

JOSEPH FENNELL

Joseph was born in Ireland in 1841 (the day and month are unknown) although the 1900 census of North Dakota reports him to have been born in April 1843.

Joseph, John and Thomas Henry were the first of the family to emigrate to North Dakota; they were listed in the 1880 census as residents of township 155, the Township of Walshville, which lies immediately south of Pulaskie Township. At that time Joseph, a farmer aged 37, was married to Lavina, age 31. John Fennell, a farm labourer, lived with them. In the 1885 census Joseph and Lavina, ages 44 and 42, were in Pulaskie Township. John was still with them and there were two adopted children, Francis and Ann Waters, ages 8 and 6, from Wisconsin. Nearby were his parents, Thomas and Anne Fennell, with whom were his brother, Thomas Henry and Perry Waters and Analetia Burrows.

On October 2, 1885, Joseph made a payment in respect of his "Final Receivers Receipt" and on May 14, 1887 he was granted a Patent for

NE1/4 SW1/4	section	13,
E1/2 SE1/4	"	14, and
NW1/4 SE1/4	"	14,

which were lots in township 156, range 51. Section 14 was not a river access lot but his ownership of 26 acres in section 13 (lot #5) enabled him to build his home on the bank of the Red River a mile south of his parents.

The 1900 census reported Lavina to have been born in Canada in April 1843; both she and Joseph were 57 years old. Joseph was said to have entered the U.S.A. in 1879 and by 1900 had been resident for 21 years. He was a farmer and owned his farm in Pulaskie township, Walsh county. The census indicated that they had had one child which had died. John and his wife, Emily, appeared to be living with Joseph but this seems unlikely since John had already inherited his parents farm. As well, on May 16, 1889, John had sold his interests in Joseph's farm to Joseph.

On November 9, 1901 Joseph and Lavina sold their entire property to Apolinary Rojalla; a month later John and Emily sold their farm and left North Dakota. Thomas Henry had sold several years earlier and Hezekiah had moved to St. Andrews township nearly ten years before.

The 1920 federal census of Oregon lists Joseph and his family in Polk County, on Johnson Street in West Salem, as follows:

Fennell, Joseph	Head	79	imm.1847	b.Ireland
" , Lavina	Wife	79		b.Canada
Kessel, Ellen	Ad.dau	37		b.Wisconsin
" , John W.	Son/law	38		b.Missouri
Jarvin, Frank	Grd/son	16		b.N.Dakota

There is nothing in this to account for the Waters children, Francis and Ann, who were "adopted" children, born in Wisconsin, in the 1885 census of North Dakota. They would have been about the age of Ellen.

The immigration date of 1847 is certainly erroneous although it would probably be about the date that Joseph had originally entered Canada with his parents. Joseph was recorded as retired, Ellen as a jewellery store employee, John Kessel as a drawbridge tender and Frank Jarvin as a woodcutter. There is no information about Ellen; as far as we know, Joseph and Lavina had one child who had died. The Jarvin boy was born in North Dakota but obviously after Joseph sold the farm in Pulaskie Township in 1901. His father was born in Wisconsin so he is not likely a son of John Kessel who was born in Missouri. His mother was born in "U.S." so she may or may not have been Ellen. Assuming that there were no more adopted children, it is possible that Frank is Ellen's son; that his father died and Ellen remarried; and that Frank retained his father's name. That would produce parents who were both born in Wisconsin and a step-father who was not. And the name "Kessel" would be one familiar to Pulaskie Township, a township settled largely by European immigrants.

Joseph was still in North Dakota in 1900 so it would have been the 1910 census of Oregon which first listed his family if they had been residents of the state in that year. The 1910 census is not indexed but a check of West Salem did not locate his name. On the other hand, it is possible that at the outset he farmed so that his name would have been listed elsewhere.

A family bible records the death of "Joe" Fennell on December 5, 1924. The Oregon Index of Deaths confirms Joseph's death in Marion County on that date. Lavina's maiden name is not known nor is the date of her death nor where either is buried. Joseph did not share in Rebecca Griffith's estate although she seems to have predeceased him. If the dates of death were correct he would have been one of the beneficiaries although he died before the date of distribution. Accordingly it seems that Lavina also died before 1926 since, had she been alive when the estate was finally distributed, his share would have fallen to her; but this does not explain why his share of the estate did not fall to (say) his adopted daughter.