

LDS ARCHIVES
Historical Department
Item: Microfilm of typescript
Call #: MS 6230 16

Oral History program
Interviewee: Ted King
Interviewer: Delbert Adams
June 22, 1961

A: This is June 22, 1961 and I'm in the home of Ted King at Almo, Idaho. Ted is an old-timer here. In fact, he was born and raised on this ranch. His father homesteaded this very spot in 1880. Actually it's a rancher's country--meadow grass, willows. Looks like plenty of water and the valley is surrounded by mountains. It's a very beautiful place. The low hills are covered with cedar trees and the higher mountains, of course, are dotted with pine. It's really a beautiful country here.

I came here yesterday not by accident, but from the fact that Wes Ward--he's an old timer here in Almo. I met him in Ogden a couple of days ago and told him that a group of the Sons of the Pioneers were coming up to the City of Rocks to see the old battleground of the Indians and the California immigrants of 1861. I asked him if there was anyone around here that could give some history of the early day battle here and Wes gladly told me that there was one man here, Ted King, that could tell as much about it as anyone.

And if I would contact him he would give me some information about it. So yesterday I came here for that purpose--a total stranger--and Ted and his wife asked me where I was going to stay and I told them that I would probably stay at a motel some place, and they said, "Stay right here. We have an extra bed and our's welcome." So I stayed here and believe it or not but at daylight this morning there was a pheasant rooster outside here in the meadow grass giving his call.

Again I'd like to impress upon the listeners of this record some day that this is a wonderful ranching country. There were at one time thousands of cattle and horses raised and fed in this valley here. It's an interesting thing to me that Brother Ted was telling me last night, that in his day they would trail cattle from here to Kelton to load them on the train because of the fact that we're out here 75 miles from the railroad--about 50 miles--and that was the only different occasions they'd have great herds of cattle drive down there and load. I'd also like to mention the fact that Ted's father was an old Pony Express rider. In the magazine of the Utah and the Pony Express Centennial edition that was put out in 1970, there's a nice story in there written concerning Ted's father and Ted is going to record it for us. So Ted, if you'd like to read your father's history we would be glad to hear it.

K: Thomas Owen King, born Dernferdale, Cambridge, England, April 27, 1840. Thomas Owen King son of Thomas King and Hannah Tapfield King crossed the ocean in the ship Donna in the year 1853 with his parents as a convert to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

A: It's all right. Go ahead.

K: Early in 1857 THomas, then 17 years of age, was employed by the Brigham Young Express Compay carrying mail adn express across the plains. During thee Johnson Army episode he remained on active duty serving under John D. T. McAllistere and THomas RIch at Fort Bridger, Green RIVER, Fort SUPply, and Ham's Fort.

In 1860 THomas King was engaged y Pony Express as a rider delivering mail fro Fort Bridger to WEber Station. Aftr the express was discontinued, he was hired to carry mail betwen Salt Lake and BEear Lakee, IDaho. As a younbg man Mr. King was engaged in surveying work in SANpetee VALleye and along the Seviere River. But his chief occupation was that of farmer and stock raiser.

In late 1860he filled a four-year mission to Great Britain where he served as president of Bedforshire Conference.e Dorcus Deebonaum became his wiffee in 1868. SHe bore him eight children. Ten year later THomas moved his family to CASSia C ounty, Idaho where hee remined for two years and wheree hee took up a ranch for himself on the present site of Almo.

Orddained a high priest, hee was set apart to preside over thee Almo Ward. Bishop King dies November 16, 1921 at Almo after many years of service to his church and to his community.

The following is an account of hs experiences. "H. Y. FAust Esq. By your request I will try and write you a short outline of my early life in the Pony Express. I'm full of regrets that I can only give it to you from memory. If we who came in early years to this, then the desert country had only kept journals that romance might have been written, but then who would have believed it? The very aper needed to wrte upon ws too scarce in those early days. I mean before the expres or rather before 1858, excus ethis digression, hat if we had all written the incidences of our drives in those days? Now they would read likee romance eand some most thrilling ones at that.

In 1855 I went to CARson Valley as a guard for Judge Hyde. In the fall of the same year I went to the Humboldt WELls to arrest Alfred Haws accused of murder. In the fall of 1856 I went on a goverment surveeying expedition under CHARles Mogah. And then again with him in the spring of 1857. In May fo the same year I joined hte Brigham Young Express Company. Just before spring broke in 1858 I was called out withh a large company to follow Indians west who had run off with a lot of horses. AFTER being out sveral days we lost their trail in a blinding snowstorm.

In March of 1860 I was eengaged by A.B. Miller to ride the Pony Express. Abot th 20th I started with Mr Millere, Henry Wehrli, and George Leonard with a lot of horses to stock the eroad fromSalt Lake CIty to Fort Bridr. Stopped at SNyder's Sawmill, Parleys Fork that nigt, adn the next day tot ehe mouth of Echo CANYon where I stoped, that being my home station. I was to rid to Bear River forty-five miles. On the 7th of April at oon the long expected Pnly Expresss came. I forgot if I had dinner or not, but it took but a few minutes or two before I was in the sadde and off.

My first ride was 20 miles up Echo grade. Slow at first and increased speed as I went. GAvee my horse one of two breathing spells. I went into the station with a yell as though I was running for the Derby. The yell brought out Frenchy with my other horse. The change being made I rodee to Bedfford

Bug Cave five miles when it commenced snowing. Here the snow was deep which had not as yet thawed, and there was only a trail made by mules carrying the U.S. mail to _____. If you got off out of the trail, down you went belly deep to a horse. And perhaps deeper according to the lay of the ground if you happened to get off that. It was all uphill and if I could only reach the top before the trail filled up I did not care, as I thought I could tumble down through it in some shape of other going down for I knew it was pretty steep.

In a letter home of May 30, 1860 that I have preserved I find that I lost my way in the snowstorm after the trail filled up. And for ten miles the snow was deep, but I made scheduled time. I got to Bear River at four o'clock. Then George Leonard took it but only to ride out. Someone else brought it back. Then rode from Weber to Muddy--sixty miles.

I see in my letter about the 24th of April I started from Weber at eight o'clock p.m. and arrived at the Muddy at quarter to two next morning. I laid down in an old wagon until sunrise, got breakfast, and at 12 the exchange came and I started back and arrived at the Weber at half past five--riding 120 miles in 22 1/2 hours minus time I stopped at the Muddy. May the 1st I started from the Weber at 12 at night and arrived in Millersville May 2nd at quarter to 8 a.m.

After the semi-weekly was put on my ride was from Salt Lake City to Bear River--a distance of 80 miles. When it came on time I started with Salt Lake City about 9 or 10 p.m., arriving at Bear River about sunrise. Henry Wehrli rode the other express and we would often pass each other fast asleep, but on our horses go at the usual rate.

On one trip I shall never forget it. Before getting to Echo Canyon going east, there's quite a wide and level space from a half a mile to a mile wide between the high bluffs and the Weber. In the distance I saw a wagon coming.

It was about 12:00 at night. I was riding a horse that had only been ridden a few times. Not thinking I got between the wagon and the river to pass when something scared him, and taking the bit in his teeth he started for the river. Here I knew the back of the river to be at least 20 feet to the water. In less time than it takes to write it I knew I was close to the back and to turn him I could not. I just threw my feet out of the stirrups to throw myself off when the horse turned. I only had a snaffle bit. The remainder of the distance to the station he just flew to please me. It was at Bear River when Captain Burton passed and was one of the riders he mentioned in his City of the Saints.

The longest ride made was at a time when the express did not connect. I forgot the date but it was late in July of 1860 or the beginning of August. I started as usual about 10 Monday and rode to Bear River--80 miles. Tuesday at 10 o'clock another express came and I had to take it on east. I rode to Hawk's Fort 65 miles before I found another to take it at sunrise the eastern express came and I rode back to Bear River 65 miles before I found another to take it.

At sunrise the eastern express came and I rode back to Bear River 65 miles, and ate a hasty breakfast. Then rode to East Canyon and ate dinner, got up by our mutual friend--John Galloway, _____, and James McDonald. From there to Salt Lake City by seven o'clock p.m. being 145 miles that day. Lacking two or three hours of 48 in which time I had ridden 200 miles, and was not tired for I very well remember taking a walk with my best girl that evening.

ANother tie the exprees wrong and I had to take it west to Foss Station in Rush Valley. I believe about 75 miles.

In September I left the company to go to England on a mision and as we passed BIg or Little Sandy, an exprees rider had been thrown, his leegs brokeen with no surgeon near then Fort Bridger. Our esteemed citizen John Kay bein in the party, he sete the boy's leegs adn we edrove on. Thomas Owen King." Original letter on firle inthe DUP museaum, contributed by Fawnand H.E. King.

A: That's a wonderful reecord isn't it, Ted.

K: That's quite a story.

A: You know just sitting her thinking of riding 200 miles in 24 hours--that was a lot of work. I don't know how they stood it. How heavy a man was your father?

K: Oh, he weighed about 135 to 140 pounds.

A: Well, he was jsut onee of thos men that was full of muscle.

K: Wll, he was a boy--young.

A: That's right. Well, that's surely fine. Thank you very uch. Ted, I'd like to ask you who your fathere adn mother was.

K: Well, my father was THomas Owen King and my motheer was Darcus Debonaum.

A: By the wa THomas King was the first bishop inthe ward at ALmo.

K: THat's right.

A: How many children weree in your family?

K: Eight.

A: Eight. HOfw many brothers and how many sisters?

K: There was five brothers and three sisters.

A: ARE any of them around the valley here now beseids you?

K: Yes, I have one sister living here in Almo. She's now up with her daughter in Idaho Falls, And then I have onee brother in CANada.

A: You told me something rathere interesting last evening. Tell us some ore about that Canadian trip. Didn't you go p there to help colonize these saints, or was that just a little ahead of you? Tell us something about that.

K: Well, my father adn William Jones bought the hurch cattle who was traileed by Brother CARD to Alberta Canada.

A: Now when you say Card, that's the name that Cardston, Alberta, Canada gets its name from, isn't it?

K: That's right.

A: Excuse me, but they trailed these cattle from ALmo, Idaho to Cardston?

K: Brother CARD trailed them from Utah.

A: Oh, is that so.

K: Yes,

A: They were tithing cattle I think you told me,

K: Yes, they were tithing cattle and they got too many of them on hand and they wanted to colonize so they trailed these cattle up there and started raising cattle.

A: And how long did they run these cattle in Canada, do you have any idea?

K: Well, I don't really know, but my brother went there and they were in the cattle business there in--I think he left here in 1890 and went to Canada, my oldest brother. Then he worked up there for Brother Pilling with a cow outfit, and then these cattle were for sale and he rode down to my father and Father went over to Brother Jones and told him the deal was too big, and would he be interested in going in and they did. Brother Jones went up to Canada and they made a deal for these cattle from the CHurh and my brother Owen ran the on the range--on the Milk River Range between Cardston and Raymond, and from there to the line. They had a grazing distance of about 100 square miles.

A: In those days there was no homesteaders, there was nobody there. The cattle just grazed themselves.

K: Well, there was a few homesteaders but not very many people in those days.

A: Ted, would you have an idea how long they were driving those cattle from Utah up there?

K: No, I wouldn't

A: But your brother went with them and worked with them after they got there?

K: Well, he left. .

A: What was his name?

K: Owen KING.

A: Owen King.

K: His name was THomas Owen King.

A: What Pilling did your brother work for--Richard Rilling?

K: HIS father. Now I don't know his father's name.

A: This is strange but true. Richard Pilling, SR. married my fther's siste,r Katherined. So such a small world as wee live in. Here I coe out here to tell you who my peple were and you're telling me wheo your people were,e adn here we find out that we're veery closel connected. Not in blood lines but i acquaintance. Well, that's wonderful.

Then you told me something interestng last evening along this line of thught of cattle adn ranching. It sems that Jesse Knight had decided to go up theree adn develop some acreage for the raising of sugar beets.

K: The Church called him up theree.

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