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# EBY FAMILY NEWS

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Issue16

January 2003

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## Our History: Ebey's Landing

**E**bey Landing is located in the town of Coupeville, Washington on Whidbey Island. Whidbey Island was named by explorer Captain George Vancouver in honor of his subordinate, Joseph Whidbey, who explored the island in a ship's launch in 1792. Vancouver's well-publicized exploration of Puget Sound helped prepare the way for settlers to the area. A more important inducement was the Donation Land Law of 1850, which offered free land in Oregon Territory to any citizen who would homestead the land for four years. Newcomers flocked to the fertile prairies of Central Whidbey, and, within three short years, had carved out irregularly-shaped claims that followed the lay of the best land. Today this early settlement pattern can still be seen by the fence lines, roads, and ridges of the Reserve.

Colonel Isaac Neff Ebey was among the first of the permanent settlers to the island. Upon the advice of his friend Samuel Crockett, Ebey came west from his home in Missouri in search of land. Both men had filed donation claims on Central Whidbey by the spring of 1851. Ebey wrote home, enthusiastically urging his family to join him.

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J. Eby Hershey shows and tells our extended family about the Eby-Hammer Creek Cemetery. A tour of the this cemetery was included as part of the 2002 Eby Family Reunion.

## 2002 Family Reunion

We held our breath this year as Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> dawned and got our wish for no rain and a lovely day for the 2002 Eby Family Reunion. Just over 80 people came together, traveling from 13 states and Canada to get to know each, trade history and just plain relish their Eby family heritage.

Most brought food to share. (The desert table was weighted with some incredibly yummy treats.) And our lunch was coordinated by Margaret Eby with her usual grace and efficiency.

Over dessert, we got down to business, reviewing association finances and activities. This year, Zona Navelle of New York won the prize for oldest attendee, Nicki Eby from Michigan was declared the youngest and Suzanne Eby Reeble won for coming the furthest (Oklahoma).

### Call for Participants

Those interested in contributing time and talents to the success of the Eby Family Association and/or the Eby Family Reunion are asked to call Christian Eaby at (717) 656-2626



*The Jacob Ebey house (1855) and blockhouse (1856) on the ridge overlooking the prairie that bears his name.*

*My dear brother—*

*I scarcely know how I shall write or what I shall write . . . the great desire of heart is to get my own and father's family to this country. I think it would be a great move. I have always thought so . . . To the north down along Admiralty Inlet . . . the cultivating land is generally found confined to the valleys of streams with the exception of Whidbey's Island . . . which is almost a paradise of nature. Good land for cultivation is abundant on this island.*

*I have taken a claim on it and am now living on the same in order to avail myself of the provisions of the Donation Law. If Rebecca, the children, and you all were here, I think I could live and die here content.*

Colonel Isaac Ebey's letter  
to his brother, W.S. Ebey,  
Olympia, Oregon  
April 25, 1851

Ebey's family soon emigrated to the island. The simple home of Isaac's father Jacob, and a blockhouse he erected to defend his claim against Indians, still stand today overlooking the prairie that bears the family name. (Shown above.) Ebey worked at farming, as a customs official, as a lawyer, and served on the Territorial legislature. Rebecca, his wife, died at the age of 30 (probably of tuberculosis) and Ebey's second wife was Emily Sconce.

In the Oregon Territorial Legislature, Ebey was a vocal advocate of a separate Washington Territory and in 1852 sponsored the statute naming King County. On August 11, 1857, Isaac Ebey was killed and beheaded by Indians from British Columbia or Alaska (probably not Haida, as inscribed on the historical marker at Ebey's Landing on

## Ancient History of the Aebi Family

"The Ebys belong to the Celts, an ancient race of people of Asiatic origin, who formerly inhabited southern, central and western Europe. During the early ages they lived in the northern part of Italy, where they were brought from heathendom to the worshipping of the true and living God through the labors of the Vaudois (Waldenses), with whom they came in contact at a very early date. They soon became strict adherents of the Vaudois faith. While the Church of Rome was gaining power and extending her influence over western and northern Europe, these Vaudois were for some time left unmolested. . . . In order to gain full sway over civilized Europe, the Church of Rome adopted means where by these Vaudois were to be either subdued or expelled from their homes. . . . The ministry, known as the Inquisitors, were first sent out to bring these people over from their faith to that of the Roman Catholic. This was as early as 1308. The Vaudois were most bitterly persecuted by their enemies, for not renouncing their primitive faith. History tells us that in 1487 Innocent XIII fulminated against these Vaudois a Bill of Extermination. In 1560 the persecutions became so fierce, that quite a number fled from their homes and were to the northern parts of Switzerland, where they led a wandering life for some time. They finally settled in Cantons Bern, Luzerne, Zurich and Schwyz. Among those Vaudois who thus settled in these Cantons we find the name Eby, then spelled EBEE. here they led a God-fearing life, and were rigid in the keeping of their primitive faith and forms of worship.

During the Reformation they were subjected to the same persecutions as other Protestants in northern Europe. After the founding of the Mennonite Church in AD 1537 by one of the early Reformers named Menno Simon, a native of Holland, these Swiss Vaudois, or Swiss Protestants, as they were then called, united with the Menno Simon party, now known as Mennonites. Among the parties who thus joined the Mennonites we find the names of Herr, Graaf, Mylin, Shank, Witmer, Landis, Eby and others...

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### Share Your Stories

Newsletter contributions of ancestor questions, obituaries, interesting facts and stories are gratefully accepted. To submit your, please contact Lynne Hagan:

Phone: (201) 568-8438

Email: [hagnil@aol.com](mailto:hagnil@aol.com)

Mail: 138 Sunset Lane; Tenafly, NJ 07670

## Eby Family Association

Eby Family News is produced by and for members of the Eby Family Association. The Association is open to descendants of Theodorus Eby (Durst Aebi) and anyone else interested in Eby Family history.

## Eby Family Association Address

P.O. Box 292; New Holland, PA 17557

## Internet Sites:

<http://www.ebyfamily.org>

<http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/q/u/a/B-D-Quasi>

<http://www.ristenbatt.com/genealogy/ebyplot.htm>

<http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/p/o/p/Michele-Popovich>

## Association Officers:

President: Christian Eaby, (717) 656-2626  
Secretary: Vacant  
Treasurer: Marty Hollinger, (717) 653-8150  
Vice President: Roy Z. Eby, (717) 768-7271  
Graveyard Committee: George Eaby, (717) 394-6758  
Reunion Committee: Margaret Eby, (717) 768-7271  
Special Projects: J. Eby Hershey, (717) 768-3317  
Abee Family Contact: Bill Abee, (704) 874-3598

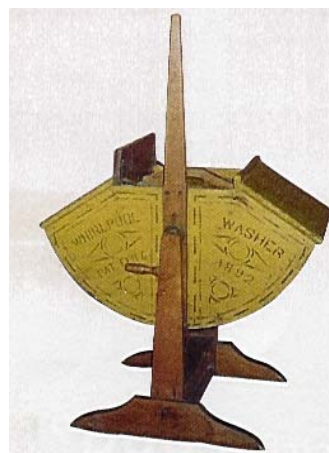
## Family Research

We are, unfortunately, unable to do genealogical or family research. Those looking for family links and research are urged to visit one of the Web sites listed above. In addition, we will be glad to post your research questions, on a first come, first serve basis in the "Searching for

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## Ancient History (continued)

“...As early as 1683 we find in some old records that Jacob Eby was ordained a Bishop of the Mennonite Church in Canton Zurich. The State party again getting the ruling power into their hands, laid the Mennonites open to persecution, and not wishing to resist the authority of State, a number of these Mennonite left Switzerland and went to the "Plantinate" or Pfaltz, an old German division, now discarded on maps. The chief towns in which they settled were Manheim, Zweibruecken and Heidelberg. Here they resided for but a few year, when they were again troubled by the enemies for not conforming to the laws and church of the



## Tidbits

**Wait: Before you read about this antique oddity, take a guess at what it is...**

A snippet in *Country Living Magazine* sent by Joan Abbey Krause reveals that this lovely antique is a wooden washer patented in February 6, 1892 and made and sold by Reinhart & Eby of Berlin, Ontario, Canada (now Kitchener). "It has a removable lid and a tall wooden handle that allows it to be rocked back and forth on its base. There are drainage holes inside the washer bin, which is divided into sections, and the underside is metal," states the owner, "D.H." of Toronto.

## Eby House Prints available for Reunion Awards

Those of you who've attended recent Eby Family Reunions may remember the beautiful prints of The Eby House given to the oldest and youngest attendees as well as the family member who travels the furthest. During our last reunion, Christian Eby, the Eby Family Association president, regretfully told us that the last of the prints had been awarded.

Fortunately, he's been able to find more via the Essick Gallery of Welcome, North Carolina. So the good news is that we will be able to continue the tradition of awarding these lovely prints as prizes. If interested, you can see an online copy of the print at the Eby Family Association Web site at <http://www.ebyfamily.org>.

State. The laws of the State were not so much violated by these parties, only they would not take up arms, nor would they speak in favour of war, but took a decided stand against all manner of war, hence their frequent abuses by the State parties.

When William Penn, by his agents, offered free homes to person of all religious denominations, quite a number of the Mennonites from Switzerland, Pfaltz and Holland moved to America and settled in Pennsylvania." - THE HISTORY OF THE EBY FAMILY - EZRA E. Eby, 1889

## Searching for Roots:

TBD (waiting to see if Dawn knows of any queries that can be included here.)

## Calendar of Events:

**Special Event:** Eby Family Reunion Dinner  
**Place:** TBD  
**Time:** TBD  
**Information:** Margaret Eby: (717) 768-3317

**Special Event:** 2003 Eby Family Reunion  
**Place:** Overly's Grove, New Holland, PA  
**Time:** Sat., May 24, 2003, 10:30 am–3:30 pm

Good food & good company will abound. Our reunion will include a review of the Eby Family Association business, a potluck lunch and a bus tour of local points of interest to Eby descendants. (Contributions very welcome).

**For more information and dinner reservations, please contact Margaret Eby at (717) 768-3317.**

**Special Event:** Noah/Jonas Eby Family Reunion  
**Place:** Garner Creek Retreat Center;  
Dickson, TN  
**Time:** July 3-6, 2003  
**Information:** Evelyn (Eby) Duncan: (352) 797-9330  
Or Frank Eby (813) 936-8183

Eby Family Association  
P.O. Box 292  
New Holland, PA 17557

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