

THE McCOY FAMILY

The McCoy family was from Ireland and probably so for many generations. It is believed the original spelling of the name was McCoughy in the Gaelic and later simplified to be spelled as it was pronounced. The family came to America about 1840 and eventually moved to Arkansas where Mary McCoy was married to Albert Michael Byrnes. They were my father's grandparents.

PHILLIP McCOY

Phillip McCoy was born in Ireland in 1829 and came to America with his parents when he was eleven years old. The family settled in Providence, Rhode Island in 1841 and Phillip remained there for fifteen years working in the shoe manufacturing trade.

In about 1852, he married Bridget Pierce in Providence. In an old book, I found her maiden name to be Pierce, but an aunt seems to remember that her name was Leonard. She may have been a widow, I'm checking this out.

Bridget was also born in Ireland and came to America as a child of 12 years of age. She was educated in Rhode Island and lived there until the family moved to Arkansas in 1859.

Phillip and Bridget had six children, the names I have are:

MARY McCOY born in Rhode Island on April 3, 1854 and married to Albert Michael Byrnes.

ELLA McCOY born in Arkansas in 1866. I believe she was unmarried.

MAGGIE McCOY born in Rhode Island in 1859, married to W. A. Gregg, a lumberman in Fayetteville.

WILLIAM J. McCOY born in Arkansas in 1861, who entered into the lumber business with Albert Byrnes.

ANNIE 'FANNY' McCOY born in Arkansas in 1863, who married Jack Wilcox, more on her later.

I do not have the other name.

Phillip and his family went directly from Providence to Prairie Grove, Arkansas in 1859. Phillip was a farmer and 'sort of' continued in this occupation all his life.

According to my aunt Betty Putman Maxwell, he never was really that fond of farming and so ran a mule supply train to St. Louis, Missouri. He took up farm products, hides and furs and returned with cloth, hardware and all types of manufactured goods. The overland trip took some two weeks and he made several trips a year. Anything to avoid farming, I guess.

In the 1880 census, an older brother, Patrick McCoy was living with him.

On November 12, 1892, Phillip McCoy drew his last will. He left his money to Bridget who was still alive at the time, his land to Bridget and Ella, and his farming equipment to William, who was named executor. He left five dollars to both Mary Byrnes and Fanny Wilcox.

The will states that he only left a token amount to his daughter, Mary, because Albert Byrnes was a successful contractor and she needed no financial help.

He left five dollars to Fanny and stipulated that she was to have no more of his estate. It seems that Fanny had run off with the hired man, Jack Wilcox, and Phillip was very unhappy over this marriage.

A transcript of the Will of Phillip McCoy is in the DOCUMENTS Section of this Addendum.

Bridget died at ten o'clock Tuesday night December 11, 1900 at the Byrnes Home. She was seventy one years of age at the time.