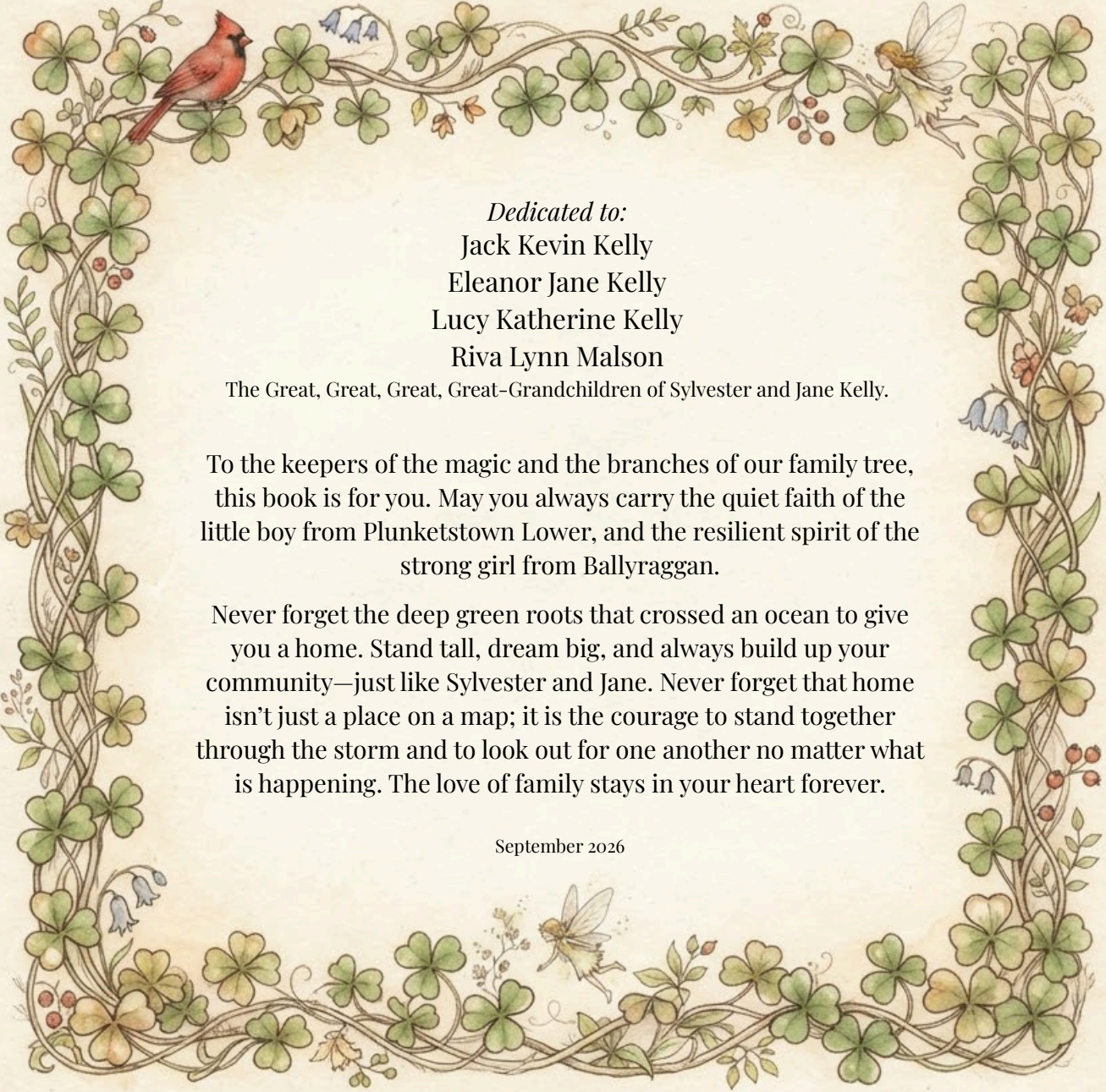


MEET SYLVESTER KELLY & JANE MURPHY

A Legacy of Faith, Family, and Helping Others



Written by Beth Kelly



Dedicated to:
Jack Kevin Kelly
Eleanor Jane Kelly
Lucy Katherine Kelly
Riva Lynn Malson

The Great, Great, Great, Great-Grandchildren of Sylvester and Jane Kelly.

To the keepers of the magic and the branches of our family tree,
this book is for you. May you always carry the quiet faith of the
little boy from Plunketstown Lower, and the resilient spirit of the
strong girl from Ballyraggan.

Never forget the deep green roots that crossed an ocean to give
you a home. Stand tall, dream big, and always build up your
community—just like Sylvester and Jane. Never forget that home
isn't just a place on a map; it is the courage to stand together
through the storm and to look out for one another no matter what
is happening. The love of family stays in your heart forever.

September 2026



Once upon a time, far across the deep blue ocean in a beautiful green country called Ireland, a little boy named Sylvester Kelly was born. He slept soundly in a wooden cradle by the warm stone fireplace.



Can you whisper a quiet hello to baby Sylvester?



Just down the ancient road, a strong little girl named Johanna Murphy
—whom everyone called Jane—was born. She drifted off to sleep
under the bright, cozy sunbeams filtering through the window.

Can you blow a sweet kiss to baby Jane?





They lived in County Kildare, where the rolling hills were bright green and the roads were ancient. Old stone castles stood like gentle giants in the fields.



Can you spot the two old castles hiding in the hills?



Long ago, Ireland was a land of Vikings, kings, and brave warriors! But by the time Sylvester and Jane were born, the battles were over. They grew up peacefully in tiny country neighborhoods just down the road from each other —Sylvester in Plunketstown Lower, and Jane in Ballyraggan.



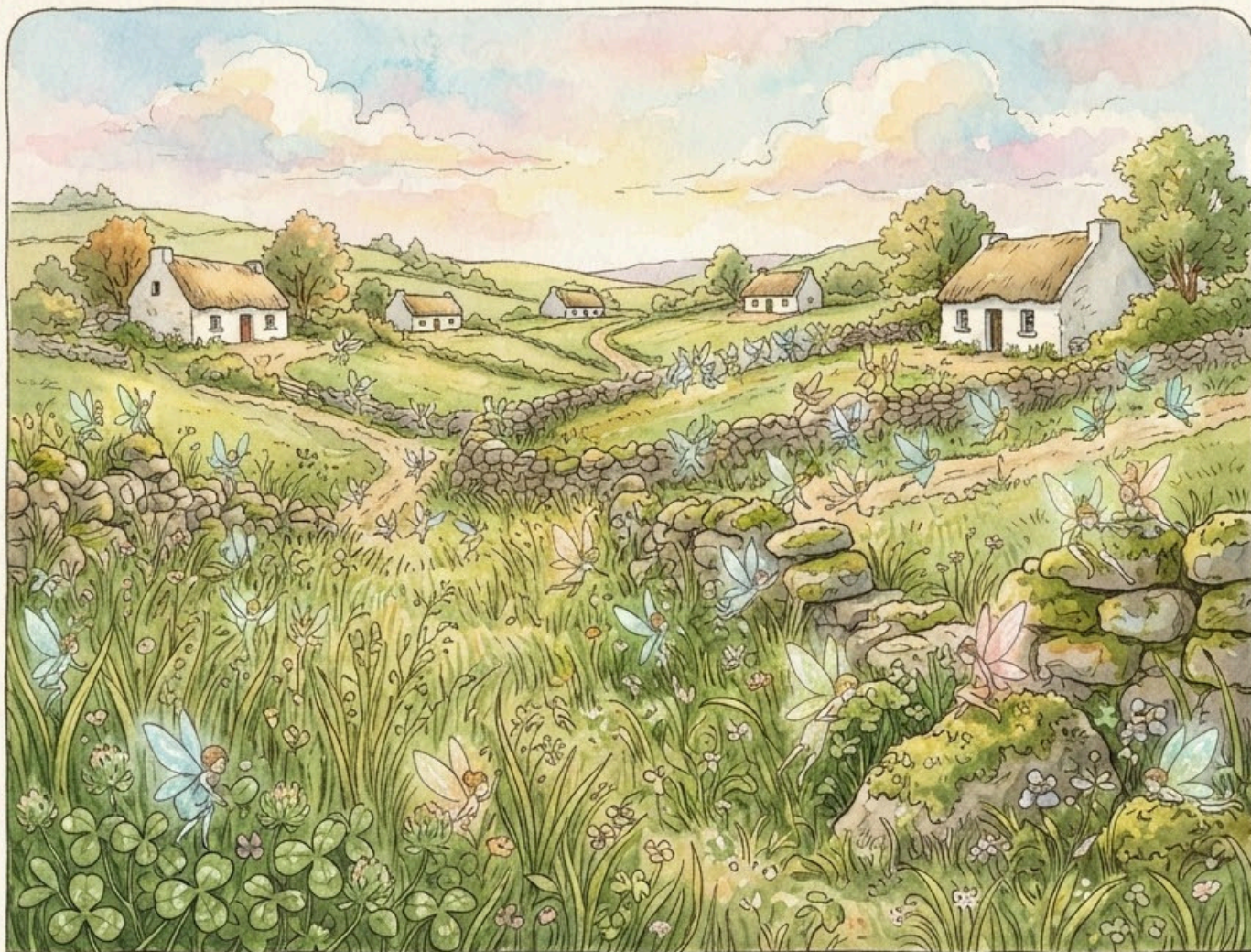
Can you trace the winding road with your finger? Where do you think it goes?



They played under the big Irish sky, surrounded by fields of clover, an old stone church, and tall Celtic crosses that had stood for hundreds of years.



Both Sylvester and Jane grew up in big, bustling families. Their families rented small thatched-roof cottages and farmed the green fields nearby.



To Irish families, the land was everything. It gave them food, a home, and a place to play. Old fairy tales even whispered that the fields were alive with magic.



How many hidden fairies can you count? Let's count them together.



No matter how busy the week was, Sylvester and Jane's families always saved Sundays for God. They walked to the beautiful village church in Castledermot, filling their hearts with quiet prayers and deep faith before a brand-new week began.



Neighbors in Ireland felt like one big family. Sylvester lived right next to his godfather and aunts. Jane lived next door to her sweet grandmother, Catherine. Whenever someone needed help, a neighbor was always there to share what they had.



Life in Ireland was full of hard work, even for kids! Without electricity, they used a warm stone fireplace called a hearth. To keep the fire burning, they collected dark, earthy bricks of turf.



The bricks of turf are stacked like blocks!
Have you ever built a tower out of blocks?



Every morning started with breakfast: potatoes and milk. Then, the chores began! Children weeded the gardens, fed the family pig, and carried heavy buckets of water.



Do you get your water from a stream or a faucet? Imagine carrying a heavy bucket like the boy in the picture



There were no washing machines back then! To wash clothes, families scrubbed them by hand, boiled them in a giant iron cauldron, and laid them out over green bushes to dry in the bright sunshine.



At sunset, the fun began! The turf fire glowed bright as neighbors walked right in to share a supper of potatoes and cabbage. By the cozy firelight, they sang songs, played cards, and told fairy tales until bedtime.



Oh no! Which farm animal is still peeking into the cottage?
What sound does it make?



When Sylvester and Jane were young, something sad happened. A plant sickness called the blight came to Ireland, and the potato crops stopped growing. Because potatoes were what kept everyone fed, these years became known as The Great Hunger.

It was a scary time, and many bellies were empty.



Even in dark times, they looked out for one another. They held onto their faith, shared their last bits of food, and dreamed of a bright adventure across the sea. It was time to make a brave choice.



Sylvester and Jane each packed up their hopes, their memories, and the strong faith they learned in Kildare. They boarded massive ships to cross the wide Atlantic Ocean for America. Sylvester and his brother John left first aboard a ship called the Dreadnaught.
Jane left Ireland a few years later.



Have you ever sailed on a big boat? Look at those giant sails!



Life at sea was a big adventure, but it was very tough. Passengers had to cook their own meals using raw oatmeal, salted meat, and hard crackers called hardtack. Imagine waiting in long lines over a hot stove while the ship rocked on the waves!



After many weeks at sea, they finally saw land. They cheered as their ship sailed right past a circular stone fort called Castle Garden in New York. This was the gateway where helpers welcomed new immigrants, checked their health, and helped them buy train tickets to their new homes.



Look at all the people waving their handkerchiefs! Can you wave your hand to welcome them to America?



Sylvester and Jane followed their cousins and siblings to a bustling new town: Auburn, New York! They were far from home, but they brought the magic of Ireland with them to build a brand-new community.



Can you find the big steam train puffing smoke at the train station?



Did you know that back in Ireland, Sylvester and Jane grew up just two miles apart? But it wasn't until they crossed the deep blue ocean to Auburn, New York, that they fell in love! On a beautiful autumn day—October 9, 1864—they got married in their neighborhood church.



Have you ever been to a wedding?



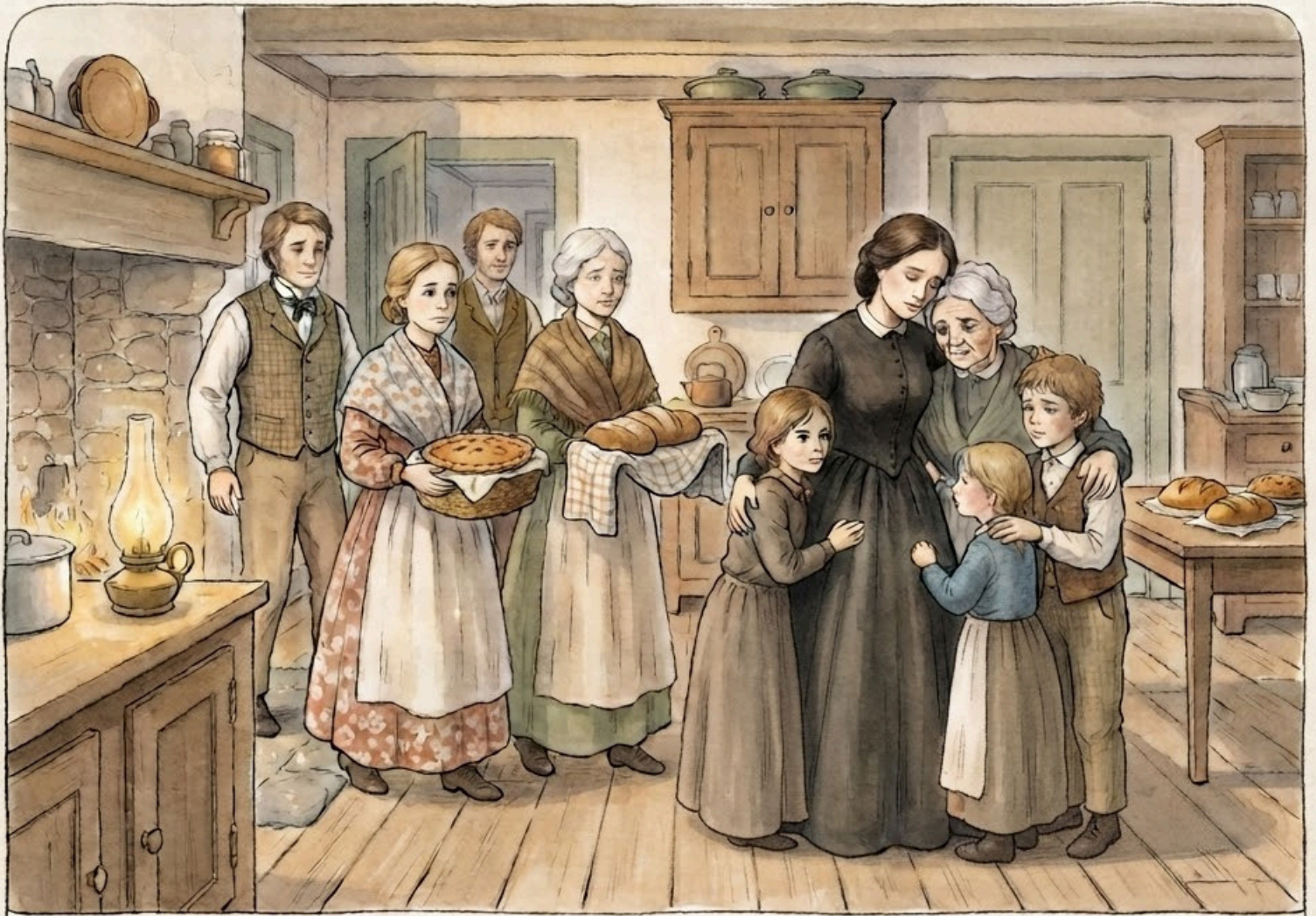
The town of Auburn was exciting and full of history. It was a place where famous heroes like Harriet Tubman lived, and where large waterwheels turned along the river to power busy factories.



Soon, their house was filled with laughter, footsteps, and music. They welcomed four boys in five years! They named them Sylvester, Patrick, James, and Edward to honor the family back across the sea.



What toys are the boys playing with?



Growing up in the old days could be difficult, and some of their children grew sick and went to heaven early, like their sweet son Patrick. When times were sad, the neighborhood families would gather at the house to comfort them, bringing old Irish traditions of love and support into their new American home.



Sylvester and Jane didn't just build a home; they built a community. When new cousins and siblings arrived from Ireland, they helped them settle into American life. They even brought Jane's father, Patrick, into their home to love and care for him as he grew older. At their big backyard table, neighbors gathered to share life's greatest joys and deepest sorrows.



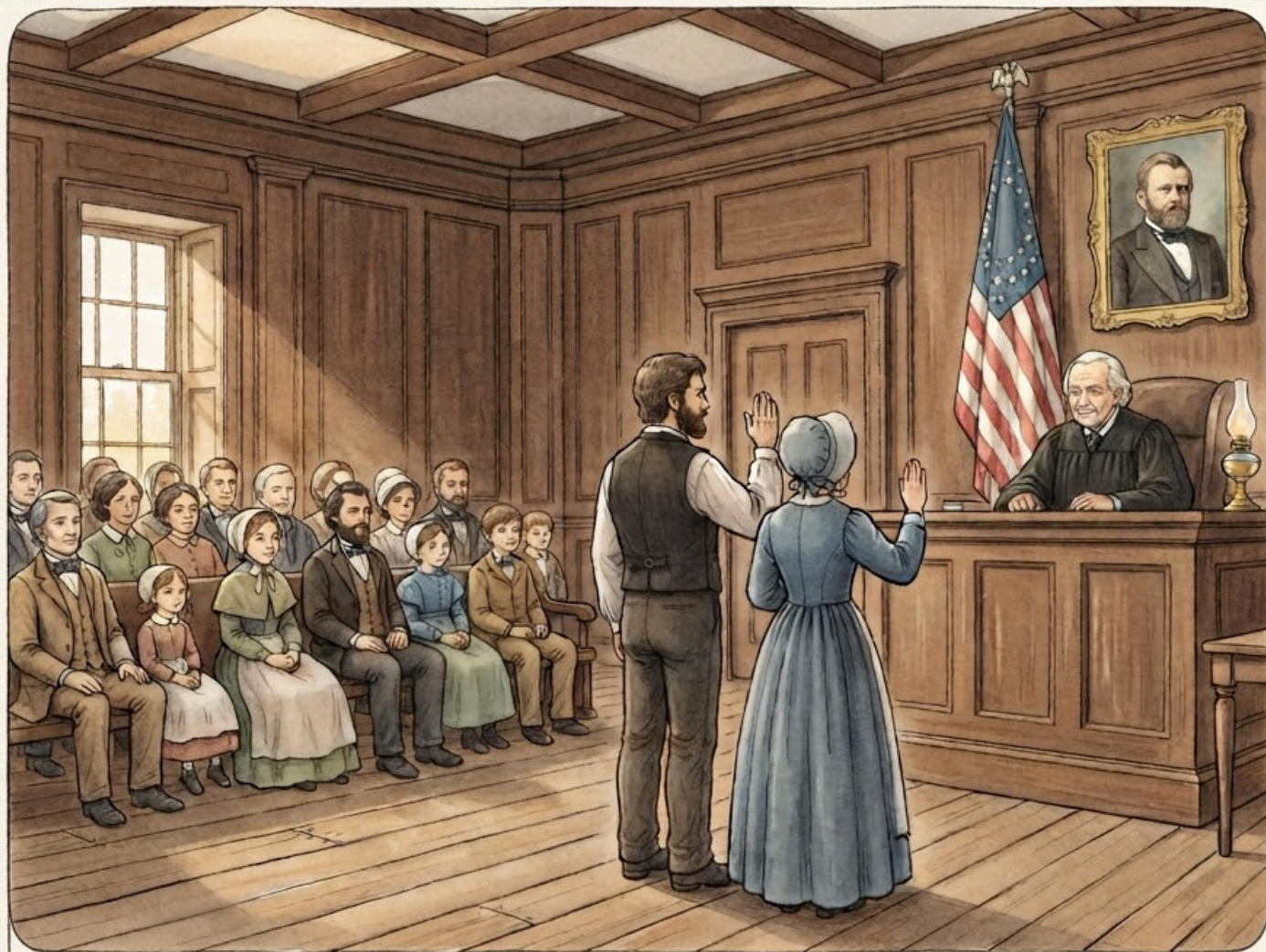
Look at the big, happy family table! Can you find Grandpa Patrick Murphy?



As the years passed, Sylvester took on an important job to keep his entire town safe. He became a railroad watchman! Every single day, Sylvester stood guard near the heavy iron train tracks. When a massive steam train rumbled into town, he waved bright flags and lit colorful lanterns to protect the passing wagons and people. He made sure everyone got home safely.



One day, a big fire accidentally started in Sylvester's backyard barn! Before anyone could panic, all of their wonderful neighbors rushed over to help. They formed a long line, passing heavy buckets of water from hand to hand until the roaring fire was put out. Once again, their amazing community saved the day.



Sylvester and Jane loved their new home, and they decided to take a big, brave step to become true American citizens. They walked into a grand courtroom during the time Ulysses S. Grant was President. They raised their right hands and made a solemn promise to love and protect their new country—carrying a little bit of Irish magic in their hearts forever.



Soon after, Sylvester and Jane saved up their hard-earned money to buy a beautiful house at 112 Van Anden Street. But they did something very special and surprising for the 1800s—they put the house completely in Jane's name! Jane became a proud female homeowner, creating a special place where her children could always feel safe and warm.



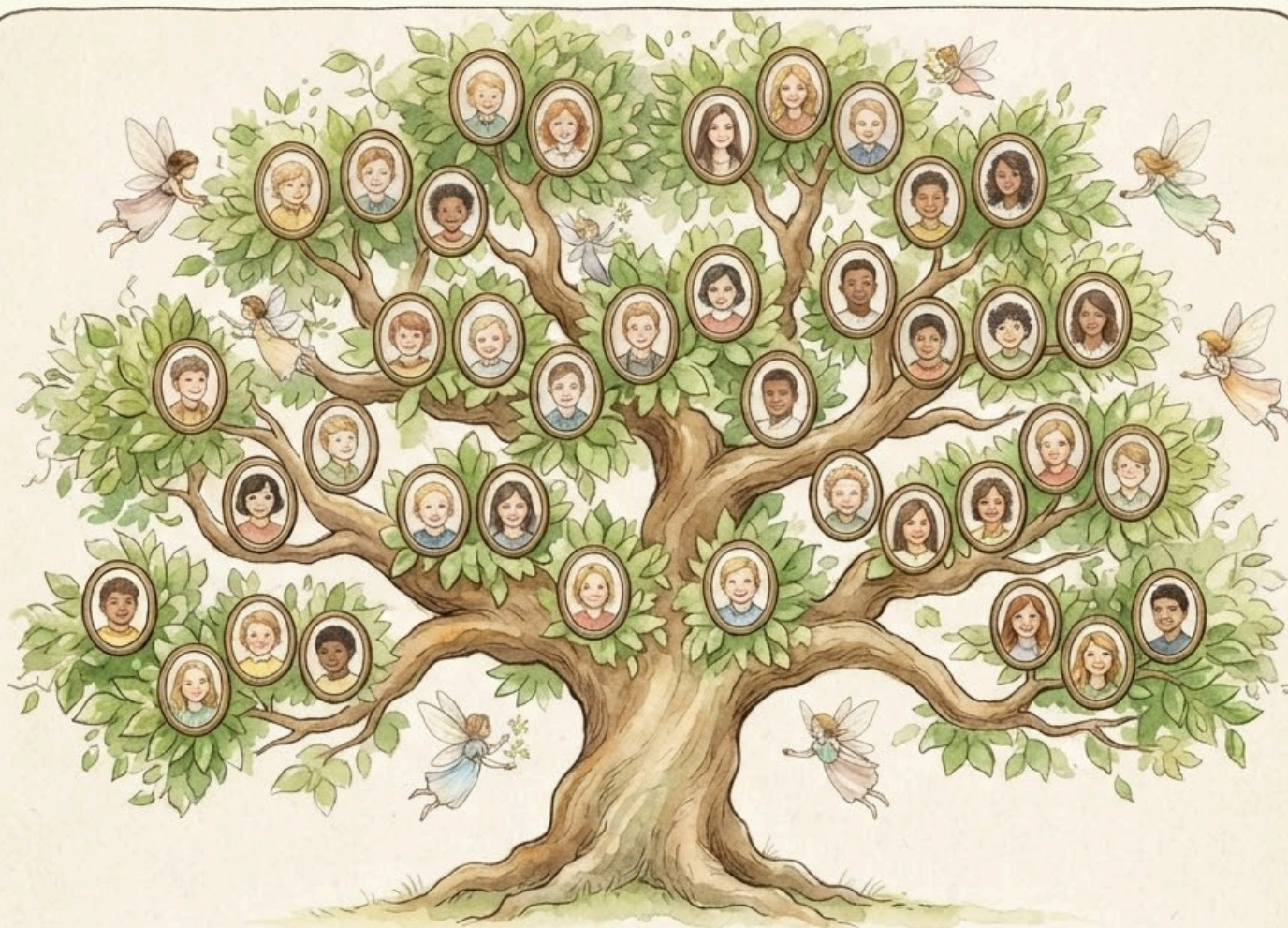
How many children do Sylvester and Jane have now? Can you count them with me?



Their new house was much fancier than their old country cottages! Instead of cutting turf, they burned warm black coal. Instead of hauling river water, they had a pump right in the backyard. But guess what? They still didn't have an indoor bathroom! To use the little wooden outhouse, the kids had to bundle up and trek through the deep freezing snow.



Brrr! Would you want to walk through the snow to use the potty?



Sylvester and Jane's house was always bursting with love, laughter, and the patter of little feet. As their children grew up, they welcomed babies of their own. Guess how many grandchildren Sylvester and Jane had? Forty-one! Their family tree grew so big and strong it could have filled a whole forest.



Can you imagine having over forty cousins to play with? What games would you play together?



When Sylvester and Jane grew very old, they closed their eyes and went to heaven. They were buried together under the quiet green grass of St. Joseph's Cemetery in Auburn. They started as little children an ocean away, braved giant waves, and built a beautiful family in America. Even though they lived long ago, their love, bravery, and strength live on today—**in you!**

Keep turning to discover real family treasures,
and the digital magic that brought this story to life.





Jane Murphy Kelly
about 1890

This book is a true family tapestry. It was built using decades of shared stories, records, and love. I am deeply grateful to my siblings Maureen, Katie, Meg, and Dan for their collaboration. This work is also a tribute to the memory of my dad Jim Kelly, aunt Julia Kelly, uncle Jack Kelly, and my dear sweet brother Kevin Kelly, who loved our family history and helped lay the foundation for this story.

Along the way, I also met incredible new cousins from other branches of the family who graciously contributed their own knowledge, photographs, and records to help map our shared ancestors: Kevin Kelley, descendant of Sylvester and Jane's son, Bernard; Dr. Valerie Burke DeLeon, descendant of Sylvester and Jane's daughter, Genevieve; and Kathleen Lanier, descendant of Sylvester and Jane's son, Michael.

The Living Treasures Hunt



The amazing true stories in this book didn't disappear into the past —and the places where they happened still stand tall today! These historic anchors have survived for over a hundred years. Look closely at the photographs above. Can you match the building to the story page you just read?

The "Deeper Dive"

This children's book is based on a fully researched genealogical paper detailing the lives of Sylvester Kelly and Jane Murphy. To read the complete history, view the original documents, and see the full family tree, scan the code below or visit:



Kelly~Murphy Branch - Bratwurst and Shillelaghs

www.elizabethkelly.org

How This Book Was Made: Blending History & Magic

To bring the world of Sylvester and Jane to life, Aunt Beth used a little bit of old family history, a lot of detective work, and a pinch of modern magic! The illustrations in this book were created by Aunt Beth using Gemini's 'nano banana' AI image generator tool, blending historical family facts with digital art to show you what their world looked like.

