

McGraw, Thomas,

Was born in Castletown, on the River Shannon, County of Limerick, Ireland, September 17, 1824. His mother was Elizabeth Faught, a German by descent and a member of the Lutheran Church. His father Redmond McGraw came from a Scotch-Irish Family. They were married in Ireland.

Redmond McGraw with his family landed in America at Quebec in 1825, and purchased land at a point south of the Canadian Border in New York State. Here he cleared the wild land but found it unproductive. He and his family then removed to Ogdensburg where he repeated his experience. From this farm he went to St. Thomas, Ontario.

In 1835 he sold this farm and moved to the township of Canton, Wayne county, Michigan during the last year of the Territorial status of Michigan. Here young Thomas lived for five years. At the age of 15 he wanted to be a sailor and set out for the East to apply. When he reached Rochester, N. Y., he gave up the idea and engaged as a clerk in a store at \$96 per year. In 1841 he had saved enough to buy a farm of 40 acres in Michigan which he sold in 1848 at \$700.

In 1847 he engaged in the wool business at Novi. Later he formed a partnership with Jessa Saxton, who is spoken of elsewhere. Before many years it grew to be a large institution and in 1864 they were compelled to seek a more central location and moved to Detroit, April 1, 1864. At the same time a branch was established in Boston, Mass.

In 1872 he released some of his holdings with the intention of retiring. He owned a half interest in the Globe Tobacco Co., also was its president for many years. Jessa E. Saxton was the Secretary, Treasurer and General Manager.

Thomas McGraw was one of the founders and director of the Michigan Savings Bank, stockholder in the American National Bank. He also owned several large buildings among which was the McGraw Building. He also collected the McGraw library.

In 1848 he married Miss Mary T. Sheldon Gardiner, daughter of James Gardiner.

Thomas' father died in Oakland County in 1852 and his mother in 1877. Thomas was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

He was injured in a street car accident near his home at 1085 Woodward Ave., and died from these injuries Oct. 11, 1897. He left his wife, Mary, a daughter Mrs. Jos. N. Surrill, two sons W. T. McGraw and Homer McGraw. Two other daughters died in 1868 and 1869.

Masonic record. Raised in Northville Lodge No. 47, November 29, 1852. Transferred to Farmington Lodge No. 151 to become a charter member October 15, 1863, then to Oriental No. 240 Jan. 31, 1871. He dimitted April 16, 1878 and never joined another.