

## A Southern Cody Clan?

While the surname Cody is not as common as many other surnames, for example, Smith, Jones, Martin, Johnson, yet it is sufficiently common to indicate that its use must have had different origins in time and place. Certainly in the light of the facts (above presented) concerning the origin of our family's use of this surname we know that it was neither borrowed nor inherited by our immigrant ancestor, Philip Legody, but came to be used by him as result of circumstances peculiar to his life as a resident of Beverly 1698-1720.<sup>138</sup> Accordingly between our genealogical family and any other bearing the surname Cody,

there can be no assumption of genealogical relationship on the basis of the fact that both bear the surname Cody.

In the course of our genealogical inquiry to discover descendants of our immigrant ancestor Philip, we learned there are many Americans bearing the surname Cody, who by the above and other tests, are not genealogically related to our Cody family. Some of these were themselves immigrants, others had but a few generations<sup>139</sup> of American ancestry, and there were many whose American ancestry began prior to the American Revolution. A large number of the latter we found residing in the southern states.<sup>140</sup> These southern Codys for the most part claimed a common immigrant ancestor whose given name was James and who was known to have inherited the surname Cody from Irish ancestry who had borne it for several generations. The date of his coming from Ireland was given as about 1743, and that upon his arrival he settled in the south, at first in Virginia and later in Georgia. The genealogist of this Cody family<sup>141</sup> reported that the origin of their surname had been traced to a member of the L'ercedekne Sept in Ireland, whose given name was Odo, and whose son took MacOdo as a surname, and that his descendants in time, probably by the early part of the seventeenth century shortened this to Codo which soon became Cody. Here then we have an origin of the use of Cody as a surname that is as unique as that of our family's use of it.

This southern Cody family claims a coat-of-arms,<sup>142</sup> which of course no one can claim who is not a descendant of the Odo branch of the L'ercedekne family.

That not all Irish who bear the surname Cody can claim this Odo to be the origin of their use of the name is evidenced not only by the fact that the name Cody is quite common in Ireland, but more especially by the fact that the name is found in records of a date considerably earlier than the seventeenth century when, as above noted, it was first found in records of the L'ercedekne family. And not only in earlier Irish records is the name found, but also in English records of even an earlier date.<sup>143</sup>

For the origin of these early uses of the name and to account for its quite common use in Ireland and in some sections of England, various assumptions have been made by students of surnames. Of these assumptions there seems the fairly reasonable one that since the essential syllable Cod of this surname is that of many other surnames, it may at one time have served to describe the marked appearance or behavior of certain individuals whose descendants claiming it for themselves thereupon made use of it in combination with some other word when circumstances came to demand that, they have a surname as well as a given name. And some of these may easily have taken the simple form Cod-y. Also there seems the reasonable chance, as some writers on surnames suggest, that so short a name as Cody may have been an abbreviation for a given name difficult to pronounce by children, and that those thus nick-named came in time to assume this for a surname which then became that of their descendants. In the light of these various assumptions of possible origin of this surname, there reasonably may be many genealogically un-related families which have the surname Cody.