

Murphy

The surname of MURPHY is probably the commonest name in Ireland. The name is very widely distributed throughout the province, although the heaviest concentration of the name at the end of the last century was in County Cork. Murphy families descend from septs which were named O'Murchadha and Mac Murchadha. One of these septs was located in the County of Wexford and the south Leinster O'Murchada sept was a branch of the McMurrughs. (A sept settled in Muskerry, County Cork, descended from Feidhlim, younger son of Enna Cinsealagh, King of Leinster, they formerly possessed a territory in County Carlow, known as Hy Felimy). The tradition of surnames in Ireland developed spontaneously, as the population increased and the former practice, first of single names and then of ephemeral patronymics or agnomina of the nickname type proved insufficiently definitive. At first the surname was formed by prefixing 'Mac' to the father's Christian name or 'O' to that of a grandfather or earlier ancestor. A notable member of the name was Arthur Murphy (1727-1805) the Irish actor and playwright, born in Clomquin, Roscommon. He worked as a clerk in Cork and then London. By going on stage he got to pay his debts, and in 1758 he produced 'The Upholsterer' a successful farce. At first the coat of arms was a practical matter which served a function on the battlefield and in tournaments. With his helmet covering his face, and armour encasing the knight from head to foot, the only means of identification for his followers, was the insignia painted on his shield and embroidered on his surcoat, the flowing and draped garment worn over the armour. In many parts of central and western Europe, hereditary surnames began to become fixed at around the 12th century, and have developed and changed slowly over the years. As society became more complex, and such matters as the management of tenure, and in particular the collection of taxes were delegated to special functionaries, it became imperative to distinguish a more complex system of nomenclature to differentiate one individual from another. The associated arms are recorded in Sir Bernard Burkes General Armory. Ulster King of Arms in 1884.

ARMS - Quarterly argent and gules on a fesse sable between four lions rampant counter-changed three garbs or

CREST - A lion rampant gules bezantee holding in the forepaws a garb or

MOTTO - FORTIS ET HOSPITALIS
Brave and hospitable