

Echoes in Time:

The Murray, Connor, and Moorer Families of South Carolina

Book I

Prologue

"William Murray I ¹ came from Edinburgh, Scotland, to America after about 1715 and settled in Virginia. While it is unlikely that he had only one child, a son William II (who may have been born in Scotland) came later to South Carolina and settled in Charleston, where his son William III was born in 1754."

That is the orthodox and undocumented history according to "family legend." ²

Maybe it wasn't quite that way at all.

There is record of a William Murry [note spelling] arriving at the Port of Charles Towne from Belfast Ireland on 08 February 1768 on the ship **Betty Gregg**, John Milford (or Monford), Master. ³ William did not travel alone. There were seven in his party, but no mention of a wife. They were William, aged forty; Archibald, aged forty; and five children: John (17), William Jr. (15), Mary (12), Agnes (10), and Jane (6).

The elder William presumably was born about 1728, the younger about 1754.

The Royal Council minutes record the cash "bounty" paid to the ship's master for their transport and the land "bounty" paid in acres. The land bounty was 100 acres for each adult and an additional 50 acres for each minor.

But there were some other people arriving in SC in the 1700's. Some mentioned later include the Moorer (Murer) family (Peter, born in Switzerland in 1670, came to America about 1735, and died in the old Orangeburgh District in 1758), the Shuler family (Hans Georg Schuler was born in Germany in 1691, came to America about 1736, and died in the old Orangeburgh District after 1770), and the Wannamaker (Wannamacher) family (Jacob Wannamaker, born in Germany in 1714, emigrated to Zurich, Switzerland, then emigrated to the South Carolina Colony in 1738, and died in the Cherokee Indian Wars, about 1760).

Another interesting arrival, on the same ship on the same day at the same port, was William Connor [note spelling], aged 24, who was allowed both the cash bounty (for the ship's master) and the land bounty.

In this case, the land amounted to 200 acres accounted for either by two adults (William and a spouse?) or by one adult and two children (William and his sons John and William? ⁴). See more about Connor in Books II and III.

William II may not have been alone in Charleston. Land grants from the Royal Governor were made on 01 September 1768 to William Murray (100 acres in Berkeley County, grant recorded 12 December 1768), to John Murray (100 acres in Berkeley County on Cattels Creek, grant recorded 10 December 1768), and to Archibald Murray (350 acres in Berkeley County on Cattels Creek, grant recorded 10 December 1768).

⁵ These are the land bounty grants referred to above. John Murray was allotted 100 acres because he had attained his sixteenth birthday and for Colonial purposes was considered an adult - or at least physically mature enough to work the land given him.

And William III may not have been an only child: a Will signed on 10 June 1794 by Alexander Murray was offered for probate on 13 August 1794.⁶ That instrument mentions no wife and no children, but refers to "William Murray . . . my whole brother and executor." Alexander recited his residence as St. Bartholomew Parish Colleton County SC.

Having gotten them here, whoever they were and from wherever they came, the story now turns to what happened next.

William Murray III⁷ **(b. 1754; d. 1816 ?)**

In 1781 William Murray III married Martha McQuillan in Orangeburg. They settled on the Edisto River six miles from St. George, at the intersection of the Charleston-Augusta GA, Stage Coach Road and the Walterboro Road (SC State Highway 15). For over a hundred years this community was known as "Murrays Crossroads" but the name was changed to "Grover" when the US Postmaster approved that name for a new post office.⁸

William III died about 1816 on his plantation at Murrays Crossroads and was buried in the Murray Cemetery, perhaps at a site marked by the cemetery's oldest marker.⁹ Martha was born in 1761; her family came to America from Belfast, Ireland, and bought lands on Ball Branch in the old Orangeburgh District SC.

Not a great deal is known of Martha, although one author¹⁰ cites "family lore" in telling a story of Martha and her sister disembarking on the Charleston docks, seeing Africans for the first time - and immediately fainting!

William Murray III served in the Continental Army during the American Revolution.¹¹ A private in the SC Militia, he was a wagon-master and commissary (or provisioning agent). The commander of his unit was Colonel Levi Casey. Various records concerning his service and his pay are in the collection kept by the SC Department of Archives and History, Columbia SC, at record number 5419, microfilm roll 109. Murray also served 189 days (14 July 1780 to 30 November 1780) as a horse soldier in that unit, and was paid for services as a blacksmith in making rivets and for putting shackles on and removing them from prisoners between August and November 1785 at George Town SC. (The latter account was assigned by William to "John Murray," but without any explanation about John's receiving William's pay.)

This part of the Murray family came from Edinburgh, Scotland, and one of the Murray Sees in Scotland, along with the Duke of Atholl's Blair Castle,¹² was at Jedburgh (pronounced "Jedboro"). Probably not coincidentally, this was also the name of the settlement where John Jackson Murray, first cousin of Thomas Jefferson Murray, lived in SC.

It would be interesting to know William's - both William II's and William III's - thoughts and feelings as the Colonies moved toward war with England. Many of the Scots and Irish who had come to SC saw no reason to abandon their loyalty to the British Crown, which after all had in many cases paid for their transport to the Colonies and had given them land. The Swiss¹³ and German settlers [See Felder,

Moorer, Inabinet, and Wannamaker, below, for examples] had had the same benefit, but in addition saw England's King George III as "almost" kin in that he was an Elector of Hanover - tantamount to being a member of the German royalty.¹⁵

Already, by the time of the American Revolution, political lines were being drawn within the South Carolina colony. The right to vote depended on owning land and about one-fifth of the population, before and after the Revolution and until the end of the Civil War, controlled South Carolina's legislative functions. Small wonder there was animated political discussion back and forth between Charleston and the rest of the colony!

Yates Snowden, cited within, posits that enthusiasm for the Revolution waned as one came inland from Charleston - but increased as one's family came from places more and more distant from London.

Fifty years later, some of the same lines would be drawn during the prelude to the American Civil War as slaveholders along the SC coast and into its foothills had to convince their upstate non-slaveholder cousins that "states' rights" was the real reason for their dissatisfaction with being one of the "united" states.

One of the fallacies of popular history is the common teaching that "all" Colonists resisted governance from London and that "all" Southerners resisted government in Washington. The latter statement may be more nearly true, but neither is an absolute.

(What is not widely remembered, though, is that SC made the first decisive military move in the American Revolution, at virtually the same place it would repeat its performance in the American Civil War. On 15 September 1775, ten months before the Declaration of Independence of 1776, the SC militia attacked and captured Fort Johnson at the entrance to the Charles Town harbor, having declared war on England - or at least its navy - by itself!¹⁶)

One wishes to tell the "every day" story of William and Martha but aside from generalities about having none of the "modern" conveniences, aside from obvious comments about not having automobiles, aside from comments about rising with the sun and sleeping with the moon, all else at this point is conjecture. How this couple dressed, what they ate, how they dealt with eight children, how they fared with their respective in-laws, how they related to their community, whether in fact they were even liked by their community, what the home was like - all the detail is gone.

William left eight children. Book I is divided into chapters for each of those and their families, but a lot of room is available for missing data of both factual and personal nature.

Known children of William Murray III and Martha McQuillan:

- I. **William Murray IV** [See Chapter I, Book I]
 - b. 15 September 1782
 - d. 19 March 1836
 - m.1. **Mary Hughes** (23 November 1802 at Orangeburg SC)
 - b.
 - d.
 - m.2. **Mary Rhode** (29 August 1813, at Orangeburg SC)
 - b. 03 February 1796
 - d. 21 December 1831
- II. **Sarah C. Murray** [See Chapter 2, Book I]
 - b. 28 January 1787