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NewsLetter

Benton County Genealogical Society

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Letter Home From A Visitor to Portland in 1852-1854

"J.S. Englerth crossed the overland route to California in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred Fifty Two and returned on the 2nd of June A.D. 1854, absence two years two months and four days."

[Only two of his letters about his experiences on the Pacific Coast during the California Gold Rush days are known to have survived. One is apparently the first he wrote home after leaving his wife and family in Greensboro, Indiana. The second letter follows and was written to his brother-in-law Larkin Newby from Portland, Oregon in 1853 and speaks of Larkin's cousin Henderson Lewelling of nursery fame.]

Posted: Portland, Oregon Feb 2nd, 1853 A.D. Respected Brother: I am once more permitted by kind Providence to address you as follows. I am well and sincerely wish these lines may find you all enjoying good health which is the greatest blessing the world affords to man.

I suppose you have had the opportunity of investigating some of my letters in regard to my journey across the plains which was one of the most interesting notwithstanding its irksomeness that I have ever experienced, it was much more easily accomplished than I anticipated.

We made the trip through from Independence to old Hangtown or Placerville, California in 7 days less than four months with ox teams, and I came by the Great Salt Lake City of Mormonism which is 40 miles out of the usual way or further than by Sublits cutoff. I am so well pleased by the overland route that should I ever come again to the Pacific Coasts I would most emphatically come by land, though I am only one in many who would agree with me in regard to the overland route to Oregon or California. Many [a one] of those who crossed the plains the past season curses the day he ever saw it in their journey over the plains. Well, it is nevertheless true that many and indeed a majority too of the Oregon emigrants started entirely too late which was the one grand

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Program May 8th WANDER WOMAN

Lois E. Meessen will speak this month on the topic Wander Woman: A Personal Discovery on the Trail of Lewis and Clark. She will be displaying books and brochures and will bring her journals. Business meeting as always is at 10:00 on Saturday May 8th with Lois' program beginning at 11:00. Many members stay after for coffee and hospitality and a visit to our substantial genealogy library. Shelf lists are available in the library as are membership lists [both for a small donation]. We can't promise you the kind of excitement Danell Aukerman experienced in the Salt Lake City Family History Library on a recent notorious occasion, but you'll have fun.

May Garage Sale June Book Sale & Potluck

Saturday May 15th our annual Book Fund Garage Sale will be held at Jean Grube's house at 2020 NW 23rd [north of Circle Blvd at the corner of Elmwood. Items for sale may be brought to Jean's at any time. You can call her at 758-7618 to make arrangements or to volunteer some time to help. We are also reminded that June is Potluck month [just bring a main dish] as well as the annual in-house book sale [bring romances, westerns, or what-have-you] for the benefit of the library.

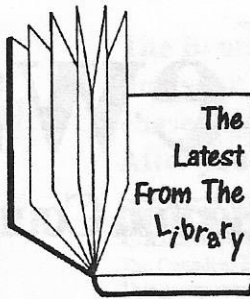
J.S. Englerth

Joseph Samuel Englerth (1816-1901) was educated to age 16 in Philadelphia while living with an uncle. His family lived in Salisbury Twp., Lancaster Co., PA. From age 18 to 21 he was bound to a cabinet maker and in that capacity went to Greensboro, Henry Co., IN where he met and married Jane Newby of a North Carolina Quaker family [mentioned in the article are her brothers Joshua, Larkin and John Newby who were sons of Thomas Newby and Sarah Brookshire]. Sarah's sister Jane Brookshire married Meshack Lewelling and was the mother of Henderson Lewelling the nurseryman. — Dorothy Burt

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cause of the suffering inasmuch as it was utterly impossible for them to find feed for their animals in consequence of being so far in the rear of so large an emigration as crossed the past year which was larger by ten thousand than any former year or perhaps will ever be again. And, further, many persons crossed the plains the past year who have not the Spirit of The Age in which they live. Perfect drones to the world, intemperant not only in regards to the internal use of intoxicating liquors but in every respect to the physical organization. True, men are more or less exposed and more liable to make those violations. Hence it takes men of perseverance, temperate and sober habits close and strict attention to business with a judicious outfit. If such men as I have suggested contemplate crossing the plains, for God's sake tell them to stay where they are, for they would only be a curse to the whole (wagon) train in which they would engage. California and Oregon have too many of such "stool or do nothing" creatures. All California has more or less all classes of the human species, many of whom are strolling about the towns and cities ready to take advantages of the bone and sinew of the country. The Chinamen are as thick as bees before a thunderstorm, the Spaniards are next. The Chinese are a small, industrious and temperate race. They will work in the mines where no white or American man will and can live on 1/4 pound of rice a day. The Spaniards are an idol, lazy, intemperant and profane class violating the laws of health. They sit about the sidewalks stupid, pale and look like death from the effects of intemperance. They can eat more watermelons and grapes, it is a given up point, than any (other) human species God ever made. I must say, however, there are a few exceptions among them but rare I assure you, and that is to pack provisions (provisions) to the miners and lariate (rope) wild stock, attend and participate in bull fights, Etc.

We landed in Hangtown, California on the 18th of Aug. I prospected the mines there but found it too dry to make it pay. Notwithstanding, many are working and doing tollerable but they were those who had good claims. I prosecuted my journey to Sacramento city leaving my company in the rear disbanded. Sacramento is a handsome city but the fire in Nov. last year destroyed two thirds of it and the residue has been since New Years all inundated and much damaged. So also has Marysville and Stockton shared the same fate. Marysville is situated 45 miles N.E. of Sacramento and on the north side of the Yuba river, 1/2 mile above the junction of the Feather and Yuba rivers and at the head of steamboat navigation. It contains 5000 souls and is the most aristocratic town of the size in the whole state of California. It has many fine large fire proof brick buildings and complete ar-



The Wuerttemberg Emigration Index, Volume Seven
The California Locator, a Directory of Public Records
CD - Federal Pensioners' Roll of 1883
1300 Missing Missouri Marriage Records, 1812-1853*
Death Records of Missouri Pioneer Women, 1808-1853*

Death Records of Missouri Men, 1808-1854*

CDs - Picton's Lost Souls (3 CDs)

A Hundred and Sixty Acres in the Sage (Post, Crook Co, OR)#

CD - Crystal Connections, CD #1 - Genealogical Records#

*Gifts of Damaris Reynolds

#Gifts of Lee Gentemann

chitecture. I must confess I like California for its noble and thoroughgoing enterprise but its society is basely corrupt partly in consequence of the feminine gender, also the great inducements open to all who may feel disposed to partake of the fires of hell. Fully and many are like "the foolish man who built his house upon the sand, it fell, and great was the fall thereof." Or like the "five virgins" who went out to meet the bridegroom "unwise and foolish took no oil in their lamps and their lamps and their lights went out." And so it is with a majority of those who traverse the land of gold for the want of good moral and intilectual science, from daily perpetuating deperadations, their light has gone out. And of the other five "who took oil in their lamps" thence the wise snare the foolish, not only in California but it is to a greater or lesser extent in Oregon.

I left Marysville, California on the 10th of Oct. and Embarked a steamer for Sacramento, then another for San Francisco, remained a week for the Steamer Columbia, on the 19th embarked the Columbia for Oregon. After starting from long wharf and taking our point for the ocean, I recognized Israel Elliott on board. We encountered high head winds, boisters (boisterous) sea for two days and nights. Many of the passengers were sea sick; myself and four others escaped. At the mouth of the Columbia River we were hailed (met) with dense fog; partially disappeared, we entered the river which is difficult on account of the large sand bar obliquely across and near the conflux. 14 miles above the mouth we anchored out at Astoria for the purpose of the distribution of the mail for all Oregon. We landed in Portland on the 25th of Oct. which is situated 16 miles above the mouth of the Willamette and on the west side of the river, on Latitude 45 deg. 30 min. 10 sec. North, Longitude 122 deg. 22 min. west. It contains one thousand inhabitants, nevertheless it is the commertial metropolis of Oregon. Steam boats and sailing vessels are daily leaving and returning. Portland is as yet in its infancy, though it has some very fine buildings. The houses are all frame, painted and many too are of complete architecture. It contains three Churches - Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic. The Methodists have had several "distracted" meetings this winter and many have joined the church and are on their way to heaven and happiness. The Presbyterians are as yet small

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and cam (calm) in their operations. They are here as anywhere else in the world: a saint on Sunday and a devil on Monday. The Roman Catholics are quite numerous and practice the usual catholics of the forgiveness of sins and the redemption of all depradations. Portland, like unto many other towns on the Pacific coast, have their various ups and downs, all kinds of people, temperant and intemperant but take the society throughout all Oregon, it is much better than that of California.

Six miles up the river on the east bank is located the town of Milwaukee, it contains about 200 souls, the houses are all frame painted, and is the Lewellings' location. Henderson's residence is 1/2 mile below town at the bend of the river and has a complete nursery. Seth resides in town and ocpation (occupation) is keeping public house. His price for boarding is \$9.00 per week or \$8 and sleep theirselves. [Joseph S. Englerth was related to Seth and Henderson Lewelling through his wife Jane Newby, who was their first cousin] When I landed here last fall I found John T. Swain in copartnership with Seth in the bording house, and John T. Lewellin waiter, but sometime Swain and Lewellin have gone to the mines, also Israel Elliott, and have not been as yet herd (heard) of. This winter have been the hardest on the miners in the mines that has been since the discovery of them in consequence of much rain, high water and very deep snows prevented the packers from taking provitions and many of them had to live on wild game rosted, as nothing could possibly be obtained at any price. Now, within the last few weeks, hundreds have returned to the Willamette valley with the intention of packing to the mines as soon as they can. Many too are strapped and must do something before they can return. Flour is now selling at \$20 a hundred; it has been as high as \$25 per hund. And all provitions are very high; farmers are getting rich with comparatively little labor. We have had the spiritual _____ in P. (Portland) and all over Oregon this winter, likewise Mesmerism and Phrenology, and we have everything here as in the states, even "Bald Face" is taken internally until the Physiogmy of men is seen butting the ground.

Brother Johua Newby received a letter or two from you recently dated Oct. requesting him to inform me of the redemption of old Henry, the re election of Hon. S.W. Parker to Congress and the defeat of Gen. Grose by 29. Well, Brother Larkin [Newby], what say you to the election of Gen. Peirce to the Presidency and the defeat of Gen. Scott. "Oh, shame, what a beat, only 4 states for Scott." Is it possible, yes it is true, only 4 states!!! Why Whigs, what have you been doing; also the re election of Joseph Wright Gov. of Indiana. I am thinking the dep. Post Masters many places will be exchanged. I understand Loucinda Pettit has gone to the stage of ac-

tion!! Oh, Wilson the hatter, where are you? May heavens blessings crown their joys and fill their arms with girls and boys!!

Dear brother, will you exhibit this letter to my wife and tell her that I have written several letters and in a month she may expect another letter. As my wife cannot write I sincerely request of you to write for her, as I long to hear from her and the children and address me at Portland, Oregon Territory. The Lewelling folks are in tollerable health, the boys are well. Joshua [Newby] is grafting for Henderson [at the Lewelling nursery] and John [Newby?] is tending the ferry at Milwaukee. I here below give you the draft of the first and second contemplated house of the Hon. Henderson Lewelling to be erected between the first of May and the middle of Sept. I shall conclude for the present, hoping you will write soon and my respects to your family and all the friends pro and con. Respectfully, your Obt. Svt. J.S. Englerth to Larkin Newby, Esq. I send you a newspaper in company with letter, also one for G.S. Englerth."

Letter and comments from Ed Englerth:

"With respect to Henderson Lewelling's house (or houses), it's not clear whether Joseph helped build it (them). The only drawing I have is what he included at the end of his 1853 letter, which is so fragile and dim at this point I hesitate to photocopy it. The drawings of both houses are done at 1/16 of an inch to the foot. The first house is a two-storey, fairly long and narrow structure. The second, however, is a circular house, apparently a single storey dwelling. His note on the second house is as follows: "This is the second contemplated form, a round house with 24 faces. You can gather the size by measuring; it is laid off 1/16th to the foot. He is now at work in planning the third. The cost of this will be 15 or 16,000 dollars. It is to be two stories, the upper to have more rooms." It's not clear whether the last 2 sentences refer to the second or third house. The diameter of the round house measures out to 3 inches. The width of the first house measures out to 1-1/8 inches; the length to 4 inches. The last bit of his letter has nothing to do with the houses, but is quite in keeping with his character. 'Henderson does not believe in witches, hell, the Bible, etc. His quakerology is knocked into a cocked hat.'"

From a Mankato, MN obituary of J.S. Englerth:

"He went to Maryville, Cal. And worked at carpentering at \$5 per day of 10 hours. After the completion of the building, he embarked the steamer Columbia for Portland, Oregon. The rainy season or 'Oregon mists' had set in, and Nov. 12 he resumed his trade in making coffins and all sorts of furniture. In the summer of 1853 he worked at building houses and in the winter of 1853-4 he made furniture and 'batched' to have money. In April 1854 Mr. Englerth embarked for California, and in May took passage east via New Orleans to his home in Indiana. In all this journey he indulged in no tobacco, intoxicants or gambling...In the spring of 1855 he...resumed his former occupation. He made cabinet ware and shipped largely from Cincinnati. His establishment was the largest in the county."

New Members

Donna James, Ardis Koester, Karel Leslie,
Georgia Prichard, Judy Tribbet

Total Membership: 126

Personal Note

We are sorry to see Joanne Perry leave us. She is moving to State College, Pennsylvania to work in the PA State University library. Goodbye, Joanne!

Membership Information

President	David Kribs cdkribs@pioneer.net	929-6079
1st Vice Pres	Ken Bielman	758-3769
2nd Vice Pres	Charlene Talbot	929-6079
Secretary	Teri Greene mmteri@proaxis.com	
Treasurer	Gene Newcomb newcombg@bcc.orst.edu	929-5715
Librarian	Jean Grube	758-7618
Membership	Leila Crawford crawford@ucs.orst.edu	753-4153
Newsletter Editor	Dorothy Burt dgburt@pioneer.net	424-3021
	Janice Barclay Jbarc@pioneer.net	847-5610

Dues are \$10.00 single and \$13.00 family per calendar year.
Dues paid after September 1st are credited to next year.

Web page URL <http://www.rootsweb.com/~orbentgs/>

The Benton County Genealogical Society will buy your used genealogy CDs for 1/2 their purchase price! CDs will be placed in our collection. After you've used it, sell it to us!

Canadian Interest Group

The Canadian Interest Group is for those searching for their roots in Canada. This group meets the third Tuesday of each month, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Albany Public Library. If you have a specific area of Canada you are interested in, please let me know so we can have books and printed materials there for you to look at. We have resources available for Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and some Quebec plus Canada in General. Car pooling can be arranged.

Call Pat Rawlinson, 752-2243, for further info.

Odds And Ends

Our number at the OSU Thriftshop on Second Street in Corvallis is 492. Please keep your Santiam and Flav-R-Pak labels coming in to the Library. There is a plastic sack in the library to keep them in. Leila Crawford is in charge of the label program. All you need is the UPC Symbol from the label. Be sure that you leave some area around the label when you tear it off.

More Member Info

Our meetings are held on the second Saturday of September through June, in the NE Dining Hall of the College United Methodist Church, on the east side of the parking lot, in the 1100 block of Philomath. Business meeting is at 10:00 a.m. with the program at 11:00 a.m.

Our Library, in the museum annex, is open to members and visitors on meeting days from 12:00 noon, or when the program is over until 3:00 p.m. IF we can keep enough volunteer librarians, it will be open every Tuesday afternoon from 12:30 until 3:00 p.m.

Members in good standing may check out up to five books and return books any time the library is open.

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S=Single; F=Family; E=Exchange.
Number is last of year; 8=1998
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