

## PASCOEVALE FARM, OAK PARK COURT, OAK PARK

### SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION, 1782 TO 2010

**1782.** John Pascoe Fawkner (1782-1868) was born at Cripplegate in London.

**1801.** Fawkner's father sentenced to transportation for 14 years for receiving stolen goods. Sent to convict settlement at Port Phillip. Family accompanied him to new settlement in Bass Strait and, later, moved to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania).

**1802.** JPFawkner, aged 20, apprenticed to builders and sawyers.

**1806-8** Fawkner family obtained a farm in Hobart.

**1811** John P. Fawkner granted 50 acres adjoining his father's farm.

**1814-15.** J P Fawkner helped some prisoners to escape & was sentenced to 3 years' hard labour. Sent to Newcastle and worked on cedar cutting on the Hunter River, NSW.

**1816** Fawkner freed & returned to Hobart. Took up bakery and sold liquor without a licence. Carried firewood and sold timber north to Launceston.

**1817** Fawkner moved to Launceston & worked as a builder & sawyer.

**1818** Eliza Cobb, aged 22, arrived in Launceston & was convicted of stealing a baby.

**5 Dec. 1822** JPFawkner, aged 36, married Eliza Cobb in Launceston.

**1824** Fawkner built a 2-storied brick house of 13 (or 36) rooms for £2,500 and attempted to open it as a hotel. His licence was refused at first because his wife was still a Crown prisoner but he was granted a licence a few months later for the Cornwell Hotel.

**1825** JPFawkner landlord of the Cornwell Arms.

**1828** Fawkner launched the **Launceston Advertiser**

**October, 1835.** The Fawkners sailed for Port Phillip.

**Jan 1838/feb 1839** Fawkner launched the **Melbourne Advertiser** (handwritten) & **Port Phillip Patriot & Melbourne Advertiser** and ran a book-selling & stationary business.

**May-August 1839- 5 April 1842.** JPFawkner's **Crown Land Grant, Lot 10, Parish of Jika Jika, Portion 101**, 760 acres valued at £1950 (site of Pascoe Vale Farm). Fawkner's land was located on the east side of Moonee Ponds Creek on an allotment that extended eastward across the old Sydney Pascoe Vale) Road to land bounded by Rhodes Parade, Northumberland Road & Gaffeny Street.

**1840-1845** Fawkner's property ('Belle Vue Park' or 'Pascoe Vale Park') located on west side of old Sydney Road. It was here that Fawkner built a timber cottage with iron gates, outbuildings & stables with an orchard, wine grapes and an acre of oak trees (hence the name 'Oak

Park'). This property was later claimed to be the 'first farm in the colony, the first vineyard, first orchard and first wine made from Australian grapes.' (See below).

**1841-42 Memorandum of Agreement (25 October 1841).** Fawkner leased part of his Pascoe Vale property on the south-west corner of his Estate, where an early Pascoe Vale Village was developed on which a church, parsonage and school house were planned. The site of this village has now become part of the Suburb of Pascoe Vale. The present main Sydney Road was established to the east of the original road.

**30 March 1842 Parish of Jika Jika map,** (included in RGO Search Notes Application 3456). This map showed Fawkner's property divided into Portion A(102 acres) on the east side of the Old Sydney Road ( now Pascoe Vale Road) and Portion B (296 acres) on the west side of the road bounded on the west by Moonee Ponds Creek Portion B contained the site of Pascoe Vale Farm. Fawkner transferred Portion B , freehold land, to his wife, the former Eliza Cobb.

**October 1842 map.** (RGO Search Notes, Applcn. 3456) This map showed the location of Fawkner's farm house in Portion B with 'Wm. F' as the owner penciled in

**27 April 1843** Fawkner was one of a group of business associates known as the 'Twelve Apostles;' who had guaranteed repayment of the large debts of WFA Rucker, merchant, with the Union Bank. When the Bank called in the guarantors in 1843 several of the signatories went bankrupt.

**June 1843.** JPFawkner leased Portion B ( excluding the site of his farm house) to his father, John Fawkner, Sen.

**30 March 1845.** JPFawkner staved off legal bankruptcy by showing bad debts of £9,614 . His remaining landed property included Portion B of Pascoe Vale Farm (ie it included the site of the complex of the historic homestead buildings). As an insolvent, Fawkner resigned from Melbourne's Town Council.

**Dec. 1845.** JPFawkner was legally released from his insolvency.

**1847.** John Fawkner Sen, paid £100 for the lease of Portion B (excluding the site of the farm house) from his son. The rent was £50 a year.

**1851.** JPFawkner became MLC for Dalhousie in the first Victorian Legislative Council and, on the introduction of responsible government, was returned for the Central Province of Victoria, holding the seat until his death in 1868. Fawkner represented the 'yeoman farmers' and was opposed to the squatters. He was opposed to manhood suffrage, secret ballots and payment of members but supported the rights of married women and deserted widows and the new Divorce Laws. Fawkner disliked sectarian rivalry. After the opening of the Victorian goldfields, Fawkner played an active role in the legislative aspects of gold-mining problems.

**21 June 1853.** JPFawkner was associated with the formation of the Municipality of Collingwood and bought a house and land there for £2,000 . He commenced work as an MLC.

**1853** Sketch of JPFawkner, MLC, by William Strutt in CPBillot's **The Life & Times of John Pascoe Fawkner**, 1985.

**C1854/55.** Oil painting of Eliza Fawkner in La Trobe Collection, State Library of Victoria.

**1854-1858.** JPFawkner's father and his father's third wife make their home at Pascoe Vale Farm. John Joseph Walsh, Fawkner's friend, often visited Pascoe Vale Farm. Fawkner Sen (1771-1854) died aged 83 on 24 September 1854. His widow died there on 14 May 1858. Both were buried in the Fawkner Grave in Melbourne General Cemetery.

**1859/60.** John Fawkner, MLC, listed in Melbourne Directories at 226 Smith Street, Collingwood.

**1860s** JPFawkner on Collingwood Bench, Chairman in 1862, and local Collingwood Councillor.

**8 Jan 1868.** JPFawkner died aged 86. Fawkner's will bequeathed his personal estate to his widow absolutely, that is, she had a life interest in all the freehold property. After his wife's death, the freehold was to be sold and annuities were listed to be paid to his adopted daughters and to his 'fathful servant' William Shapter. Anne Lucas, Fawkner's great-niece, was also listed. The estate was valued at £2,000 . The will was extremely long and complicated.(See copy of will).

**1869.** The probate of Fawkner's will held in the Public Record Office (PROV) did not contain an Inventory or any details of the probate. Valuation of Portions A and B in Crown Allotment 151, Parish of Jika Jika was £4,500 .

**19 Dec. 1870.** Eliza Fawkner, widow, mortgaged Portion B (296 acres) , Pascoe Vale Farm, for £1500 to Charles James Perry, Marine Manager at Williamstown He was owner of Will Will Rook, located on the north side of the Pascoe Vale Farm property. The Pascoe Vale Farm property included 'edifices, buildings, fences etc.'(See Search Notes, Appcn for Title No 3456 (Fawkner

**.1871.** Eliza Fawkner, aged 75, married Fawkner's friend, JJWalsh, now a barrister. The couple lived at 15 Princess Street, Kew. Eliza now lived in luxury and had learned to write.

**2 May 1871.** Eliza Walsh, widow of JPFawkner and now married to John Joseph Walsh and living in Kew, applied to bring parts of Crown Portion 151, Parish of Jika Jika under the Titles Act. This land included Portions A

and B valued at £4,500, subject to the mortgage to Charles James Perry. Eliza still signed the document with a cross( her mark).

**26 July 1879.** Death of Eliza Walsh, aged 83. In her will, Eliza left £9,126 and three properties were listed.. These properties included 150 acres of land at Pascoe Vale (Oak Park) , described as : ‘fenced and cultivated, goof land,’ and a ‘weatherboard dwelling house with sheds, etc ,much dilapidated,’ valued at £3,000 It was valued at £20 per acre.. On 1 July 1879 the tenant was Mrs Knight. There was no mention of stables on the property Eliza was able to sign her name, Eliza Walsh, on this document.

The other properties included a 6-roomed brick cottage in Kew with a coach house and stables, valued at £1,800; and a 3 storey brick building in Collins Street, West Melbourne, valued at £2,750. The West Melbourne house was leased to the Messrs Naylor for an annual rent of £425 with ‘4 years to run,’ and was subject to an annuity of £350 for life to Mrs JJWalsh. (See Will and Probate documents)

**1884.** JJWalsh married Anne Lucas, Fawkner’s great-niece mentioned in his will.

**1880s** Pascoe Vale property purchased by Joseph English, Creswick miner. A two-storey brick house was added to the property.

**C1894 MMBW Plan No 257. Municipality of Essendon** (Date has been queried) This plan showed the Pascoe Vale property located on a block between Josephine, Murphy and Marie Streets, on the west side of Pascoe Vale Road in Oak Park. There were a number of buildings shown within the property. They included two large houses set back from but facing Marie Street. The one on the east side of the group had a front verandah and a small pond. There were large stables between the two houses. There was a smaller house close to Josephine Street. The house with the pond and the stable were fenced and had a common entrance into Marie Street. This entrance later became Oak Park Court. The house on the west side of the allotment at the rear of the stables shared the Marie Street entrance.

**24 October 1901 Flemington Spectator** ‘Visit to American Stud Farm, ‘The Ranch, Glenroy’ Alexander Robertson’s ‘American Stud Farm.’ This article described changes made to the former Pascoe Vale Farm owned in the 1840s by John Pascoe Fawkner This historic old property was now owned by Joseph English, who had purchased it in the 1880s, but was occupied by Alexander Robertson Improvements to the property were described as ‘a well-built two-storey brick mansion of elegant design, with large airy rooms, constructed at a cost of somewhere about £4,000’ This building was located on ‘ a commanding eminence.’ Water was supplied by ‘huge underground tanks.’ Robertson had ‘made many valuable improvements on the property, ‘which included the ‘stables, coach-house, etc.’ (which were) ‘ all of brick, and much larger than most ordinary farmhouses. These have been put in thorough order, and the approaches made good.

**11 September 1902 Flemington Spectator,** ‘The First Farm in Victoria.’ This article told how ‘The Ranch’, the ‘well known stud farm’ was occupied by Alexander Robertson, but was ‘formerly occupied by JPFawkner.’ It was’ located on Pascoe

Vale Road, about three miles from Essendon Town Hall.’ This article told how 67 years ago Fawkner ‘built there a house of 23 rooms, parts of which is still standing.. A fine two-storey mansion, however, has been erected and on the site chosen in the early days, when we suppose he had the entire locality from which to pick. The relic of Fawkner’s house is in good preservation, the flooring being of Tasmanian hardwood, the boards showing such marks as are made by pitsaws and hand labour. The site of the house was admirably chosen on one of the highest of the flat-topped little hills with a gentle falling slope on all sides from the house.’

The writer told how the ‘first Victorian vineyard was planted here from cuttings, doubtless brought from Tasmania, but only a single vine survives.’ A ‘training or trotting track’ had been ‘formed on a small plot at the fall of the hill near the Moonee Ponds Creek.’

The writer told how the past of the property was ‘connected with the earliest history of the State, and it was peopled at the early dawn of Victorian settlement.’ John Pascoe Fawkner ‘owned the property upwards of 60 years or so. Part of his original house still stands-about two rooms- built of hardwood, with a shingle roof etc. The shingles are still there, though covered with galvanized iron. The flooring is as good as the day it was put down, and still bears the straight-line saw cuts...The wood is all Tasmanian hardwood. An old cedar mantelpiece, also a very old pattern iron gate, indicates that John Fawkner knew how to make himself comfortable before our advanced civilization came along. Fawkner’s original house had 23 rooms so he must have had a fairly large family or retinue’.

‘From the upstairs of the new mansion may be seen the township of Fawkner, named after the pioneer, while the Pascoevale Road, also named after him, passed the frontage of the farm.’ The writer also described ‘beautiful views from the balcony, which include the Dandenong Ranges, the Yan Yean, the You-Yangs, Mt Macedon, Keilor, Glenroy, Pascoe Vale, Williamstown, Doncaster Tower, and ‘many other prominent early buildings.’

Fawkner’s building was described as ‘the first farm in the colony, where agriculture was carried out on a large scale. He possessed the first vineyard in the colony, and the first orchard. Fawkner also produced the first wine from Australian grapes. But the vineyard has gone the same way as poor Fawkner, while of the orchard there are but the surviving trees.’ But the writer told of ‘an aged walnut tree’ and ‘a long row of English oaks planted by Fawkner (which was) another link of remembrance, and gave rise to the original name ‘Oak Park.’

**7 March 1914** **Argus** ‘Fawkner’s Farm,’ by AWGreig. Discusses whether a little cottage standing on the Pascoevale Farm property should be preserved as ‘the hut of the first settlers.’

**1946 (after WW2)** A remnant of the original JPFawkner land at Oak Park, was divided into more than 500 building blocks under the collective title of ‘Oak Park.’ (west of Fawkner Cemetery)

**1954 (April)** Andrew Lemon's history, **Broadmeadows**, contains a photograph of the subdivision of the old Oak Park Farm, which indicated the Homestead in the center of the subdivision.

**17 November 2009. Cadastral Map, Lodged Plan 91849**, Map showed Oak Park Court off Maria Street. Comparison with the c1894 MMBW Plan shows the site of the 3 buildings shown on the earlier map now on Lot 7, and the site of the old stables now on Lot 9, and the creation of Oak Park Court off Maria Street.

**2010.** Consultants to examine the old stable building to determine whether there is any fabric of the early stables remaining within the present structure.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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*Will & Probate Papers, Mrs Eliza Walsh, Died 8.3.1879*, VPRS 28/P/ 0, Unit 225, File 19/511; 28/P/2, unit 95, file 14/511' VPRS 7591/P/2, Unit 50, File 19/511, (PROV).

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### **(2) BOOKS, ARTICLES / REPORTS (a select list).**

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### **(3) MAPS/ PLANS (a select, chronological list)**

*Parish of Jika Jika* , GAWindsor, Surveyor General's Office, Sheet 240, 1856.(Shows Allotment 151) (SLV Map Room).

*Municipality of Broadmeadows* , MMBW Plan No 257, c 1894. (SLV Map Room)  
(This map shows a group of buildings on the site of Oak Park Farm, Oak Park Court, Oak Park. The map's date has been queried).

*AMG Zone 56, 17 November 2009*, Cadastral Map System. (Land Victoria). ( This map shows Oak Park Court allotments).

#### **FURTHER RESEARCH**

Further research into the ownership of Joseph English, who purchased the property in the 1880s, might provide useful information about the age of the stable building on Lot 9, Oak Park Court.

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