

Chapter 1

John Murphy

Emerald Isle

John Murphy was born in Omagh, Tyrone County, Ulster. His formative years are unknown; however, his parents were probably farmers.

Most farm families in... the 18th century lived on small farms... in County Tyrone, Ulster... [with] three buildings: a house with a byre (barn) annex, a pig craw/hen-house with dovecote in the gable, and a long outbuilding housing the turf store, cart shed, stable, and a cow byre. All are built of double sandstone walls with a cavity filled with rubble. The walls are whitewashed inside and out. The roofs are thatched with rye straw held in place by wooden pins called "scollops."²

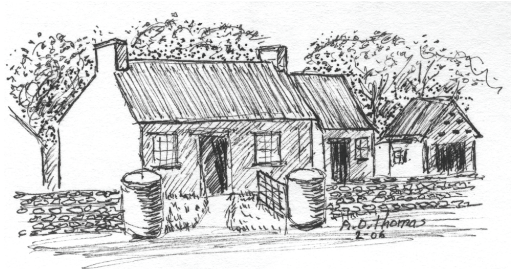


Figure 1-1: Typical Irish Farm



Figure 1-2: Omagh, Birthplace of John Murphy

The immigrants to America known as Scotch-Irish were descendants of Scots who were part of the plantation to Ireland's northern province of Ulster begun by Queen Elizabeth I of England, and continued by James I. This relocation of inhabitants from Scotland to Ireland populated Ulster and gained control for the English crown over the natives. It made Ulster predominantly Protestant as it is today. They were mostly tenant farmers with 20-30 year leases on 5-50

2. *Frontier Culture*, pamphlet, Museum of America Frontier Culture.

acres. They were Presbyterians in religious practices and resentful of the Anglican establishment. They left Ulster in the 18th century due to a series of bad harvests, rapidly rising rents, extreme fluctuations in the linen trade, and religious dissatisfaction.³

Relations between England and Ireland were always contentious. In 1949 Ireland declared itself a republic, no longer an English protectorate. Ulster remained under English dominance. With deep-rooted hatred between the Protestants and Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland, and the bloody history of bombings, kidnappings, and other terrorist acts frequently occurring, peace in Ulster escaped many efforts. A recent agreement was negotiated but just below the surface various factions lie ready to erupt.

Ireland's history is replete with invading forces and tribal warfare. Before 800 A.D. the Vikings raided the east and south coasts and established the first towns. After being overthrown in the 1160's, Dermot MacMurrrough re-conquered Ireland with the help of Henry II, the Norman King of England. Irish loyalty to England weakened by the 1300's leaving England with very little control over the land. A series of revolts by Earl Shane O'Neill were quelled by Queen Elizabeth I in the year 1603.

Northern Ireland, under the banner of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, became a way-station for our Murphy Clan. This Presbyterian family from the isle of misty green is suspected to have originated in Scotland, remaining several generations in Ireland, and then immigrating to America.

3. *Frontier Culture.*

John Murphy arrived in America with his brothers Edward and Andrew⁴, in 1788, and settled in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. A large number of emigrants, from Ulster, came to this country about six years before the brothers. The familiar term "Scotch-Irish" was applied to those Presbyterians that immigrated to Pennsylvania and the other Appalachian Mountain States as far south as Alabama. The year 1788 has not been confirmed by *Immigration and Passenger* records; although immigration data was supposed to be kept by individual States, the directive was largely ignored.

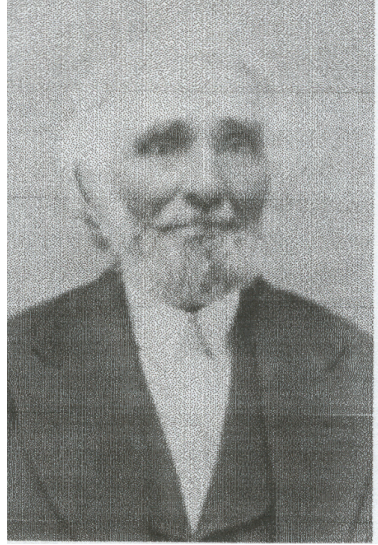


Figure 1-3: John Murphy, Sr.

The Scotch-Irish brought strong character traits to their Appalachian Mountain settlements. These traits were discipline, competitiveness, patriotism, determination, anti-authoritarianism, and self-sufficiency, all extremely helpful in taming the wilderness as they emigrated toward the Midwest. Descendants of these Scotch-Irish gave us the following United States Presidents: Andrew Jackson, Chester A. Arthur, Ulysses S. Grant, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton.

Substantiation of our Murphy origin in Scotland is lacking, but the fact that they were Presbyterian, and supported by the following written statements found in the library at Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, strongly suggest it to be true:

Murphy is the most numerous name in Ireland, very common in every province... The great majority of those of the name in Ireland are originally O'Murphys, Gaelic O'Murchadha... a personal name meaning "sea warrior".... But the majority of Ulster Murphy's will be originally MacMurphys, Gaelic MacMurchadha. These were originally a Cenél Eoghain sept who controlled the rich lands of Muíntir Birn in present-day Tyrone, and were chiefs of Síol Aodha... Finally, the name of the Clan Donald sept of MacMurchie was made MacMurphy and

4. Howard Randolph Murphy, *From Lone Prairies to Teaming Jungles and Return*, autobiography, photo copy abt. 1965, p. 2.

Murphy in Arran and so it is likely that some of the name in Ulster will be of Scottish descent.⁵

The unpublished material of Cousin Dorothy Murphy Bouma serves as a starting point of information on the Murphy family, and the marriage-related surnames of DeArmond, Skinner, Bryson, Waldo, Porter, Pope, Adams, and others. Further research has supplemented that information and data.

John Murphy settled, in 1788, in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.⁶ This county is across the Susquehanna River from the State Capital in Harrisburg, Dauphin County, and is aligned west by southwest, parallel to the Blue Mountain range. Cumberland County included the southern half of present day Mifflin County to the north, although when Cumberland County was erected, it covered all of the southwest quarter of the State.



Figure 1-4: Big Springs Church

The marriage between John Murphy and Ann DeArmond (D'Armond, Dearmond, Deyermond, etc.) took place in 1800 but was not confirmed by Church records. The Big Spring Presbyterian Church in Newville, which the DeArmonds attended, was 13 miles west of Carlisle, and without a pastor from 1798 until the pulpit was again filled on 14 Apr 1802, by Rev. Joshua Williams from the Derry and Paxton churches in Dauphin County. At age 79, Ann wrote that her marriage was performed "in or about 1800 by Robert Patterson, Justice of the Peace."

There has been no special effort to track John's brothers, but the 1800

5. Robert Bell, *The Book of Ulster Surnames*, 201.

6. Murphy, 1.