

THE VINCENT FAMILY OF OREGON

Chapter 1 Joseph Vincent

Appendix History of Umapine, Ore.

(Remainder of Book
still in the process
of compilation.)

Any person, a family relationship with any person mentioned in this booklet, or knowing of any, is requested to contact the compiler, Joseph E. Vincent, of 10421 Lampson Avenue, Garden Grove, Calif.

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JOSEPH VINCENT*

Joseph Vincent¹ was born in Virginia about 1827. He had several brothers and at least one sister. One document gives them as Frank, Will, Henry, John, and Lucy², while another calls them Toby and Wash³.

In Virginia, the Vincent boys were without shoes part of the time⁴, and

. . . when they wanted to chop wood for the fireplace, they took a short board and set it in front of the fireplace to get hot, then they put on two pairs of hand-knitted wool sox, grab[bed] the hot board and ran out to the woodpile and stood on the hot board and chop[ped] wood.

I do not know in what year or why they left Virginia, but they started west through Ohio. In Ohio they tried to draft him for the Union Army, but being from the south he escaped to Missouri and settled there . . .⁵.

Sometime during the move West, he passed through Indiana where he married Rachael Lewis, from New York and a descendant of Sir Francis Drake⁶.

Whether they stayed in Indiana long is not known. From there, however, they " . . . moved to Iowa and had a good farm, part in that state and part in Missouri" ⁷. According to a newspaper clipping of unknown source and date, they got their homestead in-1840⁸. In the Missouri portion of the homestead, they kept slaves, while in the Iowa portion they did not. According to one source

* Joseph Vincent's family serial number in the Vincent Family Chronicle is #22. On pedigree chart #1, he is no. 16 (i.e. 1-16). John Riley Vincent is no. 23 and 1-8. Rachael Lewis is no. 138 and 1-17. Almeda Gregory Vincent, 404, Al Vincent, 323, Charity Vincent, 324, J. C. Vincent, 144, Bird, 147, Jesse T.(Jack) Conrad, #148.

"they seemingly had a wonderful start back there"⁹. "They
"were doing well. They had sheep, cotton, flax, and were
prosperous . . ." ¹⁰ Rachael taught school¹¹.

Although they were doing well . and Joseph would
liked to have stayed there, his wife was the restless type
and decided to "go West"¹².

She was a terrific human dynamo, with the Francis
Drake compulsion and could not stay "put"¹³. . . Her
husband thought it was ridiculous to leave for parts
unknown¹⁴.

. . . she decided to come West. She did all the
work of getting ready — made the thread, the cloth,
and the clothes — even the wagon covers. Mr. Vincent
came along. I do not remember how many children they
had with them then¹⁵.

In 1864 they left ¹⁶. Very little is known about the
trip West except that it took five months. It is assumed
that they took the Oregon Trail used by most of the Pioneers
of that day except the Mormons, and crossed the Snake River
at Burley, Idaho.

Grandma [Rachael] told my husband [Mr. Fahl]
about crossing Goose Creek (Burley, Idaho) when it
was swollen with rain. The guide knew where to cross
but the current washed the dirt away. The mules lost
their footing and were cut off from the wagon to save
it. Mules washed out into the Snake River and were
lost¹⁷.

They settled . . . someplace in the Goose Lake
region in Southern Oregon and Grants Pass . . .¹⁸

Apparently the family lived in eastern and southern
Oregon for a while. Mrs. A. S. Vincent² believes that the
brothers and the sister, Lucy, settled in eastern Oregon,
the Rogue River valley and the Willamette valley, and that
their descendants are still there. She also mentions in a

letter¹⁹, that some Vincents and Hammerslys (Lucy's descendants) are still in that area. There as in other places in the West, Rachael served as a nurse and midwife²⁰.

From eastern and southern Oregon, Joseph and his family moved on to Umatilla County and settled at Gravelly Flats. There he took out a homestead of a quarter section or 160 acres. He once told that he had ridden a horse all over Walla Walla valley and could have had his choice of any land²¹.

He gave a corner of his land for a church and a neighbor on the adjoining homestead gave a corner of his land for a school. Both the school and the church were given the name Vincent, and the little settlement at that crossroads that was once called Gravelly Flats now became Vincent, Oregon. Still later, the town was renamed Umapine, the name it bears today²².

Rachael never lost her restlessness, and wanted her husband to move on. Although he was considered an influential man in the community, she considered him too complacent²³. She finally left him, taking their youngest child, Mollie (or "Sis") with her. The others hse left with their father — Henry, John Riley, Matilda, and Elizabeth Minerva — intending to come back for them later²⁴. She never returned, however^{25,26}. A daughter-in-law of Joseph's says that "his wife left him and took Mollie with her leaving all the rest with their father (a better man never lived) . . .²⁷

One of the children, John Riley, then four or five years

old, later told his children, how as a boy he had stood for hours with his nose against a window pane at their home in Umapine, crying and waiting for his mother to return²⁸.

Because of the children, Joseph soon remarried. His bride, Almeda Gregory Wilson, had been born in Missouri, and had crossed the plains with the Clint and Walt Hodgens Wagon Train. Like the others she had also crossed the river at the Goose Creek crossing near Burley, Idaho.²⁹ All say that she was a good wife and fine housekeeper and was a good step-mother to the children³⁰. She and her husband later had a son, Al, a half-brother to the rest.

Mrs. Harry E. Simpson (Dorothy Dorcas Conrad) describes the Vincent home in Umapine as follows:

I knew your great grandfather, Joseph Vincent, and his second wife, Almeda, when I was a little girl. . . I remember their nice home with such a green lawn and all kinds of flowers and somehow I especially remember a croquet set on the lawn. They were located very near the Vincent school which was on their property.**. I graduated from the eighth grade there in 1908 (still have my diploma). At that time I remember the school had three large rooms with a hall running all the way through the building. The playground was large and fenced in, with locust trees growing around the fence. The boys had a big enough place to play baseball. The girls played townball, darebase, etc.

I remember your [great] grandfather was a very kind man and he was considered one of the prominent men of the community, and a man of some means³¹.

Joseph Vincent is described by Mrs. Jack Fahl (Betty Yeager), saying that ". . . he was gentle, slow, and willing

** Wrong. The Vincent School was across the street from the Vincent homestead. The land was given by a neighbor.

to stay "put" ³³. Mrs. A. B. Vincent (Charity Conrad), his daughter-in-law, described him as "a better man never lived . . . ³³ He was such a wonderful man, never had an enemy. I almost worshipped him. My husband, Al, . . . was such a grand man like his father" ³⁴.

John Riley Vincent, one of Joseph's sons, took out a homestead in October 1882, adjacent to his father's, but gave it up in 1886. Why is not known, but it is suspected that he had some of his mother's wanderlust.

When John Riley passed away in Summerville in 1893, according to his daughter-in-law,

. . . his father Joseph went with a wagon and team and moved the family over to Walla Walla where they lived till Queen Ann, the mother, passed on in . . . He kept them and supplied them with all they had. After Queen Ann passed on Al and his father Joseph took the children . . . We kept the girl Bird and little Ray ³⁵.

(Although Joseph's grandson, J. C. Vincent, who was present as a young boy of about nine at the time, disagrees with that statement, saying that it was Enos and Elizabeth Goodman and their daughter, Eunice, who actually went for them in the wagon, the quotation is put in here to show how well Joseph was thought of.)

J. C. Vincent says he remembers distinctly seeing his grandfather, Joseph, then 67 years of age, standing on the lawn of his home in Umapine, with his shoes off, and he remembers in particular his feet with six toes. Passing through Umapine at that time when he was nine years old was the first time he had seen his grandfather, at least since

since he could remember, and Joseph made quite an impression on his grandson³⁶.

Sometime early in the 1900's, a quarrel took place between Joseph and his son, Al, over the homestead. Evidently Al wanted to move on and needed money. In 1901 the homestead was sold for \$10.00 an acre, \$1600.00 in all³⁷. Al then went with his father and with Bird and Jack Conrad, to Okanogan, where they secured another homestead, this one in Al's name³⁸.

Joseph did not like Okanogan and never adjusted to it. He grieved continuously for his old homestead and for Oregon and his family. Telling about the selling of his homestead in Umapine and going to Okanogan Co., John Eugene, another grandson had this to say:

And with the same pioneer spirit he sold out and moved to Okanogan Co., Washington, and a new homestead about 1898 [dates differ], where they say he died of homesickness and a broken heart³⁹. [1903]

Al left the homestead at Tonasket, on Enneas Lake, Okanogan County, and returned to the Umapine-Walla Walla area. Joseph Vincent was buried at Loomis, Washington.

Pictures. Picture Album #2. (13th and 14th leaf from front)

Vincent School, #106. Original building, #107
Vincent Church, #105, 108
Joseph Vincent's home in Umapine, #103, 104.

REFERENCES

1. In an article written by John Eugene Vincent about 1950, he gives his grandfather's name as Joe Riley Vincent. This is the only place found so far where the middle name of Riley appears. Joseph Vincent's son John Riley Vincent (1-8, #23) and a grandson, Joseph Riley Vincent (#205) both bore the middle name of Riley, but no place else has it ever been mentioned that the grandfather Joseph (#22) also bore that middle name. It has been presumed by the family that Riley must have been the maiden name of a female ancestor, as it was often the custom to use as the middle name of a child the maiden name of the mother. (Vincent Family Chronicle, p. 221)
2. Personal conversation with Mrs. A. S. Vincent at Umatilla, Ore., in the spring of 1961, and personal notes taken at the time by Joseph E. Vincent. (Letters, p. 127)
Lucy was mentioned several times in the conversation with Mrs. Vincent as Lucy Hammersly. Could this be the same Lucy Hammersly mentioned in Mrs. Vincent's letter of 24 July, 1959, or a daughter or grand daughter? (Vincent Family Chronicle p. 47A, back.
3. From John Eugene Vincent, Vincent Family Chronicle, p. 221.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. From Betty Fahl, 30 Sept. 1959, Letters, pp. 78E and F, 5 Sept. 60, ibid., p. 81.
7. Betty Fahl, 5 Sept. 60, Letters, p. 79.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 79B
10. Ibid., p. 81.
11. Ibid., p. 78F.
12. Ibid., p. 81.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 79B.
15. Ibid., p. 78C
16. Ibid., p. 83
17. Ibid., p. 81
18. John Eugene Vincent, Vincent Family Chronicle, op. cit. p. 221B.
19. Mrs. A. S. Vincent, VFC, p. 47B.
20. Mrs. Betty Fahl, Letters, p. 78F.

21. John E. Vincent, VFC, p. 221B
22. Personal conversation with J. C. Vincent, Banning, 29 December 1961.
23. Letters, p. 78-82.
24. Ibid., p. 79B, Also, Mrs. A. S. Vincent, VFC, p. 78E, Also, Letters, p. 126
25. Letters, p. 79B
- 26.
27. VFC, p. 47E
28. Personal conversation, J. C. Vincent, Banning, 23 Aug. 1960, Letters, p. 72
29. VFC, p. 47E, Letters, p. 126, 127. and 113. Also personal conversation with Mrs. Charity Vincent.
30. Letters, p. 113.
31. Ibid.
32. Letters, p. 81.
33. VFC, p. 47E
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid. p. 47B
36. Personal conversation at Banning, 30 December 1961.
37. Letters, p. 72 Also note: "After the Burlington Ditch came through that land was all valuable. The land which sold for \$10.00 an acre was now worth \$400 an acre." (Ibid.)
38. Ibid., p. 72, 126.
39. VFC, p. 221B, Letters, p. 126

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Vincent Family Chronicle (abbreviated VFC, above), a collection of notes, clippings, and letters pasted in a book. "Familien-Chronikel" (old English) on the cover. Microfilmed several times by the Genealogical Society of the Church of JC of LDS, and filed under number FFH 556, parts 1, 2, and 3, red serial number 28038. Part #3 is the most complete.

Genealogical Letters (abbreviated Letters, above), a collection of letters written and replies received relating to the Vincent family and other related families. Also contains a few pages of notes taken at personal conversations, and a few drawings, charts, etc.

HISTORY OF UMAPINE, OREGON

Extracted from letter from Mr. Tom Greene, Superintendent-Principal, Umapine School, dated 13 January 1962. (Letters, p. 195.)

The settlement at what was once called Gravelly Flats was named Vincent, after Joseph Vincent, an early land-owner who gave land for the first school and church. Because of the fact that there was another post office called Vincent in Oregon, the name of the settlement was changed in 1914 to Umapine.

The first school in the community was the "Old Dump School," which is in the location where the Pleasant View School now stands. Mr. Tom Green was principal there for eight years. There are no written records of that period. The students next attended a school taught in the home of Fanny Wright. There are no records of this period either.

In 1892 or '93, Joseph Vincent gave a corner of his land for the school and a church. (Mr. J. C. Vincent says that his grandfather gave a corner for the church and that the land for the school was given by another person.) A one room school was built on that land, in what is now used as summer fallow wheat land, across the street from the present location.

Later a three room school was constructed and Kyle McDaniel was appointed principal. In 1911, the district was bonded for \$15,000 and ^{a portion of} the new brick building now in use was constructed. In 1927, the remainder was built, completing the building as it is today.

In 1955, a new structure, the Vocational Agricultural Building was completed.

The church, on the original land across the street from the present school, is a United Brethern Church today. The church burned down twice but each time a new building replaced the old in the original location.

An area known as old Hudson Bay trading post was located about two miles out of town, in the Umapine School district. It is not strictly a trading post, however, but a place where the Indians camped and watered their horses.

The cemetary for the area in those days was the Old Ford Cemetary in or near Milton-Freewater. At least one member of the Vincent family is buried there.