



The Clay Township Farm, Jones County, Iowa

In the 1860 U.S. Census, John Wasson was identified as a tenant farmer living in Clay Township, Jones County, Iowa with his wife Jemima and their seven children. We are direct descendants of John, Jemima and their son Joe.

The 1860 U.S. Census showed that John and Jemima Wasson were tenant farmers in Clay Township, Jones County. This was the first available record that showed them living in Jones County, some six years after they moved to Iowa in 1854.

The closest-in-time plat map for the area was dated 1867, as much as seven years later (plat maps were often a year or two out of date by the time they were published), and plat maps generally show the names of land owners, not renters, so there isn't a plat map that shows where the Wassons lived in Clay Township at that time.

However, I identified a pair of farms on the Clay Township plat map that I believe the Wassons called home in 1860. I first compared the order of names in the 1860 U.S. Census with names on the 1867 plat map, and then compared that plat map to a recent Google Satellite image of the area.

SCHEDULE 1 - Free Inhabitants in Clay Township in the County of Jones State of Iowa enumerated by me, on the 13 day of July 1860. Wm. C. Johnson Marshal
 Post Office Sheldon

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Dwelling-house as order of valuation.	Family numbered in order of valuation.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	Color.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		Mary	12	f								
		Sarah	9	f								
		Robert	5	m								
4	772	Sarah Randall	27	f		Farmer	500	740	N.Y.			
		Kenneth	22	f								
		Salad										
		John Letta	26	m		Farmer			Iowa			
8	773	Wm. Corbett	34	m		Farmer		120	Ia			
		Sarah	31	f					Iowa			
		Wm.	7	m								
		Emma	2	f					Iowa			
13	774	George D. Water	23	m		Farmer		60	N.Y.			
		Delia	18	f								
		Sarah	14	f					Iowa			
		William Wood	39	m		Farmer		140	N.Y.			
		Emma	36	f								
		James	12	m								
18	775	Wm. P. Johnson	57	m		Farmer	500	490	Ia			
		Clara	34	f								
		Wm. S.	18	m								
		Mary	9	f								
		Margaret	5	f								
		James	5	f					Iowa			
		John Slayhill	61	m					Iowa			
		Wm. B. Grass	25	m		Farmer		210	Ia			
26	776	John Anderson	70	m		Farmer	700	370	Mass.			
		Lydia	66	f					N.Y.			
		Erasmus Dumb	60	m								
		Emma	13	m								
		Emergence	7	f								
31	777	John Anderson	38	m		Farmer		120	Iowa			
		Maria	28	f					N.Y.			
		David	7	m					Ia.			
		Frederic	7	f								
		George	4	m					Iowa			
		John	12	m								
		John Corbin	16	f					N.Y.			
35	778	Wilson Lee	26	m		Farmer	150	170	Vermont			
		Maria	22	f					Ia.			
		Allen	4	m					Iowa			
40		No. white males, 20	No. colored males,	No. foreign born,	No. blind,		8500	2620	No. idiots,			No. convicts,
		No. white females, 22	No. colored females,	No. deaf and dumb,	No. insane,				No. paupers,			

Part of the 1860 U.S. Census for Clay Township, Jones County (part 1)

SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in Clay Township in the County of Jones State of Iowa enumerated by me, on the 14 day of July 1860. Wm. C. Johnson Asst. Marshal
Post Office Shannon

1	2	3	4			7	8		10	11	12	13	14
			Age	Sex	Color		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate					
		Abner H.	21 m						Iowa				
		John H. Winters	47 m			Fanner	570		Scotland				
		Samuel	44 f										
		John	18 m						Ia				
		Sam	17 f										
		Mary	15 f										
		William	12 f										
		William	11 m										
		James	8 m										
		Joseph	8 m						Iowa				
		Orman Boardman				Fanner	500	240	Iowa				
		Charles	21 f										
		Francis H.	6 m						Iowa				
		Mary C.	12 f										
		William C. Fildner				Fanner			Iowa				
		Allen	21 f										
		Henry D. Dorn	44 m			Fanner	200	60	Ia				
		Sarah C.	17 f						Ia				
		Elizabeth	15 f						Iowa				
		John	13 m										
		Amelia	7 f										
		Abner T. Tuben	27 m			Fanner		100	Ohio				
		John D.	19 f										
		Lucy	12 f						Iowa				
		Mary	12 f										
		John Gilmore	3 m			Fanner	50	200	Iowa				
		Ellis	22 f					500	Ohio				
		Scott	9 f										
		John M.	1 m						Iowa				
		John C. Lee	25 f			Fanner	100	50	Ia				
		James	18 m			Fanner			Iowa				
		John Russell	27 m			Fanner	300	50	Scotland				
		Mary	51 f						Ohio				
		Robert	9 m										
		John	7 m										
		David	5 m						Iowa				
		Elizabeth	5 f										
		Henry Edmund	12 f										
		James P. Daniel	44 m					1400	500	Ia			
		Sarah	42 f						Ohio				

No. white males, 20 No. colored males, No. foreign born, No. blind, 11900 2950
 No. white females, 24 No. colored females, No. deaf and dumb, No. insane, No. idiots, No. paupers, No. convicts,

Part of the 1860 U.S. Census for Clay Township, Jones County (part 2)

SCHEDULE 1—Free Inhabitants in Clay Township in the County of Jones State of Iowa enumerated by me, on the 14 day of July 1860. Wm. C. Johnson Ass't Marshal
Post Office Wyanburg

1	2	3	Description.			Value of Estate Owned.		10	11	12	13	14
			Age	Sex	White, black, or mulatto.	Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1		Quint	31	m								
2		Delenda	27	m								
3		Matilda	15	f								
4		Elizabeth	14	f								
5		Ann M	4	m								
6	11	William Carlton	37	m			1200	50				
7		Virginia	27	f								
8		Francis	18	m								
9		Orden	13	m								
10		Kenneth	10	f								
11		Rosetta	8	f								
12		Theresa	1	m								
13	7	Mr Paul	46	m			200	600				
14		Jessie	32	f								
15		Theresa	7	m								
16		Samuel	7	m								
17		Charles	5	m								
18		Mary	3	f								
19		Elizabeth	12	f								
20		Ann Palmer	17	f								
21	11	Henry Carlton	48	m			1200	500				
22		Jessie	21	m								
23		Elizabeth	19	f								
24		Mal B	18	m								
25	17	H. Carlton	26	m			400					
26		Maria	19	f								
27		George	17	m								
28	11	Combs	60	m			1200	220				
29		Nancy	60	f								
30		Mary	24	f								
31	11	Wm. Walcott	34	m			700					
32		Antonia	30	f								
33		Francis	7	m								
34		Delia	5	f								
35		Combs	3	m								
36	11	Edwin C. Combs	31	m			2700	700				
37		William D.	31	f								
38		Angeline	11	f								
39		Combs	8	m								
40		Combs	6	f								

40 No. white males, 11 No. colored males, No. foreign born, No. blind, 10500 3316 No. Mute, No. paupers, No. convicts, No. deaf and dumb, No. insane,

Part of the 1860 U.S. Census for Clay Township, Jones County (part 3)

Note the order of the names, with those appearing on the 1867 plat map in boldface:

- Wilson Gee (808)
- John Wasson (809)
- **Emerson Brown (810)**
- **Henry Brown (811)**
- John Gilmore (812)
- Electa Gee (813)
- **John Russell (814)**
- **James McDaniel (815)**
- **Ulysses Calkin (816)**
- **William Paul (817)**
- **Mary Hutton (818)**
- **A Hutton (819)**
- Cornelius Hicks (820)
- William Walrod (821)
- **Edwin A. Cahoon (822)**



The 1867 plat map for the southwest sections of Clay Township, Jones County

Looking at the plat map, and it appears that the census taker worked his way from east to west across the southwest corner of the township, then headed north a bit and working his way back towards the east. That is reasonable – census takers worked their way through townships systematically, not randomly. When we mark the eight names from the 1860 U.S. Census to farms on the plat map, we see the makings of a likely route through the southwest corner of the township.

The sequence Wasson, E. Brown and H. Brown in the census aligns well with the properties labeled E.A.C., E.E. Brown and H.O. Brown across the southern edge of the plat map. For that reason, I believe that the Wassons lived on the 40-acre farm labeled E.A.C., at section 32, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$. Given all the names common to both the census and the plat map, the E.A.C farm makes the most sense, unless the census taker for some odd reason veered way out of his way.

That said, I later came across the 1860 Federal Census Non-Population Schedule for farm production in the area. This included the number of improved and unimproved acres for each farm. For John Wasson, it listed 30 improved acres and 70 unimproved acres, for a total of 100 acres, indicating that the farm was much bigger than just those 40 acres.

Names on the 1860 schedule account for most of the adjacent farms on the 1867 plat map – Brown to the west, Cahoon to the northwest and Hutton to the north in Clay Township and Sinkey to the south in Wyoming Township – except for the farm labeled B. Wilson to the east. If the Wassons were also farming what is labeled the B. Wilson farm at section 32, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ in section 32, that would add another 40 acres.

A total of 80 acres is still short of the 100 acres suggested by the schedule, but I found that the schedule seemed to routinely overstate the number of acres that are apparent on the plat map. Also, many of the totals were not approximately divisible by 40 as the plat map suggested they should be. Some allowance must be made for a small number of acres lost to roads, for example.

When so many of the nearby farms are accounted for in the schedule, they all can't be bigger than the plat map suggested they are. For these reasons, I suspect that non-adjacent acreages such associated wood lots have been included in the acre totals listed in the 1860 schedule.

I then compared the plat map to a recent Google Satellite image of the area.



Here is the Google Satellite image of the area. The Wasson tenant farm would have been at the upper right around the intersection of today's 130th Street at Dove Road, with the farm labeled E.A.C. towards the left/west and B. Wilson towards the right/east. The Sim-Wasson Farm is marked in the lower left-hand corner.



Likely site of John and Jemima Wasson's Clay Township farm, 130th Street at Dove Road



Likely site of John and Jemima Wasson's Clay Township farm

The 1860 Federal Census Non-Population Schedule

The schedule captured more than farm size. It also captured information about farm production for the year ending the date of the schedule.

According to their 1860 Federal Census Non-Population Schedule information, the Wassons at that time had three horses, three milk cows, three other cattle and five hogs. In the year ending June 1, 1860, they reported having produced 197 bushels of wheat and 600 bushels of corn, three bushels of peas and beans, 60 bushels of potatoes, 300 pounds of butter, 12 tons of hay, and 408 gallons of molasses.

Given crop cycles and planting seasons, and this suggests that the Wassons were also living on this Jones County farm in 1859.

Prepared by Mark David Wasson
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