

DATE: 26 March 2017

REPORT TO: Cuz & Lori Burgess

RESEARCH GOAL: Determine when and where the father of Robert Manuel Burgess Jr. was born in order to complete an application for a U.S. passport.

RESTRICTIONS OR LIMITATIONS: Limited to online resources and ten hours of research and reporting.

RESOURCES USED:

- *AmericanAncestors.org*. <https://www.americanancestors.org>.
- *Ancestry.com Wiki*. <http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/>.
- *AncestryLibrary*. <http://ancestrylibrary.com>.
- *Census.gov* <https://www.census.gov>.
- *FamilySearch*. <https://familysearch.org>.
- *Find A Grave*. <https://findagrave.com>.
- *GenealogyBank*. <https://www.genealogybank.com>.

BACKGROUND:

Robert Manuel “Cuz” Burgess Jr. was born [REDACTED].¹ His father, Robert Manuel Burgess Sr., was born about 1928, possibly in Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts, and died about January 1996 in Wrentham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts. He served in the United States Navy during the Korean War.² Robert Jr.’s mother was Rita M. Dion.³ The father of Robert Manuel Burgess Sr. was Manuel Burgess.⁴

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS:

An obituary for Robert Burgess Sr. indicates that he was born about 1928 in Providence, Rhode Island, and died 19 January 1996. Among other relatives, it identifies a son, Robert Jr.; a brother, Frederick Burgess; and a sister, Ann Morris.⁵ The birth and death date, as well as place of death, are consistent with the information provided by his son.

The obituary names his wife as Bernadette, not Rita.⁶ However, a 1963 city directory shows Robert M. and Rita M. Burgess living together in Bristol County, Massachusetts.⁷ This could suggest that Robert Sr. was first married to Rita, and then, either due to divorce or her death, remarried to Bernadette.

¹ Lori Burgess ([REDACTED], Phillips, Maine), interview by author, date unknown; notes privately held by author. Lori is Robert Jr.’s wife.

² Robert Manuel Burgess, Jr. ([REDACTED], Phillips, Maine), telephone interview by author, 25 March 2017; notes privately held by author.

³ Lori Burgess, interview.

⁴ Lori Burgess to author, voicemail, 25 March 2017; privately held by author.

⁵ “Robert M. ‘Cuz’ Burgess,” obituary, *Providence (Rhode Island) Journal*, 20 January 1996, page unspecified; database, *GenealogyBank* (<https://www.genealogybank.com> : accessed 25 March 2017), Recent Obituaries > Rhode Island > Providence > Providence Journal.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Polk’s Attleboro (Bristol County, Mass.) City Directory 1963* (Boston: R. L. Polk & Co., 1963), 78; “U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995,” database with digital images, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2469> : accessed 25 March 2017), Massachusetts > Attleboro > 1963 > Attleboro, Massachusetts, City Directory, 1963 > image 230 of 1054.

A gravestone for Robert Sr. in Wrentham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts, states that he was born 7 December 1927, and died 19 January 1996. It also names his wife, Bernadette.⁸ Again, the birth and death date are consistent with the information provided by Robert Jr.

The abovementioned records help to assemble a picture of Robert Sr.'s life. He was born 7 December 1927 in Providence to parents who had two other children, Frederick and Ann. The federal census taken in 1930 lists Robert Burgess, born about 1928 in Rhode Island, living with Manuel and Mary Burgess at 154 Quarry Street in East Providence.⁹ Robert Jr.'s statement that his grandfather was named Manuel suggests that this census record does refer to Robert Sr. Further evidence is found in the Rhode Island state census for 1935. Fredrick Burgess and Ann H. Burgess were enumerated at 154 Quarry Street, in addition to Manuel, Mary, and Robert.¹⁰ This aligns with the siblings named in Robert Sr.'s obituary. Additionally, when the 1940 federal census was taken, Robert, Fredrick, and Ann H. were living with Manuel and Mary in Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts.¹¹ A unique attribute of the 1940 census was that enumerators were instructed to indicate the respondent for each household—that is, the informant who provided details on each family member. This was done by marking an 'X' enclosed in a circle next to his or her name.¹² In the Burgess family's case, Manuel gave the information. This distinction is important, because Manuel was very likely an eyewitness to the births of his children. Even if he was not present due to extenuating circumstances, he would be no less likely to recall the specific day on which a birth occurred. Accordingly, his account of the date and place of Robert Sr.'s birth—about 1928 in Rhode Island—is primary information providing direct evidence.

An index of Social Security applications and claims includes Robert Manuel Burgess, the son of Manuel Burgess and Mary E. Queen. He was born 7 December 1927 in *East Providence*.¹³ This conflicts with Robert Sr.'s obituary, which stated he was born in Providence. In 1927, East Providence was a separate town, independent of the City of Providence.¹⁴ It's possible that a family member providing information

⁸ Wrentham Center Cemetery (Wrentham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts), grave marker for Robert M. Burgess (1927–1996) and Bernadette M. Burgess Coulombe (1938–?); digital image, *Find A Grave* (<https://findagrave.com> : accessed 25 March 2017), memorial no. 98064751, uploaded by user “Susan Connelly.”

⁹ 1930 U.S. census, Providence County, Rhode Island, population schedule, East Providence Town, folio 225 *verso* (stamped), ED 4-125, sheet 28B (penned), dwelling 429, family 629, line 84, Robert Burgess; “1930 United States Federal Census,” database with digital images, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=6224> : accessed 25 March 2017), Rhode Island > Providence > East Providence > District 0215 > image 56 of 62.

¹⁰ 1935 Rhode Island census, (card file, n.d., Rhode Island State Archives, Providence), East Providence, alphabetical entry for Fredrick Burgess, born 15 Nov. 1931; “Rhode Island State Census, 1935,” database with digital images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1529126> : accessed 25 March 2017), East Providence: Abajian–Clyley > image 3903 of 5581; citing FHL microfilm 1,711,365. See also *ibid.*, Ann H. Burgess, born 18 Dec. 1932. See also *ibid.*, Manuel Burgess, born 9 July 1907. See also *ibid.*, Mary Burgess, born 7 July 1907. See also *ibid.*, Robert Burgess, born 7 Dec. 1927.

¹¹ 1940 U.S. census, Bristol County, Massachusetts, population schedule, Rehoboth Town, folio 1128 *recto* (stamped), ED 3-87, sheet 6A (penned), household 123, line 23, Robert M. Burgess; “1940 United States Federal Census,” database with digital images, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2442> : accessed 25 March 2017), Massachusetts > Bristol > Rehoboth > 3-87 > image 11 of 26.

¹² Bureau of the Census, “Identification of Persons Furnishing Information,” *Instructions to Enumerators* (Washington, D.C.: n.p., 1940), 42; digital images, *Census.gov* (<https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1940instructions.pdf> : accessed 26 March 2017), History > Through the Decades > Census Instructions > 1940 Instructions.

¹³ “U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007,” database, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=60901> : accessed 25 March 2017), entry for Robert Manuel Burgess, SSN 039181034.

¹⁴ “East Providence, Rhode Island,” *Ancestry.com Wiki* (http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/index.php?title=East_Providence,_Rhode_Island : accessed 26 March 2017).

for the obituary was not aware of this distinction. An index of Providence births does not include a Robert Burgess born in 1927,¹⁵ which suggests that he was indeed born in East Providence.

In summary, Robert Sr.'s obituary provides information about his siblings, which in turn can be used to identify his parents. Doing so confirms that the Social Security index, which identifies his parents and a specific birthplace, refer to the same individual. Further research resolves a conflict between the obituary and index.

Robert Manuel Burgess Sr., was likely born 7 December 1927 in East Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island.

ITEMIZED RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Obituary

Robert M. Burgess was born about 1928 in Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island, to Manuel and Mary E. "Hope" Burgess. He married Bernadette M. (Coulombe) Burgess, and lived in Wrentham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts. He died 19 January 1996 at 391 Shear Street in Wrentham. His obituary identifies eight children:

- Joan M. Humes, of Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts;
- Jacqueline Burgess-Conlon, also of Rehoboth;
- Susan Glennon, of North Attleborough, Bristol County;
- Bobbi-Ann Hooper, of Hull, Plymouth County, Massachusetts;
- Darlene Lawrence, of Bellingham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts;
- Bernadette Martino, of Foxboro, Norfolk County;
- Robert M. Burgess Jr., of Plainville, Norfolk County; and
- Jackie Judson, who predeceased him.¹⁶

Gravestone

Robert M. Burgess was born 7 December 1927 and died 19 January 1996. His wife, Bernadette M. Burgess Coulombe, was born [3] June 1938.¹⁷

Census Records

In 1930 Robert Burgess, born about 1928 in Rhode Island, was living in the household of his parents, Manuel and Mary Burgess. Manuel, a rubber stripper, was born about 1908 in Massachusetts. His father was born in the Azores, Portugal, and his mother in South America. Manuel owned their home, valued at 3,200 dollars, located at 154 Quarry Street in East Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island. Mary was born about 1907 in Rhode Island. Her father was born in the United States, and her mother in Connecticut. Manuel and Mary were married about 1927.¹⁸

In 1935 Robert Burgess, born 7 December 1927 in Rhode Island, was living at 154 Quarry Street in East Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island. He was in the second grade at Sacred Heart Parish school.¹⁹ The following individuals were living at the same address:

¹⁵ New England Historic Genealogical Society, "Providence, RI: Alphabetical Index of Births, Marriages and Deaths, 1636–1930," database, *AmericanAncestors.org* (<https://www.americanancestors.org/DB11/t/0> : accessed 26 March 2017), query for Burgess, 1927; citing *Alphabetical Index of the Births, Marriages and Deaths Recorded in Providence* (Providence: Sidney S. Rider, n.d.), vol. 20.

¹⁶ "Robert M. 'Cuz' Burgess," obituary.

¹⁷ Wrentham Center Cemetery (Wrentham, Mass.), grave marker for Robert M. Burgess and Bernadette M. Burgess Coulombe.

¹⁸ 1930 U.S. census, Providence Co., R.I., pop. sch., East Providence Town, folio 225 verso (stamped), ED 4-125, sheet 28B (penned), dwell. 429, fam. 629, line 84, Robert Burgess.

¹⁹ 1935 R.I. census, East Providence, alphabetical entry for Robert Burgess, born 7 Dec. 1927.

- Manuel Burgess, a rubber stripper, born 9 July 1907 in Massachusetts;²⁰
- Mary Burgess, born 7 July 1907 in Rhode Island;²¹
- Fredrick Burgess, born 15 November 1931 in Rhode Island;²² and
- Ann H. Burgess, born 18 December 1932 in Rhode Island.²³

In 1940 Robert M. Burgess, born about 1928 in Rhode Island, was living in the household of his parents, Manuel G. and Mary Elizabeth Burgess. Manuel, a rubber worker, was born about 1908 in Massachusetts. Manuel owned their home, valued at 2,000, on Water Street in Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts. Mary Elizabeth was born about 1908 in Rhode Island. Two other children were living in the household, both born in Rhode Island: Fredrick, born about 1932, and Ann H., born about 1931. Manuel provided the family's details to the census enumerator.²⁴

Social Security Records

Robert Manuel Burgess was born 7 December 1927 in East Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island, to Manuel Burgess and Mary E. Queen. He was issued Social Security number 039-18-1034, and died 19 January 1996.²⁵

Robert Burgess was born 7 December 1927, and was issued Social Security number 039-18-1034. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy 16 May 1945, and was released 11 August 1946. He died 19 January 1996.²⁶

Robert M. Burgess was born 7 December 1927, and was issued Social Security number 039-18-1034 in Rhode Island before 1951. When died 19 January 1996, his last residence was in Wrentham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts.²⁷

Miscellaneous

In 1963, Robert M. Burgess, a cement finisher in Boston, and his wife Rita M. were living at 103 Commonwealth Avenue in Attleboro Falls, North Attleborough, Bristol County, Massachusetts.²⁸

In 1993 Robert M. Burgess, born 7 December 1927, lived at 391 Shears Street, Wrentham, Norfolk County, Massachusetts.²⁹

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

- Obtain birth record for Robert Manuel Burgess, Sr. from East Providence City Clerk's Office.³⁰

²⁰ *Ibid.*, alphabetical entry for Manuel Burgess, born 9 July 1907.

²¹ *Ibid.*, alphabetical entry for Mary Burgess, born 7 July 1907.

²² *Ibid.*, alphabetical entry for Fredrick Burgess, born 15 Nov. 1931.

²³ *Ibid.*, alphabetical entry for Ann H. Burgess, born 18 Dec. 1932.

²⁴ 1940 U.S. census, Bristol Co., Mass., pop. sch., Rehoboth Town, folio 1128 *recto* (stamped), ED 3-87, sheet 6A (penned), household 123, line 23, Robert M. Burgess.

²⁵ "U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007," database, *AncestryLibrary*, entry for Robert Manuel Burgess, SSN 039181034.

²⁶ "U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850–2010," database, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2441> : accessed 25 March 2017), entry for Robert Burgess, SSN 039181034.

²⁷ "U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935–2014," database, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693> : accessed 25 March 2017), entry for Robert M. Burgess, SSN 039-18-1034.

²⁸ *Polk's Attleboro City Directory 1963*, 78.

²⁹ "U.S. Public Records Index, 1950–1993, Volume 1," database, *AncestryLibrary* (<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1788> : accessed 25 March 2017), entry for Robert M. Burgess, born 7 Dec. 1927.

³⁰ See "Vital Records Information," *City of East Providence, Rhode Island* (<http://www.eastprovidence.com> : accessed 10 May 2017), Departments > City Clerk > Vital Records Information.

DOCUMENT IMAGES:

Image 1 — Obituary of Robert M. Burgess Sr.³¹

North Attleboro ROBERT M. "CUZ" BURGESS

ROBERT M. "CUZ" BURGESS, 68, of 391 Shear St., Wrentham, Mass., died yesterday at home. He was the husband of Bernadette M. (Coulombe) Burgess.

Born in Providence, a son of Manuel Burgess and the late Mary E. "Hope" Burgess, he had lived in Wrentham for many years. He was the stepson of Jeanne Burgess of Florida.

Besides his wife, father and stepmother, he leaves six daughters, Joan M. Humes and Jacqueline Burgess-Conlon, both of Rehoboth, Mass., Susan Glennon of North Attleboro, Mass., Bobbi-Ann Hooper of Hull, Mass., Darlene Lawrence of Bellingham, Mass., Bernadette Martino of Foxboro, Mass.; a son, Robert M. Burgess Jr. of Plainville, Mass.; a brother Frederick Burgess of Rehoboth, Mass.; a sister, Ann Morris of North Kingstown; and 14 grandchildren. He was the father of the late Jackie Judson.

The funeral will be held Monday at 8 a.m. from the James H. Delaney & Son Funeral Home, 48 Common St., Walpole, Mass., with a Mass of Christian Burial at 9 at St. Mary Church, Wrentham.

PROVIDENCE
Journal

Providence Journal (RI) - Saturday, January 20, 1996

³¹ "Robert M. 'Cuz' Burgess," obituary.

Image 2 — Robert Burgess Gravestone³²



Image 3 — Burgess Family, 1930 U.S. Census³³

Burgess, Manuel	Head	0	\$3200	R	No	M	W	22	M	19	No	Yes	Massachusetts
— Mary	wife-H				V	F	W	23	M	20	No	Yes	Rhode Island
— Robert	Son				V	M	W	2 3/4	S		No		Rhode Island

³² Wrentham Center Cemetery (Wrentham, Mass.), grave marker for Robert M. Burgess and Bernadette M. Burgess Coulombe.

³³ 1930 U.S. census, Providence Co., R.I., pop. sch., East Providence Town, folio 225 verso (stamped), ED 4-125, sheet 28B (penned), dwell. 429, fam. 629.

Image 4 — Robert Burgess, 1935 R.I. Census³⁴

+ NAME Burgess Robert		STREET ADDRESS 154 Quarry St.	
1 CENSUS TRACT 266	12 CITIZENSHIP U.S. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 NAT. <input type="checkbox"/> 2 PA. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 AL. <input type="checkbox"/> 4	13 USUAL OCCUPATION	
2 CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE East Prov.	13 IF AT SCHOOL - NAME OF SCHOOL Sacred Heart Par. 1	21 INDUSTRY	
3 TOWNSHIP East Prov	14 GRADE 2	22 CLASS OF WORKER E. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 S.E. <input type="checkbox"/> 4	
4 COUNTY Providence	15 ANY PHYSICAL DISABILITY BL <input type="checkbox"/> 1 TB <input type="checkbox"/> 4 EP <input type="checkbox"/> 7 DF <input type="checkbox"/> 2 HTD <input type="checkbox"/> 5 OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> 8 MEN <input type="checkbox"/> 3 CRP <input type="checkbox"/> 6	23 INDUSTRY	
5 IF HEAD OF FAMILY - NO. IN FAMILY		24 W. <input type="checkbox"/> 1 N.P. <input type="checkbox"/> 2 E. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 S.E. <input type="checkbox"/> 4 CLASS OF WORKER	
6 SEX MALE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 FEMALE <input type="checkbox"/> 2	16 EVER HAD MEAS. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 S. FVR <input type="checkbox"/> 2 DIPT. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 SCHICK TEST <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4	25 IF NOT AT WORK - WHY NOT 1 <input type="checkbox"/> AT WORK 4 <input type="checkbox"/> PART TIME 2 <input type="checkbox"/> IND. DISP. 5 <input type="checkbox"/> NO WORK 3 <input type="checkbox"/> SICK 6 <input type="checkbox"/> PHYS. INCAP. 7 <input type="checkbox"/> RELIEF PROJECT	
7 COLOR OR RACE WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> 2 OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> 3	17 USUALLY WORK AT GAINFUL OCCUPATION YES <input type="checkbox"/> 1 NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	26 IF NOT AT WORK - HOW MANY MONTHS IDLE	
8 COUNTRY OF BIRTH 01 R.I.	18 IF NOW IS HE SEEKING WORK YES <input type="checkbox"/> 1 NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	27 NO. MONTHS EMPLOYED IN 1935	
9 DATE OF BIRTH Dec. 7 1927			
10 MARITAL STATUS MD. <input type="checkbox"/> 1 S. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 WD. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 DIV. <input type="checkbox"/> 4			
11 READ OR WRITE ENGLISH YES <input type="checkbox"/> 1 NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2			
I.B.M. 130419 FORM P.C. 1 003		5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62	

Image 5 — Burgess Family, 1940 U.S. Census³⁵

Burgess Manual H	head	0	M	W	32	7	10	8	6	Massachusetts
Wong Elizabeth	wife	1	F	W	32	7	10	5	8	Rhode Island
Robert M	son	2	M	W	12	5	10	5	5	Rhode Island
Frank	son	2	M	W	5	5	10	3	3	Rhode Island
Ann M	daughter	2	F	W	7	8	10	2	2	Rhode Island

³⁴ 1935 R.I. census, East Providence, alphabetical entry for Robert Burgess, born 7 Dec. 1927.

³⁵ 1940 U.S. census, Bristol Co., Mass., pop. sch., Rehoboth Town, folio 1128 *recto* (stamped), ED 3-87, sheet 6A (penned), household 123.