

Carlton, now lives in this same dwelling on the Myakka where all eight Murphy children were born and raised. There was one time that Garrett Murphy moved his family to Manatee, but this change was of short duration, when there was an epidemic scare in the settlement. Grandpa, ever concerned for the welfare of his family, moved them back, kit and kaboodle, to Myakka. It was around 1896 that they moved to Bradenton, where Grandpa built a big house about a mile from where the present court house now stands.

It was free range at the time Grandpa Murphy had to buy or lease enough land to make pasture big enough to hold all the cattle. It was necessary to buy wire and fence posts for enclosures for the cattle. In 1932, the state of Florida made it mandatory for everyone with cattle to dip them every fourteen days. Every cow that wasn't dipped, the state men drove out. All the cattle were Long Horns or Scrub cattle at that time, and had only native grass to eat. Some of the cattle were so old the dipping killed them. This was a loss to Grandpa.

There was a place on the Myakka called Vicus Head. It was so full of growth that the cattle in there hadn't seen a man for five years or more. Garrett, and his two sons, Samuel Jackson and Benjamin Augustus, in company with a few other men, went in this thicket with rifles and a slow trail dog and killed the cattle just like deer. WPA workers hauled the beef to Myakka City, where it was distributed to needy families. This was also a loss to Grandpa. The dipping process was expensive for other reasons too, not only to Garrett Murphy, but to the other cattle men as well, until the state finally declared itself free of ticks. Cow hands were paid a dollar a day, and if a man furnished his own horse, he got two dollars a day. Food for men and horses were furnished. A very well improvised Model T Ford of Ben Murphy's was used for a chuck wagon. It was always stocked with good food for a savory repast at the end of a long tiring day of riding. Horses were put on a stake rope and fed with a feed bag made of a gunny sack. Of course, the Model T carried bed rolls, too. The dipping round-up was a most strenuous affair, and after the men had ridden for over a week at a time, they were more than anxious for the peace and quiet of their homes.

It was shortly after such a campaign that Garrett Murphy's three thousand head of cattle had been dipped, that he died. Ten to twelve dollars a head was paid the Murphy children for the cattle by Ed Wells of Arcadia.

Florida now leads the United States in cattle production. All the improved pasture grass has been brought in from Africa and South America. Mostly registered stock graze on the new and improve herbage. Grandpa Murphy would hardly recognize the new procedures used today in live-stock work.

He passed away in Bradenton, Florida in 1934 following a prostate gland infection and surgery. He was eighty-four years old. How well he fell asleep. Like some grand river -- perhaps the Myakka -- Widening toward the sea -- calmly and gravely and silently And deep -- life joined eternity. Copied from the tall, graceful headstone of his mothers is written, "I shall know the love that has gone before -- and joyfully sweet shall the meeting be -- when over the river -- that peaceful river -- the angel of death shall carry me." Garrett Murphy had joined his mother in death.

History is a story of people growing. Of a Nation aborning -- Of ordinary men becoming great -- Of unbound happiness -- and deep sorrow. A story that has no end -- No era of dullness -- No parallel in the fiction created in the mind of men. This is the story of the life of Grandpa, Garrett (Dink) Murphy, one time cattle king & Florida pioneer.

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