual record, but the index apparently shows what is in the record (another family member’s name – perhaps Ralph Leighton Haddleton? -- is badly transcribed to “Rachaedee Haddad”). Jessie died on 20 Nov 1922, not yet 60. I could try to get the actual death record, but this death index suggests that there is no additional information in it.

5. The 1869 marriage record of “Jessie’s parents”

This is where everything that seemed straightforward becomes very unclear.

This is from the City of Boston register of marriages recorded in 1869:

4 April 1869 Robert Webster	19	Carpenter	Richard Archer	James	Margaret Ray	Scotland
4 April 1869 William & Isabel	29	Bookkeeper	Richard Archer	James	Margaret Ray	Scotland

First we have to deal with the fact that this record names "Robert Webster" and not "Richard Webster" as the husband. I conclude that the name "Robert" is a mistake, and that this is really Richard Webster marrying Isabel (Ray) Archer. The best supporting evidence for this conclusion is the information about Isabel.

According to this 1869 marriage record, Isabel and /or Richard / Robert reported (1) that Isabel was 29 years old (meaning that she was born about 1840), (2) that she was born in Nova Scotia, and (3) that her parents were James and Margaret Ray. Now here is Isabel's death record:

FILL OUT WITH INK.—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD
ALL NAMES TO BE IN FULL

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS *Chelsea, Mass*

RETURN OF A DEATH 425

FULL NAME *Webster, Isabelle* Registered No. *126*

Place of Death *Chelsea* *70 Black Ave*

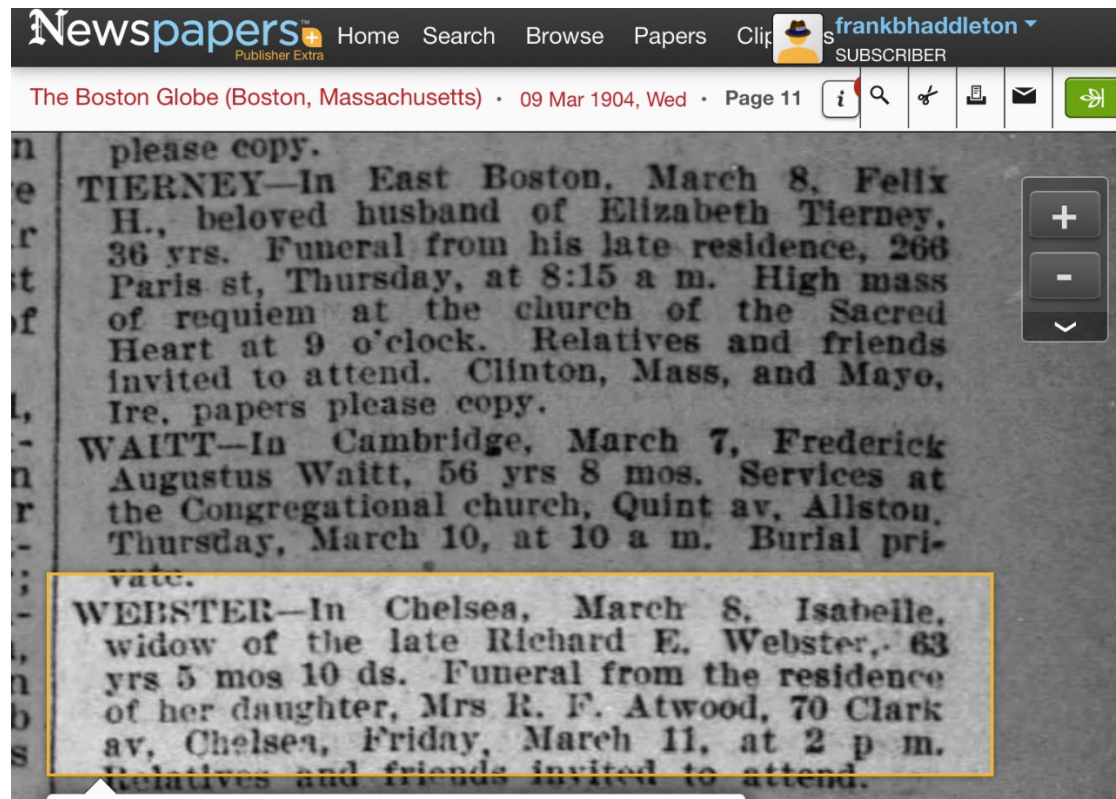
Date of Death *March 3, 1904* Age *65* years *5* months *10* days

STATISTICAL DETAILS			PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE
SEX <i>F</i>	COLOR <i>W</i>	SINGLE—MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED	I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased during last illness, from <i>March 1, 1904</i> to <i>March 3, 1904</i> , that to the best of my knowledge and belief death occurred on the date stated above, and that the CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: Primary: <i>Consumption</i> (DURATION) _____ DAYS Contributory: _____ (DURATION) _____ DAYS (Signed) <i>H. A. Johnson</i> M.D. <i>Mar. 9, 1904</i> (Address) <i>Essex</i>
MAIDEN NAME † <i>Ray</i>			
HUSBAND'S NAME † <i>Richard E. Webster</i>			
BIRTHPLACE † <i>N.S.</i>			
NAME OF FATHER <i>James Ray</i>			
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER † <i>Scotland</i>			
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <i>Margaret Neil</i>			
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER † <i>Scotland</i>			
OCCUPATION _____			
INFORMANT † <i>daughter</i> <i>Mrs. R. F. Atwood</i>			
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL † <i>Woodlawn Cemetery</i>		DATE OF BURIAL <i>Mar. 11, 1904</i>	* City or town, street and number, if any. If death occurs away from USUAL RESIDENCE, give facts called for under "Special Information." If in a Hospital or Institution, give its NAME instead of street and number. † In case of married or divorced woman, or widow. ‡ State or country; also city, town or county, if known. § Name and address of person giving statistical details. ¶ Name of cemetery.
UNDERTAKER <i>E. B. Douglass</i>		ADDRESS <i>Chelsea</i>	

Filed *Mar. 10, 1904* *Charles H. Keeg* Clerk

Note that Isabel is now “Isabelle”.

And here is Isabel’s death notice:



[As an aside, the information in these records was presumably reported by Florence Webster Wells (1st husband) Atwood (2nd husband), the daughter of Richard and Isabel who was born in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1875. There doesn’t seem to be anything inconsistent in the records about Florence, who, I believe, was Jessie’s half-sister, sharing only their father].

Just as in the 1869 marriage record, these records of Isabel’s death indicate (1) that Isabel was born about 1840, (2) that she was born in Nova Scotia, and (3) that her parents were James and Margaret Ray. [If you go by the age reported in the official death record, Isabel’s birth was 29 Sep 1838; if you go by the age reported in the death notice, her birth was 29 Sep. 1840. I don’t think this discrepancy is of any consequence other than showing that one of the sources has

it wrong. I suspect that Sep 1838 is more likely to be correct but that's just a suspicion.]

What all of this suggests is that unless there were two different Isabel Rays, each of them born in Nova Scotia in about 1840 and each of them born to parents named James and Margaret Ray, the Isabel in the 1869 marriage record is our Isabel, the one who married Richard E. Webster. I think we can reject the idea that there were two different Isabel Rays sharing all of these data points. [Note of caution to future researchers: there actually is another Isabella from Nova Scotia – Isabella J. Maxwell -- married to another Richard Webster in Massachusetts in the late 1800s, but they were in Haverhill, that Richard is a farmer, and their ages do not match the ages of our Isabel and Richard.]

Also, both the 1870 census report and this 1869 marriage record indicate that Isabel's spouse (Richard / Robert) was a carpenter born about 1835 in New York. We also know that Richard was born in New York City, as opposed to anywhere else in the state of New York. We know this from the Massachusetts death record of Frederick Webster, an infant born in 1871 to Richard and Isabel in Boston. Here is that death record (this tragic death was registered in Boston on 23 Nov 1871 and indicates that Frederick was only 5 months old):



[Note that in this record, Isabel is reported as Isabella.]

If all of that isn't enough to show that we have the right Isabel Ray here, there is also a church record from Boston confirming that "R.E. Webster" married "Isabella Archer."

Alphabetical Record of				Members in Full Connection.		
Name.	State in Life.	When received.	How received.	By whom received.	No. of Class.	Remarks.
Allen, Sarah		Nov 18 1868	By Baptism	L. R. Hayes & C.	5	Carried to first class
Archer, Isabella		Oct 25 1868	"	L. R. Hayes & C.	5	Carried to 2nd class
Archer, Ruby M.	n.	July 15 1868	"	L. R. Hayes & C.	4	Removed by letter Sept 7 1878
Adams, Eliza	s.	July 15 1871	"	W. H. Moore	1	Nov 27 1876
Allen, John	a.	June 29 1873	By letter from churchman	Wm. G. Leonard	3	Removed by letter Jan 1 1878

From the same church (Pine Street Church, Boston -- United Methodist Church) there is another record relating to Richard E. Webster's removal from the membership of the church (in March 1872, along with Isabel's removal), so I think we can conclude that "R.E. Webster" is our Richard, and that Isabel and Richard

were members of the same church before their marriage. (They appear to have both been received into the church on 25 Oct. 1868 – I’m not sure what this date means for my analysis, if anything – is it a coincidence that they became members of the church at the same time, or did they know each other before joining the church? In any case, they were not married until later.)

Alphabetical Record of				Members in Full Connection.		
Names.	State in Life.	When received.	How received.	By whom received.	No. of Class.	Remarks.
Webster Isaac	20	Oct. 25 1868	By Certificate	Rev. G. Sprague Pastor	1	Removed by letter from the Synod
Webster Isabel	20	Oct. 25 1868	By Testimony	Rev. P. Thayer P.C.	1	Removed by letter from 1-1878
Webster Maria F.						Did July 26 th 1871
Webster Richard E.		Oct. 25 1868		Rev. G. Sprague Pastor		Removed by letter March 24 1872.
White Mary E.		Nov 11 1870		Edward L. King	4	

The two key points in this record of the marriage of Richard E. Webster and Isabel Ray are that (1) it is a second marriage for both (Isabel having first married someone named Archer, apparently), and (2) it took place six years after Jessie's 1863 birth. That leaves four possibilities:

- (1) Jessie was the daughter of Richard and his first wife, who is unknown;
- (2) Jessie was the daughter of Isabel and her first husband, a man named Archer;
- (3) Jessie was the daughter of both of them, which would mean that they had an extra-marital encounter;
- (4) Jessie was the daughter of neither of them and was instead adopted by one or both at some point.

I believe the most likely answer is that Jessie was the daughter of Richard and his first wife (a marriage for which I have not yet found any record). I base this mostly on two facts:

(1) Through different genealogy sites I find DNA matches with three different individuals who descend from a Webster family from Freeport, Maine. Cousins of mine on my Haddleton side share these matches. (But see item 6, below, suggesting that our Websters may have no connection to the Maine Websters).

(2) A Boston passenger list from 1867 (8 Oct 1867) suggests that as of that time Isabel was still a Canadian citizen and was traveling alone. Here is that record:

COPY OF REPORT AND LIST OF THE PASSENGERS taken on board the <i>Sch Addia</i> of <i>Shelburne</i>								
whereof <i>Goodman</i>		is Master, burthen		<i>58</i> tons, bound from the Port of <i>Subnic</i>		for <i>Boston</i> .		
NAMES.	AGE.		SEX.	Occupation, Trade, or Profession.	Country to which they severally belong.	Country of which they intend to become inhabitants.	Died on the voyage.	Part of vessel occupied during the voyage.
	Years.	Months.						
<i>Isabel Day</i>	<i>25</i>		<i>F</i>		<i>New-Salem</i>	<i>United States</i>		<i>Stater</i>

If there is any doubt that this is our Isabel, consider this record from three years later (10 Sep 1870), in which Isabel is again coming into Boston on a schooner from Shelburne, N.S. This time she is a U.S. citizen, and it appears that she has Jessie (it's difficult to read the writing), age 8, with her.

Passenger List of <i>Sch Faxon</i> from <i>Shelburne</i>							
NAMES.	AGE.		SEX.	OCCUPATION.	The Country to which they severally belong.	The Country of which they intend to become inhabitants.	DIED ON THE VOYAGE.
	Years.	Months.					
<i>Maria Sampson</i>	<i>38</i>		<i>F</i>		<i>New-Salem</i>	<i>New-Salem</i>	<i>Cabin</i>
<i>Lizzie B.</i>	<i>10</i>		<i>F</i>				
<i>Walter Webster</i>	<i>31</i>		<i>M</i>		<i>United States</i>	<i>United States</i>	
<i>James</i>	<i>8</i>		<i>M</i>				
<i>Isabel Faxon</i>	<i>29</i>		<i>F</i>	<i>Milliner</i>			

So that leaves us, I think, with the likelihood that Jessie's parents were Richard E. Webster and an unidentified mother, his first wife. It is possible that Jessie's middle name, Leighton, is the family name of her mother, but it's far from certain. (I do have DNA matches with several Leightons, and I can't see a good place for that connection other than here, but that doesn't rule out anything else.)

6. John E. Webster – brother of Richard E. Webster – a possibly helpful tangent

In trying to find out more about Richard E. Webster, I came across records relating to John E. Webster, who appears to be Richard’s older brother. They both lived in the Boston area, they were both born in New York City in the 1830s (John about 1832 and Richard about 1835), and they were both born to Thomas and Susan Webster.

Here is the 1855 marriage record for John E. Webster, who reports that he is a gilder (someone who applies an overlayer of gold onto something – jewelry or artwork, I imagine) – his spouse is Phebe A. Luce:

MARRIAGES REGISTERED IN THE TOWN OF ROXBURY										FOR THE YEARS 1843 TO 1867					
No.	Date	Full Names of Groom and Bride	Sex	Age	Number of Marriages	Residence of each of them at Marriage	Occupation	Place of Birth of Groom	Place of Birth of Bride	Name of Parents of Groom	Name of Parents of Bride	Name, Rank and Official Station of Person by whom Married	Date of Record		
1	Jan 1	Patrik Feeney Winnifred Kelley	Wh	30	third	West Roxbury	Laborer	Ireland	Ireland	John Feeney Mary	Peter Kelley Bridget	Rev P O'Beirne	1		
2	Jan 1	Oyrus D Curtis Joelina A Morse	Wh	26	first	Roxbury	Provision Dealer	Ireland	Ireland	Gerahan Curtis Joseph Morse	Julia Sarah	J H Twombly First M E Church	2		
3	Jan 2	Charles E Manning Eliza A Hemmaway	Wh	32	second	Boston	Carriage driver	Ireland	Ireland	Peter Manning Curtis Hemmaway		Rev F D Huntington	3		
4	Jan 2	Lawrence Hughes Eliza Skally	Wh	40	first	Roxbury	Shoemaker	Ireland	Ireland	Patrik Hughes Thomas Skally	Mary Mary	Rev P O'Beirne	4		
5	Jan 3	Richard Warren Susan B Gove	Wh	49	second	New York	Merchant	Ireland	Ireland	Henry Warren Jeremiah Gove		Rev E S Gannett Federal St Society Boston	5		
6	Jan 3	Patrik McDonald Catherine Carty	Wh	21	first	Roxbury	Laborer	Ireland	Ireland	John McDonald John Carty	Catherine Catherine	Rev P O'Beirne	6		
7	Jan 4	Thomas Nolan Rosanna Monaghan	Wh	26	first	New York City	Laborer	Ireland	Ireland	Michael Nolan Monaghan	Margaret	Rev P O'Beirne	7		
8	Jan 4	John E Webster Phebe A Luce	Wh	23	first	Roxbury	Gilder	New York City	Canada	Thomas Webster Hiram Luce	Susan Ruth	W H Ryder	8		

John was a sergeant in the Civil War (there could be more information here about the parents of John and Richard):

John E Webster

in the U.S., Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861-1865

✓ Saved to: Webster, John E in tree "Haddleton / Walker Family Tree" Remove

Detail
Source

Name: John E Webster

Enlistment Age: 28

Birth Date: abt 1834

Enlistment Date: 25 Aug 1862

Enlistment Rank: Sergeant

Muster Date: 12 Sep 1862

Muster Place: Massachusetts

Muster Company: D

Muster Regiment: 43rd Infantry

Muster Regiment Type: Infantry

Muster Information: Enlisted

Muster Out Date: 30 Jul 1863

Muster Out Place: Readville, Massachusetts

Muster Out Information: Mustered Out

Side of War: Union

Survived War?: Yes

Residence Place: Dedham, Massachusetts

Occupation: Gilder

Title: Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors and Marines in the Civil War

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In February, 1864, John and his wife were living in Dedham, Massachusetts when tragedy struck. Three of their young children died within a single week, Benjamin on 5 Feb, John on 11 Feb, and Leula on 12 Feb.

29	February 27	George Thomas	male	single			Leung River	Readville					
30	28	Thomas Smith	colored	single	22								
31	25	Charles A. Allen		married			Typhoid Fever		Soldier				
32	25	Benjamin M. Webster	male	single	4	7	Scarlet Fever	Milton St		Rifle Co. 4	John E. Webster	New York	Camden, N.J.
33	18	Wm. M. Whittington	male	married	39		Typhoid Fever	Readville	Soldier		Belmont	Thomas & Dana Montgomery	Belmont, Belmont
34	11	John E. Webster	male	single	1	8	Scarlet Fever	Milton St			Dedham	John E. Webster	New York
35	11	James H. D. Paul	male	single	18	1	Scarlet Fever	Church St			Needford	James & Esther G. Paul	England
36	12	Leula B. Webster	female	single	3	7		Milton St		Charleston	John E. Webster	New York	Camden, N.J.
37	12	Leula B. Webster	female	single	3	7		Milton St					

In 1865, John and Phebe were living in Norton, Massachusetts, with their 2-year old son, Irving E. Webster (about whom I find no subsequent information):

John E. Webster	31	M	N.Y.	M	Gilder		
Phebe A.	21	F	Me	"	"		
Irving E.	2	M	Mass	S	"		

In the 1880 U.S. census, John and Phebe were in Iowa, where John became a farmer. Note that he reports that his parents were born in England. If that's true (and it may or may not be true), then the connection to the Webster family of Maine (suggested by DNA matches) doesn't come through these Websters and instead may come through Richard E. Webster's first wife, who (though a Leighton or something else) could easily have been a Webster descendant.

14	14	Webster John E.	M 47	at school															
14		" Phebe A.	F 42	at school	Farmer														
15	15	Webster Richard	M 20	at school	Keeping house														

John died no later than 22 Aug. 1889, when his widow, Phebe, applied for a military pension (there could be more information here about the parents of John and Richard).

NAME OF SOLDIER: Webster, John E.				
NAME OF DEPENDENT: Widow, Webster, Phebe A. Minor,				
SERVICE: 2 43 Mass Inf.				
DATE OF FILING.	CLASS.	APPLICATION NO.	CERTIFICATE NO.	STATE FROM WHICH FILED.
1889 Aug 22	Invalid, Widow, Minor,	402,922	267,836	Iowa
ATTORNEY:				
REMARKS:				

This is all I have found to date. Thoughts and suggestions are welcome! I am on the verge of hiring a professional genealogist.

FBH