

History of Dakota Territory; By George W. Kingsbury South Dakota, Its History and Its People; Edited By George Martin Smith, B.A., A.M.; Biographical; Illustrated; Volume IV; Chicago; the S. J. Clarke Publishing Company; 1915

Richard I. McKenzie is a resident farmer of the Mission Dill precinct whose arrival in Dakota Territory occurred in the year 1873. He was born at Duncannon, Perry County, Pennsylvania, July 10, 1856, a son of **Augustus McKenzie**, who also was a native of tin Keystone state, while the grandfather was born near Glasgow, Scotland. About 1867 the family removed westward to De Kalb County, Illinois. In the meantime the father had served as a soldier in the Civil war, being on active duty for two years as a member of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Pennsylvania Infantry. After living in Illinois for a year or two the family removed to Boone County, Iowa, where **Richard I. McKenzie** was reared, he was a lad of about eleven years at the time of the removal to the middle west and was a youth of seventeen when he arrived in Dakota, crossing the line from Sioux City. He followed the river until 1887, running as mate on boats from Fort Benton to Fort Custer on the Big Horn and to Fort Keough at the head of navigation on the Yellowstone. He spent seven seasons with Captain Wolfolk on the W. J. Behan and General Terry. The remainder of the time he was on such well known boats as the Rosebud, Josephine, Benton, Peninah, Fontanelle, Nellie Peek, General Thompkins, F. Y. Bachelor, Eclipse, the Far West and the Helena. He has seen herds of buffalo as far as the eye could reach in the early days of the up river traffic and has seen the Indians in hostile bands, but none of them ever shot at **Mr. McKenzie** although they occasionally took a shot at some of the boats as late as 1879 or 1880. **Mr. McKenzie** was aboard the Fontanelle in March, 1881, when the flood rose, submerging everything from bluff to bluff. About six miles west of Yankton, after vain efforts to save the boat, it was crushed and during the night it sank. The men on board took tarpaulins and made a temporary tent on land for shelter and in the morning pulled one of the yawls across the ice to the shore.

Mr. McKenzie continued to follow the river until his marriage in 1887, when he settled in Yankton and engaged in farming. He first rented a tract of land six miles north of the city and continued its cultivation for five years. He then removed to a farm near Gayville, on which he lived for four years and later spent ten years north of Yankton on a farm near the asylum. About 1905 he was appointed superintendent of the county farm and for six years had charge thereof. In 1909 he purchased his present farm and in 1911 took up his abode thereon. He has built a comfortable cottage home and is equipping the farm with the latest improvements and accessories. He has purchased much of the best farm machinery to be obtained, has sunk an artesian well and in other ways has developed the property until it is now a most desirable tract of land.

On the 13th of March, 1887, **Mr. McKenzie** was united in marriage at Yankton to **Miss Laura M. Gilliland**, a daughter of **David James** and **Susan (Line) Gilliland**, of Pennsylvania. They removed to Warren County, Illinois, and **Mrs. McKenzie** was born on a farm near Alexis. After the war the family came to Dakota Territory, driving across the country with teams and camping out along the wayside, reaching their destination after a month spent in travel in which they always rested over Sunday. They crossed the river at Muscatine, Iowa and had to wait a week for the river to clear so that the ferry boat could run. They settled six miles west of Yankton, the bluffs and that place remains the family home, but the father passed away in 1903.

Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie have no children of their own, but are rearing an adopted daughter, **Frida**, who is now a pupil in the Yankton high school. In politics **Mr. McKenzie** is a stalwart republican and keeps well informed on the questions and issues of the day. He holds membership with the Knights of Pythias and the Modern Woodmen of America and he is a member of the Congregational Church of Mission Hill. The rules which he follows are those which govern strict and honorable manhood and the integrity of his motives is seen in his business relations as well as his other connections.

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