Armstrong War: Colleen Murphy's Enduring Legacy

The Armstrong War, a brief but bloody conflict that erupted in Ireland in 1784, has long been overshadowed by the more famous 1798 Rebellion. However, the war played a significant role in Irish history, and one of its most fascinating figures was a young woman named Colleen Murphy.

Murphy was born in County Wexford, Ireland, in 1767. Her father was a farmer, and her mother was a devout Catholic. Murphy received a basic education, and she was known for her intelligence and quick wit. In 1784, when she was 17 years old, the Armstrong War broke out in Wexford.



Armstrong's War by Colleen Murphy

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The war was sparked by the government's attempts to suppress the activities of the Whiteboys, a secret society of Irish peasants who were protesting against the harsh treatment they received from their landlords.

The Whiteboys were led by William Armstrong, a blacksmith from Enniscorthy. Armstrong was a charismatic and popular figure, and he quickly gained a large following. The government responded to the Whiteboy threat by sending in troops, and a series of bloody clashes ensued.

Murphy was caught up in the war when she was captured by the British troops. She was accused of being a Whiteboy sympathizer, and she was sentenced to be hanged. However, Murphy's execution was stayed at the last minute, and she was instead transported to Australia as a convict.

Murphy arrived in Australia in 1788, and she was assigned to work as a servant in the household of Governor Arthur Phillip. Phillip was impressed by Murphy's intelligence and her willingness to work hard. He eventually granted her a pardon, and she was allowed to settle in the colony as a free woman.

Murphy married a fellow Irish convict named John Burke in 1792, and the couple had several children. She became a successful businesswoman, and she owned several properties in Sydney. Murphy was also a well-respected member of the Irish community in Australia, and she was known for her generosity and her commitment to helping others.

Murphy died in Sydney in 1838, at the age of 71. She was buried in the Catholic cemetery in Camperdown, and her grave is still visited by people today. Murphy's legacy as a strong and independent woman who overcame adversity to build a new life in Australia is an inspiration to many.

The Armstrong War was a complex and tragic event, and Colleen Murphy's story is just one of the many that could be told about the war. However,

Murphy's story is a reminder that even in the darkest of times, there is always hope for a better future.

Image: Colleen Murphy (right) with her husband, John Burke, and their children. Courtesy of the National Library of Australia.



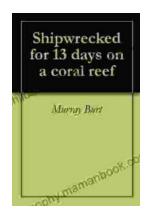
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