
KING FOLK

Newsletter No. 13

January 15, 1996

What's New?

By

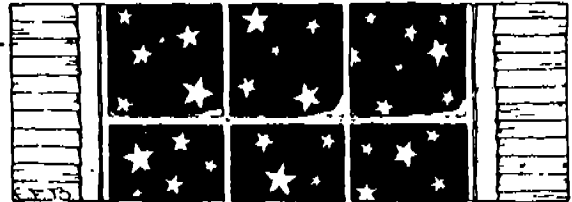
Charlotte Wirfs

Happy New Year everyone! Thank you for responding to the raise in dues, from \$6.00 to \$10.00. The extra \$4.00 was placed in a special fund to repair or replace cemetery markers and to date we've collected \$179.00. The next step is to decide which stone to work on.

Aaron and Noemi McKee did hold an open house at the Charles King home in September, but I wasn't able to put a notice in the newsletter. Carol Nelson attended and said it was very nice.

A letter from Leland & Barbara Drew cleared up the confused address. An alert past neighbor of theirs forwarded newsletter No. 12 to them and they sent me their correct address: 855 Terra California Dr. #4, Walnut Creek, CA 94595-3005.

Several people sent clippings from the Argus Observer, a newspaper in Ontario, OR. Chris Moore wrote a very nice article, complete with pictures, of the 150th-anniversary reunion at Sarah Chambers grave. Family members attending the ceremony were Jim King, Patricia Bearden, Carole Putnam, David Trask,



William & Gladys King, and Warren & Louise King. David Trask took a video of the event and would be glad to send a copy to anyone requesting it: 691 Murphy Rd. Suite 115, Medford, OR. 97504. The article by Chris Moore has been reprinted in this newsletter.

Also included in this edition is an ancestor chart from Patricia Plunkett Bearden. She begins her chart with her father, Herman Binger Plunkett. They are descendents of Lucius Carolus Norton and Hopestill (King) Norton. Patricia also sent an article telling how the first King came to America.

Arle Holt, vice president of Polk County Historical Society & Museum, has given permission to reprint his article about the 1845 wagon train that was recently published in their newsletter.

Janet King of Newberg wrote to tell us they have another grandchild, #4 for them. Her husband is Richard William King.

This fall and winter brought sad news as we learned of the deaths of two of our members. Jesse E. Belle Jr. of Eugene died Sept 7, 1995 and Robert King of Portland died Dec. 3, 1995. We extend our sympathy to the families of these two men. Both leave wives, Maxine Belle and Janie King, and extended families behind.

PEDIGREE CHART

19 Sep 1995



no. 1

Name and address of submitter:
Patricia Plunkett Bearden

1029 South Pine Street
Newport, OR 97365-4526

Phone: (503) 265-7117

2 Lucius PLUNKETT-11-----
: BORN: 26 Jun 1865
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Oregon
: MARR: 2 Dec 1890 --7

: PLACE: , Benton, Oregon
: DIED: 12 Feb 1926
: PLACE: Chehalis, Lewis, Washington

1 Herman Binger PLUNKETT-3-----
: BORN: 27 Jul 1893
: PLACE: Eddyville, Lincoln, Oregon
: MARR: 24 May 1944 --2
: PLACE: Yakima, Yakima, Washington
: DIED: 9 Jun 1972

: PLACE: Lincoln City, Lincoln, Oregon
Martha Ann BALTRUSCHAT-4-----
: Spouse

3 Adeline ZUMWALT-20-----
: BORN: 17 Jan 1874
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Oregon
: DIED: 6 Dec 1954

: PLACE: Albany, Linn, Oregon



4 James PLUNKETT-9-----
: BORN: 17 Feb 1836
: PLACE: Brockville, L, O, (Upper) Canada

: MARR: 28 Jun 1864 --6
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Oregon

: DIED: 12 Jun 1911
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Oregon

5 Ashnah NORTON-10-----
: BORN: 8 Feb 1847
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Oregon

: DIED: 14 Apr 1933
: PLACE: Blodgett, Benton, Oregon

6 Andrew Jackson (5) ZUMWALT-226-----
: BORN: 14 Feb 1845
: PLACE: , St. Charles, Missouri
: MARR: 30 Mar 1868 --98
: PLACE: Corvallis, Benton, Oregon

: DIED: 1 Jan 1912
: PLACE: Corvallis, Benton, Oregon

7 Almeda Jane VAN BIBBER-143-----
: BORN: Abt 1831
: PLACE: , Illinois

: DIED: 22 Apr 1890
: PLACE: near Wren, Benton, Oregon

8 William Robert PLUNKETT-922-----
: BORN: 23 Dec 1806
: PLACE: Cunningburne, N, CD, Ireland
: MARR: --381

: PLACE:
: DIED: Abt 1866/1870
: PLACE: poss. Drytown, A, California

9 Sarah CANADA/CADE?-923-----

: BORN: Abt 1800
: PLACE: , County Down, Ireland
: DIED: 26 Aug 1891
: PLACE: Kanab, Kane, Utah

10 Lucius Carolus NORTON-47-----

: BORN: 16 Dec 1818
: PLACE: , Madison, Ohio
: MARR: 7 Oct 1839 --24
: PLACE: , Franklin, Ohio
: DIED: 6 May 1859
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Orego

11 Hopestill (7) KING-48-----

: BORN: 7 Feb 1815
: PLACE: Below Amity, Madison, Ohio
: DIED: 16 Nov 1892
: PLACE: Nortons Station, L, Oregon

12 Isaac Newton (4) ZUMWALT-256-----

: BORN: 29 May 1815
: PLACE: , St. Charles, Missouri
: MARR: 20 Jun 1837 --110
: PLACE: , St. Charles, Missouri
: DIED: 21 Mar 1891
: PLACE: Lewisville, Polk, Oregon

13 Sarah (Sally) CROW-257-----

: BORN: 13 Jun 1815
: PLACE: , St. Charles, Missouri
: DIED: 8 Jun 1885
: PLACE: Lewisville, Polk, Oregon

14 Lazarus VAN BIBBER-281-----

: BORN: 27 Feb 1807
: PLACE: , Claiborne, Tennessee
: MARR: 23 Apr 1830 --122
: PLACE: , Claiborne, Tennessee

: DIED: 4 Feb 1896
: PLACE: Kings Valley, Benton, Orego

15 Martha VANBEBBER-282-----

: BORN: 1807
: PLACE:
: DIED: 3 Nov 1883
: PLACE: , Benton, Oregon

Back When in Benton County
The Kings of Kings Valley
Part 5
Shooting the Columbia Rapids

Kenneth Munford

Getting over or through the Cascade Range was the hardest part of the 2,000-mile cross-country journey for the covered-wagon immigrants.

When the King family arrived at The Dalles on the Columbia early in October 1845, another party led by Samuel Barlow and Joel Palmer had just left to blaze a wagon road over the mountain range south of Mt. Hood. Having suffered on Stephen Meek's trappers' trail through central Oregon, the Kings wanted no part of another so-called "short-cut."

Like many other immigrants of 1845, they built rafts, took their wagons apart, and loaded wagon box, wheels, and equipment on the rafts in hopes of getting through the rapids in that way. It was a life-and-death struggle. In a wagon box on one raft on October 22, Malinda Crabtree (later a Linn County resident) gave birth to twin sons. Four days later, the eldest King son, John, his wife, Susan, their three-year-old Electra, and an eight-month-old son were thrown into the water and drowned. Their five-year-old Luther survived.

We do not have a record of how the Kings completed the journey. They may have stopped at Fort Vancouver, as many immigrants did, to enjoy the hot food and medical attention Dr. McLoughlin had prepared for them. They finally reached Linnton, a town Peter Burnett had founded two years before on the Willamette below Portland. There, we assume, they gathered their horses and stock which had been driven on a rough trail along the south bank of the Columbia.

From Linnton they climbed up over the Tualatin Mountains and made their way across the Tualatin Plains to their western edge. On Gales Creek they found a measure of hospitality from notable Joseph Gale, an adventurous trapper, ship builder, and sea captain, who had helped form the Provisional Government two years before. Now he was building a grist mill on the beautiful, clear stream at the foot of Gales Peak.

Here the remaining 20 of the 25 members of the King family who had left Missouri in May spent their first winter in Oregon.

Next week: Homesites on Free Land.



Back When in Benton County

The Kings of Kings Valley

Part 6

Homesites on Free Land

Kenneth Munford

From their winter camp on Gales Creek near Forest Grove, the men and boys of the King family went out hunting for homesites.

At that time, 1845-'46, the boundary between Canada and the American part of the Oregon Country had not yet been drawn, but pioneers of the early 1840's felt sure the Willamette Valley would some day be U.S. territory. One of their motivations in coming west was to "save Oregon from the British." As they waited for Congress to act, they set up the Provisional Government with a land office where Provisional claims to a square mile (640 acres) of free land could be recorded.

If the King land hunters rode southward on the old Hudson's Bay Company pack trail along the western margin of the Willamette Valley, they would have found settlers in the Chehalem, Yamhill, Salt Creek, and La Creole (Rickreall) valleys. From the ford on the La Creole, at present Dallas, the old trail crossed the Luckiamute and wound around the edge of the foothills passing present Adair Village, Lewisburg, and Corvallis to ford the Mary's River at present Philomath.

Other 1845'ers were coming this way. Arnold Fuller and his son, Price, who soon married Abigail King, staked claims northwest of Lewisburg. Thomas and Nancy Read settled south of Adair and soon started a house that still stands. J. C. Avery and his wife's brother, Edmund Marsh, came to the mouth of the Marys. Along this pack trail later in 1846, the Applegate brothers and others scouted out a wagon road that became known as the Applegate trail.

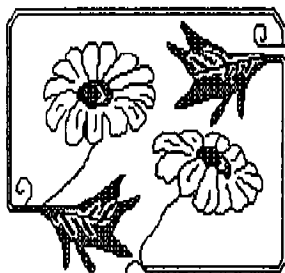
An alternate route on the old pack trail between fords on the La Creole and the Marys lay farther west through a cleft in the foothills along the Luckiamute. We can imagine the excitement of the King land-hunters following that trail when they came up over the rise south of present Peedee and gazed down into the beautiful green valley on the banks of the meandering Luckiamute. It had an abundance of what they sought: rich, well-drained grass lands easy to clear for cultivation, forests to supply fuel and building materials, streams to supply water. And, best of all, not a single settler!

Sons and sons-in-laws of Nahum and Serepta King set about staking claims to free land in this valley of the Kings.

Parts 5 and 6 are reprinted from the Benton Bulletin, August 13 and 20, 1980, Philomath, OR.

Next week: The Kings of Kings Valley





A Trek into the Past

Story and photos by Chris Moore
of the Argus Observer, Ontario, Oregon

Pg. 14 A--Sunday, Sept. 10, 1995

JUNTURA--What was the weather like on Sept. 3, 1845?

A week ago, following the Terrible Trail (the Meek Cutoff) where many immigrants lost their lives and/or loved ones, one couldn't help but wonder what it was like 150 years ago. Was it hot--like the weather on this day? Were thunder heads building up behind the hills to the south and west?

Several locals joined Chambers (King) family members at the place where Rowland Chambers lovingly laid his young wife in a grave on a sage-covered hillside above the North Fork of the Malheur River.

He then continued on with his small son and daughter as the Meek Wagon Trail sought an easier passage into the Willamette Valley then the route through the Blue Mountains to The Dalles taken by earlier wagon trains.

Historians, including Keith Clark and Lowell Tiller, who authored Terrible Trail: The Meek Cut-off, 1845, indicate Stephen Meek, a mountain man, claimed they could cut 20 days off the time it usually took to reach the Willamette Valley, but had never been across what is now known as Central Oregon.

Sunday's trip up the North Fork of the Malheur was arduous--but could not be compared to the dangers awaiting the immigrants as they hit the lava beds, rough mountains and deep canyons of the Deschutes and Crooked rivers following the Meek Cutoff. Death followed the band of travelers and at least 24 members of that group never reached the "promised land." Some graves have been located, but the locations of most remain a mystery.

According to the recently revised Terrible Trail: Meek Cut-off, 1845, two

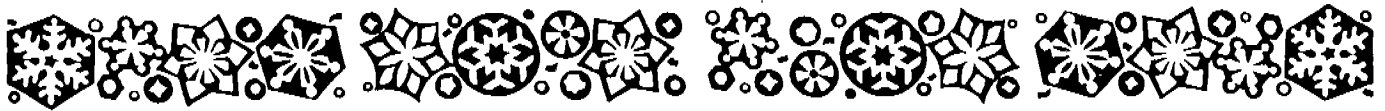
exceptions may exist between Meek's party and other wagon trains. First the party got lost and wandered about, using up valuable supplies, suffered sickness and deaths beyond the average for such trains; and second, some of the group found gold nuggets, "the discovery of which gave rise to the legend of the Blue Bucket Mine."

The book has many accounts--some from old diaries, others from memories of youngsters who traveled the route with their families--of the effort to find a route to the Willamette Valley, avoiding the dangerous, often disastrous boat trip down the Columbia River from The Dalles to Portland.

In the final weeks of the last Meek wagon train, water and grass were scarce, illness rampant, with many fearing death would be the final outcome. An Indian apparently gave directions to the leaders which eventually led the scouts to find their way through the hills to The Dalles, too tired and weak to dismount their horses. Thus the immigrants were rescued.

Sunday's (Sept. 3, 1995) excursion to the barren hillside in north western Malheur County made visitors appreciate the bravery and strength of those families who left Independence, Mo. for a new life in Oregon Country. Diary entries tell of dry camps, broken wagons, illness which struck especially the old and very young, and of deaths. One makes reference to the death of "a Packwood infant" and another notes four people were buried in one day. Family members do not know what caused Sarah Chambers' death, but assume it was "camp fever."

Sarah Chambers was the daughter of Nahum King and wife of Rowland



A Trek into the Past, page 2

Chambers. Her family was part of the large wagon train which left April 29, 1845, a day later than the planned exodus because of the death of Arnold Fuller's wife, also on the wagon train roll.

Although listed in the newspaper reports as having 1,000 people, 100 wagons and about 2,000 head of cattle and some goats, diary excerpts tell of sometimes as many as 200 wagons encamped, divisions of groups unhappy over how things were going, and split offs of some smaller groups to find sufficient water and grass to sustain the immigrants and their animals.

Members of the Chambers (King) family, who made the historic trek to the lonely hillside resting place of Sarah Chambers, said after her death, Rowland Chambers later married Sarah's sister and they raised the family in the King's Valley community located west of Corvallis.

Warren King of Fruitland said Sarah Chambers was his great-aunt. Jim King of Cottage Grove related Sarah was the great-great aunt of Patricia Bearden of Newport, Carole Putman of West Linn, and himself. Charles William King of Kings Valley, at the gathering with his wife, Gladys, said "Sarah was my great aunt, my grandfather's sister." Also

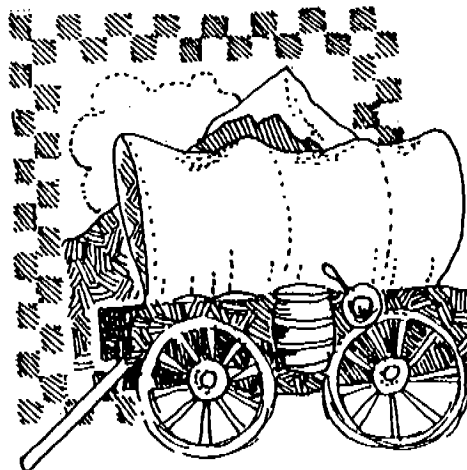
visiting the gravesite was Dr. David Trask, a Medford physician and a great-great-great nephew of Sarah Chambers.

Family members said Sarah had two children, James and Margaret. James grew up to become president of Philomath College, an educational facility located in the small town west of Corvallis.

Chambers' grave still is marked by the stone which, though somewhat weathered, can be read: S. Chambers, 1845. The grave is outlined with rock--no doubt carried to the spot by heartbroken family members who thought few would ever see the grave.

However, Agency Valley ranchers tended the spot and, in later years, cemented the stone into rocks to assure it would not be carried off by vandals. More recently, another marker has been installed and the area fenced. Many family members have visited the grave through the years, Jim King said.

Mildred Altnow Jones, wife of Denney Jones, grew up in the area and recalls when riding past in a buggy with her father, the two often put flowers on the grave and stopped to "honor Sarah's memory."



THE KING FAMILY BEGINS . . .
Late 1500's, England

by
Patricia Plunkett Bearden
Jan. 24, 1994



I have often said, "If the ocean hadn't stopped them, I'd have been born Japanese."

Who were they, these people back behind us, who kept coming west for over 300 years? You, the reader, will find that our family stories irrevocably intertwine with the history of the United States of America. To tell our family's story is to tell the story of the building of America.

Some people do not like history. To me, history is not just a reciting of names and dates--it tells a story that is very much alive and very much involved with our family.

For the past twenty-five years and more, my interest in our family's story has led me to read and do research about many areas of history. For me, it is not just enough to know merely where and when my ancestors lived, but I want to know what was going on around them, what their world was like, thus perhaps to gain some understanding about why they spent their lives as they did. I was fortunate to do some traveling to areas where some of our ancestors lived, and that helped make both family and American history come alive in my mind. It is that "aliveness" that I want to share with you, the reader, for it is our heritage.

In January 1994, I enrolled in a class titled "How to Write Your Own Life Story." Yes, I have done some interesting things that I could write about, and perhaps I shall do so, but my main intent in taking this class was to learn how to focus my thoughts and pen in a direction that would help me learn better how to tell you the stories of our family history.

The unknown part of our family history reaches back through the ages, to the beginning of mankind in England and beyond. Future research by various family members likely will bring more of it to light. But these stories will generally shy away from speculation and relate the parts of our story that we have pieced together.

The known part of our family history begins in England, almost 400 years ago, long before the United States came into being. We will start with the King family--yes, the ancestors of the same family that settled Kings Valley, Benton County, Oregon, in the spring of 1846.

We know that our ancestor, William King(e) and his wife, Dorothy (Hayne) King(e), started it all by coming from England to the Salem, Massachusetts area in 1635 with their children. Since then, the family has steadily and relentlessly continued to move westward. William King(e) was my 8th great-grandfather.

History documents that a William King began his journey to the New World in August, 1620, when he signed on as one of about sixty passengers aboard the Speedwell, sister ship of the Mayflower. Both ships set sail from South Hampton, England, but alas, the little Speedwell leaked. Captains of both ships decided to go back



to England so the Speedwell could be repaired. A couple of weeks later when they were well out to sea, some 300 miles from shore, they again feared for their safety in the leaky ship and both the Mayflower and Speedwell turned back to England.

At that point, having lost several weeks time, the voyagers made the decision not to try the voyage again with the Speedwell. Many of those on the Speedwell boarded the larger Mayflower and continued their journey on to the new world.

William King was one of about twenty passengers from the Speedwell who decided to stay in England in 1620. There is no known proof that this William King was indeed our ancestor, but the time and setting makes it possible, since our William King was a young man of twenty-five years when the Mayflower and Speedwell set sail. If so, then another fifteen years were to pass before he and his family made the trip safely from England to Salem, Massachusetts in 1635 aboard the ship Abigail.

Even if the William King aboard the Speedwell was not our ancestor, I wondered about conditions in England during that time, because we know that our ancestor did leave England in 1635, when he was 40.

As we study American history, we read of the Pilgrims and Puritans who sought religious and personal freedom in a new land. I got to wondering what really made them want to leave their homes in England to venture out across the ocean to the great unknown New World, so I did some research and background reading about the circumstances in Elizabethan England during the early 1600's.

I learned that England, as most all Europe, was forcibly Roman Catholic until King Henry VIII broke from the Catholic Church in about 1530 when he determined to divorce his wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had no son, to marry Anne Boleyn. But I also learned that it involved politics even more than religion, and the movement that became known as the Reformation smoldered for decades.

After Henry VIII became head of the Anglican Church, or Church of England, it was illegal for all citizens not to follow that religion. The Crown simply did not tolerate other beliefs. Henry's daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, demanded absolute uniformity of belief, and permitted no unlicensed printing.

Until the late 1500's, ordinary citizens did not have access to reading the Bible themselves. Only the priests and scholars knew that privilege. Copies of the printed word were very scarce and many common folks did not know how to read, so they depended upon the religious leaders and tradition for their knowledge of sacred doctrine. This changed when the development of printing presses made copies of the holy scriptures more available to the common people.

They began reading the Bible and a few of the more daring began to question the long-accepted tenets of the state religion, and even to begin thinking and reasoning among themselves about the true meaning of the scriptures. Some concluded that each congregation should be allowed to select its own pastor and officers, who would then answer to the local congregation instead

of to the government-sanctioned church. These free-thinking individuals were called Separatists, because they wished to separate themselves from the established church and state, to worship God in a simpler way. The Pilgrims and Puritans were in the vanguard of the Reformation movement.

Our ancestor, William King, was born into a country filled with social and political turmoil. He was born in 1595, at Sherbourne, Dorsetshire, in southwest England.

Polk County and The Wagon Trains of 1845

by Arlie H. Holt



When emigrants from some of the wagon trains of 1845 struggled into the Oregon Territory, many of them went to the area of today's Oregon City — a thriving little metropolis of 350 inhabitants — for succor and rest. Over sixty families stayed on in a sparsely settled Clackamas County. Myth would often have it that most of the families were first in Oregon City, but this does not tell the story of the larger number of the over 2,000 emigrants who came that year.

Donna Wojcik in her book The Brazen Overlanders of 1845 gives a broader picture. She points out that many of the families first arrived at Linnton Landing which was near the confluence of the Columbia and the Willamette Rivers. From this spot emigrants usually went up the steep hill towards the southwest to travel the fourteen miles directly into the Tualatin Plains. Wojcik says that the main camp where emigrants were to meet on the Tualatin Plains was near present day Hillsboro. There, a general breakup of the companies took place.

Many wintered on the Tualatin Plains with those already established from the two years before. The established pioneers *"dug extra potatoes, flailed additional wheat and butchered more than their usual meat supply"* to meet the needs of the newly arrived. *"Every empty structure with a roof and four walls was also put to use."* Wojcik describes one dwelling of 18 X 20 in which nineteen people wintered and that almost every night one to three travelers slept there in addition.

People tend to settle along trails and those who wintered in the Tualatin Plains were no exception. From that vantage point they were poised to travel on down

the west side of the Willamette Valley on the much used California Trail or the Hudson Bay Trappers Trail, which had already been used for several decades by those in quest of beaver pelts.

This trail was formed because the streams on the west side of the valley were easier to ford than the much larger and more turbulent Clackamas or Santiam Rivers on the east side of the valley which tended to slow the pace of development until ferries were built.

With emigrants from the 1843 and 1844 wagon trains dominating much of the country side to the north, many land seekers began to push further south and so it was that the wagon trains of 1845 formed the bedrock of Polk County settlement along the Rickreall and Luckiamute streams.

The wagon train of 1843 which is often called the *"Great Migration"* had under a thousand intrepid men, women and children on it. One could count the number of families from this train who came to the future Polk County on the fingers of one hand. The wagon train of 1844 had also approximately 1,000 and from this group 44 family groups found their way to Polk County.

The largest number of families from the 1845 wagon train came to today's Polk County and settled. Although the count can never be totally accurate, over 80 can be seen on various provisional and donation land claim records. Under fifty had stopped in Yamhill County already filling up with those from the 1843 and 1844 trains. In time, just over 30 families from the 1845 train would

Polk Co. & the Wagon Train of 1845, page 2

funnel into Benton County and just over ten in Lane and Douglas Counties.

On the east side of the Willamette, which lacked a major trail and where — as was pointed out — the rivers were more difficult to cross, the numbers were fewer. Just over 50 families came into Marion County and just under 40 into Linn County where the mighty Santiam retarded growth.

The names of families coming into the Polk County area in 1845 linger as County place names. Among them we find Doaks Ferry Road, Elkins Road, Helmick Park, Levens Street, Lewisville, McTimmonds Valley, Parker, Ridgeway Road, Ritner Bridge, Simpson Road, and Waymire Road. Perhaps the reader knows more?

Numerous descendants still live here. Often one has the pleasure to converse with Mary Fletcher whose Ridgeway and Blair ancestors were on that train. Eva Benefiel can tell us of her Hinshaw ancestors. One of the finest farms in the valley is run by David Stump who can be proud to be the descendant of David Stump. There are more and we would be pleased if you would let us know who you are.

In 1846, the South Road Expedition made up of 15 determined men from Polk County opened a southern route into Oregon and emigrants were able to come from both the north and the south on the Old California Trail. But the number would never again be as many as the 1845 year.



Charlotte Wirfs
3180 Fir Oaks Ct. S.W.
Albany, OR. 97321

