
KING FOLK

Newsletter No. 14

April 15, 1996

What's New?

by Charlotte Wirfs

The date for our reunion has been set for Sat., June 22, 1996 to be held at Kings Valley School from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. As usual bring a main dish, side dish, salad, or dessert to share, and your own table service and drinks. Coffee will be provided. A notice and agenda will be mailed to all family members on our mailing list. There are over 200 names to notify, including those of you who get King Folk. If you know of any one who has a new address, let us know so we can update the list.

It's been very quiet around here this winter. There has been few letters or news.

I did hear from Earle Greig. Among other things, he has been working to identify individuals from some of the group photos of celebrations held in or around Kings Valley over the years. He has made good progress and will bring his project to the reunion in June. He also has arranged to have a few autographed copies of Terrible Trail: The Meek Cutoff, 1845, by Keith Clark and Lowell Tiller.



Carol Nelson has been indexing the photo files. These will be published as they are completed.

A letter from Jim King, 1005 Country Club Dr., Riverton, WY. 82501 contained a question, "Does anyone know which route the Chambers and Kings took through the Green River Basin? Was it the Fort Bridger branch or Sublette's (Greenwood's) Cutoff? I'd appreciate hearing from anybody who might know. We live not far from the Sweetwater River, Devil's Gate, Split Rock, Three Crossings, and South Pass. They certainly came this way but had a choice of routes just west of South Pass."

I received the obituary of Clarence M. Smith, born March 28, 1909 and died Feb. 29, 1996. He is the son of Lester and Elva (Read) Smith, grandson of Olive (King) Read, and great g.son of Isaac and Almeda (VanBibber) King. His

What's New? continued...

wife, Maude Smith , of Corvallis survives as well as two daughters, Jaunita Rice and Judy Christianson, six grandchildren and 10 great grand children.

There is a total of \$290.00 in our "Tombstone Fund", to replace and/or repair cemetery markers. A gift of \$100.00 was given to the fund in February by one of our cousins, A. N. Onymous.



This photo was labeled "Kings Valley, OR. about 1890." The only other name on it was, Julia Price. It's believed that the two older women, who are seated, are sisters, Lovisa (King) Chambers (in white apron) and Hopestill (King) Norton, and

daughters of Nahum & Sarepta (Norton) King. Lovisa married Rowland Chambers and Hopestill married Lucius C. Norton. Hopestill, the oldest, died Nov. 16, 1892. Lovisa died Dec, 3, 1889. Kings Valley Store is also pictured. Bruce Lyday collection. Pack A, Neg. 20-21.

Back When in Benton County

The Kings of Kings Valley

Part 7

The Kings of Kings Valley

Kenneth Munford

Serepta and Nahum King had sixteen children between 1808 and 1835. Three of them, Dulany, Hannah, and James Russell died before they reached their 'teens. The rest, except the two eldest daughters, Saretta, 37, and Lucretia, 36, came to Oregon with their parents by covered wagon in the summer of 1845. This clan, with approximate ages at the time, included:

Nahum, 62, and Serepta, 54.

John, 32, and his wife, Susan and their three children, Luther, 5, Electa, 3, and a 9-month-old boy. All but Luther lost their lives in the Columbia Gorge.

Hopestill, 30, and her husband, Lucius Carolus Norton, 27, and their children, Isaac, 3, and Wiley, 1. They later had eight more children.

Stephen, 27, and his wife, Anna Maria (Allen), 22. They had no children. He had long been in poor health and died in 1852.

Isaac, 26. He came west as a bachelor but married Almeda, daughter of another Kings Valley settler, Lazarus VanBebber, in 1847.

Amos Nahum, 23. He married Melinda Fuller, 19, in 1846. Her family had traveled from Missouri in the same wagon train with the Kings and also settled in Benton County.

Sarah, 22, and her husband, Rowland Chambers, 32, and their children, Margaret, 3, and James, 1. "Sally" died of camp fever in eastern Oregon.

Lovisa, 17. She married widower Rowland Chambers in Washington County in February 1846 before the family moved to Kings Valley. In addition to her deceased sister's two children, Lovisa eventually had fourteen of her own to raise.

Abigail, 16. As the culmination of another covered-wagon romance, she soon married Price Fuller, 20.

Lydia, 14. She later married another member of the 1845 immigration, Jonathan Lafayette Williams.

Solomon, 12. He married his brother Stephen's widow, Anna Maria, in 1853.

Rhoda Ann, 10. She was later twice married, first to John Phillips and later to Eli Summers.

Beginning next week we will have a series giving more details on the careers of each of the above.

Next week: Roots of the King Family.

Back When in Benton County

The Kings of Kings Valley

Part 8

Roots of the King Family

Kenneth Munford

We have a new author this week in the history of Benton County column. Charlotte (Price) Wirfs is a descendant of two branches of the Kings of Kings Valley. Her ancestors include Isaac and Almeda (VanBebber) King and Rowland and Lovisa (King) Chambers.

Charlotte was born in Salem, attended schools in Lane and Tillamook counties, and graduated from Oregon College of Education (now known as Western Oregon State College) at Monmouth. After teaching fifth and sixth grades in Lebanon for three years, she settled down as a wife and homemaker for Walter Wirfs, superintendent of the Willamette Industries mill at Dallas. They have two children, Carolyn, 6, and Matthew, 4.

Charlotte edited the recently published Volume IV of the Polk County Historical Society series, "Historically Speaking". We welcome her as one of the contributors to our Kings of Kings Valley series.

Charlotte Wirfs

Nahum King's American ancestry dates back to 1635 when his great-great-great grandparents, William and Dorothy (Hayne) "Kinge," and their five children arrived on the ship "Abigail", out of Weymouth in Dorsetshire, England. They settled in Salem, Mass. Some of the family moved west to New Salem in central Massachusetts. There Nahum was born, July 25, 1783. His parents, Amos and Hopestill (Haskins) King, moved on to New York state, settling south of Albany in New Lebanon, Columbia County. Siblings of Nahum were Luther, Hiram, Isaac, Louisa Sherman, Betsey Warne, Hopestill Johnson, William O., Horace, and Lydia Sherman.

In Columbia County, Nahum, 24, and Serepta Norton, 15, were wed on May 9, 1807. She had been born on Nov. 12, 1791, the fourth child of James and Dulany Norton. Her brothers and sisters were Solomon, John, Cloe Howe, Abigail Dominic, Keziah Knapp. Many of these given names appear throughout later generations of Kings.

Serepta and Nahum's first three children were daughters, none of whom traveled to Oregon with the family in 1845. Saretta, born in New York on March 18, 1808, later married Moses Moore and lived in Madison County, Ohio, and in Illinois, where Moses died. In a letter from Oregon in 1846, Anna Maria King wrote that Moses Moore was expected in Kings Valley, but he never arrived. Younger generations of Kings referred to Saretta as "Aunt Saret" so she remained in contact with the family. She had one son, who died in the Civil War, and three daughters.

Lucretia, the second daughter, was born July 5, 1809, in New

Roots of the King Family, p.2

York and later married Heman S. Hallock in 1827 in Madison County, Ohio. Heman had been born in Vermont, in 1803. The Hallocks apparently remained in Ohio when the rest of the family moved to Missouri. They too were expected in Kings Valley in 1846 but did not arrive until 1853. They settled on a land claim just south of Kings Valley on March 15, 1854. "Aunt Crish," as she was known, died May 14, 1860, and is buried in Kings Valley cemetery. The probate record of Nahum King lists her heirs as Sally Edleman, Hope Mason, Rhoda Pitman, Amos Hallock, Serepta Rexford, and Margaret Irwin.

Dulany, the third daughter, named after Serepta's mother, Dulany Norton, was born April 12, 1811, probably in Ohio, and died at the age of 12 on October 1, 1823.

Next week: John King's Family.

Editor's note: As The Kings of Kings Valley series is republished in King Folk, please feel free to add information or correct misinformation to the articles. Remember that when research is done, misinformation is easily passed on when it is first printed in original sources. Unless it is corrected through publications such as King Folk, it will continue to be passed on. If you have additional information or corrections please send them to: Charlotte Wirfs, 3180 Fir Oaks Ct. SW, Albany, OR. 97321 or call (541) 926-5908.

Residence of Jake and Emma Chambers, Kings Valley, OR. Oct. 17, 1915. Emma is at the wheel and Jake is sitting on the ground. Lewis Oren is in front. In the back seat (L. to R.) are Edna Oren, Ethie Price, Hattie (Price) Graham, Don Graham (standing). The girls are Florence and Ethel Graham, children of Don and Hattie Graham. From Bruce Lyday collection. Pack A. Neg. 15.



A Commemoration of the APPLGATE TRAIL
or the Historic "Southern Route"

by
Arlie Holt

The South Road Expedition left Polk county "from on the La Creole near where Dallas now stands" on June 20, 1846 with a determined resolve to open a southern route into Oregon. It did. This expedition succeeded where many prior, but important attempts had failed. It was not an unqualified success. Bitterness and incriminations, at first very intense, resulting from the suffering have lasted down to today.



CAPT. LEVI SCOTT

We plan now to commemorate this event which is one of Polk County's most significant historical experiences. It was pioneers from this county who were the genesis for the expedition and this county was among those most impacted by those weary and battered ones coming off the trail. In this commemoration it is not our intent to take a position one way or another in the resulting conflict. It is only important to point out that the conflict is part of the history and to remove or deny it would be to extract the juice from the experience.

The name given to the trail is also a part of the controversy. The J. Quinn Thornton attacks against Jesse Applegate caused an historical association between the trail and the Applegate name even if most of the emigrants who came the trail and writers of the day referred to it as simply the "southern route." Many would refuse ever to use the "Applegate" name, or if so, would use it only in approbation.

So began the proliferation of names for the trail which one sees down to this day. A review of writings over the past 150 years by historians, journalists and pioneers reveals "southern Route," "southern road," "South road," "South Emigrant road," along with "Applegate Road," "Applegate cut-off," "Scott-Applegate Trail" and the more common usage today of "Applegate Trail." Each have had their proponents and detractors or have been used naturally and spontaneously without awareness of the others.

So if now we commemorate the opening of an "Applegate Trail," we must not forget that the other names were often commonly used and must be considered important in the history. Thus the Applegate name should not write the history as it commonly does. One must observe, as seen above, that the trail has been often called the "Scott-Applegate Trail." This is well noted in Corning's Dictionary of Oregon History. With that in mind, Levi Scott, who is the unsung hero of the trail, needs now to be brought back to the greater awareness which is his due.

I was able to go to Sitka, Alaska in September of 1993 and bring back to Polk County a 278-page reminiscence by Scott which was done in collaboration with Judge James Layton Collins of Dallas through the 1880's. Among other papers, there were also

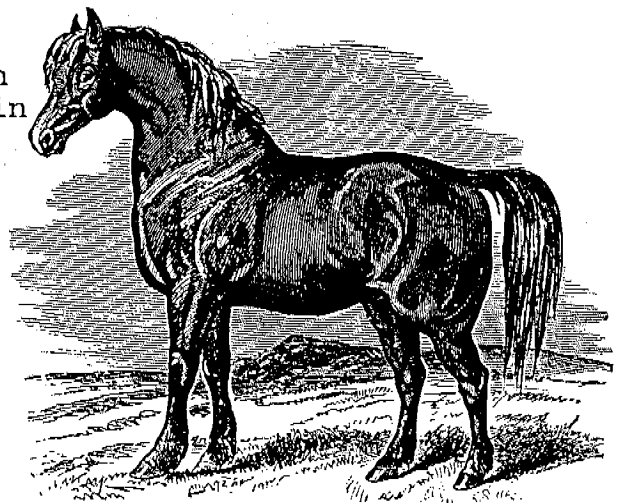
170 pages in Scott's own hand. These works more fully illustrate Scott's leadership role in the South Road Expedition. These works can not be allowed to be overshadowed by the writings of Lindsay Applegate written in the 1870's.

When Scott and three traveling companions started in the spring of 1845 "through the scanty settlements of the Willamette valley charmed with the beauty of the country," he told in his reminiscence of having a "bucking" horse which they could not catch and which had to be driven loose among the other horses. Coming down the old California Trail from the north, they came to the house of Jesse Applegate at the head of Salt Creek valley where they drove her into a corral and lassoed her. So began the long friendship of Levi Scott and Jesse Applegate. Their names are forever to be associated.

Scott, who referred to himself as an "orphant boy", crossed the plains at the age of forty-seven in 1844 with his teen-age son, John, on the Nathaniel Ford wagon train. It was guided by the intrepid teller of tall tales--the mountain man Moses "Black" Harris. Scott's wife had died and he said this blow unsettled him and started him to wandering westward, with the Star of American Empire. The 1844 wagon train experienced delays because of unseasonal rains early on its epic journey so it arrived at the treacherous Columbia river gorge with winter already advanced. The nightmare of coming down the gorge was forever etched in the minds of these emigrants. Levi Scott watched in horror when his son, John, almost drowned when he and his horse were swept into a swift moving current when crossing the turbulent Hood river near where it flowed into the Columbia.

Levi Scott left Oregon City the following spring to start his exploration of the Willamette Valley noted above and he met again friends from the wagon train crossing. He continued down the old California Trail into today's Benton County and even went to the top of Mary's Peak. He returned to the settlements along the Rickreall for the winter.

In the spring, a subscription was raised and men such as Nathaniel Ford, Moses Harris, Thomas Holt and others in the Willamette Valley became involved in generating interest in further quests to find an alternate to the gorge journey. Articles appeared regularly in the Oregon Spectator in Oregon City. One exploration which included Levi Scott, his son, Moses Harris and Cornelius Gilliam among others started in May 1845. But small numbers, uncertain leadership and the fact that streams were still too full to ford easily discouraged these searchers and they returned.



The Applegate bothers, Jesse and Lindsay, became a part of the next probe in June. They, too, had lost sons by drowning and knew of the dangers of the Columbia River gorge. Calling itself the South Road Expedition, Jesse was elected the leader, and a route whose story is famous to this day, was finally opened through the southern route into the Willamette Valley on the part of the fifteen men of the South Road Expedition.

Scott and his two sons settled in what became Douglas County. Scottsburg, Scotts Valley and Scotts Mountain were spawned by this move. But the Scotts were a restless lot and John was soon back in Polk County and was later joined by Levi. He spent most of his last fifteen years here.

So on June 22, 1996, one hundred and fifty years later, we commemorate Levi Scott and his son John, Jesse and Lindsay Applegate, David Goff, Moses "Black" Harris, Benjamin Burch, William Parker, John Jones, Robert Smith, John Owens, Samuel Goodhue, Henry Boggs, William Sportsman and Benjamin Osborne for undertaking this arduous journey. Each is to be given credit. And equally we are commemorating the courageous men, women and children who suffered untold hardship coming that route. We commemorate men like Thomas Holt who garnered help and went down into the southern Oregon mountains to help alleviate the suffering of those who were trapped there. Over thirty families among them settled here in Polk County.

The trail belongs to all of the above. It is not the Applegate's Trail (possesive) as if they conceived of it and created it and led the emigrants back as myth would have it. It is the "Applegate Trail" (generic as would be any other name) and all who were associated with it are to be honored in our commemoration.

A state-wide brouhaha centered around the naming of the trail for its centennial celebration in 1946, too. Most of the major newspapers wrote editorials and took sides one way or another. It resulted from the fact that the Klamath Falls community had the largest celebration and called it "the southern route" which conflicted with the Pioneer Trails organization which was placing "Applegate Trails" markers along the route. The state historical society was asked to rule. Its report had used the term "southern route" and Applegate trail, route or road." The terminology was used 30 times in the material analyzed. Of these, 24 were southern route or road and six were Applegate road, route or trail. The state historical society recommended a consistent use of "Southern Route" but the Pioneer Trails organization placed "Applegate Trail" markers in defiance since the historical society had no power to stop them. The Pioneer Trails people also placed a slick promotional brochure into every school and to this day I am often confronted as proof of it always being "Applegate Trail." The State Historical Society can no longer find the record of its deliberation which would be of interest.

Kings Valley Photo Collection

indexed by Carol Nelson

The Kings Valley photo collection has been an ongoing project for several years. Bob Price started taking pictures of existing Kings Valley photo collections in order to preserve photos by obtaining a negative. After his death, his daughter, Charlotte Wirfs continued. Pictures are borrowed from owners and 35mm film is used to photograph the photograph. Prints are made and collected in loose-leaf binders and negatives are stored in a safe deposit box. To date, two binders have been filled and an index has been started.

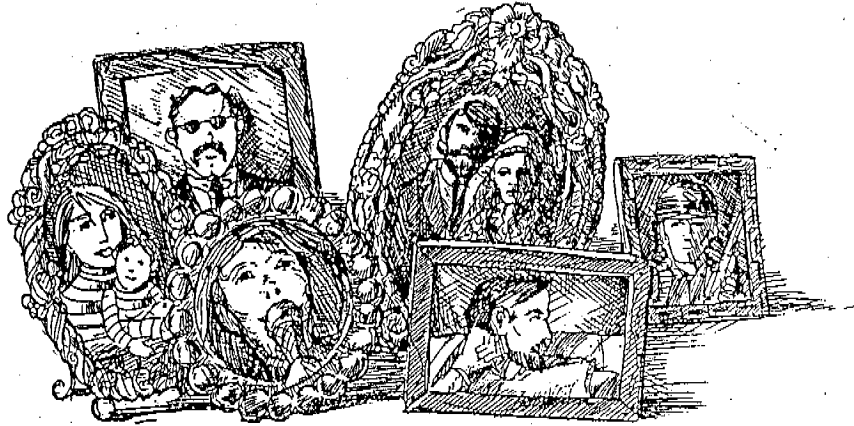
The following is a surname index for Bruce Lyday's collection labeled "Pack A, negatives 12-36."

Alcorn: W.S. "Bud"; Dale; Vernon.
Allen: Ethel; Lillian; Lincoln or "Link"; Mabel; Morris and Mrs. Morris; Retha; Rose; Tom.
Ayers: Andy; Grover; Jeff.
Bayless: Ray
Bowman: Bill
Brocklesby: Clarence P.
Brown: George; Sally Grant.
Bush: Carl
Chambers: Chester; Emma; Jake; Lovisa King.
Christianson: Isaac
Cosgrove: Hazel
Dunn: Jim
Eddy: Israel; Myrtle.
Frantz: By
Girard: Sophia
Graham: Addie; Bell; Don; Ethel; Hattie Price; J.; Joe; John "Don"; Florence.
Grant: Jim; Rick.
Hall: Merle.
Kinderman: Art.
Logan: Johnny.
Lyday: Arthur; Orin; Ruth.
Marks: Reta
Maxfield: Lyman; Ray; Roll; Sam; Walter.
Miller: B.; Bruce; Frank.
Moser: Bayliss; Charlie; Ray; Stella
Nelson: Nels.
Norton: Hopestill King.
Nyman: Adolph; Frances; Gus; Olivia; Vernon.
Oren: Edna; Lewis.
Plunkett: Wiley
Price: Bud; Charles; Clair Macy; Ethie; Harold; Jim; Johnny; Julia Chambers; Leone; Minnie Read; Nina; Rena Frantz; Virgie.
Rice: Charlie.
Seward: Billy
Siddall: Don; Lou.
Smith: Charlie; Lela; Lester; Orville.

Photo Index, p. 2

Thompson: Ethel
Townsend: Cecil; Jim; Lew; Minnie.
Waters: Ed.
West: Lester.
Whitfield: Fred; Perry; Harvey.
Woodside: Albert; Echo.

Photocopies will be mailed on request at no charge.
Prints (4"x6") cost \$1.00.
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