

John Roach

John Roach }
TO }
Mary Kelley }
SS: }
Be it Remembered, That on this 18th day
of April, 1879, the following Marriage
License was issued, to-wit:

INDIANA, TO-WIT: Benton COUNTY, SS.

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

Know ye, that any person empowered by law to solemnize marriages, is hereby authorized to
join together as Husband and Wife, John Roach and
Mary Kelley, and for so doing, this shall be his sufficient authority.

In Testimony Whereof, Samuel H. White, Clerk of the
County Circuit Court, hereunto subscribe my name, and affix
the Seal of said Court, at Hamlet, this 18th
day of April, 1879



Samuel H. White Clerk

Be it further remembered: That on this 26th day of May
1879, the following certificate was filed in my office to-wit:

INDIANA, TO-WIT: Benton COUNTY.

This certifies, that I joined in marriage as husband and wife, John Roach
and Mary Kelley, on the 13th day of April 1879

John Dempsey

1880 U.S. Population Census; Nebraska, Meridian Precinct; Jefferson County-July 28, 1880

Kelly, Annie F	16	Dtr.	Brn. Penn. Parents	Brn. Ire.
" , Nicholas M	15	Son	Brn. Penn. Parents	Brn. Ire.

Two other Kelly children were not listed here-Timothy, 22, born in Pennsylvania and his sister, Hannora(Nora)also born in Pennsylvania, 20. Here, family stories tell that Mary and Tim may have been born in Sullivan County, Penn., and then the family moved to Bradford County, near-by. Later, another move was made down to near Wilkes-Barre and then to Harrisburg. As I may have said before, Mary Kelly Roach told how she remembered seeing Lincoln's funeral train go by in 1865 when she was 8-this train did go through Harrisburg.

In 1880, Thomas Roach, Jr. may have quit working and living in the Chicago-Gary area and gone out to live near his brother, William Patrick Roach in Nebraska. Patrick and his family were out in Furnas County, Lincoln Precinct, Nebraska, near the James Quinn family and listed thusly in the census on June 1:

1880 U.S. Population Census, Nebraska; Lincoln Precinct-
June 1, 1880

Roach, Patric(sic)	W	M	29	Married; Farmer;	Born Ire.;	Par. Brn. Ire.
" , Mary	W	F	22	" ; Wife ;	Born Ind.;	Par. Brn Ohio & Va.(sic)
" , William	W	M	4	Son	; Born Ind.;	Par.Brn.Ire. & Ind.
" , Lizzie	W	F	2	Dtr.	; Brn. Ind.;	Par.Brn.Ire. & Ind.

Mary Quinn Roach's parents as listed here is incorrect-she either gave wrong information as some Irish tended to do when dealing with the government or the census-taker put it down wrong. James and Bridget Burns Quinn were both born in Ireland. Naturalization papers found in the county courthouse, Lafayette, Indiana(Tippecanoe Co.)show that James Quinn at age 25 became a citizen of this country. On July 28, 1856, he dropped his allegiance to Queen Victoria; told that he had come from County Antrim, Ireland-left from the port of Belfast in northern Ireland and arrived in New York City in June of 1844. He was lucky and came before the famine. Here is his family as listed in the census of 1880:

1880 U.S. Population Census, Nebraska; Furnas County; Lincoln Precinct-
June 1, 1880

Quinn, James	W	M	54	Farmer	Brn.Ire.;	Par. Brn. Ire.
" , Bridget	W	F	36	Keeps House	Brn.Ire.;	Par. Brn. Ire.
" , Thomas	W	M	19	Farmer	Brn.Ind.;	"
" , John	W	M	16	Farmer	Brn.Ind.;	"
" , James	W	M	13	Farmer	Brn.Ind.;	"
" , Ellen	W	F	12	Housekeeper	Brn. Ind.;	"
" , Joseph	W	M	10	Farmer	Brn. Ind.;	"
" , Annie	W	F	8	Dtr.	Brn. Ind.;	"
" , Maggie	W	F	5	Dtr.	Brn. Ind.;	"
" , Michael	W	M	2	Son	Brn. Ind.;	"

The balance of the Quinn family was still in Indiana in 1880. William Quinn, a son born in 1859 in Tippecanoe County, Indiana, stayed on in Newton County and eventually married a Catherine McCormick and farmed there raising 13 children and dying in Benton County in 1939 of cancer. His sister, Catherine Quinn Roach was married to Daniel Roach and living in Benton County, Indiana, with her 2nd child on the way.

After Thomas Roach, Sr. died the family stayed on at the farm south of Kentland, possibly in Jefferson Township, until sometime in the mid-1870's when they moved down into Benton County. They were found living in Parish Grove Township, southeast of Earl Park in the 1880 census:

1880 U.S. Census, Indiana; Benton County-Parish Grove Twp..
June, 1880

Roach, Daniel	W M 25	Married	Hired on farm	Brn.N.J.	Par.	Brn.Ire.
" , Catherine	W F 20	Wife	House servant	Brn.Ind.	"	"

And down the road 6 or 7 farms were:

Roach, Dennis	W M 27(sic)	son	single	Farmer	Brn.Ire.	Par.	Brn.Ire.
" , James	W M 19(sic)	son	single	Attends School	Brn.N.J.	"	"
" , Maggie	W F 18(sic)	dtr.	single	Helps in House	Brn.N.J.	"	"
" , Delia	W F 16	dtr.	single	Attends School	Brn.N.J.	"	"
" , Dillia(sic)	W F 52	Widow		House Helper	Brn.Ire.	"	"

In this same census report, Maggie Roach is listed working in Richland Township for the George Richmire family as a housekeeper; she had a grandmother and 5 children to care for.

Maggie was an excellent seamstress, too. When she was 15, her mother sent her to a woman in Earl Park or near-by to learn to sew. She learned very well and in later years could look at a picture of an outfit, hold up an old newspaper to the person, cut out a pattern, and then start sewing a great dress, etc., for a perfect fit.

James Roach was also listed again up in Newton County, Beaver Township, working for a John Goddard as a laborer, age 21 on June 4, 1880; Tom, Jr. was thought to be out in Nebraska, but perhaps while he was still up in Chicago, James went up to see him and the sights of a big city. Walking around town seeing everything and probably appearing the perfect "greenhorn" a policeman stopped him and asked him if he was lost and where he was from. The policeman advised him to go home before something happened to him as this was a rough place. While there, James went in a tailor shop to buy an overcoat-the man put a huge coat on him grabbed a handful of coat in the back so it seemed to fit in front, and told him, "Great fit, great fit!" Hopefully James Roach was a sharp Irishman and didn't buy that coat.

On August 1, 1880, Daniel and Catherine Quinn Roach had their first child that lived-a son whom they named Thomas. There are no baptism or birth records for him.

During the 5 years he was out of the Army and home in Indiana, Joseph Dennis Roach was bothered by the rheumatism and sciatica he developed while out on the plains in the Indian Wars. He was treated off and on by Dr. Boice in Earl Park. What was done for this crippling and continuing pain is not known, but it may only have given him temporary relief; he continued as head of the family that was still at home.

In late June, a large part of the Roach clan appears in Republic County, Kansas in Rose Creek Township, apparently working for farmers and living in tents. Here is how the census reads for them, then:

1880 Kansas Census; Republic County., Rose Creek Township-
July, 1880

Roach, John	W M 22(sic)	Laborer	Brn. N.J.	Par.Brn.Ire.
" , Mary	W F 23	Wife; Keep Tent	Brn. Penn.	"
" , Thomas	W M 4/12	Son	Brn. Ind.	Par.Brn.N.J. & Penn.
" , Thomas	W M 24(sic)	Laborer	Brn. N.J.	Par.Brn. Ire.
Kelly, Tim	W M 22	Laborer	Brn. Penn.	"

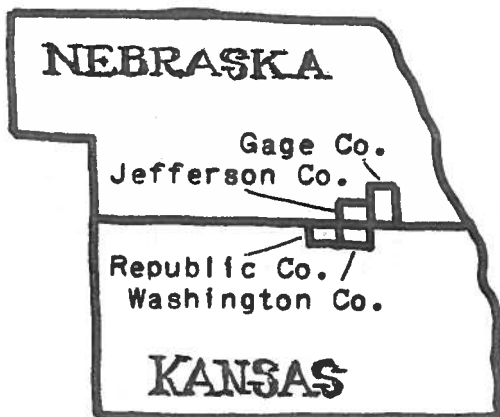
and:

Roach, Patrick	W M 29	Laborer	Brn.Ire.	Par.Brn.Ire.
" , Mary	W F 23	Wife; Keep Tent	Brn.Ind.	"
" , Willie	W M 5	Son	Brn. Ind.	Par.Brn.Ire. & Ind.
" , Lizzie	W F 2	Dtr.		

and:

Kelly, John	W M 60	Laborer	Brn.Ire.	Par.Brn.Ire.
" , Ann	W F 55	Wife	Brn. Ire.	"
" , Annie	W F 17	Daughter	Brn.Penn.	"
" , Nickolls	W M 15		Brn.Penn.	"

On July 5, 1881 John and Mary Kelly Roach had their 2nd child, another son, James, near Hanover, Kansas in Washington County. This was not too far from where Mary's family lived, if they had stayed in Republic County. Possibly again, as in the past, they all moved together as one large unit. Sometime within the balance of the year or very early in 1882, the Kellys moved up into Gage County near Blue Springs and Wymore, Nebraska. John and Mary Kelly Roach did not stay in Kansas more than a year, evidently, and may have moved up to Gage County to be near the Kellys once again. Patrick and Mary Quinn Roach went too, with brother Thomas Roach, Jr.; on January 28, 1882, Patrick and Mary had their 3rd child and 2nd daughter, Kate Roach, near Blue Springs, Nebraska.



Whether or not John and Mary Kelly Roach stayed in this area of Gage County through the summer and harvest is not known, but they were back in Indiana by winter, 1882. Thomas Roach, Jr. is thought to have gone with them. By the time they got there by covered wagon, Daniel and Catherine Quinn Roach had their 2nd child and 1st daughter whom they named Mary Bridget and nicknamed, Mame. She was born October 29, 1882, and was born to them in Parish Grove Township near Earl Park, Indiana; red-headed after the Quinns. Her birth is registered at the county health department office in Benton County.

The WPA Project of the late 1930's of indexing and typing these early records, neglected any birth or death records before 1882 for some reason. Some earlier records in Indiana exist but 1882 was this groups beginning date so anything before that and you're out of luck.

By the end of 1882 the Roaches had a good start on enlarging their family—Bridget was a grandmother 9 times over—John and Mary Kelly Roach

had added another son to their family in December, 1882—in fact, John N., was born on December 23—almost a real Christmas present.

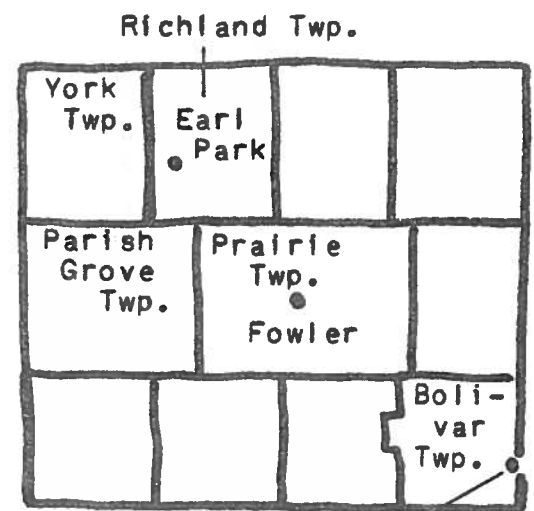
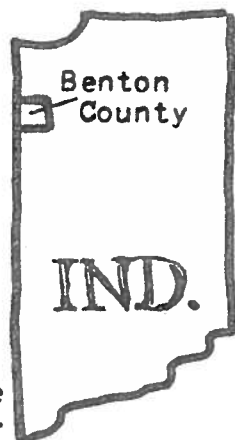
On January 23, 1883, Maggie Roach and William Burns were married in Benton County by Fr. C. E. Maujay, who had replaced Fr. Messman at St. Anthony-Dehner. He was 30 years old, she 22. He and his family had lived in Benton County several years before the Roaches arrived in the area—had lived in Ohio before that after coming from Ireland. He was one of the older children in a family of possibly 7 or 8, and with his brother Michael had been born in Ohio. Parents were John and Mary Burns; John Burns worked on the railroad. Here's how the census read for them:

1880 U. S. Population Census, Indiana; Benton County, Richland Twp.; June, 1880

Burns, John	W M	44	Married	Railroad Hand	Brn.Ire.	Par.	Brn.Ire.
" , Mary	W F	46	Wife	Keeps House	Brn. Ire.	"	"
" , Elie	W F	10	Daughter	Single	Brn.Ohio	"	"
" , Frank	W M	9	Son	"	Brn.Ohio	"	"
" , Anna	W F	3	Daughter	"	Brn.Ind.	"	"

Michael Burns, the son that was 21, was single, and working as a hired hand in York Township just west of Richland; was born in Ohio; William Burns was also working out in York Township as a laborer for a Barnet Whittleby; born Ohio and age 27. It seems to me that there were probably more children in this family that were married and/or gone working by this time—there is too large a gap between Michael, 21 and Elie, 10; also 6 years between William and Michael. There may have been at least 4 or 5 other children in here—possibly some had died, but it is more likely they had married and were in the area but under other last names, or there were sons that had gone farther from home. The 6 year gap is a logical one that could indicate that the father came over alone, first, and then Mary Burns and a baby or small child came after; only after becoming settled in Ohio did they again begin enlarging their family. That is how it was with Thomas and Bridget Scahan Roach. This is my own feeling—it may never be proved.

One thing here that becomes evident and happens so often, is the long and frequent moves by members of our family in covered wagons with babies and little children—it seems so incredible to us in these times. One wonders whether it was that the "grass seemed greener" somewhere else or that they got lonesome for the rest of the family or that there was some kind of a crises at one place or the other. Over the years, one sees that various members of the Roach fam-



Otterbein
BENTON CO.

94 William Parsons } Be it Remembered, That on this 17
 TO } day of January 1883, the following
Maggie Roache } Marriage License, was issued, to-wit:
Indiana, to-wit: Benton County, 893

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS. GREETING:

Know Ye, That any person empowered by law to solemnize marriages, is hereby authorized to join together as Husband and Wife, William Parsons and Maggie Roache and for so doing, this shall be his sufficient authority.

In Testimony Whereof, I, Michael D. Smith Clerk of the Benton Circuit Court, hereunto subscribe my name and affix the seal of said Court, at Fowler, this 17 day of January 1883

Michael D. Smith
 Clerk Benton Circuit Court.

Be it further remembered, that on this 3rd day of March 1883, the following certificate was filed in my office, to-wit:

INDIANA, TO-WIT: BENTON COUNTY:

This Testifier, That I joined in Marriage as Husband and Wife, William Parsons and Maggie Roache on the 23rd day of January 1883 to Magray Catholic priest

ily and their allied lines, tended to draw together in periods of crisis-economic downturns-Panics or Depressions-or deaths in a family; having a baby or promise of a job and a healthier climate. In later correspondence within our families, special mention is made a number of times of the prairie's healthy "climate"-with their troubles concerning T.B. and other chronic illnesses, it seems this may have been one of their reasons for moving West to claim land.

In January or early February, 1883, the Roach boys still at home and not married, along with their Mother, Bridget Scahan Roach, planned to go out West and claim homesteads. This would be the time to go-before Spring planting-they had been saving their money and they could go in a group and pool their resources to buy what they needed out there and help each other get settled. All the children that were interested in marriage were taken care of, except "Dea"Roach, the youngest and she may have been engaged-she was out working on her own, possibly down in Bolivar Township in Benton County and interested in a young man named Jesse A. Ice. So getting all their train fares and leaving Dea, and Indiana forever, Bridget, Joseph, Thomas, and James left Benton County on the train for Dakota Territory in mid or late February. Daniel and Catherine Quinn Roach and William and Maggie Roach Burns were still there possibly waiting their turns to head West, too, and bring the balance of the clan's belongings when they came.

The Homestead Law had been in effect since 1862 and by the 1880's most of the land had been taken in Kansas and Nebraska, so Dakota was still available. The Indian problem was rapidly being settled in that part of the country, so with all these new families, farms were needed for their futures. The boys not yet married were old enough to claim 160 acres in their own right and they all certainly had by now saved some money to get a start. They would get their land under the Pre-Emption law.

"This Pre-Emption Law or land law was passed in 1841, provided that the head of a family, a widow, or a single man over 21 could file a claim for 160 acres of the public domain. The claimant was required by this law to erect a dwelling on the claim, make proof of his settlement to the Register and Receiver at the land office for which that official received 50¢(in our case it was \$2.00)from each claimant. The latter in accord with the specifications laid down, was required to swear that:

1. He had never pre-empted before.
2. He was not the owner of 320 acres in any state or territory.
3. He had not settled on land for the purpose of selling it.
4. He had made no agreement or contract with anyone, directly or indirectly, to turn the land over to anyone else.

The intent of these last 2 was to guarantee that he was a bonafide settler. The Register and Receiver made such regulations as he deemed necessary to safeguard against fraud. On taking the proper oath and making proof, the settler was allowed to purchase the claim at the minimum appraisal price. This was in most places \$1.25 per acre.

Persons swearing falsely were guilty of perjury according to the law, and the perjurer was penalized by the loss of both land and money." 14

14 "Sod House Frontier" by Everett Dick; Johnson Pub. Co.; Lincoln, Neb.; 1954. pp. 20.

Under the Homestead Law, not using the pre-emption rules, it was cheaper to acquire land but one had to "prove up" longer (7 years as opposed to 5 year under pre-emption). "The Homestead Law provided that 'any person who is the head of the family or who has arrived at the age of 21 and is a citizen of the United States or who have filed the declaration to become such', and who had 'never borne arms against the United States Government or given aid and comfort to its enemies', was entitled to 160 acres of land in certain areas or 80 acres if taken in a railroad grant."

"A fee of \$18.00 was charged for each 160 acres, \$14.00 was paid on making application and the balance when 'final proof' was made. From the date of first application, usually called "filing", 6 months was allowed to make improvements. On or before the expiration of that time the homesteader had to be on the land and begin improvements. He was further required to make it his permanent residence for 5 years from date of the first papers. Any time after that date the settler could take out his final papers, provided, however, that he did it within 7½ years after filing."¹⁵

Just what it was that made the family finally decide to go out West to claim homesteads in 1883 may have been a land company agent travelling east from Dakota that came through Benton County spreading the good word and telling of the bountiful future they would have, plus the healthful climate. The railroads were behind alot of this land expansion as they had a great amount of acreage they wished to sell and settle.

These plans to go in the winter of 1883 were probably made long before they actually went; they probably went from Benton County on the "Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Chicago" line to Chicago; then on out to possibly Rock Island, Dubuque, Sioux City and either Yankton to Mitchell or Sioux Falls to Huron. If they went to Huron, they may have travelled on the "Chicago and Northwestern".

Joseph Dennis Roach, though born in Ireland, would now be eligible to claim land even though he was not naturalized, as his stint in the Army automatically gave him all the privileges of a citizen.

One wonders how anyone could choose land in late winter when there was snow all over the ground and chances of March blizzards. They would want to be there by spring so they could begin preparing the ground and getting some crops planted; also, it was easier getting around with a horse and wagon or buggy while the ground was still frozen. Still, these 4 members of the family who went out to Mitchell, S.D., and at the land office, either chose and bought the land sight unseen from a map, or went by train and then horse and buggy out that 40 or 50 miles to Jerauld County where sections were available and chose their claims on the spot. There is also the possibility that one or two of the Roach boys had gone out to Dakota earlier the preceding fall and looked things over then. Upon arriving, they must have had a difficult time setting themselves up. The rules and regulations were confusing and involved and once started, they had to stay on this land to watch it so no one else could claim it and get a dwelling built to live in. It would be hard to get the building material out there from the nearest town, which was probably Wessington Springs, 6 miles southwest; and then put togeth-

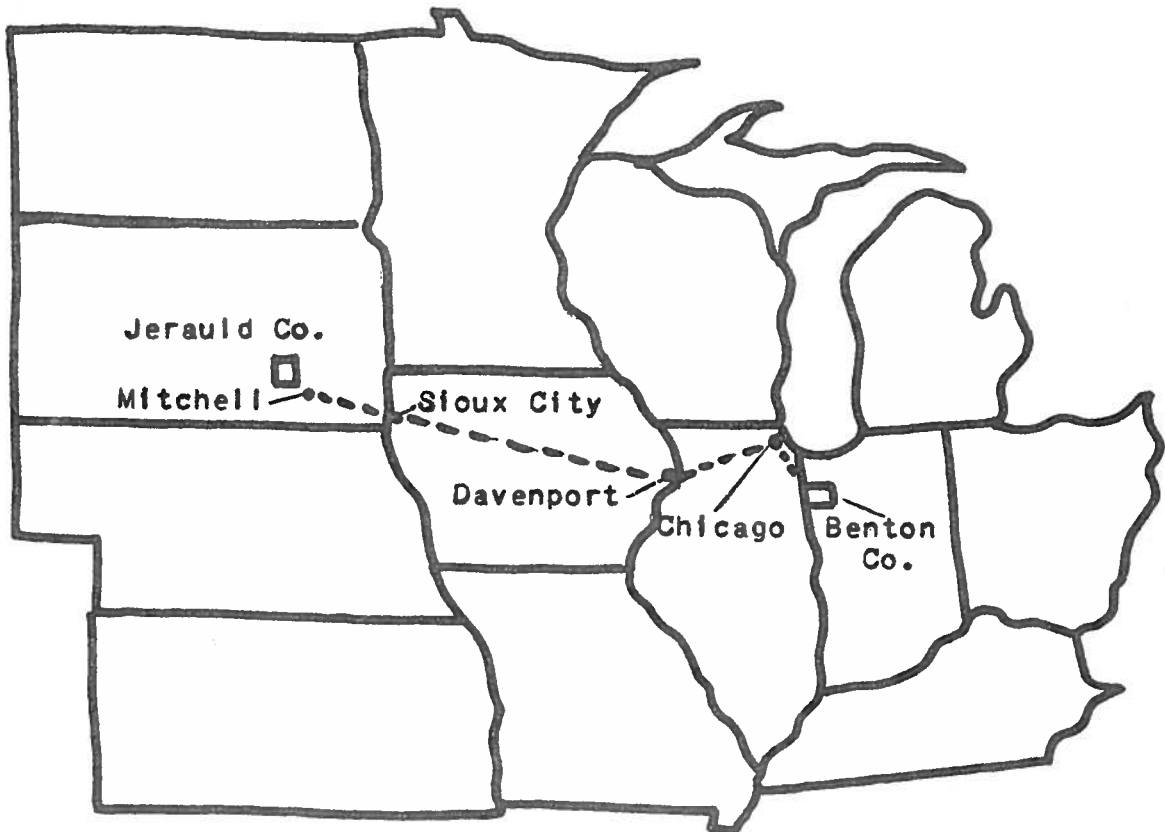
¹⁵ "Sod House Frontier" by Everett Dick; Johnson Pub. Co.; Lincoln, Neb.; 1954. pp. 118

er some kind of a simple frame shelter that would qualify and still give them a place to live that would be warm and minimally comfortable. They managed to get adjoining claims so they were close enough to live in one house, while working on the required frame dwelling for each of the other claims. Whether or not they were able to get a mortgage on this property while they were waiting the 6 months to get final proof is uncertain; possibly after that they were able to, as most settlers desperately needed money to help them buy farming equipment, seed, a team, or even a wagon or buggy. Many homesteaders, upon finally paying the \$200.00 for their 160 acres, did mortgage this land, in turn, for what it was worth and sometimes more.

The railroads by 1883 served a good part of Dakota Territory, especially the south and eastern part and many settlers coming from states further east brought their belongings; possibly some animals and farm equipment in a box car on the train. They would come to the closest town to their claim and then finish the trip in their wagons. It was usually the man or head of the household, along with an oldest son or relative who came first and got settled before the rest of his family joined him.

Joseph Dennis Roach, Thomas, Jr. and James Roach, plus Bridget came first to get settled and find out what had to be done and how, so that the other members of the family could come later and have an easier time of it.

The exact filing dates the Mitchell Land Office recorded on the Roaches and the preparations they made for qualifying for final proof were:



The possible route taken in February, 1883, by the Roaches on their trip to Dakota Territory to claim homesteads.

Joseph Dennis Roach chose his claim February 24, 1883; 160 acres described here as the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 34 of Jerauld County, D.T.; township 108W of range 64W; 5 P.M.. On February 26, 1883 he paid his \$2.00 Register's and Receiver's fee. He immediately built on the claim a frame house, habitable 9'x12'; stable 12'x13'; broke 12 acres making the value of these improvements \$150.00-moved in on March 17, 1883. He claimed to be a native citizen of the United States, 34 years of age and single. Later, he planted corn, oats, wheat, and garden vegetables.

Thomas Roach, Jr. filed next; he chose his claim March 13, 1883; filed March 15, 1883, for 160 acres and paid his \$2.00 fee for the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 27, township 108W, Range 64W, 5 P.M.. He immediately began hauling lumber for his house and built it 8'x12'; stable 11'x 22'; broke 17 acres and moved on the land as a resident March 17, 1883. He claimed to be a native born citizen of the United States, a single person and 26 years of age(he was actually 29). Later he would plant corn and garden vegetables.

Bridget Roach files next-she chose her land the same day as Tom; March 13, 1883-160 acres; the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 27, township 108W, Range 64W, 5:00 P.M.. On March 15, 1883, she made her declaratory statement for the claim and paid her \$2.00 Receiver's and Register's fee and immediately began to improve her property. I'm sure her sons helped her-they hauled lumber for her house and built it 9'x18', habitable; stable 13' x 46'; dug a well and broke 12 acres. Valued it at \$150.00. She took up residence on March 20, 1883. Cultivated about 4 acres and planted garden vegetables. She could not read nor write so made an "x" where her signature should've been and had 2 witnesses when she made her mark.

While the majority of the Roach family was up in Dakota Territory choosing claims and trying to settle in, down in Nebraska, in Furnas County, William Patrick Roach and Mary Quinn Roach had their 4th child and 3rd daughter whom they named Delia Ellen Roach-she was born on March 3, 1883, according to records at St. Marys Catholic Church in Orleans, kept by Fr. John A. Fanning who arrived in the area in 1882. Delia Ellen Roach was born near Oxford and baptised, most likely at a mission church, St. Michaels, served from St. Marys in Orleans. She was baptised on July 6, 1883 and her sponsors were George Gehley and her Grandmother, Brigitta Quin(sic).

When Bridget Scahan Roach claimed her homestead an interesting thing here in her papers for this claim was a handwritten copy of her husband Thomas Roach's naturalization papers-some information was missing where the paper had been folded and worn out from her carrying it so much.

James Roach filed last. He chose his 160 acres March 20, 1883; the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 33 of Jerauld County, township 108W, Range 64W, 5:00 P. M.. Paid his \$2.00 Receiver's and Register's fee and immediately began to prepare his claim as the others did by building a small frame house 8' x 10' with 1 door and 1 window; built sod stable, 14' x 16' worth \$10.00 (house was worth \$25.00), dug a well 15 ft. deep worth \$15.00; broke 13 acres and planted it to sod corn; it was worth \$80.00. He took residence on April 15, 1883. He was unmarried at this time, was a native born citizen of this country and was 23 years old.

All these preparations the family had to make in order to qualify for pre-emption hopefully were typical-possibly not up to the letter of the law, but not stretching the rules the other way so as to make them illegal-settlers covered for one another, and few land office representatives seemed to ever go out into the countryside and check to see what

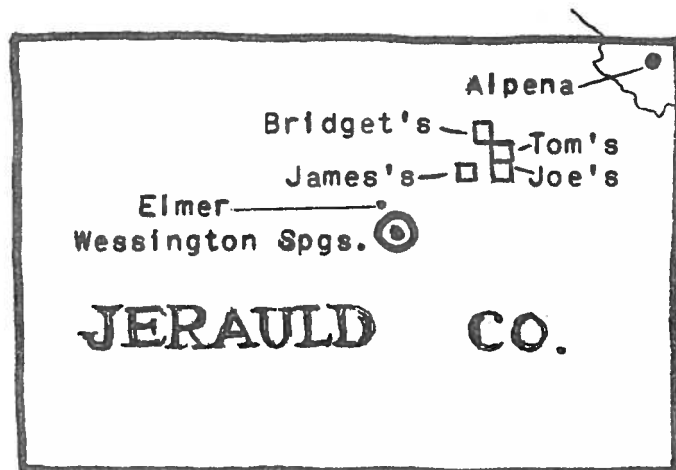
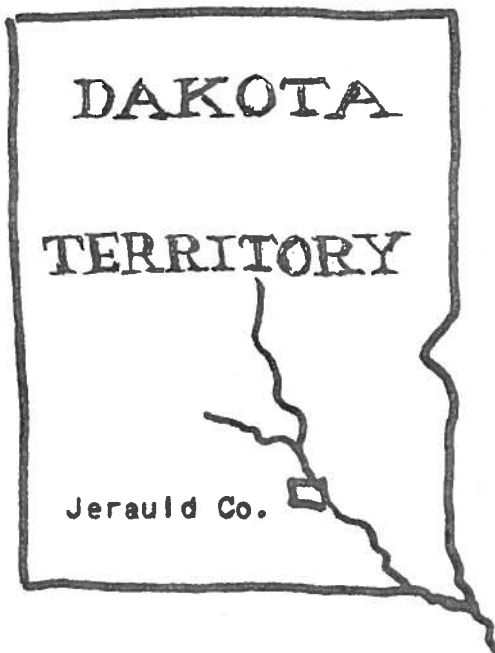
these people were actually doing to qualify for the land. The Roaches may have been somewhere near the middle—here again from the book, "Sod House Frontier" are some statements on how the settlers sometimes went about interpreting the letter of the law— "The Pre-Emption Law was a hotbed in which all sorts of graft, perjury, and misrepresentation flourished....."

"The custom in pre-emption days was for the claimant to stake off his tract and then take his axe, cut logs, and begin a house. The indication that a building was in the process of construction held the claim temporarily while he went to town or back to the old home to get his wife and property. Pre-emption grew less careful, however, and it became the fashion to drag a few logs out of the woods, build a sort of pen 3 or 4 feet high, return to their former home, and leave these logs as proof of ownership. A shingle was usually driven into the ground bearing the name of the architect and proprietor."

".....some anxious land grabbers dropped a stone at each of the supposed corners of a house, took a small stick and splitting it, put a small piece of glass in it and placed it on one side of this square for a window. He would borrow a blanket or two and a plank from a neighbor, sleep a night within the confines of imaginary walls and after giving all assurance he would be back in a few days or weeks, go to the land office, swear he had built a dwelling with a glass window, and plank floor." 16

Knowing our Irish family like I think I do, no telling what they actually constructed and how it looked.....

On May 1, 1883, John and Mary Kelly Roach had their 4th child and first girl, whom they named Mary Martha Roach, named after her mother. She was born near Wymore, Nebraska in Gage County.



Elmer, D.T. was a tiny place with a post office about 1 mile north and a half-mile west of Wessington Springs that our Roaches gave as a mailing address. It did not last long.

About 9 months later, beginning in early February, 1884, the Roaches had to come once again to the courthouse in Wessington Springs with witnesses to swear they had stayed on their land for the past year--had not left it for more than a few days at a time and had improved it to live on and raise crops. This was a real hardship on most families as they were poor; for 2 witnesses plus themselves, they had to provide transportation to the district court nearest them, plus pay their room and board for at least 1 day and possibly 2; make arrangements for these people's animals to be cared for and claim looked after. And the time of the year for the Roaches was more than inconvenient, being in February when in Dakota it is still cold and stormy, with snow on the ground.

Joseph Dennis Roach had to go to Wessington Springs first, on February 11, 1884, and his 2 witnesses were his friends from Indiana and neighbors now in Jerauld County, Peter Nelson and William Marlow.

Bridget Scahan Roach was to make her statements and affidavit on the same day as Joseph, but only her 2 witnesses were there to do it. She sent word she was unable to come into Wessington Springs due to severe weather--she came 4 days later on February 15 and presented her affidavit that she had been on the land she wished to claim, for a year and had improved it and owned no other 320 acres, anywhere, etc..

Thomas Roach, Jr. went into Wessington Springs with his brother Joseph on February 11, 1884 and presented his affidavit concerning his being on the land a year, improving it, etc. and brought his 2 witnesses who were also Peter Nelson and William Marlow.

James Roach went to the courthouse at Wessington Springs in late February, 1884, to make his affidavit with 2 witnesses that he had lived on his claim for one year, had not left it for any length of time and had improved it.

Before doing this, each person had to go to the local newspaper office and place a notice they were making final proof--they had to run this notice for 6 consecutive weeks before they could buy the 160 acres they had claimed. In our family's case they ran their notices in the "Wessington Springs Herald". These notices read as follows, using whatever name and dates were applicable--

"Notice for Publication.--Land Office at Mitchell, D.T.,
Dec. 28, 1883

Notice is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim and that said proof will be made before C.W. McDonald, Clerk Dist. Court, Jerauld County, at Elmer, D.T. on Feb. 11, 1884, viz:

Thomas Roach

who made d.s. filing No. 20481 for the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 27 town 108 range 64. He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land viz; William Marlow, Peter Nelson, Robert Tracy, Eli W. Chapman, all of Elmer, D.T.-- Geo. B. Everitt, Register.

Each member of our family claiming land had to go through this procedure--running a notice in the local news for 6 weeks prior to their being able to pay their \$200.00 for the 160 acres they planned to homestead. In James Roach's case, it seemed to be that he waited too long to run his notice and then didn't wait the designated number of days aft--

er it had stopped before he went to make final proof. Later, he left his claim and moved up to Faulk County, D.T., either trying to sell it, or planning to plant it to crops and having his family keep an eye on it for him. In essence, he left it for over a year and someone may have reported him to the land office authorities. Later on, he had a number of legal difficulties over it and was threatened with the loss of the claim or other penalties. He had to file for "relief from suspension" and finally got it all settled in his favor.

Four years would have to pass before this land that they had just made final proof on and paid their \$200.00 for, would be theirs. This was now the spring of 1884 and the land owned by the Roaches would become theirs in 1888. If they did not stay that long they could sell their claims as transferers to a buyer called a transferee; the land title the buyer got in the transaction was called a Warranty Deed.

These first 2 years the folks were out in Dakota were fairly good ones as far as weather and crop success went. If it had not been so favorable, they might not have stayed on as long, but, sad to say, this was not to last. They would have normal weather and good crops for what they planted in 1883 and 1884 and even 1885. Encouraging for newcomers and homesteaders giving them a chance to make good and get ahead some.

That year, 1884, was an eventful one for the Roaches. Sometime in late 1883 or early 1884, Maggie Roach Burns gave birth to her first child—a boy. This child was sickly from the start—she called him a "blue baby". She sensed something was wrong with him and blamed his death after about 2 weeks on an event that happened shortly before he was due. A stray dog had come onto the farm and bit one of their calves. While trying to feed this calf, it bit Maggie on the finger. She was certain this had something to do with her baby's condition. One night after feeding him and sleeping as usual with him lying across her, she woke early and found him limp across her body. When she tried to wake him and get him to respond, she knew he was dead. What this child's name was I don't know, but there seems to be no record of his short time here on earth and is more than likely buried in an unmarked grave in the little cemetery at St. Anthony-Dehner's.

In the winter of 1884, Daniel and Catherine Quinn Roach learned they were to become parents again and she being lonesome and homesick these past 5 years for her family, wanted to go out to visit her folks in Furnas County, Nebraska. As near as can be learned, she must have gone on the train alone out there from Earl Park or Fowler in April or May, quite a long trip for a single woman, especially a pregnant one, but easier than bumping along in a covered wagon! Daniel Roach, being a kind and loving husband, would've let her go and wanted her to see her family and have a long visit; they must have talked over the fact that she would stay out there and have her 4th child and then return to Indiana to him and her 2 small children in the fall of 1884. Little did anyone dream that a tragedy would intervene and cause her never to return.

After arriving in Furnas County at the Quinn family home near Orleans, Nebraska, Catherine must have truly enjoyed herself and been so happy to see her brothers and sisters once again. On July 20, 1884 Catherine Quinn Roach gave birth to a son, her 4th child and 2nd son, whom she named Joseph.

Dea Roach married Jesse A. Ice in Bolivar township, Benton County, Indiana on December 25, 1884. They may have been married at St. Pat-

ricks Catholic Church in Oxford, Indiana by a Fr. P.J. Crosson who served that church and possibly others in the area. Jesse A. Ice was a Baptist, but it seems that Dea arranged her marriage in her own church. Dea had turned 20 in 1883 after her mother and brothers had gone out to Dakota; then in August of 1884 she turned 21; was surely working out for some family earning her way. It is possible she went down into the southeast part of Benton County and was working in or near Bolivar Township or in Oxford or Otterbein. She was an excellent nurse and in later years earned a living caring for people who were ill; she knew about home-made medicine and herbs and was in great demand to do this sort of thing, especially for patients who had chronic illnesses. Here, either at a social gathering or while working, she met Jesse A. Ice. He was from a large family of 9 children; his father, Joshua H. Ice was originally from Virginia. They were of the protestant faith. Jesse Ice's mother was Rebecca W. Hickman Ice and was born in Indiana. Just who stood up for Dea and Jesse A. Ice is not known, but it could very well have been Dea's sister Maggie Roach Burns and one of Jesse's brothers. Dea did not give up her faith, but eventually only one of her children, Jessie, joined and stayed in her church. After the Christmas holidays, Dea Roach and Jesse A. Ice stayed on in Benton County and began their new lives together.

Here is the Ice family as they were listed in the 1880 census in Benton County, Indiana:

1880 U.S. Population Census; Indiana, Benton County Bolivar Twp..
June, 1880

					Born	Par.Br.	Estate	Pers. Prop
Ice, Joshua H.	W M	45	Mrd.	Farmer	Va.	Va.	\$5,400	\$1,700
" , Rebecca W.	W F	44	Wife	Kps.House	Ind.	Va.		
" , Trammel	W M	28	Son	Laborer	Ind.	Va.&Ind.		
" , Howard	W M	22	Son	Laborer	Ind.	"		
" , Jesse A.	W M	20	Son	Laborer	Ind.	"		
" , William	W M	19	Son	"	Ind.	"		
" , Warren(Bay)	W M	16	Son	"	Ind.	"		
" , Josie	W F	12	Dtr.		Ind.	"		
" , Joseph	W M	12	Son		Ind.	"		
" , Anna	W F	10	Dtr.		Ind.	"		
" , Ella	W F	6	Dtr.		Ind.	"		

During the time Dea Roach and Jesse A. Ice were being married and starting their new life, Catherine Quinn Roach was still out in Nebraska with her family and her infant son who had been named Joseph Roach. It seems from her lengthy stay after her baby's birth in July that her state of health was not good enough for her to make the long trip back to Indiana. Family stories tell that she suffered from T.B., so this may have been the reason for her prolonged visit-plus it was also believed that the birth of her last child was a difficult one and so weakened her that she was apparently quite ill. The Quinns certainly must have written Daniel Roach of her condition and why she did not return to him and their two small children. He often told of how he heard very little from the Quinns on all of this and then, long after something had happened. It certainly couldn't have been a very happy holiday season for all those involved.

The winter of 1885 began and went along through January and then at the end of the first week in February, Catherine Quinn Roach's health must have deteriorated considerably, because on February 8, 1885, the family took her son, Joseph to be baptised at St. Marys Catholic Church in Orleans, Nebraska, so she would know that he had been taken care of,

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Jesse A Steel
TO
Delia A Roach

Be it Remembered, That on this 22nd
day of December 1884, the following
Marriage License was issued, to-wit:

Indiana, to-wit: Benton County, ss:

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

Know Ye, That any person empowered by law to solemnize marriages, is hereby authorized to join
together as Husband and Wife, Jesse A Steel and Delia A Roach
and for so doing, this shall be his sufficient authority.



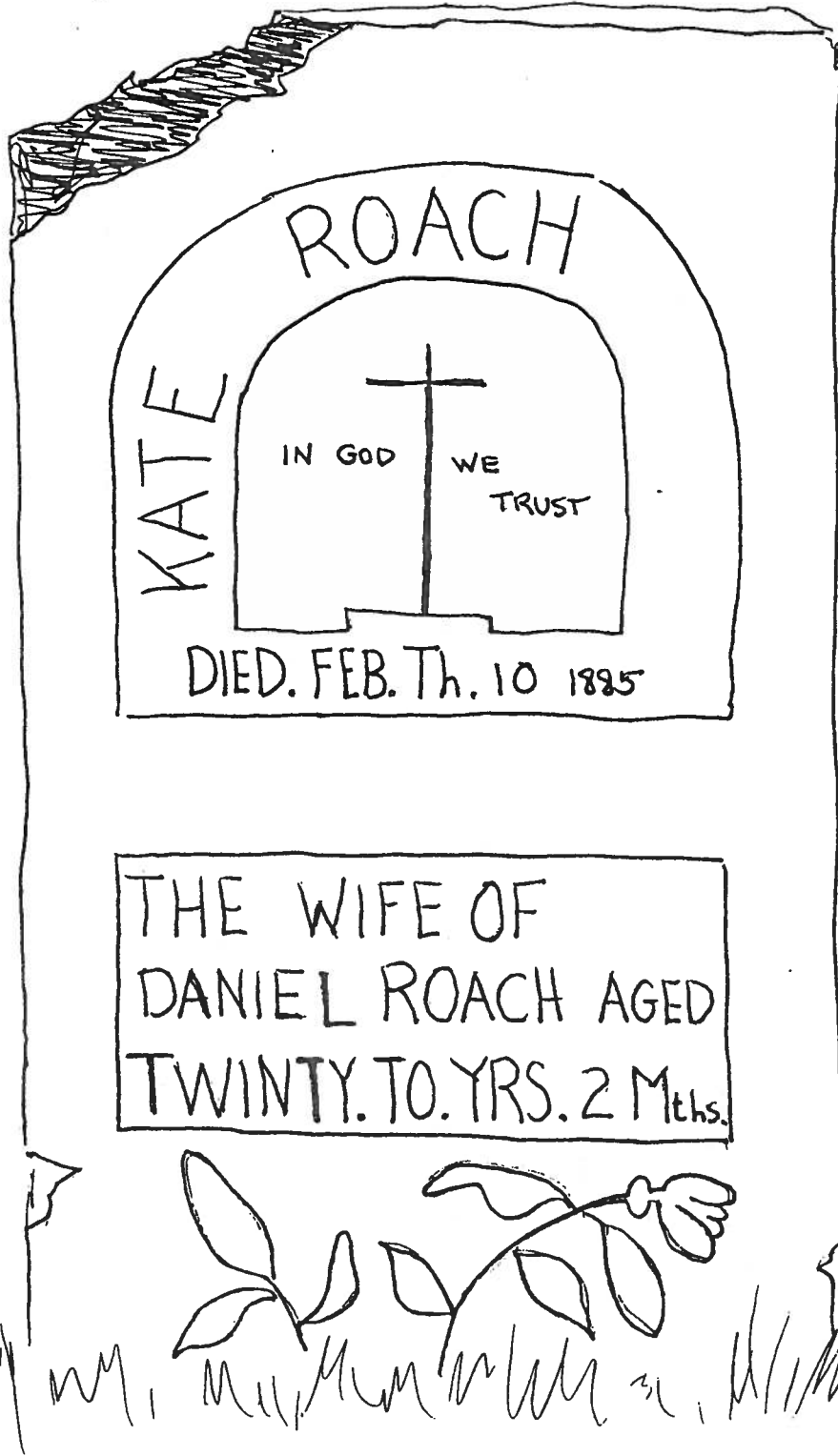
In Testimony Whereof, I, Mahlon D Smith Clerk of the
Benton Circuit Court, hereunto subscribe my name and affix the seal of
said Court, at Fowler, this 22nd day of December 1884
Mahlon D Smith

Clerk Benton Circuit Court.

Be it further remembered, that on this 4th day of February 1885, the
following certificate was filed in my office, to-wit:

INDIANA, TO-WIT: BENTON COUNTY:

This certifies, That I signed in Marriage as Husband and Wife
Jesse Steel and Delia Roach
on the 22nd day of December, 1884.
P. J. Croason



Records from that church tell that Joseph Roach was baptised on February 8, 1885 by Fr. F. Brophy. He was born to Daniel Roche(sic) and Catherine Quinn Roche(sic) on July 20, 1884, and the sponsors were Thomas Roche(sic) and Helena Quinn. The Thomas Roche mentioned here must have been Daniel's brother, Thomas Roach, Jr. down from Dakota, visiting.

Two days later, Catherine Quinn Roach died-February 10, 1885, near Orleans, Nebraska. She was only 22 and the events concerning her death are not known very well. Her family buried her after a funeral Mass where she received all the sacraments by Fr. F. Brophy and laid her to rest in the cemetery that served St. Marys Catholic Church near Orleans. This small, aging graveyard holds about 16 remains. It is situated on a hilltop. On Catherine Quinn Roach's grave, lovingly hand-chiseled into a piece sandstone or limestone by someone in her family, are these words:

KATE ROACH
WIFE OF DANIEL ROACH
IN GOD WE TRUST
DIED FEB. 10, 1885 - 22 YRS. 2 MTHS.

On the bottom of the stone are carved long-stemmed flowers with leaves. It is one of the more unique and precious memorials I've seen in any cemetery.

On February 17, 1885, near Oxford, Nebraska, Thomas R. Roach was born. He was the 5th child and 2nd son of William Patrick and Mary Quinn Roach. On February 22, 1885, Fr. T. Cullen baptised Thomas at St. Marys Catholic Church in Orleans, and his sponsors were Jacobus (James)Quin(sic) and Brigitta Quin(sic), who was his uncle and his grandmother.

Soon after the death of Catherine Quinn Roach, the family was again to suffer the heartbreak of a member's death. In March, 1885, Thomas Roach, the oldest child of John and Mary Kelly Roach, died unexpectedly at their home in Richardson Co., Nebraska, near Humboldt. Family stories tell he choked to death while eating corn on the cob. What a sad thing this was-a Dr. Gage was called but surely by the time he got there or by the time the family had rushed him to the doctor, he was dead. He was just 5 years old; his death is listed as "an accident" in the 1885 territorial census mortality schedule.

About this same time, late spring, Daniel Roach made up his mind to leave Indiana and move out to Dakota to be near his mother and brothers. Possibly all the Roaches still there also wished to go, except Dea and her new husband, Jesse Ice. Family stories tell they went to Dakota in a covered wagon; it may be the men took all the household belongings in two wagons with a few farm animals tied on behind. Maggie and William Burns would have their things to take, too. Maggie would have been pregnant with her 2nd child in late spring when they left for Dakota. Mame Roach was only about 3½ when they went out there and as an older person told how they went in a wagon-she said there was "a clanful" of Roaches. She remembers a hanging on the way-a man in the wagon train supposedly raped one of the women and the rest of the men lynched him right then and there. Mame may have thought there was a lot of Roaches on the way to Dakota, but there certainly were a "clanful" when they arrived. Mame's older brother, Tom was about 4½ when they went to Jerauld County and was old enough to remember his mother.

Just when they arrived can only be guessed at, but on June 1, 1885 they are found listed in the Dakota Territorial census in Hyde County,

Dakota Territory, at the homestead of Joseph Dennis Roach. There was quite a group of the family there. They may have been there on a visit, gone on up to see family they hadn't seen in a long time after stopping off for a week or so at Bridget's place and Thomas, Jr. in Jerauld County. They are listed thusly:

Dakota Territorial Census, 1885, Hyde County; Banner Twp.
June 1, 1885

Roach, Joseph D.	W M	32(sic)	Single	Farmer	Brn. N.J.(sic)	Par. Brn. Ire.
" , James	W M	24(sic)	Single	Farmer	Brn. N.J.	Par. Brn. Ire.
" , Daniel	W M	26(sic)	Single	Hrnsmk.	Brn. N.J.	"
Burns, William	W M	28(sic)	Mrd.	Farmer	Brn. Ohio	"
" , Maggie	W F	22(sic)	Wife		Brn. N.J.	"
McCormick, Sarah	W F	24	Single	Servant	Brn. Wis.	"
Roach, Thomas	W M	4	Nephew		Brn. Ind.	Par. Brn. N.J. & Ind.
Roach, Mamie	W F	2	Niece		Brn. Ind.	Par. Brn. N.J. & Ind.

James is also listed above as brother to Joseph; Daniel the same; William Burns as his brother-in-law; Maggie as his sister and the children as above. Sarah McCormick was either engaged to James or nearly so as they married later that year, perhaps in the fall, in Woonsocket ?

This is interesting; Joseph D. Roach is here listed as the homeowner or whatever and appears to be homesteading in Hyde County in 1885 when he is still the owner of an original homestead down in Jerauld County. James Roach also owned his 160 acres in Jerauld County. Evidently, these 2 planned to sell their Jerauld County holdings-possibly they were waiting to sell them and had planted a crop on them for that season. Each person over 21 was able to own 2 Homestead Claims(320 acres)at one time, but one wonders why these men had worked so hard for 2 years and plowed a number of acres in Jerauld County; had buildings there, etc., only to pack up and leave them and start all over again in a new place further north and away from their mother and closer towns. The old saying about the grass always being greener, etc. here again may have been behind the move.

A revealing excerpt from a book entitled, "The Last West" by Russell McKee explains in the chapter fourteen, "Peopling The Plains" how things were in the beginning and what lay behind the moves and hopes of these settlers including our own family- ".....most plains settlers differed little from those found elsewhere. Mostly they were farmers to 1900; we were 80% a nation of farmers. In Europe and our Eastern states small farms and plenty of rain provided a wide range of crops, both in the ground and on "the hoof". A family could live on what it grew, and be independent of money, cities, or commerce. Financial panics and a lack of markets were a nuisance, not a calamity. Naturally, this spawned individual views of personal independence and self-sufficiency. Such attitudes led the immigrant farmer and the American hopeful westward across the Mississippi in the last half of the 19th century where, at first, all went well. Newcomers on the plains blotted up the waterholes, planted their edibles, raised pigs, cows, and chickens. They even had enough timber for their houses, all found along the river bottoms and down in the coulees. For them, the land could provide as it had in the East."

"Their numbers of course were small, though large enough to deceive others into believing similar good fortune lay out there on the open plains. The vagrant fact of a thin rainfall was slow to strike

home. Anybody could plant corn, but it took waiting through a long, dry season to learn that it wouldn't grow. Millet, sorghum, oats, and rye were planted with a similar lack of success. An almost total lack of wood required a new form of housing and fuel. The settlers eastern plow failed in attempts to break the heavy sod. Against these obstacles he developed the sod house. Twisted lumps of dried grass for fuel, and a new type of steel-bladed plow, curved and sharpened to chisel its way into the tough centuries-old mat of grasses. Against the lack of water, he converted windmills to new needs of this dry land. Against marauding buffalo, wandering Indians, and trail-driven herds, he developed barbed-wire; the Devil's Hatband- a key element in subduing the plains."17

McKee goes on to describe a typical trip west in a wagon later on in this same book. "Some of the resourcefulness of those early people is contained in the memories of Mary Starr Frost, who went out to the Nebraska plains as a 10-year old with her family in 1871; "We traveled in our covered wagon, drawn by an ox team, with our plow tied securely on, which at the back of the wagon was a few chickens in a coop. Our cows were driven along as well. We started from Buffalo County, Wisconsin, crossed the Mississippi at Wabasha, Minnesota on a ferry boat and were on the trail 6 weeks."

"Near Blue Earth, Minnesota, we fell in with three other families and traveled on together. When in camp, the mothers baked their bread over a bed of hot coals in a "Dutch Oven". I can still hear in memory the swishing and groaning of the tall grass as the wagons rolled across southern Minnesota."

"When we arrived near what is now Plainview, Nebraska, we decided to stop. About the first thing to do was dig a well. Next to build a house. This called for turning over the sod, cutting it into 2or 2½ foot lengths after which it was laid up into walls, very much like the mason lays brick, breaking joints and making a solid wall. Such walls were warm in winter and cool in summer and of surprising durability due to the thick grass roots which had grown unmolested for countless years without being cut by the plow-shares of the pioneer. We had the ground for the floor, which was swept daily with a broom made of willows. Our house was plastered with alkali mud and whitewashed. Mother tacked old sheets to the rafters up over our beds. The rafters were poles from the woods. These were covered with strips of bark(smooth side down) cut from the larger trees. Hay was next placed on top of the bark, then sod laid like shingles. Father had the credit of finishing the first house in the settlement."

"The fall of 1871, prairie fires swept the landscape until every foot of ground was black as far as the eye could reach. This did not happen once, but nearly every fall until the country was settled up. We had our fire breaks made by plowing strips of ground around our homes and burning in between. Then we would start a backfire when the flames came too near."

"Our door was fastened with a wooden latch to which was tied a leather string passing through a tiny hole to the outside. To lock our door, we drew in the string. But the latch string was always out to welcome any neighbors or weary travelers passing through."

"Our bread was made of cornmeal, and as coffee was almost unknown

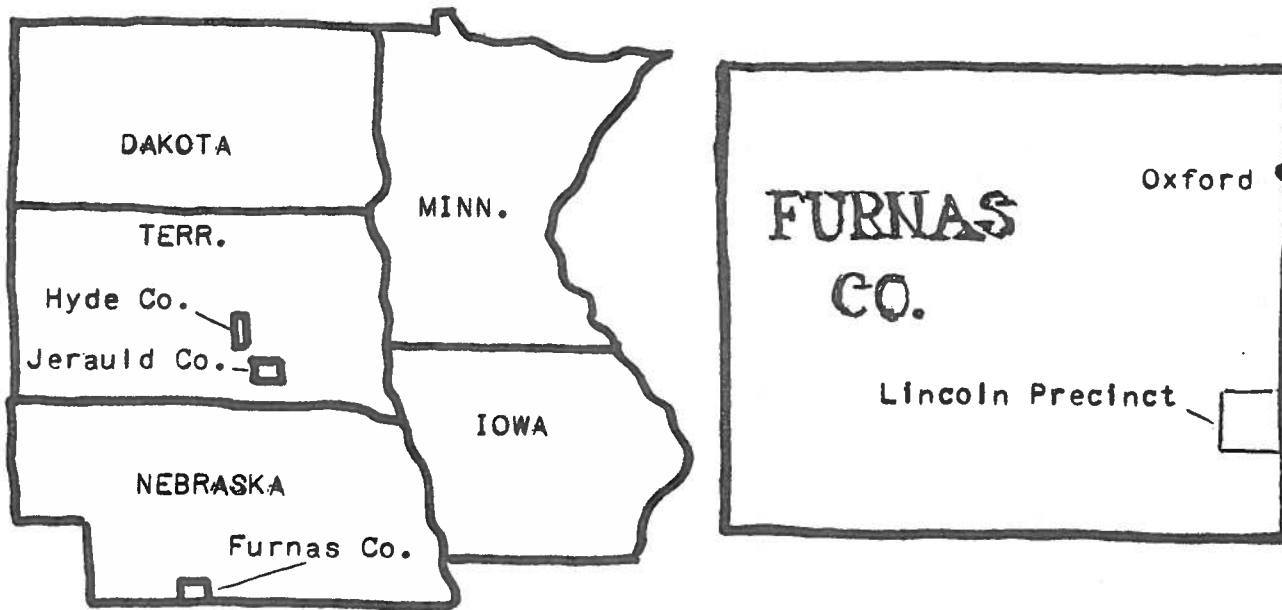
for the first 2 years, mother browned corn and corn meal for a substitute."

"One night mother left her washing on the line. A big wind came up and scattered the clothes over the prairie so that some were not found until the snow melted in the spring. But the thaw came so fast that several inches of water came into the house. We had to live on a platform. Those were stirring times for all. The coyotes and wolves howled at night making music for our lonely little band of settlers."

"The grasshoppers visited us 3 years in succession. They usually stayed with us 3 days, eating every green thing excepting the grass and sorghum cane—they drew a line at that. When that happened, father left us and found work near Norfolk where the crops were not damaged by grasshoppers, working through the harvest, then returning in the fall. That way he could earn \$50 or \$60 in cash, plus a supply of meat, flour, and potatoes to tide us over until the next crop could be raised. All our supplies were purchased at Norfolk 30 miles away. It took 3 days to make the trip with the ox teams."¹⁸

So the Roach family was gathering together once again and then separating a little, too. Joseph Dennis Roach, James, Thomas and William and Maggie Roach Burns were starting or planning to start new claims up in northeast Hyde County while Bridget, Daniel, and now newly arrived William Patrick Roach were staying on and settling in deeper in Jerauld County.

William Patrick and Mary Quinn Roach had come north from Nebraska



Furnas County in Nebraska where the James Quinn family lived and homesteaded from 1878 on; where several of the oldest Quinn boys claimed land along with their brother-in-law, William Patrick Roach in Lincoln Precinct.

¹⁸ "The Last West" by Russell McKee; Thomas Crowell Co.; N.Y.; 1974. pp. 255-