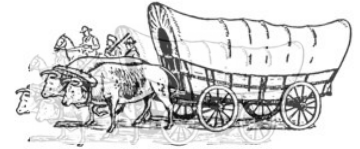




King Folk



Newsletter #37

King Family Association

April 2018

Stephen King, Possible Gravesite

By Anne Trussell

Stephen King, 1818-1852, was the seventh child of Nahum and Sarepta. Born in Madison County, Ohio, he married Anna Maria Allen in 1843. By spring, 1845, Stephen & Anna Maria had joined the King family, who were Oregon-bound.

The trek west wasn't an easy one for Stephen. In a letter Anna Maria wrote to her family in 1846, she said:

Stephen was taken with the fever at Fort Boise; he had not been well since we left Ohio, but was now taken worse. He was sick for three months, we did not expect him to live for a long time, but he is now well and hearty, getting fatter every day, and he weighs as much as he did when he came over the mountains...

Stephen and Anna Maria settled on their Kings Valley donation land claim in 1851 and began the arduous task of clearing and farming the land. But tragedy would soon strike. Stephen died 26 November 1852, leaving behind Anna Maria and their four-year-old son, Charles Allen King.

Early Oregon records are minimal so it has never been known how Stephen died or where he is buried. But a new clue came to light recently within the pages of the book **Memories of Wren, Oregon, 1840 – 1998**. In a section on the Wren Cemetery, it is stated "... the Stephen King grave is located in an old orchard off Harris Road on the old King claim."

A few locals, knowledgeable of the area, trekked into the forested Stephen King donation land claim in 2017 and found what appears to be the location of Stephen King's grave. A cairn of rough, moss-covered stones, adjacent to what appears to be an ancient tumbled-down rock wall, sits amongst some very old apple and pear trees. Nearby is a beautiful meadow where the cabin probably stood. The view of Mary's Peak from the meadow is spectacular.

Is this the final resting place of Stephen King? We'll probably never know for sure. It fits the description passed down through Kings Valley families for 150 years. And it's nice to think of Stephen resting in that lovely spot, near a green meadow, below the old apple and pear trees, with Mary's Peak rising in the distance.

King Family 2018 Reunion

Saturday, June 23, 2018

9:30 AM – 2 PM

College United Methodist Church, Philomath

2018 President's Letter

Hello family! I hope you all had a great holiday season and you are thawing out from the weather. The date and time for the reunion has been set but we are still looking for a vice president.

The reunion will be June 23rd at College United Methodist Church in Philomath, OR. The street address is 1123 Main Street. We will have coffee and donuts at 9:30 AM. Please bring a lunch as we do not have the use of the kitchen. I am interested in hearing from people if they would be willing to pay to have lunch catered for the 2019 reunion. Tours are not planned this year, but we are hoping to have a couple of presentations, on the location of Stephen King's grave and on what to do with family treasures when immediate family is unable or unwilling to take them. We plan to wrap things up by 2 PM.

We are in desperate need of a vice president. The main responsibility of the office, in the past, has been organizing the annual reunion. This means securing the location and any other activities taking place. It does not necessarily mean taking on the position of president in the future. Currently, the officers communicate by email, mostly between January and the reunion in June. If you are interested, please call or email me at 503-626-9808 or tracj1031@gmail.com.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the reunion in June!

Traci Willey
President

Bits and Pieces

by Anne Trussell
atru02@comcast.net

REUNION... Please note reunion location and time, June 23, 9:30 am -2 pm at College United Methodist Church, 1123 Main St., Philomath. We will brown bag it. **NO KITCHEN.**

REUNION TOUR GUIDES... A written tour guide of King landmarks will be provided for each place that is visited during future reunions. The tour guide will also be placed on our website where it can be downloaded and/or printed. See the 2018 reunion article for this year's virtual tour.

CHECKS and DUES UPDATE... Please make checks out to **Pam Peck-King Folk** and mail to **Pam Peck, 1524 Kings Blvd., Corvallis, OR 97330.** Your \$10 pays for the reunion, the newsletter, and repair and replacement of family headstones.

FAMILY WEB SITES... The King Family Association has a web presence on three sites. First, Ancestry.com contains our "King Folk" family tree. A big THANK YOU to Char Wirfs for hosting and maintaining this tree and for our Facebook page. Second, we are on Facebook as "Kings Valley Kin." Email Char Wirfs for an invitation to either or both sites. Third, George Davidson is our webmaster for our very own King Folk website, kingfolk.co

OBITUARY COLLECTION... David Trask, our historian, has one of the most extensive collections of family obituaries on the west coast. He's worked hard to organize and maintain this. Please help him expand this collection by sending him obituaries for King Family members and their extended families. dltrask@aol.com

KINGS VALLEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION... The Kings Valley Cemetery Association has a great newsletter. Watch for the interesting stories of those who came before us and, please, help to support this worthy cause.

A HEART FOR ANY FATE... Read Linda Crew's interesting article in this newsletter on how the story of the Kings on the Oregon Trail, **A Heart For Any Fate**, came about. In 2017, this book was chosen by the Linus Pauling Middle School Library to present to the Board of the Corvallis School District. Linda's latest book **Wedding in Yangshuo** is now available in printed or ebook format. Terrific read!

DAR... Our Amos King now has a DAR #, A213123, and a DAR connection to his son, Nahum. Thanks to Judie Kelloff's perseverance, anyone wishing to join DAR with Amos King as a Patriot Ancestor can now do so by proving your own lineage from Nahum. Contact your local DAR chapter.

Y-DNA... We are still looking for a male King, a direct descendant of Nahum's through the male King line, who would be willing to take the Y-DNA test to help determine earlier King ancestry. Please contact either Traci Willey or Anne Trussell.

KING FOLK NEWSLETTER... You can receive your newsletter via email. Just let me know your email address and I'll add you to the email list. Help us keep our costs down. And you will receive the newsletter faster and in color! The newsletter is also available on our website *kingfolk.co*.

NAHUM'S CANE... Kathryn Hood, one of our members, has Nahum's cane. She reports that she uses it every day. Kathryn, we'd love a photo for next year's newsletter.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES has a new exhibit, ***Black in Oregon 1840-1870***. The exhibit is in Salem and is open to the public Monday – Friday, 8:00am-4:45 pm until August 24, 2018. The exhibit features stories, photos, and documents of early black pioneers in the Pacific Northwest. The Oregon State Constitution will also be on display.



2018 King Family Reunion

We will hold this year's reunion at the **College United Methodist Church, 1123 Main St. Philomath**. In the same complex is the Benton County Museum, which is housed in the big brick building built by the United Brethren Church.

GETTING THERE: Drive west through Philomath. The Methodist Church and the Museum are on the north side of Main St. Lots of additional parking behind the museum.

MEETING ROOM: Located at the north end of the long hall in the Methodist Church. It will be open from 9:30 am – 2 PM. Coffee and donuts will be provided.

NOTE: WE WILL "BROWN BAG" IT THIS YEAR. **NO Kitchen available.** There is a Subway and a Safeway store with a deli counter located at the 53rd St shopping center, about 2 miles east of Philomath.

ACTIVITIES: This year we will do a virtual tour of Stephen and Anna Maria King's presence in Kings Valley. We will also be discussing the process of donating items to the Benton County Museum. The Isaac King Cemetery won't be visited by our group as we have in past years. However, if you wish to visit the cemetery, you may contact the owners, Bill and Jerry Wischnofske, jwishnofske@peak.org to make arrangements.

ADDITIONALLY: The museum itself opens at 10 AM and we encourage everyone to browse through the displays on the first and second floors.

AND FINALLY: Please take a moment to visit the Benton County Genealogical Society in the little annex house on the west side of the museum. They have an impressive collection of books and research guides.

KING FAMILY REUNION

College United Methodist Church, Philomath, Oregon
June 24, 2017

Again, reunion day was bright and sunny, and about 50 family members and guests attended. President Traci Willey presided. Three people were here for the very first time. A list of the King children were read, and descendants of each one were asked to stand.

Saretta King – 0

Isaac King – 5

John King – 0

Sarah King – 0

Stephen King – 0

Abigail King – 0

Amos King – 0

Lydia King – 0

Lovisa King – 6

Soloman King – 3

Lucretia King – 1

Rhoda Ann King – 3

Hopestill King – 18

Total descendants in attendance: 36

Traci reported that she finished her Master's Degree this past year. Congratulations, Traci!

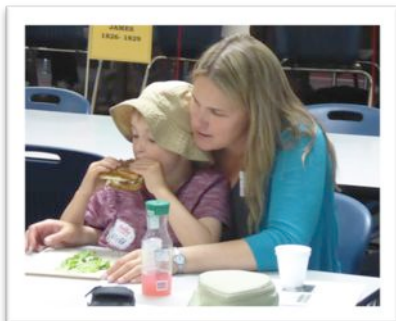
Vice President Earle Greig is stepping down today, after many years of serving the King family in too many ways to count. THANK YOU, EARLE! All were invited to share in a cake honoring Earle today for his service as our vice president since 2003. So this means that the vice president's position is now open. We will leave this position open for now, until someone steps up who is willing to serve.

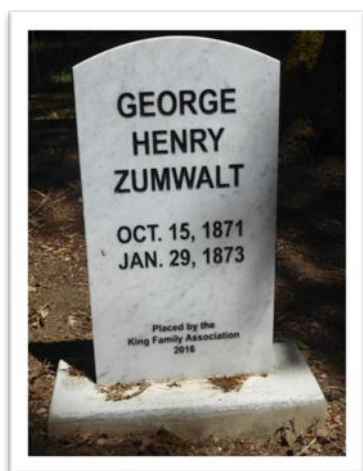
Officers were introduced: Pat Plunkett Holler is our secretary. Pam Peck is our treasurer, and David Trask is our long-time historian. Former officers Anne Trussell and Char Wirfs now serve as board members-at-large.

President's report: One of her goals is to research how the King Family can become a non-profit organization. This might open up some grant opportunities for different projects. She will present a report and recommendation at next year's reunion for discussion. Earle noted that being vice president "was a good job, especially for such a great family, and most especially when it ends with the 'best doggone cake you've ever tasted!' "

This afternoon after the reunion there is an opportunity for all who would like to caravan out to the old Isaac King DLC to view the Isaac King Cemetery (on private property) and also the old King barn which is still in use. We are cautioned to stay on the roadways, because fire hazard concerns are very high in this dry summer. Also we are requested to stay by the barn area, and not to go near the marijuana greenhouses located on the back of the property.

Jane Fromherz offered some lapel pins that say "I'm a King's Kid" for sale for \$1.25 each.





Earle reported that the new monument that we bought for little George Henry Zumwalt (1871- 1873, son of Almeda King Zumwalt & her second husband) was placed in the Isaac King Cemetery since the last reunion. Also the owners have installed a wrought iron fence surrounding the graves.

The secretary summarized the minutes of the 2016 reunion meeting. There were no corrections, and the minutes were accepted as presented. The treasurer reported that we have \$4733.97 in the bank as of today.

The historian said that there isn't much news to report for this year. Please keep sending obits, birth and death information, etc., to David Trask to add to the family archives collection. Thank you

to David for once again bringing "a fraction of the collection" for display today. David said that today he is presenting the original gravestone of the infant son of Amos Nahum & Melinda Fuller King (who died in 1847) to the Benton County Museum. It was originally in the Locke Cemetery, and is believed to be the earliest marker of a King descendant in the Kings Valley area. Many years ago David found the original stone in a pile of stones at the Locke Cemetery and rescued it, keeping it safe through the years. A few years ago the King Family paid to have a replacement marker for the infant set at the Locke Cemetery.

Tour today to Isaac King cemetery & barn: Char Wirfs prepared a nice commemorative tour booklet about the Isaac King DLC and cemetery for our use today. We hope to put out a new tour guide every year now, to various areas connected with the King Family. The same information in the booklet will also be printed on the kingfolk.co family website. Today Char also gave a copy of the booklet to the Museum next door. She will also give copies to both property owners who graciously are allowing us to visit today. Jane Fromherz volunteered to also take a few copies to the Fromherz reunion that takes place tomorrow. Char noted 2 corrections in the booklet: on page 6, it should say "great-great", not "3rd great." (Isaac King was Char's great-great grandfather.) Also on the last page, the year for Isaac King's death information from the Corvallis Gazette should read December 1, 1866, not 1886. Isaac King died at the barn on his 47th birthday in November 1866.



In 1975 the US Department of the Interior National Parks Service prepared a form that described the houses then remaining on the property and the old barn. The historical society also researched the history of Isaac's death and they said it was "inconclusive, whether suicide, accident, or even a murder." That is probably why there are so many stories surrounding the death. The original comments from 1866 appear to have come from an inquest. One said it was suicide and 2 or 3 more said it was an accident, a gunshot by his own hand. So, we do not know the facts. The family, the community and friends must have all been traumatized. People still talk about it. However, we feel that the documents that are dated closest to the date of death are probably the most factual. There is evidence at the Benton County Courthouse of a coroner's inquest being held. However, the clerk said the file contents are missing. It will be a continuing project for the King Family to continue digging for the facts in this matter.



Earle told us about the Isaac King barn. There is a picture of his mother at the barn. She and Earle together looked for any bullet holes in the barn years ago. Earle will lead today's tour. He asked those in attendance to help with cleaning up this room in the church, because last year Pam Peck was left to do most of the cleanup. (Thank you, Pam.) We all need to help with this. Sherry Fish said that someone tried last year to obtain GPS coordinates for the Isaac King cemetery, but they were unsuccessful because there is no cell service out there.

Y-DNA Testing: Anne Trussell said we are still looking for a direct-line male King descendant who would be willing to take a DNA test. The King Family will pay for the test. Anne said that currently Ancestry DNA has the largest database (close to 4 million participants). There are 33 matches in our "DNA Circle" of King connections. Anne reported that her connection through a female line of Kings shows some Native American ancestry. Earle's test came back the same as Anne's, so likely somewhere, among the Norton ancestors, prior to Sarepta's birth, there is some Native American blood.

DAR & SAR Application: Anne said that the first thing is to contact the national organization. They will give an applicant some paperwork to complete. Amos King (Nahum's dad) was a Revolutionary War soldier. There are two Amos Kings whose service is documented in Revolutionary War records. Unfortunately, the DAR mixed them up for years. To join, it is necessary to begin with yourself and then work backwards. You must provide birth/death/marriage records (some are available already on our King website). A critical dilemma is that we MUST have the title page from the Nahum King Family Bible. We have photocopies of the handwritten birth/death/marriage information from the Oregon King family Bible, but no copy of the title page. The Bible itself disappeared from the Benton County Museum. Char noted that each DAR region has a registrar, and some of them are more meticulous than others. But they will help applicants work on it. Char is working on this question, but what always stops her is the missing Bible title page. However, the DAR will accept land records. The missing absolute proof of relationship between Nahum King and his father Amos King is truly our "missing link." Anne suggested that during the next couple of years, we will try to fill in gaps in the information that Historian David Trask has. David has a funeral card and some other info that may help make the connection. Those who wish to apply for DAR or SAR membership may contact David for help with documentation. The SAR is easier because someone in Idaho already joined that group through our Amos King and his youngest son Horace. But, the DAR registrar said that the DAR does not accept the SAR's records! (The SAR does accept DAR records.) Our Nahum King was Amos King's first-born, so we know that Nahum was a descendent of Hopestill Haskins, the first wife of Amos King.



Kings Valley Cemetery report: Earle reported that the cemetery board just applied for and received some small grants. This good news has not yet been made public. The grant funds will be used for a new sign at the cemetery entrance, an informational kiosk to be placed in the cemetery and some new fencing to replace an old fence that has deteriorated. The materials for the new sign have been purchased and the project is already in process.



Business Items:

The King Family officers suggest paying \$300 as a donation to the K.V. Cemetery, to be used for improvements at the cemetery. It was moved and seconded to approve this item; all voted aye, motion approved. President Traci suggested that we also make a \$100 donation to the Benton County Museum as a thank you for the museum tours they hosted this morning. It was moved and seconded to approve this item; all voted aye, motion approved. For those who are interested in having access to the King Folk family tree on

ancestry.com, please contact Char Wirfs. Char is administrator of the huge King Family tree on ancestry.com. She pays the annual membership fees, and she can send invites to the tree that will allow participants to view the information posted there. Thank you to Char who pays the membership fees as a contribution to the King Family. Some discussion took place about the membership fees, and consensus was that the King Family should be helping Char with the fee amount. Deaths during the past year: Michael William Olson; Winnifred Jane Smith died a few months ago, and Mary Gerding died. Char also noted that the King Family has a Facebook page. Search for it as "Kings Valley Kin." George Davidson administers a website devoted to the King Family's history: www.kingfolk.co ("dot co" NOT dot com!) Thank you, George, for all the work you've done already on this site! There being no more business, attendees were invited to meet outside for the annual group photo, followed by cleanup of the church meeting room. Following that, we will caravan from the reunion site to the Isaac King DLC located in Kings Valley. The meeting adjourned at 1:45 P.M.

KING FAMILY ASSOCIATION

NOTES FROM TOUR OF BENTON COUNTY MUSEUM'S STORAGE ROOM King Family Reunion

*Notes taken by Patricia Plunkett Holler
June 24, 2017*

Tour Leaders: Mary Gallagher, Museum Collections Manager & Jenna Procter, Intern/Volunteer³

Bibles were set out on display for King Family members to see:

- . The Chambers Family Bible #1, artifact #2003-062
- . The Chambers Family Bible #2, artifact #2003-042
- . Hopestill King Norton's Bible, copyright 1843, that contains King Family info

Sol King's organ. The stool was also recently donated. The donor said that although it does not match the organ, the stool belonged with the organ. They have no more information than this.

Trunk—covered in cowhide with fur still attached. Was abandoned along the Oregon Trail, then family members returned some years later, found and retrieved it. Although associated with the King family, some family members believe it was actually from the



Zumwalt family. Museum plans to display it in their first exhibit at the new museum that is under construction now in Corvallis. The maker of the trunk's original label is still attached inside the hinged lid. It looks like some repairs were made to the trunk sometime over the years. Anne Trussell noted that someone posted photos of the trunk on Facebook during the past year, and there, the trunk was called the Zumwalt family's trunk. Trunk is museum artifact number 15028. It was donated by J.E. Norton in the 1960s. (He was father of Warren and Ross Norton.)

James Plunkett's rifle, in beautiful shape. Someone said that in 1898 James Plunkett rode his horse to town to buy it and accessories for it. He had \$15.00 in his pocket, and came home with some money left. Bill Dixon was the donor of the gun. M. Gallagher said the gun is "one of the best artifacts they have, in terms of condition."

Large framed portrait of Hopestill King Norton.

A large spinning wheel donated by Arthur Norton—from the Zumwalt family. (King and Zumwalt families are intermarried.)



The Price family's liquor still. It is the only still in the museum. Belonged to Jim Price.



Two drums that were owned by James Plunkett. He played the drums in the band at Ft. Hoskins, and after he was discharged from the Army he and a few friends played music throughout the Kings Valley area and even over to Toledo near the coast. (There is a picture of the band, with Jim Plunkett and his drum.)



High up on a shelf, a **mustard-colored rocker** that belonged to Hopestill King Norton. Museum also has a **bed and dresser** that belonged to Hopestill. Also Hopestill's **chest of drawers** that was handmade in Benton County after they arrived here. Also a low **post rope bed** that matches the chest of drawers. These items

were handmade during the early pioneer period here.

"Bruce the Moose,"—he was on display at the old Horner Museum under Gill Coliseum for many years. He has now been restored and will soon be on display in the lobby of the new museum. (Stuffed.)

Grain auger from the Chambers Grist Mill, on 3rd shelf up. It was handmade of wood (not unusual construction) – a very traditional item. It moved grain along as it turned.

The museum can/will email pictures of any of their artifacts to interested persons. Go to Benton County Historical Society website; choose "contact us." Mary Gallagher is listed there as a contact person.

The Tale of Two Trunks

By Anne Trussell

Confusion has arisen over a family trunk donated to the Horner Museum in 1970 (now at the Benton County Museum). You will find a description of that trunk in the prior article.

Called the 'King' trunk by King family members, family stories relate that a trunk was brought west in 1845 by Hopestill King and Lucius Norton. After getting lost in eastern Oregon, to lighten their load, they buried the trunk in the desert and the group pushed on, starving and disoriented, until they found their way to The Dalles.

In the spring of 1846, a few of those same pioneers traveled east again, back to the desert, to reclaim the trunk. They found it, emptied of personal possessions, and brought it back to Benton County. During the following years, the trunk and its story were passed down through generations of King family members.

In August 1970, a trunk was donated to the Oregon State University (Horner) Museum by Mrs. James Emmett (Mildred) Norton. Her Deed of Gift states "Rawhide covered trunk brought to Oregon by the Lucius Norton Family in the year 1845..." It is dated and signed August 5, 1970, Kent, Oregon, Mrs. J.E. Norton.

Her description says "This trunk in the wagon train of 1845. Came with a brother of Joe Meek across the mountains. Had a hard time with bad water. Late in the fall settlers in the valley came to meet them. They took



the sick people back to the settlement and left their baggage under trees near now Eugene." This trunk now resides in the Benton County Museum.

Last year a photo of the same trunk was posted to Facebook. Taken in 1959, the photo is of Jax Zumwalt and Warren Norton standing behind the trunk. The caption reads "Isaac Zumwalt's trunk. He brought across the plains in 1846."



Is it the Zumwalt trunk or the King trunk at the museum? Hopestill and Lucius came west to Oregon in 1845, following Stephen Meek through eastern Oregon. Isaac and Sarah Zumwalt came west the following year, 1846, and took the Applegate Trail through southern Oregon, arriving in the Willamette Valley via the area that would eventually become Eugene. Mrs. Norton's narrative contained a bit of both of these journeys.

Complicating this mystery even further is that James Emmett Norton was descended from the King Family, from Hopestill & Lucius Norton AND from Isaac and Sarah Zumwalt.

An Oregonian article from June 29, 1970, tells of a planned Zumwalt July reunion. Describing the end of the 1846 Zumwalt trip, the article states "Subsequently, they left half their baggage in the Calapooya Mountains,

returning for it in the spring of 1847. One trunk is now in the Kent, Oregon, home of Mrs. Mildred Norton."

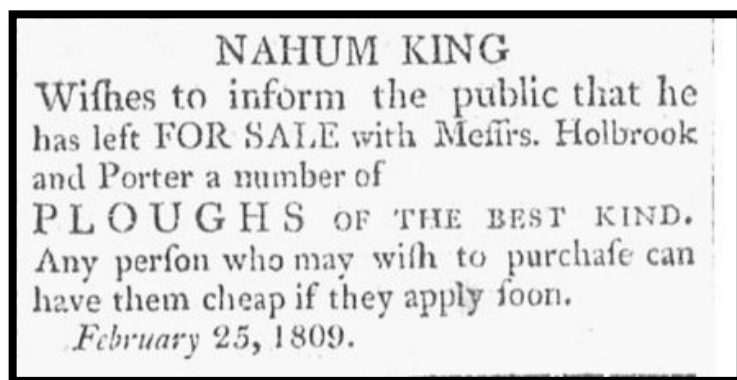
Is the trunk at the museum the Zumwalt trunk instead of the King/Norton trunk? The Benton County Museum has a grand opening of their new building in Corvallis in 2019 and is planning to display this trunk. Is it the 1846 Zumwalt trunk instead?

It definitely appears so. Where, then, is the 1845 King/Norton trunk?

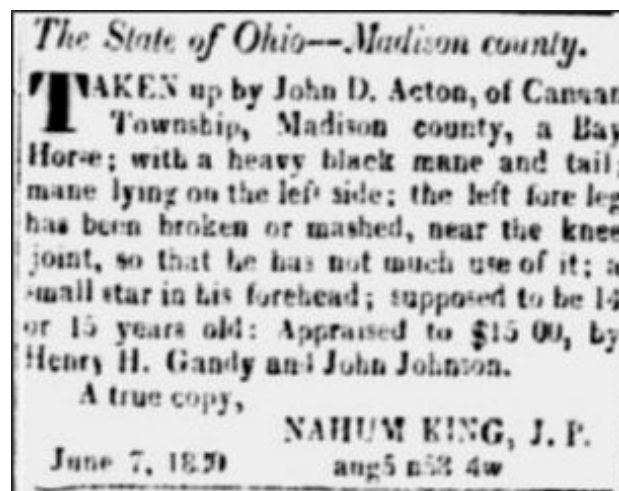
Earle Greig remembered another trunk that had been passed down through other descendants of Hopestill & Lucius Norton. That trunk is still in their possession. A little searching turned up the owners and, from them, a definitive confirmation. In their possession, besides the old trunk, is a note passed down from their mother, which says "Old cedar chest - came on wagon train with Lucius Carolus Norton family."



This family is hoping this King/Norton trunk can be displayed at the opening of the new Benton County Museum in Corvallis. Arrangements still have to be made. Perhaps both trunks will be displayed, the King/Norton trunk which arrived in Oregon via the Meek cutoff in 1845 and the Zumwalt trunk which arrived via the Applegate Trail in 1846. We'll keep you updated in the newsletter.



This advertisement is from the *Brattleboro, Vermont, Reporter*, Monday, March 13, 1809. It has been speculated that Nahum and Sarepta, who married in New York on May 9, 1807, took their small family to Vermont before going to Ohio in 1810. Could this be our Nahum? What do you think?

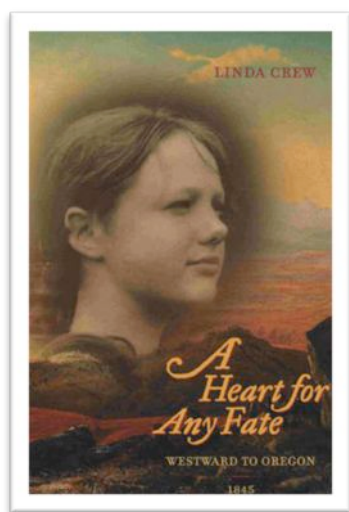


Here is another clue about the life of the King family. This is from the *Ohio State Journal*, Columbus, Ohio, August 6, 1830. Columbus is only about 20 miles from the King home in Madison County, Ohio. It appears that Nahum was still a Justice of the Peace in 1830.

A Message from Linda Crew

It's exciting to hear that, through DNA tests, people are learning they're descendants of Nahum and Sarepta King. As merely an *honorary* King family member, I envy these folks the proud heritage into which they've stumbled, the wealth of knowledge about these pioneers that's available thanks to previous research.

A few people have apparently mentioned on Facebook being slightly disappointed to not be finding out more about their own particular King family ancestor in my book, *A Heart for Any Fate: Westward to Oregon 1845*, so I thought I'd take this opportunity to explain to newcomers how the book came about, what's fact and what's a product of my imagination.



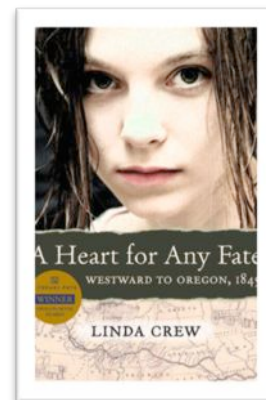
As a child, I'd always loved Oregon Trail novels, and as a grownup writer with several historical novels already published, I wanted to try my hand at my own. Looking to hang my story on a real wagon train episode, I thought to explore one where people

were lost and then rescued, as I always find stories of courage and compassion in dire circumstances the most compelling.

I had no interest in one more book about the Donner tragedy, thank you very much! I was aware too, of the story of the first group coming over the central Cascades, and how settlers already in the valley went up to save them from the snow. But on the day I headed down to the library—this was before we were using the internet to the extent we are now—I pulled *Terrible Trail: The Meek*

Cutoff, 1845—from a reserved section shelf and this set my course.

Scanning the Roster of Names of those who'd followed Stephen Meek on the so-called shortcut in Eastern Oregon, I stopped at the King family. I had only recently discovered and fallen in love with Kings Valley by going on a Volkswalk out there one golden September day, so my pulse picked up as I scanned down the names of the King Family children.



At the lovely and distinctive name Lovisa I stopped. Quick math showed she'd have been seventeen at the time of the crossing. Apparently the oldest unmarried daughter setting out on the trail, a note pointed out she ended up married in Oregon to her dead sister's husband. Talk about a plotline—how might *that* have happened? I wanted to figure it out. *That's my girl*, I thought in that moment, and in all the research and writing to come, I never wavered nor second-guessed myself on the choice of Lovisa King as my main character.

If I'd prioritized marketing on this project, I'd have written a true children's book, since the Oregon Trail is designated as a fourth grade subject in Oregon schools. But so often such books will feature a family of three on the trail, with the main character being about ten, the older sister serving as the love interest. Hey, if we're interested in love and match-making (and we are, right?), why shouldn't the seventeen-year-old sister be the main character?

Also, many of the families who traveled the Oregon Trail in those years were quite large, and I was determined to reflect that reality. With eleven King children plus assorted spouses and grandchildren in the group, I clearly could not give equal attention, word per word, to each of them, especially as I

needed to bring into focus members of the other real-life families into which the Kings would ultimately marry at trail's end.

If any of the Kings kept trail diaries, they did not survive, so I do not actually know how any given family member felt about anything. All I had to go on were the facts of who was on the trail, who died and how, who survived it, and how their lives went after they arrived in Oregon.

I knew it would make for a boring, unbelievable book to cast every King family member as equally heroic, so I allowed myself the ascribing of certain frailties to those who did not survive. I studied hints of their later lives to make literary guesses at their personalities. For instance, given the disturbing stories of Isaac King's ultimate demise in his own barn, I cast him as rather gloomy. After all, surely everybody wasn't always "up and doing" every minute. Some people had to express the inevitable discouragement of the trek. "Little Lute" later ran afoul of the law for running off with a 14-year-old girl, so I drew him as a tough little scallywag of a survivor. Since Sol grew up to be a popular man and three term sheriff of Benton County, I saw him on the trail at twelve as a lot like my own son Will, smart, savvy, always engaged, always knowing what was going on. And cute as the dickens.

When I first decided seventeen-year-old Lovisa was the family member I'd follow, I had yet to study her future life, but making up the story of her evolving relationship with Rowland Chambers, I'm confident I was completely on target in creating her as a girl of extraordinary courage and fortitude. You don't wind up the matriarch of Kings Valley by being a wimp!

So, Lovisa King was the star of my novel and, as writers do, I gave her my own imagined thoughts and feelings. But King Family members are descended from these folks in real life, and in real life, we are each the star of our own show. If you are carrying the

genes of Rhoda or Lydia or anyone else you felt got short shrift in my book, remember this: No more is actually known about Lovisa's real feelings than is known about *your* ancestor, and each person on that trek surely played his or her own important part. Feel free to imagine the details yourselves.

And congratulations on being a King!



Lydia King Williams

By Anne Trussell

One of the family members mentioned in Linda's article is Lydia King, who was only 14 years old when the family came west in 1845. For many years, Lydia's "King Children" Chart at our reunions has remained empty of names. We've had no descendants of Lydia attend.

However, just this past year, DNA testing has brought us a Lydia descendant, Glenn Williams. Glenn tells us that his great-grandfather, Emmett Eugene Williams (1875-1905), and his great-great grandfather, Emmett Douglas Williams (1856-1875), both died just after their sons were born. Their wives remarried and, over time, their King family history was lost. A DNA match with many King descendants helped Glenn to learn about his King heritage. We hope he can eventually make it to the reunion and put his name on Lydia's chart.

Here is the ***Back When*** article on Lydia, written by Dorothy Turner Brown, from the Benton Bulletin, Nov 26, 1980.

Lydia became the bride of another 1845 immigrant Jonathan L. Williams in Benton county two days before Christmas in 1847. "Jont" was born in Grainger County, Tennessee, in 1826 and arrived in Oregon with his parents, James Edward and Martha Williams, in 1846. They settled near Airlie in Polk County. That is also where 'Jont' and Lydia settled their Donation Land Claim in May of 1854. Their known children were Lafayette (Lafe), Lena, Emmet, and a daughter who died in infancy. 'Jont' died in Polk County January 24, 1907 and is buried in the Odd Fellow Cemetery in Salem. Minnie Price, 92, of Portland remembers hearing her mother, Serepta Norton Price, speak of "Aunt Lyd", who lived in Portland and was almost blind.

King Family Deaths

Glenva King Chotard (1921-2013)
descended from Stephen & Anna Maria

Sherrie Henderson (1936-2016)
descended from Abigail King & Price Fuller

Audrey Theurer
1928-2018
Benton County Historian

Audrey Theurer will be missed by so many, family, friends, acquaintances, and everyone who loves Benton County History. She was a supporter of both the King Family reunions and the Kings Valley Cemetery Association. She was active in the Benton County Historical Society, the Kings Valley Cemetery Association, and the Fort Hoskins group. She was lovingly called "The Mayor of Hoskins."

Audrey wrote the book ***Kings Valley: The Middle Years***.

When we began the King Family Photo Project in 2007, Audrey was one of the first people to invite us into her home to scan some of her historical photos of Benton County. We spent an afternoon looking at, talking about, and scanning old photographs. She was amazing, a fount of knowledge about Benton County history. She will be missed.

Benton County Genealogical Society

By George Davidson

Our Library is located in the Annex Building (west side) next to the Benton County Historical Building on Main Street in Philomath. The Library is open 1-3.30pm, Tue and Sat. Membership \$20 for one calendar year. Our Library has WIFI and a computer available for your use. Please feel free to visit our website: www.bccgs-oregon.org for more information.

GPS Locations for King Family: Markers and Graves

By Anne Trussell

Kings Valley Cemetery **Kings Valley, Benton County, Oregon**

Nahum and Sarepta King Memorial Marker
N44 40.724
W123 26.391

(Their actual burial place, on their DLC, was originally marked by field stones. Those stones are missing and the burial site is no longer able to be located.)

Hopestill King and Lucius Norton
N44 40.724
W123 26.439

Lovisa King & Rowland Chambers
N44 40.714
W123 26.417

Kings Valley Cemetery (cont.)

Lucretia King Hallock
N44 40.724
W123 26.437

Isaac King Cemetery

Private Property; need permission to access
Bill and Jerry Wischnofske,
jwishnofske@peak.org

Isaac King
N44 40.247
W123 25.514

Orleans Cemetery Linn County, Oregon

Heman Hallock (Lucretia's husband)
N44 34.163
W123 11.490

Salem Pioneer Cemetery Salem, Marion County, Oregon

Lydia King and Jonathan Williams
N44 55.188
W123 02.825

IOOF Cemetery Corvallis, Benton County

Solomon and Anna Maria King
N44 35.090
W123 17.880

We haven't collected all of the GPS
Coordinates for King Family burials yet so, if
you have more to add, please let us know.

HISTORIAN REPORT

*By David Trask
King Family Historian*

Not a lot to report this year. I appreciate
copies of recent obituaries, death
certificates, family trees, etc., acquired
during one's research. Do not assume I have
a copy.

A topic that has been brought up, though,
seems reasonable for us to all discuss and

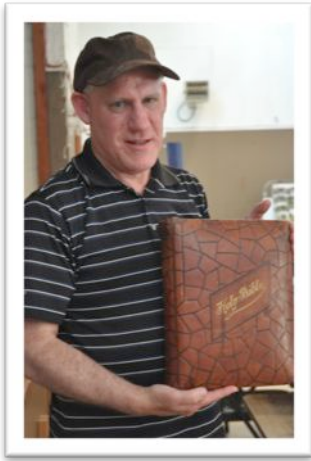
address. At each of our reunions in recent
years, various family members generously
bring in family heirlooms for all to view.
These have included quilts, family Bibles,
photos, and portraits, among many items.
Two specific questions have been brought
up numerous times to me over the last two
years. First, is there a family "registry" that
documents who has what heirloom, and
perhaps a history of how that heirloom may
have been passed down the generations?
Second, what is the best way to see to it that
such heirlooms remain accessible to future
generations and safe from the elements (ie.
moisture, sunlight, rodents, etc.). To my
knowledge, we have no family registry of
such items. That might not be a bad idea,
though, and perhaps we can discuss this at
the 2018 reunion. A simple description of
the item, which branch of the family it
descends from, and
a little history of
what it represents
and how it has
been passed down
to the present
family member
who possesses it,
would be useful
information. That list can be kept by the
Historian and perhaps also recorded on our
King Folk website.



The second question becomes very relevant
as we get older, something we are all getting.
With my son now graduated from high
school and off to college, and despite his
keen interest in the family history over the
last decade, I know that it will be years
before he really absorbs the knowledge to
realize the significance of various family
artifacts I may have. If something happens to
me, then he may not know what is valuable
as an heirloom amongst my possessions, and
what may otherwise appear as junk and be
discarded.

Most of the attendees of the last two
reunions have toured the Benton County
Museum, whose staff has graciously
accepted a number of King Family

heirlooms: James Plunkett's drums, Norton Bible, Henry Plunkett's musket, the gravestone marker for the infant son of Amos and Melinda King, to name a few. The museum is state-of-the-art, with precise climate and moisture control, and good security, and staffed with experts who know how to handle and store items in an archival manner. So a number of family members have asked if I thought this might be an appropriate place for certain heirlooms to be donated, and after



I, myself, donated an item last year, (the gravemarker), I think it is a very legitimate and safe place for many items to be safely stored for others to be able to view. The staff was beyond competent and I felt good about the process. So it seems logical to consider this as a permanent home to various King-related heirlooms. Furthermore, perhaps family members can consider bequeathing items upon their deaths, documenting their wishes in their wills, to the museum, particularly those who may not have close family interested in family history. Such desires should be considered, though, early enough in life, so as to make sure appropriate documentation is recorded in legal documents.

Several things to keep in mind, though, before donating any item. First, there is a process: one must contact the museum staff first, write up what the item is, and any known pertaining history. I think it fitting that this is announced at a reunion or in the newsletter so others are aware of the donation intent. Then the item can be brought to the museum for staff to accept,

and then it is presented to the museum board, where it is decided whether the item is appropriate or not. Second, the museum cannot realistically routinely accept a lot of very large items. Special items are accepted, as for instance, the Sol King organ. Third, there is the concern whether the museum could someday lose funding, and the items given away or sold. I think it is reasonable to request from the museum that any King heirloom should be returned to the present King Family Historian, in any event the museum no longer wanted or can store the item. I would propose that our family association inform the museum who that person is annually, so he or she can be notified to retrieve the item.

Donating certain heirlooms that may be a part of all of our heritage to the museum may be the best way to assure that artifacts are kept as safe as possible, and can be made available for display by professions, for an event such as our annual reunion. I was very impressed with the manner in which items were presented for us at the last two reunions. So for those who have items that may have become increasingly fragile and otherwise more aged, consideration to donate these to the museum can be considered.



Death of Isaac King

Accident--Suicide--Murder

It's a Mystery

By Charlotte L Wirfs

The year was 1980. I was standing next to the grave of my great-great grandfather, Isaac King, knee deep in overgrown oak, brambles, and poison oak. Besides my Mother, my companions were Norman Chambers, my Dad's second cousin and owner of the property, Earle Greig, my third cousin, and Art Lyday, husband of my Dad's second cousin and a resident of Kings Valley. The first thing I noticed was that Isaac died on his 47th birthday.

As we walked away from the cemetery, Art said, "That's quite a story. Poor old guy was killed by a son who wasn't quite right. His wife and the hired hand, Jake Zumwalt, talked the boy into shooting his Dad so they could get his land and his money. She and Zumwalt are buried up in the main cemetery next to her folks."



My jaw dropped. I was in shock. Art had just finished telling me that my great-great grandmother plotted with one of my great-great uncles and another man whom she later married, to kill my great-great grandfather. Not likely, I thought, but managed to say, "Really?"

Not long after that, I began collecting news articles and stories of the death of Isaac King. I have 11 accounts to date. I listed them in chronological order and charted the details: when, where, who, what, why, and how. The first five, dated from December 1866 to 1885 were detailed and held common facts. The stories that were written down and told 99+ years after Isaac's death had details that varied and not one story was the same. I decided that Isaac had shot himself in the head with a six-shooter deliberately and that most of Isaac's family knew that. I base my conclusion on the first 5 accounts of his death and on my own personal experience with family members suffering from severe depression and suicidal thoughts, one fatal.

Isaac King was a wealthy man on his 47th birthday. He was an informed and savvy farmer, with a little more than 640 acres of prime farm land in Kings Valley. He arrived with his family there in the spring of 1846, married the next-door neighbor's daughter, Almeda VanBebber, and began farming and raising kids, eight of whom were still living when he died. Alfred, the oldest, was a newly-wed and about 18 years old. Lazarus Samuel "Sam" was age 16; Steven was 13. Two years later Isaac's younger brother, Sol King, was the executor of Isaac's estate, which he inventoried and gave a net worth of the estate as \$12,000.00. There was no will, and the State of Oregon collected a hefty \$4,000.00 probate tax.



There was nothing unusual about the three-year-long probate case except one thing. During the process, Sol King was given the guardianship of 7 of Isaac's children and another man, a non-relative, was given the guardianship of "Sam." Sam ended up living with his grandparents, Lazarus and Martha VanBebber, in 1870. I did think that was strange.

During the probate case, Almeda married Andrew Jackson "Jake" Zumwalt. They lived on half of the original DLC's of Isaac and Almeda King. Four more children were born to them. Almeda was a wealthy widow and 13 years older than her second husband, which may have created a veil of mystery around her with the community, who must have been very curious about the circumstances at the time.

Sol King and the State of Oregon divided the land and personal property of Isaac King fairly. Isaac's eight children were given cash, about \$220.00 each, which total equaled the same amount that Almeda received, \$1700.00. Almeda received one half of the acreage that had the house and barn. The children jointly received the other half.

Now, as to the reports I have collected concerning Isaac's death, they are so varied, but a few common threads remain. Most say that the boys and Isaac were out hunting birds, some say woodpeckers, some say geese, some just say they were hunting. Isaac did not have a rifle. Most reports say he had a pistol, possibly a six Colt shooter. The boys returned to the house, but Isaac stayed behind. One boy looked back to see his father aiming at a stake and heard the report. Two more shots were fired. Later Almeda went to the barn, found Isaac dead or close to death, on the ground, bleeding from his mouth. He had a gunshot wound to his head, the ball entering under his chin and exiting through his crown. The pistol was still in his hands. Something had gone terribly wrong at the cost of a man's life.

I have long suspected that Alfred King, the oldest son, knew what happened that day his father died. I think he saw his father kill himself, accidentally or deliberately. In the inquisition that followed, Alfred and his family were protected by the extended family, friends, and neighbors who immediately rallied around them. In plain language, a cover-up was created. A pact seemed to have been made.

Why?

In 1866, suicide was an unpardonable sin, which in many communities banned the victim from a decent burial in the local cemetery. That was bad enough, but if a child had pulled the trigger that killed his father, accidentally or deliberately, it would have also been unbearable.

So the mystery remained. The community, always ready for a tale of gossip, came up with possible versions of what may have happened. As for the family, they never passed the real

information on to the next generation. Today no death certificate, no coroner's report, no record of an inquisition can be found.

I do not believe the stories that were still being told in Kings Valley in 1990. My single conclusion is that Isaac suffered from severe depression, which is always a problem when sunny days get shorter, and is always a problem on special holidays, and is always a problem when someone feels that they are not valued.



It adds up to suicide for me. In my mind suicide is indeed an accident--an accident of the psyche. Reality gets distorted enough for a person to want to stop living. They become delusional and think of nothing else but ending their lives. Often suicide attempts do not succeed and the person recovers, and sometimes they succeed and the life is ended. For me, the untimely and unexpected death of a person is always an accident. For Isaac and his family, each person suffered trauma. For the survivors of a successful suicide, the trauma can last a lifetime and even influence the next generation.

So I believe that by letting Isaac's death remain an "accidental death" is the kindest thing we can do for all of us who survived the tragedy that occurred that November day in 1866.

It brings tears to my eyes as I write these words. I am so sorry such a horrible accident happened to that family or to any family. We are all so precious.

King Folk is a newsletter published by the family of Nahum and Sarepta Norton King, Oregon pioneers of 1845. Annual dues are \$10. These funds are used for family projects, publication costs, and reunion costs. Please make checks payable to "**Pam Peck – King Folk**" and mail to Pam Peck, 1524 NW Kings Blvd, Corvallis, OR 97330.

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