



Patrick J. Quirk Diary (C3943)

Collection Number: C3943

Collection Title: Patrick J. Quirk Diary

Dates: 1865

Creator: Quirk, Patrick J., 1845-1921

Abstract: The diary of Patrick J. Quirk relates the details of a trip made in 1865 by railroad and steamboat from Springfield, Massachusetts, to Yankton, South Dakota, on the way to the Montana Territory.

Collection Size: 0.02 cubic feet
(1 folder)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at columbia@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: Materials in this collection are in the public domain.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Patrick J. Quirk Diary* (C3943); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia].

Donor Information: The diary was donated to the University of Missouri by Patrick Quirk's granddaughter, Alice M. Knight of Marlborough, New Hampshire, on July 23, 1991 (Accession No. CA5055).

Alternate Forms Available: The diary has been digitized and is available online at: <https://digital.shsmo.org/digital/collection/frontier/id/669/rec/12>.

Processed by: Processed by Tom Sullivan on November 7, 1996. Finding aid revised by Elizabeth Engel on December 22, 2021.

Biographical Note:

Patrick J. Quirk, born 14 January 1845, in Drumbiggle, Ennis, County Clare, Ireland, was the son of Patrick J. and Ellen Carmody Quirk. His father, a small landowner, had his son educated by the Christian Brothers, a religious order prominent in Irish secondary education.

Quirk and his brother Dennis emigrated to the United States, arriving on 13 January 1865. They proceeded to Springfield, Massachusetts, where they took jobs working for the Armory. Patrick then moved to New York, where he was hired to work as a surveyor for a company exploring the West. The diary is a partial account of a trip made in 1865 from Springfield, Massachusetts, to the Montana Territory.

Patrick Quirk returned to New York after his trip to Montana. A contractor, his company was responsible for putting in the water and sewer systems in the Bronx. He had eight children and died in New York on 27 December 1921.

Arrangement:

The diary has been maintained in its original order.

Scope and Content Note:

The Quirk Diary, as presently constituted, consists of twenty pages in five sections (unbound, four pages per section) and contains the journal entries of a trip Patrick J. Quirk made by railroad and steamboat from Springfield, Massachusetts, as far as Yankton, South Dakota. The first entry is dated 8 May 1865; the last entry, 24 June 1865. The final sections of the diary are missing: the last entry ends in mid-sentence, the crossing of Nebraska and Quirk's experiences in Montana are not related.

The diary presents Quirk's observations about the countryside through which he is passing on train or steamboat as well as life on the steamboat. His itinerary took him by railroad from Springfield, Massachusetts, to New York City, through Chicago, Illinois, to Saint Louis, Missouri, and by steamboat up the Missouri River from Saint Louis to Yankton, South Dakota, and beyond. Quirk describes the size and character of the towns in which he spends some time, commenting on particular buildings that impress him, variety shows he enjoyed, and events that struck him. The cities of Chicago and Saint Louis receive his particular attention, as do the towns of St. Joseph, Omaha, and Council Bluffs. Quirk relates how certain tasks are performed (how mule teams are hitched, buffalo hides tanned, or tepees constructed) and describes the different peoples he encounters (particularly Native Americans, their mode of dress and behavior). He comments frequently on the situation of fellow Irish immigrants, their successes and failures. He is interested in trees and lists all those he can identify.

Container List:

f. 1 Diary, 1865

Index:

Index Terms	Years	Folder
Illinois, Chicago--Description and travel	1860s	1
Indigenous peoples--Social life and customs	1860s	1
Iowa, Council Bluffs--Description and travel	1860s	1
Irish Americans	1860s	1
Missouri River--Description and travel	1860s	1
Missouri, St. Joseph, Description and travel	1860s	1
Missouri, St. Louis, Description and travel	1860s	1
Mules	1860s	1
Nebraska, Omaha, Description and travel	1860s	1
Railroads, Description and travel	1860s	1
Sioux Nation	1860s	1
Steamboat--Fanny Ogden	1860s	1
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