

**THE MURPHY FAMILY;
GENEALOGICAL,
HISTORICAL AND
BIOGRAPHICAL**

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The Murphy Family; Genealogical, Historical and Biographical by Michael Walter Downes

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MICHAEL WALTER DOWNES

**THE MURPHY FAMILY;
GENEALOGICAL,
HISTORICAL
AND BIOGRAPHICAL**

THE
MURPHY FAMILY

Genealogical, Historical and
Biographical

WITH OFFICIAL STATISTICS OF THE PART PLAYED
BY MEMBERS OF THIS NUMEROUS FAMILY IN
THE MAKING AND MAINTENANCE OF
THIS GREAT AMERICAN
REPUBLIC

BY MICHAEL WALTER DOWNES

HARTFORD, CONN.
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1909

FOREWORD

The purpose of this brief work is not to furnish the pedigree of any particular family or group of families bearing the name of Murphy, or to make a continuous connection between those who now bear the name and some distinguished ancestor, whose distinction might be sufficient to shed its lustre over all of his descendants; for two reasons, the first being that a work thus limited would require the support of subscriptions made by those interested in its publication, as the prospect of profit from the sale of such a work would not be sufficient to invite the labor of gathering the necessary material and making the research that the execution of such a work would demand, and the second reason being that to present an authentic, unbroken lineage having its course run through the common people of Ireland, presents almost unsurmountable difficulties, because during the last three centuries, owing to political, industrial, and social conditions, involving poverty and ignorance, and the decimation of the people by war and famine, and the great exodus from the country continued through these several centuries, to escape conditions of hardship; that which has been the pride and boast of its people, the clan genealogy, was almost utterly neglected.

Owing to the long continuance of tribal government in Ireland and the existence of a special class, whose duty it

was to preserve the genealogies of the ruling families and to commemorate the deeds of family progenitors, there were in Ireland some of the most ancient pedigrees to be found among any European people.

From Elizabeth's accession, in 1559, the political disturbance attended by industrial depression brought about by restrictions on Irish commerce and manufacturing, resulted in poverty, which commenced to work a sad change in the spirit of the people, and as they gradually became the social inferiors of the English who lived among them and who represented in their country the conqueror, they lost their pride of race, which had maintained an almost religious preservation of the ancestral line.

Hundreds of thousands left Ireland during the succeeding century to serve in foreign armies, and the exodus has continued in an ever increasing volume until it expanded into the tremendous emigration of the last century, which sent millions to the United States, Australia and the Argentine Republic.

To connect all the links between the present day and the middle of the 16th century would be a most difficult task. However, in a general historical treatment of the family genealogy, while not able to follow the latter day ramifications, the records present much of exceeding interest. It is possible to begin with the eponym of the family and follow the lineage for many centuries with the certain assurance that although the surname is radically changed from the original patronymic, it has merely followed the phonetic changes in the language, and, incredible as it may appear to some, it is almost certain that any member of the Murphy family in perusing these pages will read of his progenitors

and other members of the family to which he belonged, even back to the first centuries of the Christian era.

Greater confidence is placed by scholars in these Irish genealogical records than almost any similar records. They accord with archæological investigations, and many of the facts in these records synchronize with other historical references.

To add interest to the work, biographical sketches have been added of persons of the name who have attained prominence in this country and in the family's native land. Also, a tabulated Roll of Honor of those who surrendered, or hazarded their lives in the establishment of this free government, or in the wars waged for its defense and maintenance.

THE MURPHY FAMILY

Regrettable as the fact is, candor demands that we record that it was through the immediate agency of a member of the Murphy family that English authority first gained strength in Ireland. The author of this calamity, which meant so much to the Irish people, was Dermot McMorrough, King of Leinster. He was born in the year 1090, and his family had been the ruling power of the province for several generations.

It must be remembered that tribal government continued at this time in Ireland to almost the same extent as in the days of Patrick, and this meant the existence of tribal jealousies and constant inter-tribal turmoil; while, on the other hand, England, which had inherited from the Romans the feudal system of government, had consolidated into a strong power, and recognizing in the tribal system the disorganization of Ireland, the ambition had been growing for the subjection of that territory to the power of the English sovereign.

Henry II occupied the English throne and an Englishman named Nicholas Breakspeare occupied the see of Rome, and is known to history as Pope Adrian IV. The Pope, probably impelled to some extent by a desire to further the ambitions of his countrymen, and also influenced by the fact that the church of Patrick did not conform in many matters of discipline and in the observance of feast days with the Roman discipline, except the Danish and Norman

element of the Irish, issued a bull in the year 1157 authorizing Henry II to exercise temporal authority over Ireland. This command of the Pope was communicated to the bishops and abbots and all ecclesiastical authorities in Ireland, and it produced a divided sentiment among the people, who felt that they owed a duty to the ecclesiastical head of the church and were yet impelled to resist his authority in this respect from patriotic impulses.

At this time, Dermot McMorrough, then King of Leinster, was ousted from his sovereignty by one Roderick O'Connor, a rival claimant to the throne, and, lacking the support to reinstate himself, he took advantage of the Pope's decree authorizing English sovereignty in Ireland, and repaired to King Henry II of England, who was at that time in France, who received him cordially, and acquiesced in his project, and authorized him under the royal hand and seal to enlist an army among the Saxons to go with him to Ireland, armed with which he repaired to England and had the authority of Henry publicly read at Bristol, England, and at the same time he promised large rewards to all persons of influence who would lend their services to him in recovering his lost territories. It was here he met DeClare, Earl of Pembroke, and to him he promised to give his daughter Eva in marriage and that he should succeed him in the sovereignty of Leinster. In Wales he associated Robert Fitz-Stevens. This incursion of Anglo-Normans occurred in the years 1169 and 1170. The war was then carried on with all the barbarity and vengeance which attended military operations in those days, and McMorrough was re-established in power in Leinster, and Roderick O'Connor utterly routed.