

CFR 0721

Mr. Frank LeLand McGirr

APPLICATION FOR CENTURY FARM HONORS

GRANT

Deadline for filing applications - May 1, 1985

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT:

Your name (Mr., Mrs., Ms.) MR. Leland FRANK Mc GIRR

Your address: Box 336 Fox 97831
Street, Route, or Box Town Zip

Location of Farm: Fox, Oregon Grant
Address County

To qualify as a Century Farm, a farm must have not less than 10 acres with a gross income from farm use of not less than \$500 per year for three out of the five years immediately preceding application for Century Farm Honors. Does your farm meet this qualification? yes

Name of family member who was founder or original owner of farm _____
FRANK Mc GIRR

Year founder settled on farm 1880 Where did he come from? NEVADA

Who farms the land today? Leland FRANK Mc GIRR

Relationship to original owner? Grandson

Are any of the original buildings still in use? If so which ones? Granary
and frame work of one barn

If you know crops or livestock raised on farm one hundred years ago, please list:
CATTLE, sheep, Hay and grain

What do you raise on farm today? CATTLE, grain and
HAY

How many generations live on the farm today (Names)? Leland F
Mc GIRR; Three generations work on the Ranch.

How many times has the original farm been divided? None

Do you declare that the statements made above are accurate and correct to the best of your knowledge? yes

Please return form to: _____
Leland F. McGirr
Signature of Owner
Melred L. McGirr

Elizabeth W. Buchler, Field Historian
Oregon Historical Society
1230 S.W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon, 97205

CFR0721

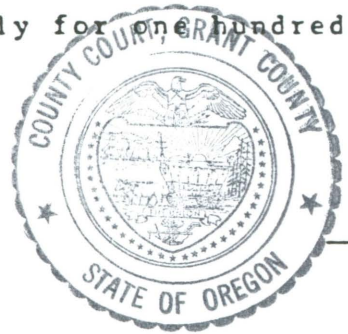
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CERTIFICATION OF OWNERSHIP OF CENTURY FARM

I hereby certify that the farm for which Island Frank McGinn

Is, Oregon
(owner's Name and Address)

is applying for Century Farm Honors has been in his family
continuously for one hundred or more years.



Carole Knight
(County Recorder/Clerk)

04-19-85
Date

Frank McGirr--- The prominent citizen and esteemed gentleman whose name is at the head of this article is one of the leading stockmen and stock dealers in the eastern Oregon region and has wrought with herculean efforts in this county for the advancement of its welfare and for the developments of its resources, as well as being eminently successful in the achievements of his private business enterprises. As a pioneer to the region where he now resides, he commenced at the bottom of the ladder and it is largely due to his efforts that Fox Valley owes its prosperity, since he was instrumental in bringing the resources with which it is blessed to the attention of others that the way should be opened for the ingress of civilization.

Mr. McGirrs father was a native of Ireland and came to the United States in 1830 when he was thirteen years old, locating in Missouri, where he later married Miss Elizabeth Haskins and they became the parents of five children, four of them being in Grant County, and the other is deceased. In 1852 the family came across the plains and experienced much trouble with the Indians enroute, losing one man and nearly fifty head of stock in the many battles that occurred on the Humbolt River. They settled near Stockton, California, and later moved to Nevada, where the father died, and in 1899 the mother died in this county.

Referring more particularly to Mr. Frank McGirr, the subject of this sketch, we may say that his birth occurred in Stockton, Cal. January 23, 1860, but while still a child he went with his parents to Austin, Nev., where he was raised on a farm and in giving attention to the herds his father owned. Here also he received his education in the public schools. At an early age he commenced the life of the cowboy and rode for several years in Nevada. It was in 1879 that he came to the north in company with thirty-five others who were detailed to bring ten thousand head of cattle from Sterns Mountain to Wyoming for a Mr. Davis. The cattle were divided into three bands, and twelve men were the number with each band. Before completing the journey, Mr McGirr resigned his place and came through this valley enroute to Walla Walla, Washington. IN the following spring he returned to this valley and took up a pre-emption and then a homestead, where he now lives at Fox Post Office. He has added until his estate is nearly twelve hundred acres, and it is all fenced and improved. He gives his attention to farming and raising stock and also buying and selling, being one of the heaviest dealers in this section. He has some very fine purebred cattle and takes great interest in improving the stock throught the valley.

The marriage of McGirr and Miss Henrietta Hart, daughter of Harice and Marguerite Hart, late of Prescott, Wash. was consummated on March, 21, 1880, and to this union were born the following children, Rhoda E., deceased, Nora May, deceased; Albert; Frank; Etta; Nellie; Cash, deceased; Bertha; and Mabel Irene.

This article was copied from a "History of Grant Co." written in the early 1900's. It is also on file at the Grant Co. Court house

Century Farm

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Leland's father, Frank McGirr Jr. born in 1887. Eventually the parents moved to John Day during the winter so their children could attend school. Frank Jr. and Bert were the only two boys who grew up to continue ranching.

Following Frank McGirr's death in 1909, Frank Jr. and Bert became ranching partners. Frank Jr. eventually bought out his brother and sister's portions of the ranch. He married a local girl in 1912, Bessie Alderson of Fox. Leland was born that same year and later a sister Phyllis joined him.

Leland worked on the ranch, taking over full charge upon his father's death at age 89 in 1976.

Long Creek High School sweetheart Mildred Gibbs of Galena became Leland's wife in 1933. They recently celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary.

Leland and Mildred remain active in the ranch, happy in the knowledge that son Bud will take it over and continue the McGirr Fox Valley ranching tradition. They also have two daughters, Pat Still of John Day and Betty Crave of Portland.

"If the cattle market lasts and the money is here we think it will stay in the family," said Mildred. She pointed out that several other farms in Fox Valley now over 100 years old have changed hands one or more times.

"People don't stay on places anymore," said Mildred. "They

can't afford it." Their son Bud lives on a 100 year-old farm in Long Creek that has changed hands just once, from Carter to McGirr.

What keeps the McGirrs happy in a beautiful, lonely valley in the mountains? During the Indian summer weather of the fall, the days are warm and skies brilliant over pine and golden larch forests surrounding Fox. But at 5100 feet they both admit the winters are cold, long and snowy.

"I guess you just get in a rut and can't get out," Leland said jokingly, an obviously dedicated rancher.

"In ranching you're your own boss," Mildred added.

"You just have to like it to do it," said Mildred. Leland nodded his agreement from across the living room, sitting where once his father and father before him relaxed at the end of a long day on the McGirr ranch.

John Day, OR
Blue Mountain Eagle
(Cir. W. 3,202)

OCT 24 1985

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888



Leland and Mildred McGirr of Fox, who recently received a Century Farm Award for the McGirr farm, still enjoy the ranching life that has been a McGirr tradition for over 100 years.

Leland's grandfather, Frank McGirr, was also the first settler of Fox valley in 1880.

Century Farm

McGirr Ranch in Family Three Generations

FOX — Relaxing in comfortable chairs in the same living room three generations have called home, Leland and Mildred McGirr share the pride and love for ranching that has kept the McGirr family farm together for over 100 years.

This year, the McGirrs received a certificate recognizing their ranch as a "Century Farm Award winner." Founded in 1880 by Leland's grandfather Frank McGirr, the farm has an added prestige of being the first settlement of Fox Valley and remaining under the McGirr family name.

The McGirrs have expanded from an original 1200 acres to the current 4000 acres in Fox Valley

area with an additional 600 acres in Long Creek. Leland runs cattle in the tradition of his father and grandfather. Carrying on is son Bud McGirr who ranches in Long Creek, and two grandsons, both with an interest in ranching.

The story of the McGirrs arrival in the 1800s to the remote Fox Valley set high in the Blue Mountains along the route from John Day to Pendleton, starts with Leland's great grandfather Patrick McGirr.

Patrick McGirr immigrated to the United States from Ireland in 1830, settling first in Connecticut and later moving west to Missouri. There he met and married Elizabeth Haskins.

The couple kept moving westward to Stockton, California where Frank McGirr and four other children were born. The family moved on to Austin, Nevada where they ran a successful cattle operation.

As a young man, Frank McGirr, age 17, left Nevada on a 10,000 head cattle drive to Canada that passed right through the uninhabited Fox Valley.

Frank McGirr did not continue to Canada, instead halting at Walla Walla and retracing his steps back to Fox Valley to start a homestead and his own ranching operation. That was in 1879.

The next year he headed north

again to Walla Walla and returned with a wife, Henrietta Hart McGirr. They built the sturdy home that was to house generations of McGirrs. The two-story white, wood frame house may be seen today on Highway 395 next to the Fox Valley store and post office.

A 1200 acre ranch was "a big outfit in those days," said Leland. He pointed out that many ranchers in the 1800s did not bother trying to own much property since the range was free and open for grazing.

Frank and Henrietta McGirr raised nine children (two who died as children and the oldest at age 19) in Fox Valley, including

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