

LIFE OF MR. CLAY MURPHY

(Henry "Clay" Murphy)
Haskell County, Kansas

Written by Maxine Ridge

Consultant: Henry "Clay" Murphy

** Additional information added about Henry Clay Murphy and his family*



HENRY CLAY MURPHY FAMILY

*Back row, left to right: Ray, Bill, Anna Mae, and Frank
Front row, left to right: Henry Clay, Dee, and Ruth Ethel*

Photograph provided by Roxana Stitt

Mr. Clay Murphy was born on August 6, 1863, in California, Moniteau County, Missouri. He moved to Kansas in August of 1885 and settled on a farm between Santa Fe and Ivanhoe. He did all of his tradings at Ivanhoe until the town was abandoned, and in 1887 he started to trade at old Santa Fe. He was a great farmer and raised

many small grains but grew more wheat than anything else. He raised excellent crops and was successful at farming.

In 1889, Mr. Murphy moved to La Junta, Colorado, where he lived and farmed for two years.

Clay Murphy was a great hunter, and in his youth, he went on many big game hunts. One of the most outstanding was when he and two of his pals went on a big game hunting trip in December of 1889. They went down to Texas and got a lot of small game and one deer. However, they killed one hundred wild turkeys. That was unusual because the guns were not fast shooting automatics like they have today, but were old-style pump guns and the like. They traveled on horseback and in old wagons.

A year later, Mr. Murphy, with two of his other friends, Mr. Bailey and Frank Robinson, went on another hunting trip. This trip was just as unusual as the other was and about as extreme. They got a lot of small game and a few wild turkeys, but their main game was deer. They killed a wagonload of deer in a very short time.

Clay Murphy was married on August 5, 1891, (*may have been Aug 8th*) to Miss Ethel Scarlett, who, with her family, had moved to Kansas a little later than the Murphy family (*in 1886*).

Clay and Ethel had five children; Will Murphy of Conway Springs, Kansas, Mrs. Mae Stitt of Clearwater, Kansas, Mr. Frank Murphy of Marion, Kansas, plus Mr. Ray Murphy and Mrs. Dee Jacquart both of Sublette, Kansas.

Clay and Ethel moved to Carlton, Colorado and Mr. Murphy was a Section Foreman for the Santa Fe Railroad for six years. It was fascinating work for him, and he had many different and exciting experiences. The rest of the time that they lived at Carlton, Mr. Murphy farmed, mostly truck farming.

After thirteen years at Carlton, Mr. Murphy and his family moved back to Kansas, making their home at Conway Springs, which is in Sumner County. They lived there for six years and farmed. Their wheat was said to be exceptionally good. There were hailstorms and some drawbacks, but Mr. Murphy is an industrious man and always comes out on top.

After living at Conway Springs, they moved to a ranch close to Sublette, Kansas. It was a large ranch, and they raised many cattle. Mr. Murphy enjoyed the ranch life, although there were long days of hard riding and work in the hot desert sun. There were scorching winds, and it was extremely dry. Then the farmers began to be more interested in the wheat industry. They plowed up the prairie grass and cactus to plant wheat. Mr. Murphy sold the ranch in 1921 and moved his family into town.

Sublette was a small town when Mr. Murphy had the hotel built in 1921. They ran the hotel and café both for some time. Mrs. Murphy did the cooking and, with the aid of their children, got along very well. (*The hotel was torn down in 1970.*)

In 1929, Mr. Murphy leased the cafe to his youngest son and his wife (*Mr. and Mrs. Ray Murphy*). Mr. Clay Murphy continued to run the hotel. He was friendly and very interested in promoting community improvements. After moving to Sublette, the town elected him as Mayor, the job he held for eight years. He also became a town Councilman and a great influence on the progress of the city. He aided in the paving of the streets in 1931 and 1932. Mr. Murphy had seen the city's slow increase and had witnessed the "boom" and failures of the county.

At the time of a big harvest, Mr. Murphy benefited greatly. He had always wanted to travel, so in 1935, he leased the hotel to Mr. and Mrs. Hemeker. Mr. Murphy built a house trailer, and he and Mrs. Murphy started traveling.

Because of traveling when they did, they missed some of Haskell County's worst dirt storms, and they consider themselves very fortunate.

Colorado was the first state the Murphys visited. They visited Greeley, Colorado; Manitou, Colorado; Colorado Springs; and Denver. They took lots of time so they could see all the sights and visit many of their friends.

Arkansas was the next state they traveled to: Rodgers, Arkansas, Springdale, Arkansas, and then, on to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. These were the most outstanding places that they visited. While traveling, Mr. Murphy did his favorite hobby, fishing. He had several pictures taken of himself and the fish he caught, as he was afraid that people would doubt the big fish stories he would tell.

They went back to Kansas and visited Clearwater in Sedgwick County and Conway Springs in Sumner County.

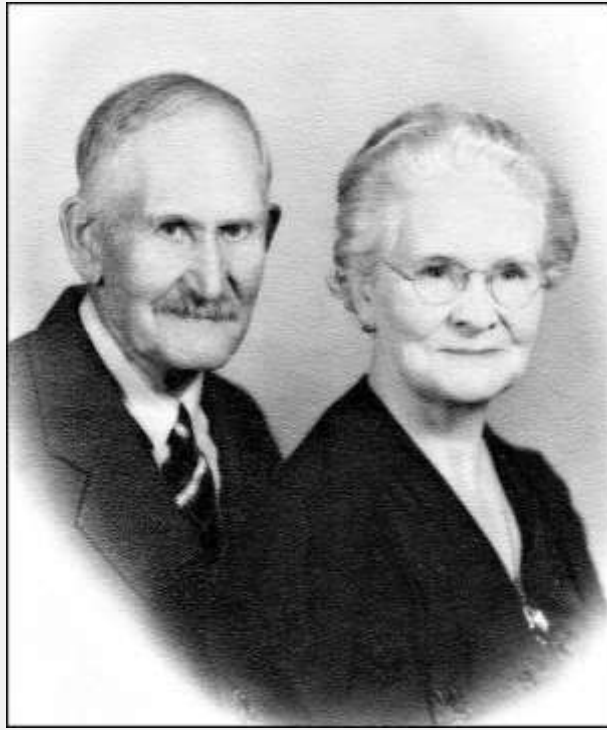
Texas was where they went next. They never tired of talking about the sights in Texas. They especially enjoyed the Aransas Pass. They drove out six miles on a bridge that went on a ferry across to land to get there.

They went to Corpus Christi and visited the Lackys Pet Shop. There Mr. Murphy bought several small pet turtles that he sent to his children and friends. He saw a three-hundred-pound turtle in the pet shop pond and asked about buying it. They told him he could have it for twenty-five dollars if he could get it out of the pond. Mr. Murphy did not get the turtle.

They returned home after visiting Texas. They went back to their usual work. Mr. Murphy worked in his garden, where he had many lovely flowers. He sold his house trailer and began building another one just for the fun of it. He saw the mistakes he made on the first one and improved on the new one.

Today, if you were to come to Sublette to the Murphy House Hotel, you would find two old kind-hearted contented people who have seen many hardships and have enjoyed many pleasures. They both enjoy having good health.

Additional Information
HENRY "CLAY" MURPHY



HENRY "CLAY" AND ETHEL (SCARLETT) MURPHY

*Photograph & family information provided by Roxana Stitt
(Roxana's husband, Woody Stitt, is a descendant of Henry Clay and Ethel Murphy.)*

Some information is from the Haskell County, Kansas book, 1887-1987 and other detail were found while doing research on Ancestry.com and Findagrave.com

HENRY "CLAY" MURPHY, son of Henry C. Murphy (1837-1863) and Mary Frances Elliot (1836-1910), was born on 16 Aug 1863 in Moniteau County, Missouri. He married RUTH "ETHEL" SCARLETT, daughter of John W. Scarlett (1846-1925) and Elizabeth Frances Jackson (1849-1914) on 8 Aug 1891 (*may have been August 5th*) in Santa Fe, Haskell County, Kansas. Ethel was born on 25 Jan 1875 in Marshall County, Missouri. In the year 1900, Clay and Ethel moved to Carlton, Prowers County, Colorado. By 1920, they had moved back to Sublette, Haskell County, Kansas. The next year, Clay Murphy began building the hotel and café that they owned and worked in until 1935. After leasing the hotel, they began traveling and visiting many different places. (*Eventually, they sold the hotel to a Mr. Brown.*)

Henry passed away in May of 1946 in Sublette, Haskell County, Kansas. Ethel died on 25 Jul 1970 at the Western Prairie Nursing Home in Ulysses, Grant County, Kansas. She was 95 years old. Burial was at the Haskell County Cemetery in Sublette, Haskell County, Kansas.

Eight children born in their marriage:

WILLIAM (“BILL” or “WILLY”) THOMAS MURPHY was born on 8 May 1892 in Haskell County, Kansas. On 9 Aug 1916, he married Bessie Veronica Mercer, daughter of Franklin Pierce Mercer (1853-1930) and Rosa Ann Alloway (1860-1928), in Conway Springs, Sumner County, Kansas. Bessie was born on 28 Jan 1897 in Conway Springs, Kansas. They had two sons, Dr. Claude Franklin Murphy (1917-1981) and Harold Clay Murphy (1919-1977). Records reveal Bill and Bessie lived on their farm in Eden, Sumner County, Kansas from 1920 to 1940. Besides working their farm, Bill had a Chalmers Tractor dealership. Bill passed away on 24 Jul 1945 in Conway Springs, Kansas. Bessie died there on 18 Apr 1972. Burial was at the Conway Springs Cemetery in Conway Springs, Kansas.

ANNA MAE MURPHY was born on 22 Nov 1893 in Santa Fe, Haskell County, Kansas. She was married to John D. Stitt on 2 May 1917 in Conway Springs, Sumner County, Kansas. John was born on 10 Jul 1893 in Butler Township, Harrison County, Missouri. They had three sons, Marvin Dean Stitt (1918-1997), Jerrold Dwight Stitt (1924-1994), and Donald Keith Stitt (1926-1992). Anna died on 26 Oct 1976 at her home in Peck, Sedgwick County, Kansas. John remarried on 31 Aug 1982 to Juanita Lucille (Moberly) Higginbotham (1911-1992). John died on 17 Jun 1985 in Clearwater, Sedgwick County, Kansas. Burial for Anna Mae and John was at the Clearwater Cemetery in Clearwater, Kansas.

GLADYS ESTHER MURPHY was born on 11 Sep 1895 in Carlton, Prowers County, Colorado, and died there on Christmas Day, 25 Dec 1896. She was buried in La Junta, Otero County, Colorado.

HENRY “FRANK” MURPHY was born on 17 Jan 1897 in Carlton, Prowers County, Colorado. He was first married to Julia “Fay” Boekhaus on 1 May 1924 in Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas. Fay was born on 23 Dec 1903 (*Obituary gives 1904*) in Lewistown, Lewis County, Missouri. They lived in Sublette, Haskell County, Kansas at the beginning of their marriage, but in about 1937, they moved to Marion, Marion County, Kansas. Fay passed away on 8 Nov 1962 in Garden City, Finney County, Kansas after a long illness. Frank married again to Thelma J. Blackshere, daughter of Earl Blackshere and Mina Baumgartner, on 17 Jan 1968 in Hutchinson, Reno County, Kansas. Thelma was born on 17 Nov 1901 in Coffeyville, Montgomery County, Kansas. She was first married to Herbert V. Savage, Sr. He died in 1955. Frank Murphy passed away on 15 Jul 1980 in Hutchinson, Kansas. Thelma died there on 22 Oct 1996. Thelma and first husband, Herbert Savage, were buried at the Memorial Park Cemetery in Hutchinson, Kansas. The burial for Frank and Julia Fay was at the Haskell County Cemetery in Sublette, Kansas.

INFANT DAUGHTER was born and died in the year 1898 in La Junta, Otero County, Colorado.

ELLIOTT "RAY" MURPHY was born on 15 Nov 1905 in Colorado. He was married to Dorothy Norton in 1926. Dorothy taught school for a few years in Sublette, Haskell County, Kansas. Ray passed away at his home in Sublette from an unexpected blood clot on 4 Jul 1939. Dorothy married again to Ed Shay and they continued to live in Haskell County. Dorothy passed away in 1969.

CLARA "DEE" MURPHY was born on 13 Mar 1908 in Prowers County, Colorado. She married Robinson "Rolland" Jacquart, son of Henry Joseph Jacquart and Albessie Ann Robinson, in about 1929. Rolland was born on 23 May 1900 in Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Colorado. Dee and Rolland had two sons, Robin Murphy Jacquart and Robert "Roger" Jacquart. Rolland died on 24 May 1986 in Satanta, Haskell County, Kansas. Dee passed away on 26 Dec 1995 in Liberal, Seward County, Kansas. Burial was at the Haskell County Cemetery in Sublette, Kansas.

MARGARET LOIS MURPHY was born on 1 Aug 1917 and died on 6 Aug 1917 in Conway Springs, Sumner County, Kansas.

Cemetery Headstones
HENRY CLAY MURPHY & RUTH ETHEL (SCARLETT) MURPHY



HASKELL COUNTY CEMETERY
Sublette, Kansas

Headstone photographs provided by Leon Barton

