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Marquis Fayette King

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Marquis Fayette King.



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Engraved by Campbell Brothers New York.

M. F. King

MARQUIS FAYETTE KING.

BY

NATHAN GOOLD.

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1905.

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MARQUIS FAYETTE KING.

HON. MARQUIS FAYETTE KING, the Vice-President for Maine of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, succeeding his intimate friend Hon. Josiah Hayden Drummond in that office, died in Portland, Maine, Friday, October 21, 1904, at the age of 69 years, 8 months, and 2 days. The funeral services were of extreme simplicity, with an impressive committal service at the grave performed by his brother, Rev. Henry Melville King, D.D., the last survivor of the family. Few men are ever taken from a community for whom more sincere sorrow was expressed by all classes.

Marquis F. King was born at Craigie's Mills, in the town of Oxford, Maine, Feb. 18, 1835. He was the son of Col. Samuel Hall and Eliza (Shaw) King, and was one of the two survivors of ten children, the others dying in childhood. The brother is the Rev. Henry Melville King, of the First Baptist Church of Providence, R. I. The father's first settlement was at Craigie's Mills, about 1823, it then being in the town of Hebron, where he was actively engaged in developing the valuable water power afforded by Thompson's Pond, where Oxford Village now is. In company with another, he bought a large tract of land from the heirs of Andrew Craigie of Cambridge, Mass., who had built the saw mill that gave the name to the settlement. The purchase included much of the land now occupied by the village. Mr. Craigie had been the Apothecary General of the Continental Army, and his house at Cambridge was the headquarters of Gen. Washington during the siege of Boston, and later became the home of the poet Longfellow. It still bears the name "Craigie." The partnership was of short duration, for Mr. King, reserving a sufficient amount of land for a large farm, sold the balance to his partner, and proceeded to clear his own land for cultivation. He had learned the trade of housewright of his father, and built his own buildings. He was also engaged in trade and lumber operations. Col. King was a selectman of Hebron, an advocate of the division of the town, and was elected the chairman of the first board of selectmen of Oxford.

Col. Samuel H. King was commissioned an ensign by Gov. John Brooks, a lieutenant in 1820, by Gov. William King, the first governor of Maine, a captain in 1822, a major in 1825, lieutenant-colonel in 1826, by Gov. Albion K. Paris, and colonel in 1827, by Gov. Enoch Lincoln. He was honorably discharged April 22, 1833.

Col. King was the eldest child of Capt. Samuel and Sally (Hall) King, and was born at Paris, Maine, Feb. 4, 1799. He married, Oct. 31, 1824, Eliza, the daughter of Gilbert and Silence (Cole) Shaw of Paris. She was born Sept. 2, 1801, and was eighth in lineal descent from Abraham Shaw of Halifax, England, who died at Dedham, Mass., in 1638. She was also eighth in descent from John Shaw of Plymouth.

Col. Samuel H. King moved to Portland, Feb. 10, 1845, where he engaged in the country produce and grocery business, and died there, May 6, 1864, aged 65 years. He was a man of commanding presence and of dignified manners. His wife was a woman of strong character, of affectionate disposition, and was a model wife and mother. She died, after years of suffering borne with Christian fortitude, Jan. 22, 1875, aged 73 years.

The grandfather, Capt. Samuel King, was the son of George and Betty (Shaw) King, and was born at Raynham, Mass. His wife was Sally, daughter of Jonathan and Lydia (Haven) Hall, whom he married in 1798. He went to Paris, Maine, with his uncle, Jarius Shaw, in 1793. Capt. Samuel King was a descendant of John and Mary King who came with John Humphrey, Deputy Governor of the Massachusetts Company, and were in his service in England. It is thought that they were of the Dorsetshire family. John King was born in 1600, and permanently settled in Weymouth, Mass., before 1640, at a place called "King's Cove." He was recorded as a "seaman," "planter," and "goodman." In 1663 he was one of the proprietors of Mendon. His son Philip, whose wife was Judith Whitman, was the father of John King, who married Alice Dean, and they were the parents of Benjamin King, wife Abiah Leonard. The latter were the parents of George King, the father of Capt. Samuel, the grandfather of Marquis F. King.

At the age of nineteen, Marquis F. King engaged in photography, and was one of the first and one of the most proficient in that occupation. He served in the militia, and was a Republican in politics, voting for the first nominee of that party for the Presidency in 1856. He served in Portland's City Council in 1868, was an Alderman in 1871, 1872, and 1882, and was elected Mayor of the City, in 1884, by a larger vote than had ever been given a candidate. He was a member of Gov. Edwin C. Burleigh's Council in 1891, and of Gov. Henry B. Cleaves's in 1893, for terms of two years each. He was also a Trustee of the Portland Public Library and of the State School for Boys.

Mr. King had four ancestors who took an active part in the War of the Revolution, viz: Benjamin King, a delegate to the Provincial Congress, Sergeant George King, Lieutenant Eleazer Cole, and Corporal Abner Shaw. He was one of the first members of the Maine Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and served as a Councilor several years. He rendered valuable service in aiding applicants to become members.

When the Union Safe Deposit and Trust Company was established in Portland, in 1893, he became the manager of the Safety Vaults, which position he held with the same fidelity that characterized his life. A committee of the directors submitted the following to the Board:—

“In the death of Hon. Marquis F. King the Union Safe Deposit and Trust Company loses an official whose connection with it from its inception was marked by those qualities which justify confidence and inspire esteem; this community loses a citizen who had served it with faithful ability in varied stations, including the highest within its gift; and a wide circle of friends have lost a genial associate whose sterling character commanded respect.”

Mr. King was greatly interested in Masonry, and had its highest honors. He was made a Mason in 1859, in Ancient Land Mark Lodge in Portland. In 1863 he received the degrees of the Scottish Rite, and May 18, 1865, received the thirty-third degree and became an Honorary Member of the Northern Supreme Council, and Sept. 17, 1885, was made an Active Member. He held offices in the Lodge, Chapter, Council, and Commandery. He was for two years Grand Master of Masons in Maine, and was the Grand Treasurer from 1894 until his death. He was Deputy of the Supreme Council of Maine from 1886. He assisted to form the Knights of Constantine, and was the Grand Treasurer. He received the degree of Grand Cross, and was the Treasurer until two years before his death. He also was editor of the *Masonic Journal* for fourteen years, which ceased issue with the next number after his death.

For twenty-three years Mr. King was a director of the Union Mutual Life Insurance Company. But two survive who were members when he was elected to the board. One, president Fred E. Richards, announced Mr. King's death at a special meeting of the directors in the following words, which were ordered to be copied into the records:—

“The quorum of the old board stands on the other shore to welcome him whose chair is vacant and whose loss we mourn to-day. Marquis F. King was the personification of conscientious independence. He was slow to make acquaintances, and slower yet to accept acquaintances as friends. The opinion of others he received as collateral evidence only in support of conclusions arrived at by his own personal investigation. When a friendship was once formed by him its strength was such that time or circumstances could seldom sever the chain of his confidence. His name was the

synonym of honesty and integrity. As he stood guardian of the millions deposited in the strong boxes of the Union Safe Deposit and Trust Company, its patrons knew their property was absolutely safe in his keeping.

By his death the State loses one who had been efficient and faithful in its service; the city loses one of the best of its leading citizens; this company loses a wise and conservative counselor, and the loss to his family is irreparable."

Marquis F. King married, March 8, 1856, Frances Olivia Plaisted, a daughter of Samuel Pomery and Sabrina (Perkins) Plaisted of Portland. She was the eighth in descent from Lieut. Roger Plaisted who was killed in the attack on Berwick, Maine, in 1675. They had five children: Walter, who died in infancy, Luetta, Dr. Alfred, the distinguished surgeon of Portland, Warren C., and Francis P., who are now living.

Mr. King was a man of large physique, being upwards of six feet in height, and was well proportioned. He enjoyed vigorous health, which enabled him to perform the vast amount of work that fell to him to do. He discharged his duties faithfully, and whatever he undertook he did well. He had a strong will, unwearied perseverance, and possessed good executive ability. He was always self-controlled, and was a true friend. His rule seemed to be to do right because it was right. By his courtesy and kindly manner he won people to him who learned the value of his friendship. He was a useful citizen who left the best of himself with the world.

Marquis Fayette King was a valued genealogist and historian. His store of information was always at the service of the inquirer, and many in the land mourn his taking off. He was elected a member of the Maine Historical Society in 1889, and was an interested and useful acquisition, being constantly contributing books to their library. He was an honorary member of the Old Colony Historical Society, in a locality of much interest to him.

It was in the Maine Genealogical Society, of which he was the president for fifteen years, that he found his greatest usefulness. Much of the success of that Society is due to his efforts. During that time, he edited the Notes and Queries columns in the *Portland Evening Express* for several years, through which much genealogical and historical knowledge was diffused.

Mr. King's tribute to his native town was his "Annals of Oxford," 1903, a handsome volume of 298 pages, that will be his monument in that town. It was dedicated to his parents as follows:—

"To the sacred memory of My Beloved Father and Mother, whose patient toil and sacrifice guarded my childhood; whose wisdom and experience guided my youth and whose excellent precepts and examples are an ever present admonition to a better manhood; also to my dear brothers and sisters—one only surviving (the tiny forms of the others resting in unmarked graves on the sunny shore of the mill-pond, opposite the ancient homestead of Esquire Keith; a spot once set apart as "God's Acre," but later reclaimed for tillage) this volume is affectionately dedicated."

His last publication, "Some of the Descendants of Roger Plaisted," was his tribute to his esteemed wife and her family. The dedication in this book was as follows:—

"To Frances Olivia Plaisted, who on the eighth day of March, eighteen hundred and fifty-six, in the City of Portland, at the residence of Rev. George W. Bosworth, D.D., in the presence of Mr. Samuel Sylvester Starbird and Miss Susan Elizabeth Plaisted, voluntarily resigned an honored family name, that she might honorably perpetuate another, by becoming the loving and beloved wife of the compiler, who hopes this work may ever be a lasting monument to thee.

Portland, Me., July 15, 1904."

Mr. King set the type and printed these books with his own hands. They are rare literary efforts, and were the product of his heart, his head and his hands.

The compilation of the names changed by the Legislatures of Maine, from 1820 to 1895, was his work, and through his influence the State published the names of nearly one thousand soldiers of the Revolution preserved in the Land Office papers. The volumes 12 and 13 of the York Deeds were published under his direction. He compiled the town vital records of Gorham, Maine, to 1800, and also the records of the First Parish Society of Portland. He made several valuable scrapbooks for the Maine Genealogical Society's library, that exhibit much patient and unselfish labor and interest. But for him they would probably have never been made. He had in preparation the history of his own and that of the Shaw family.

Marquis F. King carried through to completion the erection of a monument at the grave of his life-long friend, Hon. Josiah H. Drummond. It was a notable undertaking done by small contributions from the many friends, and was a great tribute to a kindly and honored life. His eulogy at the dedication of the monument was one of his best efforts.

This was not all that Mr. King did, but it was a great work for one to do in addition to the necessary responsibilities of life. None knew the value better than himself, and that was his compensation. He knew it from personal experience. Such work is above all meanness and is an inspiration to others. It will be his most lasting monument. When stone monuments have crumbled, his books will be read by those seeking such knowledge.

Marquis Fayette King was a representative man; a substantial citizen without pretence, who was interested in all organizations that were for the benefit of his fellow man. The value of his life has not been over-estimated. It was a success, and the world is better for his living.

"We mourn no blighted hope nor broken plan
With him whose life stands rounded and approved
In the full growth and stature of a man."

