

Bennett McGuirk House, 401 Boggess St., c. 1855

Summary



Patrick Bennett "Ben" McGuirk was born 31 October 1826 in County Monaghan, Ireland.

Mary McDonald was born in 1831 in County Monaghan, Ireland.

There are various dates relating to when Mary emigrated to the U.S. The 1900 census has 1850; the 1910 census has 1845; her obituary has 1852.

Bennett McGuirk moved to Glasgow, Scotland, when he was 24, around 1850. He stayed in Glasgow for two years, then emigrated to New York City about 1852. A correspondent to the Galena Daily Gazette wrote, in a "Letter from Nebraska," that B. McGuirk walked from Freeport to Galena "before the railroad was built..."

“Bernard” *sic* McGuirk and Mary McDonald married 7 October 1854 in Jo Daviess County, Illinois, almost certainly in Galena.

One son, Patrick, was born in 1855. A second son, Alexander, was born 30 March 1857. Both births were in Galena.

“Bennett” McGuirk became a naturalized citizen in the Circuit Court of Jo Daviess County 23 May 1860.

Daughter, Mary McGuirk, was born 16 December 1866. Son, Edward B. McGuirk, joined the family in 1869.

On 18 April 1870, Bennett McGuirk offered a two-story frame house and three lots, plus a stable and wood sheds at the corner of Boggess and Fourth streets, Galena. The house “contains six rooms and a fine cellar, and cistern.” The house was still on sale in 1871.

The McGuirk family moved to Dixon County, Nebraska, in 1871. There was a small, but significant migration of Galenians to Dixon County around 1871.

A son, Thomas McGuirk, was born that same year of 1871. Daughter Rose was born 7 March 1873 in Daily, Dixon County, Nebraska.

Bennett McGuirk bought 160 acres of land in Dixon County 20 July 1878.

Daughter Catharine, 11 months old, born in August of 1880, died of croup in Nebraska.

Bennett and Mary McGuirk moved from Daily Township to Newcastle, Nebraska, in 1902.

Bennett died in Newcastle 22 June 1909. He was 83. Six children survived him. He is buried in Saint Peter’s Cemetery, Newcastle, Nebraska.

Mary McGuirk moved in with her daughter, Mary’s family. In the 1910 census, she was enumerated having had 12 children, 6 of whom were living.

Alexander McGuirk died 26 June 1912 in Dixon County, Nebraska.

Mary McDonald McGuirk dies in Newcastle, Nebraska, 14 March 1913. She is buried at Saint Peter’s Church cemetery.

The McGuirks were poor when they arrived in Nebraska, but were successful at farming. Friends from Galena who had moved to Dixon County corresponded with the Galena newspaper and occasionally referenced the McGuirk family.