

# **STAT 210 Parsons' Paper Company Workers Database**

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## **Introduction**

Mining the History of Holyoke (STAT210) is a class at Amherst College with a mission statement of curating and publishing a piece of Holyoke's history and making it accessible to the town's people. One way our class has begun this journey is by analyzing and curating an old payroll registry found in an attic in Holyoke and now available in the archives of the Holyoke Public Library History Room. This register tracked pay for employees who worked at the Parsons Paper Mill in Holyoke, Massachusetts (the "Paper City") in the 1860s.

It has been remarkable to track down so much history as each page of this nearly 400 page registry has upwards of 30 employees, and each name has its own story worth telling. In the registry, we can see the name, number of days worked, their wages, whether or not the worker had rent or board due, the final balance owed, and signature (see Figure 1). Click [here](#) for an interactive display of the register.

## **Workers' Summary**

We took on the task of finding more information about some of the employees at the paper mill using the genealogical database Ancestry.com. On page 259, we found two women with

the same last name (see Figure 2) which was common back then and decided to search for them on Ancestry.com. Their names were Lucy and E.A. Allen.

When we searched for Lucy, we found that E.A. stood for Eliza Ann Allen—they were sisters! (see Figure 2). Lucy was born in Massachusetts in 1842 and Eliza Ann was her older sister born in 1841. They lived in dwelling 42. Their father's name was Job Allen and their mother was Anna Allen. Job was born in England and moved to the United States sometime before 1841. Like his daughters, he too worked at the Parsons Paper Company. We found record of him first on page 3. (see Figure 3). Anna Allen stayed at home. This was a common life for a working-class family in Holyoke, Massachusetts in the 1860s.

From what we were able to gather, Eliza and Lucy were finishers meaning they helped with finalizing the paper making process. We made this assumption when we found Lucy's name on Page 2 under the label "Finishers." See (Figure 4). Eliza and Lucy were paid not by the number of hours or days they worked but rather the number of reams they finished. We can see on page 2 that Lucy finished 756 reams of paper for the month of January in 1861. Eliza's name first appeared in 1862 on page 34 right below her sister's name, one year after her sister first started working. (see Figure 5). Coincidentally, they were one year apart in age. Perhaps their father Job did not want his daughters to work until they were 20 years of age.

It seemed that the Allen family had trouble finding a permanent residence as we found a number of addresses reported across different resources. In 1869, the Holyoke city directory shows that the Allen family lived on Dwight Street. Ancestry.com showed that the Allen family lived in dwelling 42 with no street name reported in 1870. (see Figure 6). We were able to follow Lucy's places of residence in several years after 1870 until her death on May 11, 1893 in Holyoke, MA. See Figure 7 for Lucy's places of residence.

Following the inspection of the payroll pages (pg 1-319) of the PPP register, we observe that Lucy, Eliza, and Job all worked throughout the decade. It is reasonable to presume that the Allen daughter were unlikely to be pursuing education on this time. Lucy also appears to have continued working in the PPC mill until her death. It is difficult to determine if the Allen family's literacy due to inconsistencies in signatures. Some signatures have "X" in them while others do not, and the handwriting is different across the decade suggesting they multiple people could have been signing for them.

Additionally, we were able to find records on Joseph Clark Parsons; the founder of the Parsons Paper Company (see Figure 8). We chose to explore his ancestry and observe how it would differ to those of his employees.

Parsons was born on February 6, 1814, in Northampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts to Lydia and Justice Parsons. Parsons was a local businessman who became very successful after founding his mill. He married Lucretia Hoyt Parsons and had three daughters; Catherine Turner Taft, Fannie Colton Parsons, and Elizabeth Hoyt Parsons. We found that Parsons lived in house 22 of dwelling 165 on Suffolk street which was quite close to his Mill. This was surprising because we expected him to live in the upper-class district because wealthier people lived in hills above sea level.

If we continued our research, we would aim to find descendants of the Parsons Paper Company that are still living today.

## Photo References

*Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum prefixed to our Signatures,  
being in full of all demands up to March 1<sup>st</sup> 1868.*

NAMES.	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
Geo Papillion	22 <sup>1/2</sup>	15 <sup>1/2</sup>	59.07		59.07			March 14	George Papillion
James P. Dow	19 <sup>4/10</sup>	33.69			33.69				James P. Dow
W. J. Lord	24 <sup>2/14</sup>	57.16	725	44.91					Walter J. Lord
Geo A. Day	23 <sup>4/15</sup>	58.75	725	51.50					Geo A. Day
O. E. Wheler	22 <sup>4/14</sup>	51.93	1657	35.36					Oren E. Wheler
A. G. P. Sykes	25 1/6	48.75	1657	27.18					Ade P. Sykes
J. Faull	25 <sup>2/18</sup>	58.75	857	50.18					Horace Faull
Chas Robertson	25 1/6	31.25			31.25				Charles W. Robertson
Chas H. Morgan	25 1/6	21.83			20.83				Charles H. Morgan
Elin Donovan	23 1/6	23.00			23.00				Elin Donovan
Johannah Stack	25 "	25.00			25				John Stack
H. Casy	24 "	24.00			24				H. Casy
Fannie Strong	25 "	25.00			25				Fannie Strong
Geo Whitemore	25 "	25.00	1242	12.58					George Whitemore
Maria Brown					00.00				
Sarah Slater	24 "	24.50	1242	12.08					Sarah Slater
Clara Woodworth	25 <sup>2/3</sup> "	28.75	1242	11.33					Clara Woodworth

Figure 1: This is page 259 of the PPP registry, demonstrating how the name, days worked, wages, whether or not the worker had rent or board due, final balance owed, and signature were recorded

Sarah Campa	22	\$1	18 75
Mary Smith	22	64	22 00
H. Brown.	34 30	48	18 92
John Dowd	4 98 1	49 58	28 68
Lucy Allen	4 12 84	49 44	28 36
M. Brown	4 10 72	44	28 36
Wmgt. Dowd	4 11 29	49 "	28 36
E. A. Allen	4 86	"	13 73
	4 24 62	33	13 73
	4 95	"	12 03
	4 32 7	20 4	12 03
	5 0 3	2	2 0 68
	1 0 3 4	2	2 0 68
	7 9 7	2	1 5 9 4
C. H. Dowd	7 8 8	2	1 5 1 6
Martha Wright	1 1 0 8	2	2 2 1 6
E. Tomlinson	7 0 2	2	1 8 0 4
S. Beanegard	1 5 1 5	2	3 0 1 0
Mary Dowd	3 1 0	2	6 2 0
Mary Holland	5 6 0	2 2	1 4 1 1

Figure 2: Lucy and Eliza Ann Allen entries in the Registry page 259. March 1st, 1868

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum specified to our Signatures. Job Allen being in full of all demands up to February 1 <sup>st</sup> 1861.									
NAMES.	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
J. M. Ordway	20 000	40 00			10 000	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	5 7 7	1861	J. M. Ordway
John Jones	26	52	00	52 00	52 00				John J. Jones
James S. Pease	28 10	13 75			23 75				James S. Pease
Samuel Green	64 2 7	10 25			20 25				Samuel Green
Eliza Allen	27 8	56 00	00	56 00	56 00				Eliza Allen
Patrick Sigan	80 2 7	56 08			39 58				Patrick Sigan
Benjamin Coors	82 7	40 00			40 00				Benjamin Coors
Patrick Grace	11 2 10	11 50			11 50				Patrick Grace
Anthony Game	28 4 90	25 56			25 56	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	5 7 7	1861	Anthony Game
Patrick Sigan	26	28 00			28 00				Patrick Sigan
Otis Pease	26	28 12			28 12				Otis Pease
John Vaughan	26	32 00			32 00				John Vaughan
Michael Ryan	26 7	50 05			50 05				Michael Ryan
James Vaughan	13 2 00	13 00			13 00				James Vaughan
William Kelly	61 2	31 80			31 80				William Kelly
William Holden	26	31 50			31 50				William Holden
John Kelly	19 95	28			28				John Kelly
Barqueet Spangle	36 150	80 00			80 00	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	5 7 7	1861	Barqueet Spangle
Richard Sarge	62 90	29 02			29 02				Richard Sarge
William Terry	50 10	50 00	10 00		20 00				William Terry
James H. Shry	28	12 57	50		57 57				James H. Shry

Figure 3: Job Allen in the Registry page 3, line 5. February 1st, 1861. In this pay period he worked 27 days and received \$31

Mary Melody	20	0	11	00	7.02	4	Julia A. Smith
S. A. Perry	10	0	11	00	11.69	4	Mary Melody
<b>Lucy Allen</b>	Sorties	11	0	07	8.75	4	Ada Bradham
S. A. Cram	7.06	20	15	12	6.87	4	E. M. Perry
Dyma Clegg	6.03	0	00	00	10.12	4	Suey Allen
D. E. Money	3.00	0	00	00	12.06	4	Lucia M. Cram
A. J. Hallworth	6.64	0	00	00	6.12	4	E. M. Perry
	6.64	15	80	00	1.28	4	George Money
					7.50	4	Julia A. Smith
					7.50	4	
					57.859	4	
					57.159	4	

Figure 4: Lucy Allen in the Registry page 2, line 3. January, 1861. In this pay period she worked 24 and received \$15.12

Orchardia Donopis	20	00	11	00	10.00	4	Mary A. Murphy
Mary Murphy	16	.99	10	00	8.04	4	Suey Cram
Suey Cram	5	0	3	00	9.57	4	E. M. Perry
Dyma Clegg	15	0	9	37	9.07	4	Eliza A. Allen
Suey Allen	16	0	9	07	10.50	4	Eliza Allen
E. A. Allen	20	0	12	50	15.52	4	W. Jennie Bolton
W. Jennie Bolton	24	0	15	32	12.96	4	Lucy Campion
Suey Campion	18	1	12	96	105.570	4	
					6.82	Jan 15 <sup>th</sup>	E. M. Perry
					6.38	4	Eliza A. Allen
					7.22	4	Eliza Allen
					9.84	4	Suey Cram
					7.74	4	Suey Clegg
					20.00	4	Mary Money
					10.524	4	Louise Hatch
					17.28	4	A. R. Hart
					15.00	4	E. M. Perry
					6.80	4	Ada Bradham
					107.62		
					10.50		
					29.12	Jan 16 <sup>th</sup>	E. M. Perry
					30.25	4	Sarah E. Hay
					10.50	4	

Figure 5: Lucy and Eliza Ann Allen on page 34 line 5 and 6. January, 1862

Ancestry Library Home Search Message Boards Learning Center Charts and Forms New Collections

### Lucy M Allen in the 1870 United States Federal Census

Detail	Source
Name: Lucy M Allen	
Age in 1870: 28	
Birth Date: abt 1842	
Birthplace: Massachusetts	
Dwelling Number: 42	
Home in 1870: Holyoke, Hampden, Massachusetts	
Race: White	
Gender: Female	
Post Office: Holyoke	
Occupation: Works in Paper Mill	
Father of Foreign Birth: Yes	
Mother of Foreign Birth: Yes	
Inferred Father: Job H Allen	
Inferred Mother: Anna Allen	
<b>Household Members (Name)</b>	<b>Age</b>
Job H Allen	64
Anna Allen	48
Eliza Ann Allen	29
<b>Lucy M Allen</b>	<b>28</b>

Figure 6: Lucy Allen's Profile from Ancestry.com providing details on her birth year and family members

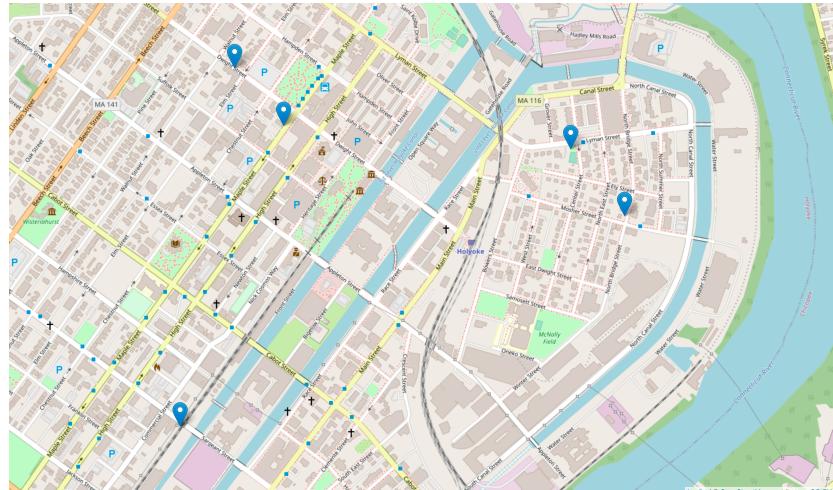


Figure 7: The blue dots shows the 5 residences for Lucy Allen between 1869-91

Print

## Joseph Clark Parsons

in the U.S., Find a Grave™ Index, 1600s-Current



Want to get involved? [Click here.](#)

Detail	Source
Name:	Joseph Clark Parsons
Gender:	Male
Birth Date:	6 Feb 1814
Birth Place:	Northampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, United States of America
Death Date:	12 Mar 1886
Death Place:	Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts, United States of America
Cemetery:	Forestdale Cemetery
Burial or Cremation Place:	Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts, United States of America
Has Bio?:	N
Father:	<a href="#">Justice Parsons</a>
Mother:	<a href="#">Lydia Parsons</a>
Spouse:	<a href="#">Lucretia Hoyt Parsons</a>
Children:	Catherine Turner Taft Fannie Colton Parsons Elizabeth Hoyt Prescott
URL:	<a href="https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/137384548/joseph-clark-parsons">https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/137384548/joseph-clark-parsons</a>

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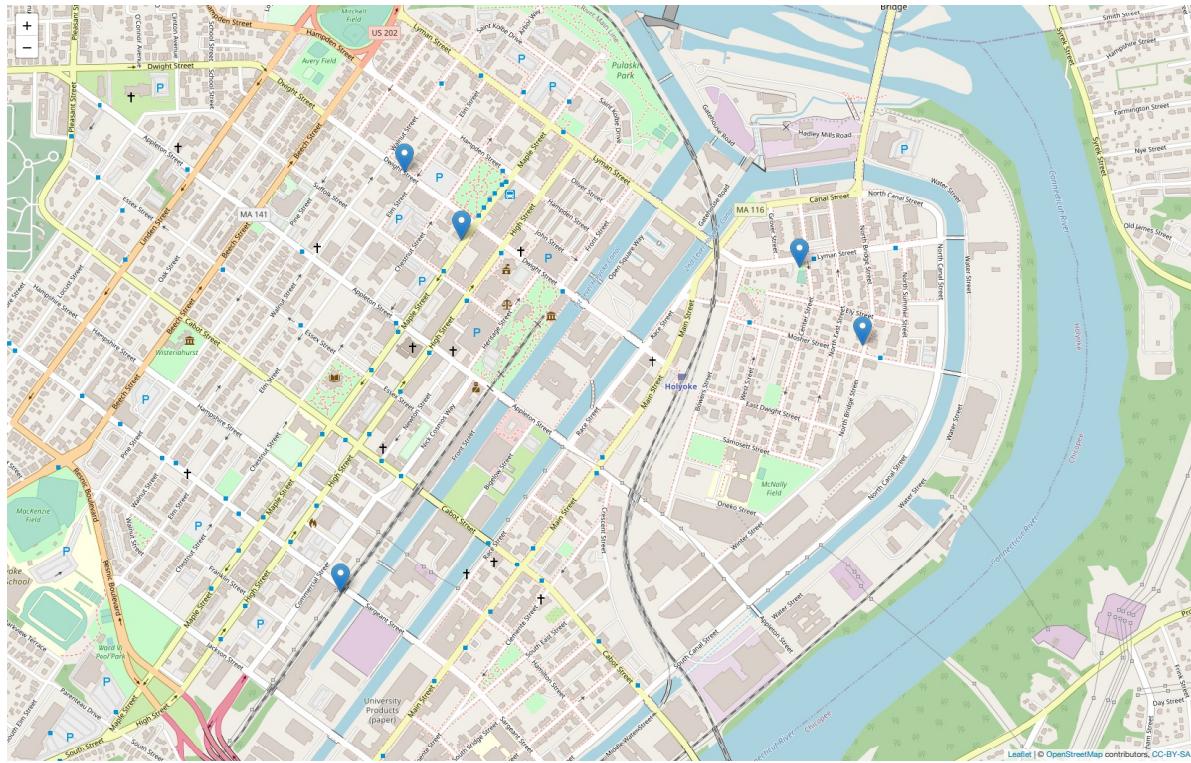
 **Find a GRAVE**

Provided in association with Find a Grave

**Suggested Records** ⓘ

	North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000 Joseph Clark Parsons
	Geneanet Community Trees Index Joseph Clark Parsons

Figure 8: Joseph C. Parsons' Profile (1814-1886)



## Database

Here is the database we created. It displays personal information about Parson's Paper employees. We can find who they are, when they were born, their address, family members, and place of origin. Naturally, with data this old, we could not find each and every piece of information for all of the employees. This is just a start that will hopefully fuel other individuals to contribute to this document. If we had extended time and resources, we would search up more employees on Ancestry.com and try and find their living descendants today. For this project, we were only able to access basic information on Ancestry.com. It would be great to access the full database and find more documentation of the employees as each additional document provides more information about someone's life that we might not have had before. The table shown below shows some of the columns of the data set. More information is viewable in the full spreadsheet. This is the aggregated info for some of the workers who worked in Parsons' paper in the 1860s:

Table 1: Employee Database

Last Name	Birthday	Death Day	Spouse	Birthplace
Strick	1859	N/A	N/A	Chicopee, Mass
Parsons	2/6/1814	3/12/1886	Lucretia Hoyt Parsons	Northampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts
Kelly	1834	N/A	Catherine Kelly	Ireland
Casey	1843	N/A	Ann Casey	Ireland
Kelley	1840	N/A	Hanna Kelley	Ireland
Hollom	1835	N/A	Ann Hollom	Ireland
Corner	1849	N/A	Anna Corner	Ireland
Mitchell	1852	N/A	N/A	MA
Allen	1842	N/A	N/A	MA
Allen	1841	N/A	N/A	MA
Allen	1806	N/A	Anna Ellen	England
William	1849	12/12/1912	Magaret Kelly	Ireland
Martin	2/7/1838	11/11/1907	Barbara F. Kelly	Crusheen, County Clare, Ireland
James	4/4/1852	8/12/1915	Mary O'Brien	Monson, Hampden, Massachusetts, USA
Thos	1856	N/A	N/A	N/A
Phillip	1843	10/22/1902	Ann Gilday	Ireland
John	1843	2/23/1907	Octavia Bordeaux Beaudry	Canada
Frank	N/A	1853	Lillian Short	Massachusetts
John	1836	11/27/1922	Mary Kelliher	Ireland
William	1843	1930	Florence Nightingale Growden	Maryhill, Lanarkshire, Scotland
Chester	1819	4/18/1892	Sarah Cooley	Easthampton, Hampshire, Massachusetts, USA
Martin	6/24/1827	9/2/1903	Emily Louisa Moore	Petersham, Worcester County, Massachusetts, United States

## Technical Appendix

The goal of this technical appendix is to provide a repeatable procedure of our process of collecting the information from Ancestry.com so that other passionate historians can build off our work. First, we accessed the Amherst College Library account for Ancestry.com.

The screenshot shows the Amherst College Library website. At the top, there is a dark purple header with the text "Amherst College Library". Below the header is a light gray navigation bar with links to "Library Home", "Services & Requests", "Find Resources", "About the Library", "Archives & Special Collections", and "Hours & Contact". Underneath the navigation bar, the URL "Library / Research Guides / American Studies Research Guide / Find Primary Sources" is visible. The main content area is titled "American Studies Research Guide". On the left, there is a sidebar with various research guides: "Home", "Find Background Information", "Find Articles", "Find Books", "Find Media", "Find News Sources", "Find Primary Sources" (which is highlighted in dark blue), "Primary Sources", "Tip: What are primary sources?", "Writing and Citing", and "Find Related Guides". Below the sidebar, there is a section titled "Research Librarian". The right side of the page contains a detailed description of the "Find Primary Sources" collection, listing four specific databases: "North American Indian Thought and Culture", "Ancestry Library Edition", "Archives of Sexuality & Gender", and "Sixties: Primary Documents and Personal Narratives 1960-1974".

Figure 9: Once on the Amherst website, we clicked the link to Ancestry Library Edition

The link to Amherst's access to ancestry website is [here](#).

Here is how the ancestry website looks at a first glance:

The screenshot shows the Ancestry.com search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to "Home", "Search", "Message Boards", "Learning Center", "Charts and Forms", and "New Collections". To the right of the navigation bar, it says "AMHERST COLLEGE". The main search area has fields for "First & Middle Name(s)" and "Last Name", and a "Birth Year" dropdown menu. Below these fields is a map of the United States with state names and major cities. To the right of the map, there is a sidebar titled "Explore by collection" with categories like "Birth, marriage & death", "Census & voter lists", "Immigration & travel", and "Schools, directories & church histories". Each category has a list of specific collections underneath it.

Figure 10: Ancestry.com 'search' screen

By searching for a name and a place, (Holyoke, Hampden, Massachusetts), we were able to find census information from the 1800s and track down paper mill workers.

The are a number of names that appear in first search. We used educated guesses to select the most appropriate person looking at dates of birth and death, places lived, and any other information that might've given us a clue.

The screenshot shows the Ancestry.com library interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Home, Search, Message Boards, Learning Center, Charts and Forms, New Collections, and AMHERST COLLEGE. The main title is "All results for joseph Clark Parsons". On the left, the search bar shows "joseph Clark Parsons Born: 1814 Any: Holyoke, Hampden, M...". Below the search bar are "Broad" and "Exact" filter options, and a "Browse by collection" link. A note says "To get better results, add more information such as Death Info—even a guess will help. Edit your search or learn more." The search results are organized into three columns. The first column contains filters: Census & voter lists (9,000+), Birth, marriage & death (30,000+), Military (10,000+), Immigration & emigration (1,586), Newspapers & periodicals (13), Pictures (6), Stories, memories & histories (283), Maps, atlases & gazetteers (5), Directories & member lists (50,000+), Court, land, wills & financial (7,000+), Dictionaries, encyclopedias & reference (208), and Family trees (70,000+). The second column lists records from the U.S. Find a Grave™ Index, 1600s-Current, 1880 United States Federal Census, and 1870 United States Federal Census. The third column provides detailed information for each record, including Name, Birth date, Death date, and Residence. For example, the first record is Joseph Clark Parsons, born 6 Feb 1814 in Northampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, United States of America, and died 12 Mar 1886 in Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts, United States of America.

Record Type	Name	Birth	Death	Residence
U.S. Find a Grave™ Index, 1600s-Current	Joseph Clark Parsons	6 Feb 1814	12 Mar 1886	Northampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, United States of America
1880 United States Federal Census	Joseph C. Parsons	Abt 1814		Massachusetts
1870 United States Federal Census	Joseph C Parsons	abt 1814		Holyoke, Hampden, Massachusetts, USA

Figure 11: Initial search results

The amount of information we could find on each worker varied from name to name but in general, we were able to find birth year, birthplace, spouse, children, parents, occupation, and address. Here is what Eliza Ann's profile looks like on Ancestry.com. We then compiled these results into this table<sup>1</sup>.

**Eliza Ann Allen**  
in the 1870 United States Federal Census

		Detail	Source
Name:		Eliza Ann Allen	
Age in 1870:		29	
Birth Date:		abt 1841	
Birthplace:		Massachusetts	
Dwelling Number:		42	
Home in 1870:		Holyoke, Hampden, Massachusetts	
Race:		White	
Gender:		Female	
Post Office:		Holyoke	
Occupation:		Works in Paper Mill	
Father of Foreign Birth:		Yes	
Mother of Foreign Birth:		Yes	
Inferred Father:		Job H Allen	
Inferred Mother:		Anna Allen	
Household Members (Name)		Age	
Job H Allen		64	
Anna Allen		48	
Eliza Ann Allen		29	
Lucy M Allen		28	

Figure 12: Eliza Ann Allen's Profile (1841-?)

1870 United States Federal Census for Lucy M Allen										
Massachusetts > Hampden > Holyoke										
13	41	37	Glancy John	57	M	W	Anne Glancy	Contractor	\$34000	4800
14			Bridget	42	F	W	Ropery house		Ireland	111
15			Jamie E	22	M	W	Beth Reber	✓	Mass.	111
16			John S	20	M	W	Teamster	✓	Mass.	111
17			Mary L	11	F	W	Attending School		Mass.	111
18			Madden Henry J	8	F	W	Attending School		New York	111
19			Maurice Margarette	22	F	W	Domestic Servt		Ireland	111
20			Whalen Thomas	26	M	W	Teamster	✓	Ireland	111
21	42	40	Dover Ellen	53	F	W	Ropery house	500	Ireland	111
22			Mary F	27	F	W	Workers Wife		Mass.	111
23			Margaret N	25	F	W	Workers Wife	✓	Mass.	111
24			Jane P	23	M	W	Workers Wife	✓	Mass.	111
25			Lorraine D	21	M	W	Brother	✓	Conn.	111
26	41	40	Aller Job H	64	M	W	Workers Wife	500	England	111
27			Anna	48	F	W	Ropery house		England	111
28			Eliza Ann	29	F	W	Workers Wife		Mass.	111
29			Lucy M	28	F	W	Workers Wife		Mass.	111
30	42	40	Perry William	36	M	W	Workers Wife	350	Ireland	111
31			Catherine	31	F	W	Ropery house		Ireland	111
32			William C W						Mass.	111
33			Joseph J	2	M	W			Mass.	111
34			Maurice Margarette	41	F	W	Workers Wife		Ireland	111
35	43	40	Brown Justin E	30	M	W	Grocer	3500	Maine	111
36			Lorraine B	57	F	W	Ropery house		N.H.	111

Figure 13: Zoomed in Image of the 1870 Census