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Biographical Sketch

of

Robert Edson King

by Laura King Dunkley, daughter

Pioneer Year 1852

Born 1 Nov 1834 in Chagrin, Cuyhoga County, Ohio

Married March 1855 to Margaretta Lemon

Died 8 Nov 1921

Leading up to the cause and reason why Robert Edson King became a Utah Pioneer, a short story of his forefathers will not be amiss.

In his diary John Morris king (Robert's father) relates that his father, John King Sr., "was of an emigrating disposition", and hence this early citizen of our young Republic made several moves up to the time he (Robert's father) was ten years of age.

At that early age he states, "I had serious thoughts of death and my mind was seriously affected by religious reflections until I was 15 years old." At that time he joined a sect called the Christian Church. The family was living at West Bloomfield, Ontario County, New York. Five years later, at the age of 20, he went to Grove, Allegany County, New York. During the three years he remained here his religious conviction were not satisfied. He had a belief "that the Lord would have a church on earth standing on the same 'ground' that it did in the days of the Apostles."

While living in Grove he married Sarah Ann Jewel on February 11, 1833. On August 1st of the same year they left Grove for the state of Ohio. Here they settled in the village of Chagrin, Cuyhoga County, Ohio. On November 1, 1834 Robert Edson King, the subject of this sketch, was born. He was the first of four children born to them. About this time the little family began to hear of the Latter-Day Saints and upon moving to Louriane a year later they heard more regarding the Mormons. They learned nothing about the Mormon doctrine but heard every story afloat against them. During their year stay in Louriane they suffered much with chills and fever.

In the Fall of 1836 John received a letter from his father, John King Sr., telling them her and their mother had joined the Latter Day Saint Church, and advising them to come to Kirtland and investigate the Gospel. John told his wife he had a peculiar feeling about the religion and the desire grew in his heart to find out what the Mormons believed. He decided to journey to Kirtland and find out for himself what it was all about. He sold his belongings and went to Kirtland, arriving in November. The reunion with his father's family after an absence of five years was a joyous occasion.

John Morris King and his wife, Sarah, investigated and studied the principles of the Gospel and were deeply impressed by it. At a prayer meeting, soon after their arrival in Kirtland, they received a strong testimony of the power of administration through the Priesthood. Sarah Ann, whose health had been and was then very poor was administered to, and bore testimony as the Elders took their hands from her head that she felt better, and the change was visible in her countenance. They were baptized Nov. 17, 1838 by Brigham Young.

When eight years old Robert Edson King was baptized a member of the Latter-Day-Saint Church by the prophet Joseph Smith. The baptism was performed in the Mississippi river.

His impressions of the Prophet were enduring and he often bore his testimony as to the divinity of the Prophet's calling. He many times watched the Prophet and others play ball and participate in other sports.

When Robert was nine years old his parents moved to Nauvoo, Illinois, where they resided for about three years. Here they, with the other Saints, endured many hardships and persecutions at the hands of the mobs. They were finally forced to leave the city at night, in disguise, taking with them only the few things they could carry.

Robert and his parents started with the very first of the Mormon pioneers who attempted to cross the plains in 1847. They journeyed as far as Winter Quarters where the father, John Morris, was called to go as a member of the Mormon Battalion to Mexico. Robert remained in Winter Quarters there, with his mother and sisters, until the return of his father and also until 1852 when they came on into Utah. At that time he was 18 years of age.

In 1853 he was hired by Brigham Young to act as teamster on a trip to California. He returned in 1854, and was married in March 1855 to Miss Margaretta Lemon, who came to Utah in 1847. By this marriage he became the father of ten children. For some time after his marriage he assisted his father, John Morris, who was a stone mason, in work on the Salt Lake Temple.

In March 1856, he and his wife and baby came to American Fork. Their first home was a small log house near the home of Stephen Mott. Later, they purchased from Leonard E. Harrington the lot where they resided until death. On it was a cabin, the first one built outside the stockade or Fort wall. It stood about where the home of his daughter, Laura Dunkley, is now built at 58 South 1st East Street.

He took up his labors as a farmer in American fork, but late in the same year he was called by Bishop Harrington to go back and help a company of handcart pioneers, who had been snowed in at Winter Quarters. At the time of his death he was the only living survivor of this company of eight who were called to go to the rescue from American Fork.

In 1857 Robert served as a soldier in the Echo Canyon war, when Johnson's army came to Utah. He again answered the call when the Black Hawk war broke out. In this war he raised in rank from private to lieutenant and then to captain. He did not serve in this capacity long, however, because of illness.

Robert was well known for his musical ability and strong personality and made many friends. He was a member of the Brass Band and for twenty years led the musicians for the dancing here and in surrounding towns. His violin, which he played upon in Missouri and purchased from Samuel Mulliner after arriving in American Fork, is now owned by his grandson, Leonard Russell Dunkley. He took an active part in the early day dramatics of his community, along with John Peters, Mary Ann Evans, Emma Featherstone and others.

He was a good mechanic and owned and ran a threshing machine for many years. He was active in Sunday School, and as city councilman was progressive and prudent. He in many ways rendered good service in building up and defending the community.

Robert Edson King believed in Celestial Marriage and in the principle of Plural marriage as practiced by the Latter Day Saints. With the consent of Margaretta, his first wife, he entered into plural marriage with Miss Jane Prudie, March 15, 1862. By this marriage he

became the father of 8 children. He was married, again in 1865, to Miss Angelina Thrift (Boley), and 8 children were born to them.

He died November 8, 1921, at the age of 87, widely esteemed and honored by all who knew him. He left a numerous posterity who revere and cherish his memory. At the time of his death, he was survived by his first and second wives, 15 children, 57 grandchildren, and 26 great-grandchildren. At this writing (March 1937) his living descendants number 11 children, 44 gran-children, and 68 great grand-children. One son, 5 grandsons, and 2 great grand-sons have fulfilled missions. In the priesthood he held the office of Seventy.

Children 1st wife

John Edson King
William King
Thaddeus Constantine King
Eva Margaretta King
Mortimer King
Sarah Ann King
Katharine King
Lillian King
Laura King
Martha King

Children 3rd wife

Arsenia Anglina King
Francis Louise King
Aseno King
Guy King
Maud King
Abella King
Morris king
Edson King

Children 3rd wife

Mary Adrietta King
Robert Edwin King
James Purdie King
Melissa Jane King
Joseph Hyrum King
David King
Aurthur King
William Neil King