

# King Folk

News Letter #22

June, 2003

## What's New?

Welcome to another "King Folk".

This little news letter was established and edited and conscientiously published for a number of years by our own Charlotte Wirfs. When "Char" decided to resign due to many other demands on her time, we struggled to find a way to continue.

This will be our attempt to produce a letter to keep you informed as to the date of the next reunion. Also it enables us to make some announcements and keep you posted on interesting new developments.

We are sad to have to report that Keith Clark passed away about a year ago. Keith, along with Lowell Tiller were the authors of "Terrible Trail, The Meek Cutoff, 1845". Keith and Lowell have both attended our reunions and some of you are fortunate to have autographed copies of their book. Our sincere condolences to Donna and family.

Some of you are aware that the old Plunkett house and land were donated to Benton County for a park. Engineers found that the central core of the house remains fairly solid. The decision was made to shore up the foundation and install a new roof. Enough antique four over four windows were located to restore the house to its original design. A search is on to try to locate siding to match the original. There is no plan to restore the interior at the present time. Recent inhabitants moved the stairway, partitions and the original chimneys. Drop by for a peek on your way to or from the reunion. The dedication will be in July. We will try to have a firm date to announce.

Charlotte Murphy will bring an extremely interesting letter concerning the death of Amanda Norton Price. This letter was found in an old trunk that belonged to Ashnah Plunkett. Ashnah lived in this house and was an older sister of Amanda. Charlotte has written an interesting article about this letter which we are happy to include. Charlotte will be at the reunion.

Pat Bearden has written a very interesting article for this edition. Pat and Charlotte are both descended from Ashnah and James Plunkett. Naturally, both are keenly interested in the Plunkett house restoration. Thanks to Charlotte and Pat for their contributions.

I must mention my own search. Charles Allen owned the DLC that included the cemetery. He donated land for the pioneer section. His wife, Hetty Witham Allen died in 1864 and is buried in the pioneer cemetery. Charles re-married and along with his wife and two new sons, moved to the Walla Walla area. We had some wrong information and tried for many years to locate him near Moscow, Idaho. Recently he and two half sisters were located in the Dayton, Wash vicinity. We had not even known about the sisters. In fact, there happened to be five half sisters.

Concerning the cemetery projects. Volunteers have stabilized over three hundred monuments in the three different cemeteries. This has been an intensive four-summer project. Over six dump-truck loads of rock and dirt have been used to date. A seventh load is now on the ground to be used this summer.

The three major projects for this summer include the removal and replacement of the east fence. It is about a hundred years old and is completely disintegrated.

Also on tap is a gravel path between the Pioneer Cemetery and the I.O.O.F. Cemetery. It will be of interest to be able to see actual boundaries.

In addition, four reader boards have been fabricated. One of these will be installed near the entrance and will show a map of all three cemeteries. Included will be historical information. The other three boards will be strategically located and will include a map and a list of each burial in that cemetery.

Three bibles have been donated to the museum. One was donated by our own Maxine Simmons Bell. One was donated by Barbara Baxter. These are both from the Chambers family. Earle Greig donated the Hopestill King Norton bible which she brought across the plains in 1845. The two Chambers bibles had some photographs that named the individuals. This permits us to identify some other old photographs.

We should mention that dues collections have been disappointing. Newsletter dues were set at \$6.00 and cemetery contributions (if you wish to contribute) were set at \$4.00. A remittance envelope is enclosed. Please HELP!!!!!!

## REUNION NOTICE!

KING FOLK REUNION – SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2003 – 9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

KINGS VALLEY SCHOOL - 39088 Kings Valley Highway  
(In the gym behind the school)

Morning session is a workshop – bring family information and pictures to share. A copy machine will be available. Coffee and donuts served.

Lunch at Noon – bring a main dish and another item of your choice (dessert, salad or munchies) to share. Also bring your own eating utensils. Coffee, iced tea and bottled water will be furnished.

General Meeting & Sharing Time – 1:30 p.m. Discussion Items: Kings Valley Cemetery and possible donation, King Folk Newsletter, website, cash on hand, Chambers family Bibles, Nahum & Sarepta's burial site, Plunkett house.

HELLO FROM THE PRESIDENT - Mimi Stang

I am so pleased that we finally have another edition of the King Family Kinfolk to send out. We owe a big thanks to Earle Greig for not giving up and prodding us all until it became a reality. He and his wife are also responsible for getting all the mailing labels affixed and even taking it to the post office – thank you so much, both of you.

In this newsletter you will find information about all the great things happening at the Kings Valley Cemetery (there are a lot), information on our upcoming King Family reunion, and other tidbits of interest to King family members.

At the reunion we will need to have a discussion about our association dues – since we are not printing a newsletter on a regular basis how do we want to handle them? In the past, we have collected \$6.00 and stated that it was for “an annual subscription” to the newsletter. Obviously, since our wonderful Char Wirfs retired, we have not had a newsletter at all. I did mail out a reunion notice last year, and there were postage costs associated with that. Members have also been encouraged to give an additional \$4.00 for the Kings Valley Cemetery fund, which many of you did.

Last September the new Fort Hoskins park was dedicated. Most of the King Family Association officers were in attendance and we all enjoyed seeing the wonderful facility that it has become. There are walking trails, a number of information kiosks, including one on which Nahum King and family are mentioned, a lovely open-air shelter that can be rented and even permanent restrooms. I was really impressed at all that had been done but also appreciated that it still maintains its character – looking out over the parade field it was very easy to envision soldiers marching in formation. I would encourage you to stop by for a visit when in the area.

I am looking forward to our reunion on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> – same place – Kings Valley School. This is now a charter school and I am pleased that we are still able to use it for our reunion. They only charge us \$35.00 rent! See you all then.

## For the King Clan:

Some time ago, my cousin, Merle Hawley Bower, offered to give me a letter that had been among our great grandmother, Ashnah Norton Plunkett's, possessions. The letter was written with regard to the death of Melinda Norton Price- wife of Dillard Price. It is a lengthy, 4-page letter dated November 23, 1882. Melinda and Ashnah were daughters of Hopesstill King and Lucius Norton. Another sister, Sarepta, was married to Willard Price who was Dillard's brother.

The letter was written by Mrs. S.J. Simpson who lived in Jacksonville, Oregon at the time. It was written with great attention to the short illness and death of Melinda.

Upon the advice of a curator, I had the Lane County Museum seal it in a protective cover, designed to preserve important historical documents. because it was quite fragile.

We have been able to transcribe nearly all of the letter and will bring it to the reunion June 21, 2003 for anyone to see who may be interested.

On the 4th, and last, page, after describing in some detail the illness and death, she (Mrs. Simpson) offers the following, in an attempt to describe how she and her daughters prepared Melinda for burial.

*"...the girls thought her nice new brown dress would do & would make her look more natural to her family so we made her a full suit of underclothes & trimed them nice & put on her dress & a nice pair of sandals (low shoes) & white gloves & her a nice white lace necktie & I comed her hair and tried to fix it as she wore it when she was well & I put in the nice big hair pin little Laura said you gave her & I saved a large lock of her hair and when the girls finished dressing her I thought I never saw a prettier corps she looked as peaceful as an angel She had a very nice cofen ..."*

My hope is that all of the King descendants will find this compassionate letter as touching as we have.

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## FAMILY HISTORY "COINCIDENCES"

In my thirty-plus years of pursuing family history in various ways, I have always been intrigued by the "coincidences" that so often occur in this work. Here are a few that come to my mind, but I also know that similar occurrences have happened to many other researchers of different families all over the world.

The first one happened in January, 1979. I live only about 55 miles west of Corvallis, but had never explored the archives of the Benton County Court House. I knew it would be interesting to look through the old records for entries about the King, Norton and Plunkett families, of which I am a part. So one day I finally decided to take a day off from work and just go to Corvallis and see what I could find in the old Court House.

At that time the County had not sorted or organized its archives in any way, so they just turned researchers loose to explore on their own. I was standing at a work counter in the Court House basement, busily making notations of all family names that I ran across in such records as marriages, land ownership, probate, etc. Several other people were in the room, intent upon their own researching. Suddenly I looked across the chest-high counter at the notepad of a lady who was working on the other side of the counter from where I was. Upside down, I could see familiar family names on her notes that matched the ones on my list!

It turned out to be Charlotte Price Wirfs. Thus began an ongoing and rewarding exchange of letters and contacts that has lasted through the years since. I always call Charlotte the "cousin that I found in the basement of the Benton County Court House!"

Anyone who is descended from the Nahum/Sarepta King family is related to at least hundreds of other folks, if not even thousands of them! Many still live in the Northwest; others are scattered across the U. S. and on around the world. What a shame that so few of us actually know each other!

A second incident happened in January, 1985. I happened to be in Portland for a business conference. I had some free time one evening so I

visited the Portland Genealogical Forum. When the staff there learned that I was interested in the King Family and other related families, they told me that there was a young man who often came into the Forum who was also interested in the Kings. They gave me his name and address, and I decided when I returned home a day or two later, that I would contact him and see who he was and what he was up to.

Well, when I got home to Newport a letter was waiting for me from the young man, who I learned was attending medical school in Portland. Sure enough, that's how I connected with David Trask. He had found my name somewhere and had beaten me to writing the first letter. Another friendship was born that remains to this day. David is now the King family historian.

I had little trouble finding all sorts of information on most of my family lines except for the Plunketts. They were elusive, and I kept hitting dead-ends in my searches. So I decided to place a query in the July-Aug. 1985 issue of *Genealogical Helper* magazine, which has a national circulation. My ad said I was looking for information on the background of James Plunkett, my great-grandfather. A man from San Francisco area answered my ad. He was not a relative, but lived close to the National Archives branch in San Bruno, CA. His hobby was trying to help people find information about their families at the Archives. We struck up a correspondence that went on for about a year, until he retired and moved to Florida. But he found the Plunkett family in Van Buren County, Iowa. We pieced information together in jigsaw puzzle fashion, which then enabled me to make a very fruitful trip to Amador County, CA where the Plunketts had lived for many years. Eventually this effort led me to connect with Challas Snarr of Midvale, UT, who is a descendant of James Plunkett's sister Mary Melinda. Again, we became acquainted via many letters and phone calls, and later on, I made a number of visits to the Salt Lake area to visit with Challas. I learned that her branch of the Plunkett family had been trying for 20 years to find out what happened to our James P.!

Genealogy coincidences do not always result in contact with another living person. Once I had a few hours to fill before catching a plane home from Kansas City, MO. I decided to go to their large public library downtown. I was primarily looking for information on my Zumwalt family line

on that researching trip. I was tired from a couple of weeks of traveling and concentrated researching, and toward the end of that library visit I just idly browsed the shelves, looking at book titles at random. One caught my eye, something about Palatine\* Settlers to America. I didn't even know what a Palatine settler was at the time, but I pulled it down and scanned the index. Amazingly, there was a reference to Andrew Zumwalt, the first of this family to come to America, and it even told the ship's name on which he arrived and the date of arrival. This information came to me purely by chance—or did it really?

Some believe that there is a Higher Power that guides us in doing our family research work. Whatever it is, I am humbly grateful for each of these occurrences and others, too which have so enriched my family history researching, and most of all, for the dear cousins that I have met as a result of these events.

Patricia Plunkett Bearden

\*Palatine: A district in SW Germany, W. of the Rhine, which belonged to Bavaria until 1945.

The next two pages are from one of the fabulous Chambers bibles recently donated to the Benton County Museum. The museum scans these items and then it is not necessary to open the fragile documents again. We are very pleased that they gave us permission to reproduce them here.

The first entry refers to Rowland Chambers and his birth date.

The second entry is for Sarah King Chambers and her birth date.

The third item is for Lovisa King Chambers and her birth date.

The fourth and fifth entries are for the births of the two children of Rowland and Sarah.

The final fourteen entries are for the children of Rowland and Lovisa.



# Births

Rowland Chambers Son of

Born May 12 1813

Sarah. Daughter of Nahum & Sarepta King was  
Born in Madison Co. Ohio

Lovisa. Daughter of Nahum & Sarepta King  
was Born May 2 1828. in Madison Co. Ohio

Margaret <sup>Daughter</sup> of Rowland & Sarah Chambers.  
Born Dec. 17 1842. in Carl Co. Mo.

James <sup>Son</sup> of Rowland & Sarah Chambers.  
Born Sept. 7 1844. in Carl Co. Mo.

Sarah <sup>Daughter</sup> of Rowland & Lovisa Chambers  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or. Nov 30 1847.

William <sup>Son</sup> of Rowland & Lovisa Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or. Nov 15 1847.

Jackson <sup>Son</sup> of Rowland & Lovisa Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or. June 15 1850.

John <sup>Son</sup> of Rowland & Lovisa Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or. Nov 15 1851.

Franklin <sup>Son</sup> of Rowland & Lovisa Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or. Feb 13 1853.

Henry <sup>Son</sup> of Rowland & Lovisa Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or. June 3 1854.

Cordelia Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1855.

Daughter of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Samuel Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> 1857.

son of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Louisa Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
Mar 26<sup>th</sup> 1858.

Daughter of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Rebecca Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
Feb 8<sup>th</sup> 1860.

Daughter of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Julia Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
Nov 5<sup>th</sup> 1861.

Daughter of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Lincoln Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
Dec 6<sup>th</sup> 1863.

son of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Ann Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
Mar 6<sup>th</sup> 1865.

Daughter of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.

Nice Chambers.  
Born in Kings Valley Benton Co. Or.  
July 8<sup>th</sup> 1867.

Daughter of Rowland  
and  
Lorissa  
Chambers.





These are some before and after pictures at the cemetery.  
The first monument, top left, is about to fall. The second one has already toppled and the fourth one is leaning badly. They have been stabilized in the top right picture.

The bottom left has toppled and is restored on the bottom right.

King Folk is a newsletter published by the family of Nahum and Sarepta (Norton) King , Oregon Pioneers of 1845  
Subscriptions are \$10.00 annually. These funds are partially allocated to cemetery repairs and publication costs.  
Dues are due January 1. Please make checks payable to "King Folk" and mail to Anne Trussell 2108 Stacia Way,  
Sacramento, CA 98522

All information published in "King Folk" is printed as it is written or presented for publication. For that reason, the information may not be completely accurate. Corrections and updates are published whenever they are known. Please submit material for publication to:  
Earle L. Greig - 4441 N.W. Elmwood Dr. - Corvallis, OR 97330 Email [EGreig@pioneer.net](mailto:EGreig@pioneer.net)

The King reunion is held on the first Saturday after Father's Day Weekend in June at the Kings Valley Charter School It is made up of descendants of Nahum & Sarepta (Norton) King , Pioneers of 1845 Who settled Kings Valley in the spring of 1846.

Current officers:

President:	Mimi Stang	<a href="mailto:mstang5165@aol.com">mstang5165@aol.com</a>
V. President	Earle Greig	<a href="mailto:egreig@pioneer.net">egreig@pioneer.net</a>
Secretary	Patricia Bearden	<a href="mailto:pbearden@action.net">pbearden@action.net</a>
Treasurer	Anne Trussell	<a href="mailto:atru@accessbee.com">atru@accessbee.com</a>
King web site	Jackie Farris	<a href="mailto:jackiefarris@all-oregon.com">jackiefarris@all-oregon.com</a>

Please send queries to David Trask - 691 Murphy Road - Suite 115 - Medford, OR. 97504  
Note that David collects obituaries of the King family and can look one up for you. Help him by mailing obits you come across.

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