

# Six



## LUKE SYPHUS & CHRISTIANA LONG

### **The Life of My Grandmother**

*By June Syphus*

*This history was told by Christiana Long Syphus to her granddaughter, June Syphus. It was written by June when she was attending Moapa Valley High School in Overton, Nevada. June won an honorable mention for her essay of her grandmother. The awards were listed in a newspaper article dated June 11, 1929.*

This is the life of Christiana Syphus, a pioneer of Southern Nevada. It seems too bad that so many of our old pioneers die and leave behind them such wonderful lives, yet no one knows enough to tell them as they should be told. Thousands of stories are written every year for the entertainment of people. Nine tenths of these are not true, yet our parents and grandparents have had so many thrilling experiences happen to them in their day, and they pass away without their history being recorded.

My grandmother used to tell me little incidents of her life and they thrilled me so much that I had her repeat them to me many times. One night while some of her grandchildren (including myself) were

sitting around the fireplace, I asked her to tell us the story of her life. She seemed glad to do so, and also happy to think that we were interested enough in her to want to hear her stories. We all sat very quiet, so eager to hear her begin that we could hardly wait. I will now try to tell Christiana Long Syphus' story as she told it:

I did not have the privilege of having a mother's care, for my mother died when I was so young that I can hardly remember her. When but a child of six, I was adopted into a fine old family by the name of Kings. They were living in the city of London, which was my birthplace, although I had spent several years before my mother died, in Toronto, Canada.

I lived with these people until early womanhood when I chanced to hear some Latter-day Saint Missionaries preaching the gospel. Not long afterward I joined their church and became actively engaged in the work. While helping with these activities, I chanced to meet Luke Syphus. With him, began my first romance. He, too, joined this church although the people are more commonly called, "Mormons". When I was

nearly nineteen years of age we were married.

One year later, we, with a few other people, set sail for Australia. Our ships were not built as they are today, and all during our journey we had the constant fear of not knowing whether we would arrive safely at our destination or not.

While on this voyage, which lasted six months, my first child, a son, was born. He lived only a few days and was buried in the sea just off the coast of Africa.

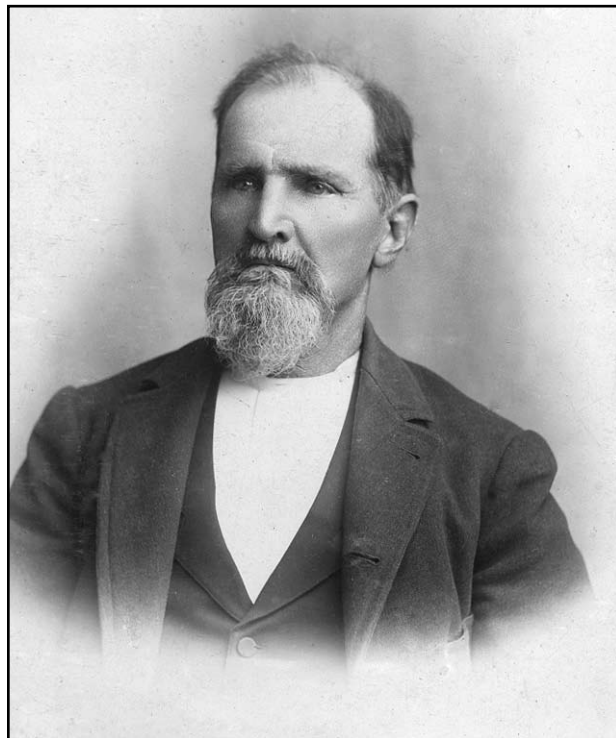
Our vessel caught fire several times, and it was with great effort that the ship and its passengers were saved. Several times before we reached Australia our food was reduced to sea biscuits alone. At one time, our water supply became exhausted, and had it not been for a passing ship, which re-supplied us, we probably would have died from thirst.

Among the passengers on this ship was a young couple by the name of Ridges. Acquaintance and deep friendship sprang up between us, and for three years we lived and worked together in the wilds of Australia. We were engaged in the lumber business during the time of the gold rush there. Here I spent some of the happiest days of my life, for we prospered greatly, besides accumulating the necessary means to carry us on to America.

We landed in Welmington, which is now San Pedro, California, in August. Three days later, in a hastily improvised shack, built from the fragments of a wrecked vessel, my second son was born. When I was again able to travel, we went to what is now San Bernardino.

After two years, we were called into Southern Utah to settle that country. We left our home, land and nearly all of our belongings, except just the bare necessities of life for we could not overload our wagons.

During this journey some very thrilling but almost disastrous things happened. We were camped just above Moapa Valley close to where Glendale is now located. During the night, I was awakened by a noise, and I heard whispered words like someone creeping around our wagon. My husband awoke about that time and together we investigated. We found several Indians in the act of stealing our eldest daughter. How thankful we were that she was saved, for Indians at that time would steal children and keep them until big rewards were offered for their return.



**Luke Syphus**

The next day we traveled on, and as we were dragging our weary way slowly along the sands of the Virgin Valley, passing through sort of a glade surrounded by trees and brush, we were suddenly startled by a young Indian jumping from the willows and delivering a hurried speech in Piute in which was occasionally used the words "Sipus", "Sipus". Then from the surrounding brush appeared a whole band of Indians with drawn bows and guns ready for discharge which they withheld only by the command of their chief, when

the first appearing warrior commanded supplies for his band. Explanations proved it to have been the intent of these Indians to massacre the company, which no doubt would have happened, had not the first appearing Indian, at an earlier date visited San Bernardino where my husband had treated him with much kindness, and a strong friendship had grown up between them. This Indian upon recognizing him in the company had counseled with the chief and as a result the intended massacre was prevented.

This taught me one lesson which I have ever since remembered. If you once form friendship with an Indian he never forgets it and is ready when an opportunity comes to repay you for your kindness.

After a brief sojourn in Cedar City (Utah), we started the settlement of Santa Clara. When leaving this place, we lost practically all of our earthly possessions on account of a great flood.

Going from there to Clover Valley, now a railroad station on the California and Utah line called Barkley, we spent three years in the settlement of this place.

About fifteen or twenty families moved into Clover Valley at this time. We quickly saw the need of cooperation, together with hard work in order to protect ourselves from the savage-like Indians who raided that part of the country.

We built a fort with all the houses joined together except in several places that were used for openings. About one hundred and fifty yards from this fort a corral was built where all the horses and cattle were kept. The men in turn would guard this corral at nights. They always carried their guns with them while working in the fields. If it was necessary for the men to do this, you probably can imagine the danger that women and children were in, and the constant fear they had that their lives may be taken at any time. It was useless in even trying to keep Indians out of our houses,

because of the crude way in which they were built.

An especially dreaded Indian was Bushhead, the chief of a tribe about two miles from the fort. He would come to the houses during the day while the men were in the fields and threaten to kill our children if we didn't give him anything that he so desired.

At one time he came to my house while I was alone with the small children. He walked over to the crib where my baby was lying. In one hand, he took hold of the baby's hair and in the other he held a knife, threatening to scalp the child if I didn't give him "shetcup" which meant grub. I realized how absolutely helpless I was in trying to save the baby. While it seemed like hours were passing by and nothing being done, I suddenly seized a chair and with one hard blow Bushhead went to the floor. The knock stunned him and for a minute he could not move. I was trying to decide what next to do when my husband came in. It seemed to save my life for help never had looked so far away as it had a few minutes before.

During the fall of one year while my husband was away, I constructed a burrough through the tall standing grain, at the end of which was a large space covered with interwoven grain. The children worked hard to help me with this for they were always frightened of the Indians and as young as they were seemed to realize the danger we were in. I instructed them that in case of attack during the night, they were silently to creep through this burrough while I should make the best defense possible of the home. This we had to do every night during the absence of my husband.

One day, about noon, Bushhead again appeared in the doorway. I could see at once that he carried no weapons. No doubt he seemed to think that the scare he had given me before was sufficient and that I would give in to him and hand out anything he should ask for. At once, every ounce of determination I owned seemed to

be ready to assist me. This kind of work had been going on long enough, and I was determined it should cease. Grabbing the first implement of defense in my reach, which was a butcher knife, I rushed at him. For a minute he stood there seeming to think that my intentions were only false, but he quickly changed his mind for I kept after him until he was clear out of the fort, and I'm telling you he found out that I was in earnest before he had gone many paces.

So many dreadful things had been happening and conditions were getting worse instead of better, so that something had to be done--and done quick. That night all the men got together and made their decision.

Early the next morning they took all their weapons of warfare and marched up to the Indian camp. Of course, the chief and all his followers were taken by surprise. They could do nothing but surrender. The men lined all the Indians up with Bushhead taking the lead and marched them into the fort and down into the dooryard of my home. Then all the Indians were placed in a circle and in the center, Bushhead, their chieftain, was hanged. Men were guarding them so they could do nothing but watch the hanging. They were then given a fair chance and told that if they would stop stealing from us, and be friends, they could

live in peace; otherwise the same thing would befall them as had done their chief. They promised to be friends but evidently forgot all promises for not long afterward the same things were happening again.

We became discouraged. All our time we spent in planning a way to protect ourselves. Our children were not given the proper care they needed. We felt that they were being neglected and that it was our duty to care for them properly. The only way to solve this problem was to move from Clover Valley. Once more we left our homes and lands and saw all of our work for the past three years being left behind for those to enjoy who drove us from it.

We hoped to find peace in Panaca, and to build a home in which we could really live and enjoy ourselves. Here my time was devoted to my children and associates, and even though a great part of my life has been hard to bear because of discouragements and general hard times, there has been lots of pleasure. I have reared a large family of whom I am very proud, so that seems to make up for all other things.

**Typed Copy of Marriage Certificate of Luke Syphus and Christiana Long**

Luke Syphus and Christiana Long were married on the 25 Dec (Christmas Day)

*Copy of Original Marriage Certificate of Luke Syphus and Christiana Long*

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1851 MARRIAGE solemnized at ST. PANCRAS CHURCH, in the Parish of ST. PANCRAS, in the County of Middlesex.

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
102	25	Luke Syphus	24	Single	Bookbinder	St. Pancras	Matthew Syphus	Bookbinder
		Christiana Long	21	Single	Housewife	St. Pancras	John Long	Housewife

MARRIED in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by me, *J. H. H. H. H.*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Luke Syphus* and *Christiana Long* in the Presence of us, *John Long* and *Lewis Syphus*

The above Extract from the Register of Marriages was made this *25<sup>th</sup>* Day of *December* 1851

*J. H. H. H. H.* Curate

Church is open all days from eleven till twelve o'clock. Marriages and Christenings daily, at Quarter Past Ten.

1851 at St. Pancras in the Parish of St. Pancras in the County of Middlesex, England according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the established Church, or Episcopal Church, in the presence of John Long, and Sarah Wildman (a friend), witnesses, after Banns being called the usual number of weeks by the Curate F. I. Hainforth.

**Typed Copy of Death Certificate of Luke Syphus, Jr. who died shortly after his birth on the Ship Java.**

Luke Syphus was buried the 29th of March 1853 in 45 degrees 6 ' South Latitude and 61 degrees 2 ' East Longitude. From on board the ship Java.

Captain G.H. Christiansen

**The True Story of the Sailing Vessel Java**

*By Lovina Syphus Whitney, Daughter of Luke and Lovina Syphus*

*The following story came from the lips of Lovina Syphus Whitney. This story was typed by Waldo Perkins. He has placed brackets around statements that are not historically correct.*

**T**he sailing vessel Java, left England early in the year of 1853 with my parents, your grandparents, on board. Their names were Luke Syphus and Christiana Long Syphus. There were altogether about five-hundred people on that vessel.

This ship carried water and provisions for three months, but due to reverse winds they were six-months this particular trip. These reverse winds would drive them backwards sometimes for days at a time; so that the three months trip was drawn out to a six-month one.

They had been on this vessel three months when my oldest brother was born. This was the 3rd of March 1853 in Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, Africa. My mother because of lack of food and care could not give the baby the proper attention and care;

therefore he died on March 29, 1853. He was buried beneath the ocean waves.

All the people on board the vessel suffered terribly for want of food and water. Many died before they reached Australia, which was their destination. They were put on small rations amounting to two tablespoons of water a day and what was called sea biscuits. These were so hard they had to be chopped with an axe; not only were they hard but were full of big worms, but the people ate them because they were so hungry.

Not only were they troubled with reverse winds, but the vessel sprang a leak and it was thought for some time that they would have to abandon ship and take to lifeboats. The Captain ordered the boats lowered and all the women and children were told to get in.

While the Captain was below deck getting the men to pump the water out and organizing a bucket brigade for bailing water out, my father took the Captain's place and ordered all to stay on the ship and not get in the boats. He told them they would be all right as soon as the water was pumped out and the leak fixed.

When the Captain came back on deck and learned what my father had done he was somewhat angry and told him that he could have him put in jail for what he had done.

It was at this time that so many rich gold mines had been discovered in Australia, causing a great demand for lumber and all kinds of building material; so my father decided to saw lumber as it was bringing a very good price.

I wish you could have seen how they sawed lumber at that time. First they had to dig a deep pit or cellar about six feet deep, sixteen feet long and four or five feet wide. The log they were going to saw into lumber they would mark with straight black lines where it was to be sawed; then

one man would get down in the pit and the other stand on the log at the top. The man on the bottom would pull the great saw down and the one at the top would draw it up. In this way, the lumber was sawed for the buildings. This happened before I was born, but I saw my father saw lumber this way many years later when we lived in Panaca, Nevada.

My parents were Latter-day Saints or Mormons commonly called; so after they went to Australia their home soon became headquarters for the Latter-day Saint Elders and Apostles [no apostles came to Australia between 1854-1856 when the Syphuses were in Australia] that were laboring in Australia at this time. In 1854, August 31st this grandmother of yours saw the light of day. August there comes in the cool part of the year.

**Letter dated July 24, 1857, to Christiana Long Syphus from her brother Levi Long in England**

92 Grove Street  
Camden Town  
July 24th 1857 London

My Dear Brother and Sister

It is with a heart profoundly penetrated with grief that I address this letter to you. The contents of which are fraught with tidings of the bitterest sorrow and of most extreme grief inasmuch as they announce the death of our poor father. Yes death that grim and unrelenting tyrant that Universal Conqueror hath laid his irresistible and iron grasp upon him. He died on the 23rd of February 1857, in the University College Hospital, of brain paralysis. The first symptoms of the malady began to manifest themselves in the May of 1856 as him and me was walking down in the City looking for work. His speech was suddenly affected so that he could not articulate his words, neither could he remember what he was about to utter but wandered into something else and from that to something else to utter confusion. At the same time

he felt oppressed and with a very faint and languid feeling. So much so that his limbs almost refused to bear him.

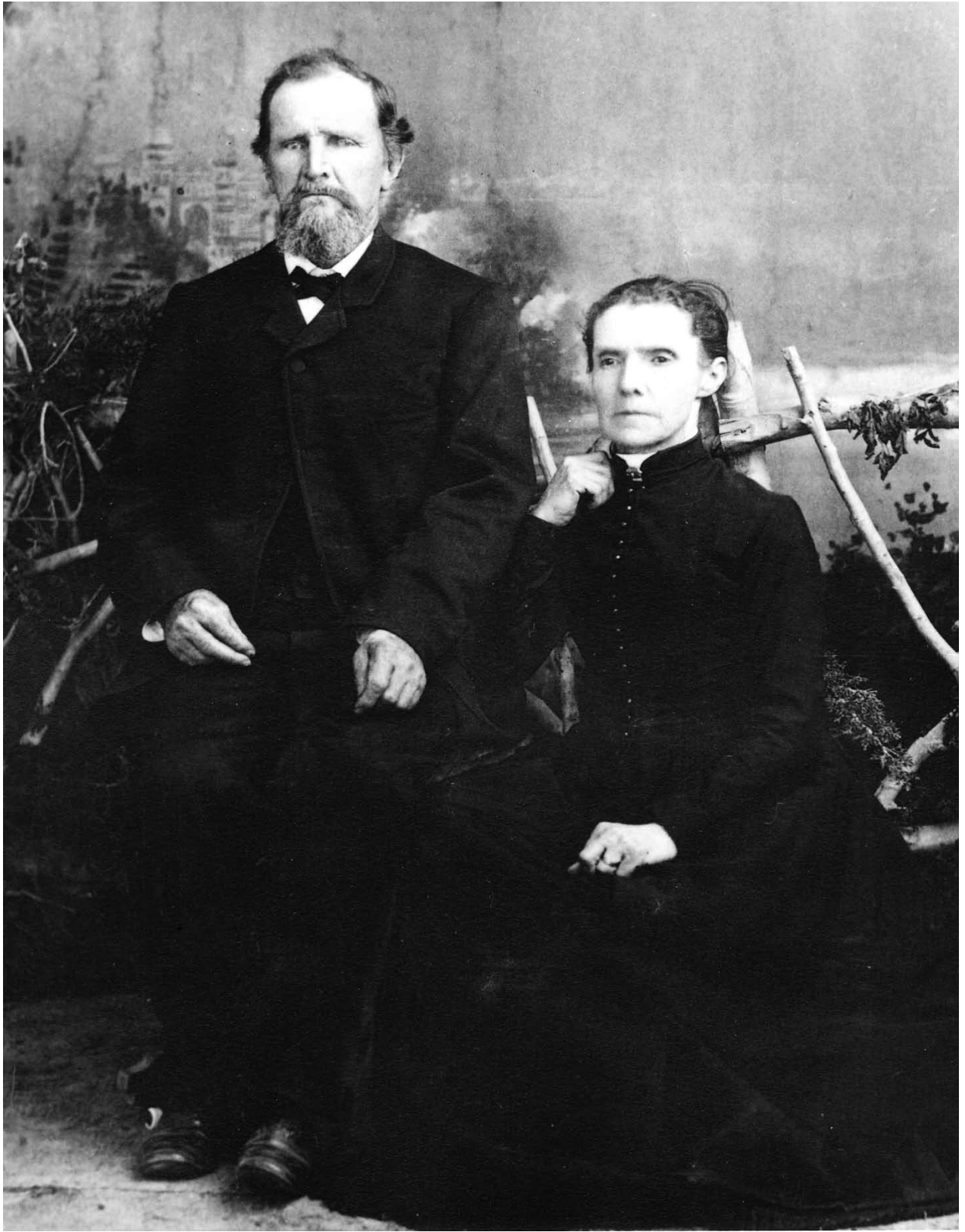
After getting home and resting a day or two his speech was perfectly restored and he felt comparatively well. Still that resolute energy had left him and he felt low spirited and weak at times. Still we worked on and on together where ever we could get a job till at length, after a few months he was attacked with a similar but much more powerful stroke which affected his sight and speech and limbs to a considerable degree and gave rather a curious expression to his features.

After a few days he showed signs of recovery. But what he wanted and what he had wanted from the first attack was plenty of nourishing food, rest and a change of air all of which alas his low and indigent circumstances denied him and what indescribable pain it gave Amelia and Myself to think that we was not in a position to give him what he required. But what we could do we did do and that is the only consolation left us.

Recovering from his second attack, we worked together and put out seven houses. It was in Midsummer, under the scorching rays of a July sun which must sorely have effected his poor brain but there was no alternative. His circumstances goaded him on. O with what feelings of deep grief did I witness his untiring efforts to keep himself up and to earn a few shillings and how this did add to my grief to know that I could not help him.

After finishing the job and as time wore away all down the Autumn father had nothing to do. He was at home some times a little better and then worse and not having enough nourishing food till about the latter end of November 1856 he had a little job home. On it was two pair of Villas at Hollowery (?) and the best he ever done.

After working a week or so, he began to get very weak and to feel a dreadful



*Luke Syphus and Christiana Long*

sensation of sickness and giddiness so that he was absolutely obliged to go home. Every object in his vision appeared double or treble and he reeled and staggered from one side of the road to the other as if drunk. I perfectly well remember the best piece that ever we put together. After being at home two or three weeks he went into Kings College hospital for he could not afford medical advice and treatment at home. Neither was that what he wanted. What he wanted as I once observed was plenty of good living and rest. After being in the hospital a fortnight and be subjected to a great many examinations, the medical men could not tell what was the matter with him.

Coming out of there he went into the University College Hospital where he was sounded and examined by very skillful men who soon found out the nature of his malady and treated him accordingly. He

was cupped three times at the back of the neck and afterwards the back of his head was shaved and blistered, which so affected him that he lay in a state of utter prostration and unconsciousness with little or no pain he lay in this way six days. Being in the hospital but nine days before he died.

The first four days he could just barely whisper and would move his hand toward us in order that we might press it. He would open his eyes for about a minute at a time and look at us with such an indefinable expression of tenderness and love and then doze off again for hours, as if in a state of stupor.

On the Sunday, the 22nd we gave up all hopes and on the 23rd we could see that the period of dissolution drew near. He died upwards and the last few hours he labored and his breast heaved with mighty convulsions. A little while and the last low

***Syphus Family - First Row: Chrissie Syphus Riding, Ellen Syphus Gentry, Luke Syphus (Father), Christiana (Mother), Lovina Syphus Whitney, Alfred Luke Syphus Sr. Back Row: Levi Syphus, Mary Syphus Bunker, Edward Henry Syphus, Clara Syphus, George Syphus***



gurgling sound is heard and all is over---he is dead.

His chest was opened and his lungs and heart were perfectly sound and healthy. It all lay in his brain. We gave him a highly respectable funeral. He lays in the Cemetery at Fincheley, a little on the other side of Highgate. We laid him in a very sequestered spot, down in a gentle valley near to a little grove or copse and I hope his immortal soul is at rest. Thus I have shown you the end of a brave and valiant man. I could not possibly give a better account of his illness and untimely death

Poor uncle Solomon died just a fortnight after him of diseased lungs and kidneys and was buried at Hanwell. He died on the 9 Mar 1857. Uncle William died in 1854 of Cholera and Caleb's brother Henery Long died on his voyage home from the Indias and poor Bulben the sawyer has lately died in Cuba of brain fever.

Of the state of trade in this Country I shall simply say that it has never revived since the war broke out and that there is nothing whatsoever doing in this pool. Of ourselves I can also say that we were never in such low circumstances since we have been married before as we are at the present time. I hope you will answer this directly as I am firmly resolved to go to Australia as soon as I can get a few things together to go with.

I am very glad to hear that you are in good health both of you and also that you have a way of obtaining a good living. All Mrs. Reynold's family are alive and well. Caleb Long was married to Fanny's sister, on the 9th of December 1856 and that was the last bit of enjoyment that ever poor father had at their wedding. He spent his last Christmas down at John Newmans. John and Amelia are quite well as also Fanny and Myself, and we all individually and collectively send our kind love to you and your family.

I remain with the sincerest gratitude and highest respect yours eternally,

Levi Long

### **Life Story of Luke Syphus and Christiana Long**

*This is the story of my great grandparents written for my mother, Lovina Ellen Whitney Perkins, granddaughter of the above. (We are appreciative of this unknown writer for this story.) Also, some additional material has been found and inserted in this story in brackets.*

There, in or near London, was a girl in her teens and a young man. The young lady had accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, but the young man had not. The story here is how she (Christiana Long Syphus) told it in the sunset of her life with her own lips.... She said, "You know when I first heard the Elders, we went to their meetings together and their messages all seemed so true and it found a response in my heart and I tried to show him, but he would not listen, but I knew it was true. I could not marry him because he could not accept the Gospel. I finally told him so and he felt sorry and so did I, but I wanted my children taught this Gospel. Thus he and I parted, but there was another young man by the name of Luke Syphus. He was a good young man; he joined the Church. We married and I have never been sorry."

They were never sorry and their faith was never shaken. They bore the hardships and suffering and privations with all the rest of our forefathers who settled this intermountain land. Many of them left homes of luxury and came for the love of truth.

Luke Syphus, son of Matthew and Mary Long Syphus, was born 23rd of January 1827 at Leafield, Oxfordshire, England. He married Christiana Long, the 25th of December 1851 at St. Pancras Church in Middlesex County, England.

Christiana Long, daughter of John Long and Martha Hignall, was born the 10th of January 1832, at Standlake, Oxfordshire, England. Christiana's mother died when she was eight years old. Later her father remarried and, although the stepmother was kind and good to the children, Christiana wanted to be independent. She wanted to earn her own living; so, she went to London to find employment.

Though Christiana was not born of the gentry, she always conducted herself in a most well-bred, lady-like manner. This quality enabled her to find employment in a "gentleman's family", caring for his children. However, she did not like the lady for whom she worked because she expected Christiana to do so many other things besides taking care of the children. She decided to leave and because she had always been such a lady-like girl, they were forced to give her a good letter of recommendation.

Her next job was with a family by the name of King. Here she stayed, seemingly very happy for five years, or until they left to sail for America. The Kings wanted Christiana to go to America with them, but for some unknown reason, she stayed behind.

Who can tell where the kind hand of providence takes charge of our lives for a purpose? It was not long after the Kings left, that she heard the Gospel of the Latter-Day Saints. When she heard this new religion, she began attending meetings and investigating. The more she studied and heard, the more she was convinced that she had found the truth.

Where Luke and Christiana lived in England we do not know (Their marriage licence states they lived on Lewis Street in Camden Town—north part of London.), nor what occupation Luke followed; but we do know that later he was a good stone mason and was skilled at whip-sawing lumber. He was able to make good use of these skills later in his life.

About a year after their marriage Luke and Christiana set sail for Australia, 21, November 1852, in the sailing vessel Java. This vessel had about five hundred people aboard and carried water and provisions for three months. Before sailing, Luke was given a blessing by the presiding church officials in England that he would suffer a great loss on the voyage, and that he would be the means of saving the ship. This prophecy was literally fulfilled.

It is on this voyage that we begin to get a picture of the character and personality of Luke Syphus. Many adverse conditions prevailed, among them reverse winds that sometimes drove the ship back for several days. So instead of a three-month voyage, it lengthened into five months. All the people on the vessel suffered terribly from lack of food and water; many died and were buried at sea before Australia was reached. The passengers were put on rations that amounted to two tablespoons of water per day and sea biscuits. These sea biscuits were not only so hard they had to be cut with an ax, but they were also filled with big worms - they were eaten anyway because those on board were so hungry.

When the ship was three months out, Christiana gave birth to her first son, Luke, on the 3rd. of March 1853. He was born while the ship was in Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, Africa. Due to conditions on board ship, she could not give her baby proper nourishment and care, so he died on March 29, 1853, twenty-six days after birth, and was buried at sea.

The reverse winds were not the only troubles that beset the Java. She sprang a leak and for some time the captain considered abandoning ship. In fact, he had ordered the boats lowered with all the women and children loaded in them.

Here is where Luke showed his faith and inspiration. While the captain was below seeing about repairs and pumping operations and organizing a bucket brigade to bail water, Luke preempted the captain's

place and ordered all passengers to stay aboard and away from the boats. In a calm, authoritative voice, he told them that the leak would be repaired and the water pumped out, and the ship would continue safely on its way. They were assured by his calm manner and none left the ship.

However, when the captain came on deck he was very angry and threatened to put Luke in the brig for his actions. But Luke did not back down on the wisdom of his order, and the captain realized that he had been spared additional troubles, forgot the insubordination and the incident was closed.

After five months of buffeting by the elements, passengers almost starved, with many sick on board, the Java reached Australia. (24, April 1853) This was just at the time when so many rich gold mines were being discovered in that country. Consequently, there was a great demand for lumber and all kinds of building material. Luke was quick to see the possibilities in

this activity and immediately prepared to saw lumber. Well-sawed lumber brought a very good price, as it should.

At that time, lumber sawed by hand and under great difficulties was whip-sawed in the following manner: First a deep cellar-like pit was dug. The log to be sawed was marked with straight black lines the size of the boards determining the number of lines per log. The helper would stand on the log, the two of them drawing the great saw up and down the length of it. A most arduous way to get lumber! Surely Luke earned the good wages he got for his efforts!

Since Luke and Christiana were Latter-day Saints, the home they established in Australia became headquarters for the L.D.S. Elders and Apostles who came there to proselyte the natives. In Australia, the cool time of the year comes in the summer months. This was fortunate for Christiana for on August 31, 1854 she gave birth to her second child, a lovely daughter, later named Lovina. At the time of her birth,

*Clara Syphus, Luke Syphus - Home in Panaca before 1915*



Luke and Christiana were living in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

Luke worked hard, and with the help of his good wife, was able to save enough money for passage to America. Always in their hearts from the time they first joined the Church, had been the desire to go to Zion. When the time came to sail, Lovina was not quite two years old, but already she was a beautiful child, taking after her mother in looks.

Christiana was a small, dainty woman with fine features, beautiful black wavy hair, laughing brown eyes that were shadowed with provocatively long lashes, and a lovely mouth that curved easily into smiles. Her ankles were trim and neat, ending in the high arched instep of a true aristocrat. These attributes of beauty she passed on to her children to some degree, but her first-born daughter, Lovina, was a true prototype.

There is no record of the names of the people with who they associated and did business while in Australia except one—this was Joseph Ridges. He and Luke were associated in the lumber business and became fast friends; a tie that lasted throughout their lives. This same Joseph Ridges was later called to build the Salt Lake Tabernacle organ.

He tells about his conversion to Mormonism and his association with Luke in his personal history: *“In 1852, in company with a friend, I set sail for Australia, suffering from a bad attack of gold fever, and after five months we landed at Sydney. While on board ship I became acquainted with a gentleman whose name was Luke Syphus, and it subsequently transpired that Mr. Syphus was a Mormon; but at that time I could not have told what a Mormon was as the fame or otherwise of the Latter-day Saints had not then become so widely known at it is today. Upon landing at Sydney, I joined forces with this gentleman, and we went some four hundred miles up the rivers and creeks into the dense bush.*

*“Well, to cut the matter short, it was not long before I found out what a Mormon was, and I become one of them joyfully... an action I have never regretted, if it did have the effect of causing my brothers and relatives at home in England to cease corresponding with me.”* Brother Ridges had gone to Australia seeking gold, but through his association with Luke he found the more precious gold - the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

On the 23 of May 1856, Luke and Christiana and little Lovina set sail on the ship *Jenoveve* (or *Jenny Flora*) for America. They sailed with a large company composed mostly of L.D.S. This too was a hazardous passage as the ship caught fire three times while on the three months' voyage across the Pacific.

They landed at San Pedro Harbor, California early in August (15 August 1856). Most of the Saints moved inland to San Bernardino where an L.D.S. colony was already established. However, the Syphuses and a few close friends stayed behind at San Pedro because Christiana was expecting her third child momentarily. Luke quickly gathered driftwood and ship wreckage to make a shelter. This was the first cabin on the beach, and some two weeks later the second white child was born there. This was Edward Henry Syphus, born August 22, 1856, a son to Luke and Christiana.

When the mother and baby could travel, the little party also moved into San Bernardino 30 September 1856. Here Luke sawed lumber and made rails from the trees of the nearby mountains. With these he built a three-room house for his little family and fenced a fifteen-acre farm. The soil here was very good, and with the help of a young Indian, Luke cleared and planted his small farm.

Ever a kindly man, and one to help the needy, Luke took the hungry Indian boy in, gave him food, and paid him to help with the land. Over Christiana's protests, the Indian was allowed to sit at the table with the family for his meals. This was contrary

to prevalent custom, but Luke felt that if he worked in the field, he should be allowed to eat as his family ate. This Christian kindness later paid big dividends to the Syphuses and their friends.

The small farm yielded abundant crops in 1857. It looked as though the family larder would be running over with winter supplies, plus what could be grown the year round. Things began to look good for the Saints in San Bernardino. They had water, good soil, good climate, and were seemingly unmolested by persecutors. but their good fortune was short lived.

Far away in Southern Utah the Mountain Meadow Massacre had been perpetrated. Its affect on the members of the Church was far-reaching. In California, the Latter-day Saints were threatened with death if they did not get out. The leaders in Salt Lake called them to come to Utah for safety. They had to leave so quickly they had no time to sell anything; probably would not have found buyers anyway. They just walked away, leaving their homes and crops to anyone who chose to take them (3 Dec. 1857).

Leaving California certainly was a test of faith and proof of the sturdy character of these people. The wilderness road to Utah lay across three waterless deserts and through valleys infested with starving, hostile Indians. Every mile was fraught with danger, yet those sturdy people loaded their families and meager possessions into wagons and started across the trackless wastes. They were sure of three oases between San Bernardino and Utah, but they were not sure they would ever reach them. And reaching them, they were not sure they would leave alive because of the Indians lying in wait. These oases were Las Vegas, The Muddy, and Beaver Dam. Each had running water, shade, and a modicum of grass. Las Vegas was a clear spring that spouted up and ran out into the desert. The Muddy was a big creek, fed by warm springs that meandered down through a long narrow valley, all enclosed by tawny mesas. Beaver

Dam was a mountain-fed stream, bordered with trees and grass at intervals that had cut a wide gash in the earth for more than a hundred miles. Before, between, and after these three oases lay the desert, stark and jealous, reaching out hungry hands for the weak and unprepared.

The little party of fleeing Saints had safely negotiated the first third of their journey. They stopped at Las Vegas without incident, and were praying to do the same at the Muddy. But as they drove down the tortuous trail to the river ford, they came upon Indians...half-naked, hungry Indians. The wagons had made the crossing safely and were slowly following the trail across the upper valley...each driver kept a sharp look-out for Indians, for they knew the Piutes would do anything for food.

Suddenly Luke heard a noise to the rear of his outfit. Hastily looking over his shoulder into the dark depths of the wagon, he saw Lovina being lifted out of the back opening by two brown hands. With a shout, he stopped the team and leaped to the ground, running as he lit. He struck the Indian a blow that made him drop the child and sent him spinning. Lovina had been too frightened of the brown face to cry out, but in later years she said she was sure the Indian was only looking for food and had moved her, the better to look.

With this incident to spur them on, the little party moved toward Beaver Dam. Up they went, up the steep sandy slope of the mesa, over the ragged rim-rock, across the dreary miles on top, down over the rim-rock, and on across the slopes of shifting sand. Plop, plod, plop went the feet of the horses, and in the minds of the people a question: Would there be Indians at the Beaver Dam? There were—the whole tribe had assembled, ready to pounce on the wagon train. The Saints quickly prepared to defend themselves and in so doing, one member of the party was recognized. Luke Syphus... the young Indian that he had employed in San Bernardino and so kindly treated, knew his friend. He quickly

spoke to the chief... pleaded with him to spare the lives of those in this wagon train. Reluctantly the chief consented, provided the Saints would give them food. An agreement was made. Leaving most of their provisions behind, the train was allowed to proceed in safety.

And so the third oasis was left behind, and what lay ahead--none knew. When Utah was reached, the Syphuses reached Cedar City January 31, 1858. They stayed there about a year, but apparently were not satisfied, for they moved further south into Toquerville. They left November 15, 1858, arrived the 16th of November 1858. This was a small settlement of saints between Cedar City and St. George. The Syphus' did not stay long here either, but during their stay, a fourth child, a daughter, was born. On the 6th of March 1859, Martha Ellen Syphus joined the family.

The next place the family moved was to the settlement of Santa Clara, a small place that was being built up on a bend of the Santa Clara Creek; they arrived on December 11, 1859. Here they acquired land, built a home, and surrounded themselves with the usual accoutrements of farm life: pigs, chickens, cattle, farm equipment, and so on. The family was doing very well--was busy and happy, and well onto forgetting their previous hardships.

(They were sealed together on August 9-10, 1861 in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah.)

Here too, in this quiet time, Alfred Luke Syphus was born, December 22, 1861. When he was one week old, (Jan 1, 1862), disaster struck again. During the winter of this year there had been so much snow and rain that the beneficent Santa Clara Creek became a torrent. Its angry water gobbled up the land it had previously made.

The people hastily abandoned their homes, climbing to a hillside for safety. Here Christiana sat with her week-old son, along with her neighbors and watched the

greedy creek carry their homes away. The men saved what they could, but since they had been forced out in the evening, it was hard to work in the dark. When morning came, the only thing left of a flourishing settlement was the chimney of Luke and Christiana's house. This made two homes and farms that they had lost in five years.

But they were not daunted. With stout hearts, they moved around the point of the hill, a greater distance from the creek and started over again.

Luke's brother Matthew Syphus was in Santa Clara, Utah at the time of the flood with his little family, his wife being Marianna (Mary Ann French). After the flood disaster, Matthew went to California (where the gold had been discovered) and he left his family in the care of Luke and Christiana. Thus, with this added responsibility, Luke made a decision to give up farming and to follow the stone masonry trade. He quickly made adobes and built a house for his family. One was surely needed for there was much sickness that summer after the flood.

Because of so much sickness in the two families, Luke moved Marianna and her children into his home. They watched her two oldest daughters die, even as Christiana nursed her own ailing children. It was a terrible summer and one to try the faith of the most devout.

Probably because of the sorrow he had seen in this house, Luke sold it, moving the two families to a new one closer to the hills. In this new home, Marianna saw her baby die and Christiana gave birth to another son: her sixth child, George Alvin Syphus, born the 23rd of December 1863.

In the preceding two years, and in spite of so much personal trouble and sorrow, Luke had been very busy. He had been building homes for other people; homes that still stand, a monument to his integrity as a builder. One house in particular that he helped build was a home for Jacob Hamblin. Most of the town's people helped

to build this home in some way as it seemed a community project. Its site was up on a hillside overlooking the rest of the town. A rather pretentious, two story house with thick rock walls.

In the fall of 1863, Matthew returned from California and resumed responsibility for his family. About this time, or shortly after the birth of George Alvin Syphus, Apostle Erastus Snow called on Luke to make yet another move. Several families were called to settle in Clover Valley, Nevada and Luke was called to be the Bishop. *(Another source lists the Bishop as Bishop Edward Bunker.)*

These were the days of Indian uprisings and raids; Clover Valley was not exempt. In fact, the raids became so frequent that the settlers had to build a fort and a big round public stockade for the cattle and horses. At night, guards had to be posted to ward off Indian forays.

On one of these raids, two of the Indians were shot, but the settlers decided to follow them and end once and for all, if possible, the trouble. Since the raid took place about midnight, the men at the fort took up the trail as soon as they could follow the tracks. When they stopped for breakfast, Luke's horse got loose and went back to the fort. This caused a great deal of excitement and sorrow, because he was loved by all the settlers. One woman swore personal vengeance on anyone who had harmed "their Luke". But, Luke returned home safely and all were relieved when he came back although the men were unable to stop the Indians. The raids continued until nearly all the stock was driven off.

Clover Valley was a beautiful valley, one of the most picturesque yet settled by the Saints. The present settlement is known as Barklay (1965) and is on the Union Pacific Railroad. But, in 1864 it was an isolated, lonely place. The small group of Saints had to depend entirely on their own resources for protection from the Indians.

***Syphus Home in Panaca***



The Indians here were especially troublesome. They were ruled tyrannically by Bushhead. He was feared as much by his own people as by the white settlers. Luke was not only the ecclesiastical leader of the group, but he had to plan the strategy against the Indians as well. Many skirmishes and narrow escapes were recorded, not only by the Clover Valley group, but by more distant settlements.

One of these more distant settlements was in the Pahrnagate Valley, some 60 or 70 miles away. The settlers were not Latter-day Saints, but Bushhead was no respecter of persons, and one of his group killed a man at Kiko in the Pahrnagate Valley, then cunningly blamed the Mormons for it! This of course aroused their fury against the Saints in Clover Valley. They organized a posse and came posthaste to wipe out the "damn Mormons".

But here again we see the quiet strength and sagacity of Luke Syphus revealed. Calmly his group met the irate posse and asked for a hearing. He quickly outlined the situation, explaining the cunning perfidy of Bushhead. Immediately the two valleys joined forces and subsequently succeeded in capturing the leaders of the Indians, among them the rebel Bushhead though the Indian trouble continued.

It seems that in each place that Luke and Christiana helped to settle, they were destined to spend a short time. They gave their strength and talent to establish a settlement and then were called to a new frontier, and in each place a child was born into their family. Here in Clover Valley, Levi Walter Syphus was born on April 22, 1867, their seventh child.

Luke and Christiana were required to make one more move before they finally chose and were allowed to make a permanent home. In the fall of 1866, they moved 55 miles east to an isolated little valley that was later known as Pinto. Their stay was very short. Just through the winter of 1866-1867. In the spring of

1867 they moved to a settlement that had already been established, and was situated adjacent to rich and active mines. Yes...in the spring of 1867 the Syphuses moved to Panaca, Lincoln County, Nevada and they were "home".

Not long after they came to Panaca, another rich mining town sprang up. This was Pioche. Here they found ready sale for all the vegetables and farm products they could grow. They build a comfortable home and being thrifty and industrious they were able to give their children all the comforts available at the time and in some instances, provided even luxuries.

In Panaca, Luke and Christiana found the sanctuary among the Latter-day Saints of Zion that they had set out to find so many years before when they left England on the sailing vessel Java. They had given the strength of their youth, their talents and native abilities to help in getting the church established in outposts throughout Southern Utah and Nevada. Now at the ages of 40 and 35, those choice, rich years of life, they found permanency and could put those abilities with which they were so richly endowed to purposeful and permanent uses.

They took active part in church, civic and political enterprises. Luke was a Bishop for seven years in the Panaca Ward from Feb. 25, 1875 to June 7, 1882. And prior to that he was first counselor to Bishop Thomas Jefferson Jones for a period of four years. He was a County Commissioner for Lincoln County, Nevada for ten years. In this capacity, he skillfully guided the policies and achievements of that body along lines of greater civic improvements.

Christiana was not idle either. She was busy helping her husband to organize and staff the various church auxiliaries. Many of these she had to guide herself until enough people came into the ward to take over the leadership. Always they wanted the best the church had to offer their children

in opportunities and training and they worked together to achieve this end.

Here in Panaca too, their three last children were born, Christiana Amelia, March 11, 1868; Mary Etta, January 5, 1871; and Clara Melissa, January 6, 1874.

It was here in Panaca too, that Christiana told her grandchildren about her conversion to Mormonism and about her marriage to Luke, the good man who had joined the church. "I have never been sorry." How well she had earned the peace and comfort of the final years in Panaca.

Luke and Christiana passed on to their reward after years of full rich living in the gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Luke died at the age of 88 on April 19, 1915. Christiana followed 3 years later at the age of 86 on August 17, 1918.

#### **Places Where Luke and Christiana Syphus Lived:**

Left England – 1852

New South Wales, Australia – 1854

San Pedro, California – 1856

San Bernadino, California – 1856/57

Cedar City, Iron Co., Utah – 1859

Toquerville, Washington Co., Utah – 1859

Santa Clara, Washington Co., Utah – 1861

Clover Valley, Lincoln Co., Nevada – 1864

Pinto, Washington Co., Utah – 1867

Panaca, Lincoln Co., Nevada – 1868

Mesquite, Clark Co., Nevada – 1881 had property there and goes there often.

Edward Henry Syphus, Luke's son, was in Mesquite with his father 1881-1882.

Panaca, Lincoln Co., Nevada – 1915  
Death

#### **Voyage from Australia in 1856**

*We learn more about their journey from Australia to the United States, from the book John M. MacFarlane. This information was told by Sarah Ann McMullin who was a friend of Luke and Christiana and traveled with them on this voyage.*

The voyage was memorable. At one time it became very rough, enough to damage one of the masts and to impress Sarah Ann as being the worst weather she had ever sailed in.

The ship went aground on a coral reef in Tahiti. This was blamed by some of the passengers on the insobriety of the captain. In Tahiti, some of the passengers went ashore and returned to the ship staggering.

They crossed the equator in the 4th of July.

When they reached Pearl Harbor, the natives came out in long canoes loaded with fruit which they sold to the passengers. In contrast with the quiet observances of the Fourth, the Twenty-Fourth with a day-long ceremony culminating in a banquet given by the captain which consisted of "substanials" accompanied by a plentiful supply of "London Stout".

The ship had to steer far north to catch the prevailing winds, and it was not until August 15, 1856, after one hundred three days at sea, the "Jenny Ford" reached San Pedro, California and docked at Mormon (Terminal) Island.

Here the organ (that Mr. Joseph Ridges had made in Australia from funds donated by the Saints) was unloaded and the passengers were transported to San Bernardino. When the company bringing

the organ reached Salt Lake City and saw the great size of the new Tabernacle, they realized that their organ would be too small. It was placed in one of the ward churches, and John Ridges was commissioned to build another larger organ.

### **Luke Syphus became a Citizen of the United States**

Luke Syphus made his Declaration of Intention to become a Citizen of the United States at San Bernardino, California, January 22, 1857, and the same was signed by Rich R. Hopkin, County Clerk.

On the 11th of January 1864, he presented his signed declaration to James G. Bleak, Clerk of Probate Court, Washington County, Territory of Utah, together with his sworn oath of allegiance, Sworn in open court the 11th day of January, 1864, before James D. McCullough, Probate Judge.

He then appeared in the District Court of the Seventh Judicial District of the State of Nevada, in the County of Lincoln, the Hon. Mortimer Fuller, presiding judge, on the 20th of July 1872, J.T. Jones and James A. Wadsworth, appeared as witnesses for Luke Syphus. P.B. Miller was Clerk of the District Court, J.M. Hemferd, deputy clerk.

Luke Syphus became a citizen of the United States, 20 July 1872, the 96th year of our independence.

### **Patriarchal Blessing of Luke Syphus received December 4, 1858**

Tokerville, 4 Dec. 1858

Patriarchal Blessing of Elisha H. Groves, on the head of Luke Syphus, son of Matthew Syphus and Mary Long. Born on the 23 Jan. 1827, in Leafield, Oxfordshire, England. Given in Tokerville 4 Dec. 1858.

**B**rother Luke, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth and by virtue of the Holy Priesthood in me invested, I place my hands on thy head, and seal upon thee

a Patriarchal or Father's Blessing, which shall rest upon thee, and thou shalt realize the fulfilment thereof. Because of thy faith and the integrity of thy heart, thy sins are remitted unto thee; thy name is written in the "Lamb's Book of Life." Thy Guardian Angel hath watched over thee from thy birth, in all the meanderings and trials thou hast been called to pass through. He will still be with thee, he will not leave nor forsake thee, but in his hands thou shalt be borne up and delivered from the influence of the powers of darkness and from all thy enemies. Thou shalt be called to and in the redemption of Zion, and avenging the blood of innocence on them that dwell upon the Earth. The Angel of Vengeance shall be with thee, he will strengthen and nerve thy sinews, that no power shall be able to withstand thee. Thou wilt be called to lift thy voice in distant lands. Both Jew and Gentile shall hear thy proclamation, and many shall be gathered by thee to rejoice in the New and Everlasting Covenant. The elements shall be at thy command, and both wind and water shall obey thy voice. Both, bars, gates, chains, or prison doors shall not be able to hold thee. No miracle shall be too hard for thee to perform, which may become necessary for the accomplishment of thy work. Many of thy kindred both of the living and the dead shall be brought by thee into the mansions which thy Father hath prepared for thee.

Thou art of the seed of Abraham, the loins of Joseph and blood of Ephraim, a lawful heir to the Holy Priesthood, which thou shalt receive in due time. Thou mayest be able to stand at the head of thy Father's family, in the redemption of thy progenitors, many of whom shall be revealed to thee by Holy Messengers, who will commune with thee from time to time, revealing the genealogy of thy fathers.

Thou art a Father in Israel. Thy posterity shall multiply and become numerous on the earth. Thy name shall be perpetuated to the latest generation. Good order shall rest in thy habitation. Thou hast been brought to privation and want that thou mightest

obtain the power of appreciation. Wealth and great abundance shall flow into thy hands, and all things needful to render life happy and agreeable. The vision of thy mind shall be opened and thou wilt know how to escape evil and thwart the purposes of thine enemies. Thou shalt behold the winding up scene, the coming of the Redeemer, the Reign of Peace established on the earth. Thou shalt be anointed a King and a Priest unto the Most High God, receive thy crown, Kingdom, Dominion, power and Eternal increase, be numbered with the Hundred and Fourty four Thousand, thy inheritance with the faithful in Zion. Be thou therefore faithful, yield not to temptation and these blessings are sure and certain unto thee. I seal them upon thy head in the name of Iesus Christ our Redeemer, Even so, Amen.

John M. Macfarland, Clerk.

**Patriarchal Blessing of Christiana Long Syphus received December 4, 1858**

Tokerville. 4 Dec. 1858

Patriarchal Blessing of Elisha H. Groves on the head of Christiana Syphus. daughter of John Long and Martha Hignall on the 10 January 1832 in Standlake. Oxfordshire. England. Given in Tokerville 4 Dec. 1858.

Sister Christiana, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth and by virtue of the Holy Priesthood in me invested, I place my hands on thy head and seal upon thee a Patriarchal or Father's Blessing, which shall rest upon thee, and thou shalt realize the fulfillment thereof. Because of thy faith and the purity of thy motives, thy sins are remitted unto thee, thy name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Thy Guardian Angel hath watched over thee from thy birth for thy good; he will still be with thee; he will not leave nor forsake thee; in his hands thou shalt be borne up and delivered from the power and influence of thy common enemy; thou mayest be able to keep pure before thy Heavenly Father.

Thou art a daughter of Abraham, of the loins of Joseph and blood of Ephraim. a legal heir to all the blessings, privileges and powers which pertain to the Holy Priesthood, according to thy sex, which thou shalt receive in due time. Thou mayest be able to stand in connection with thy husband in the redemption of thy progenitors, many of whom shall be made known to thee by Holy Messengers, who will commune with thee from time to time, revealing the genealogy of thy fathers.

Thou art a Mother in Israel. Thy Posterity shall multiply and become numerous on the earth. Peace and quietness shall rest in thy habitation. Thou will share in all the blessings of thy husband. Thy table shall be filled for thy comfort and the convenience of thy family. Inasmuch as thou wilt seek it with all thy heart, thy mind shall be enlightened, and thy understanding enlarged; thou wilt be able to baffle the power of the destroyer, that he bereave thee not of thy children, thou shalt behold the winding up scene, the coming of thy Redeemer, the Reign of Peace established on the earth. Thou shalt cast in thy mite to build the Temple in Zion, into which the Glory of the Lord shall come. Thou shalt receive many blessings and privileges therein, be anointed a Queen and Priestess, receive thy Crown; Kingdom, Dominion, power and Eternal Increase, thy inheritance with thy benefactor in Zion. Be thou therefore faithful, yield not to temptation and these blessings are sure and certain unto thee. I seal them upon thee in the name of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, Even so. Amen.

John M. Macfarlane, Clerk.

**Patriarchal Blessing of Luke Syphus received October 3, 1859**

Tokerville, 3 Oct 1859

A Patriarchal Blessing by Isaac Morley, on the head of Luke Syphus, son of Matthew and Mary Syphus. Born 23 Jan. 1827, in Leafield, Oxfordshire, England.

**B**rother Luke in the name of Jesus I place my hands upon your head, and in his name I seal the blessings of a Father and Patriarch upon you, that the promises and blessings of the Fathers may continue upon thee, and thy posterity after thee. I bless thee as a father at the head of thy family, according to the Patriarchal Order of God. I seal upon thee the gift to bless thy posterity that the seals and keys of the everlasting Priesthood may be extended upon them. Thou hast left thy native country and kindred for the Gospel's sake. It shall become a gift and blessing unto thee to become a Savior to thy father's household, that they with thee may be redeemed from the fall. Thou art of Joseph. Thou art entitled to these blessings by birthright. Let thy heart be comforted, my son, for the Lord will crown thy labors with the fruit of the earth. He has seen fit to prove thee in the day of small things. He will crown thy table with the fruit of the earth. The fruit of the vine will cheer thy heart. Thy children and children's children will yet rise up and bless thee.

Thou wilt be numbered with the Anointed of the Lord for the rolling forth of Christ's Kingdom. Thou wilt see Zion redeemed- Thy enemies come to naught and live until thou art satisfied with life. Cultivate in thy bosom the attributes of faith, love, and fidelity, and thou wilt be crowned with glory, immortality, and eternal lives; I ratify it in the name of Jesus, Amen and Amen.

### **Patriarchal Blessing of Christiana Long Syphus on October 3, 1859**

Tokerville, 3 Oct. 1859

A Patriarchal Blessing by Isaac Morley the head of Christiana Syphus, daughter of John and Martha (Hignall) Long, born 10 Jan. 1832, in Oxfordshire, England.

**S**ister Christiana, I place my hands upon your head in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and seal the blessings of the Fathers and Patriarchs upon your head, and memory.

Let thy heart be comforted, my daughter. The Lord is thy friend. He will test thy fidelity through his providences to thy good. Cultivate in thy bosom the attributes of faith, love, and fidelity, and these attributes shall be extended upon thy posterity from generation to generation. Thy children have been given thee of the Lord. They will preserve thy name and memory. They are bestowed upon thee for thy stewardship-for the occupancy of thy mind, whereby thou wilt be called a mother in Israel. Thou wilt rear sons who will become the Lord's Anointed. Thy daughters will become stars in thy crown in the morning of the resurrection. I bless thee in thy habitation that it may be a dwelling of peace-a house of order, where the servants of the Lord will be made to rejoice.

Thou art of Ephraim. Thou wilt not want for bread in the day of famine, neither shall thy fellowship be sullied in the midst of thy brethren. I ratify this seal in the name of Jesus and seal up unto eternal lives in the mansions of thy Father even so. Amen.

### **Mission Certificate**

*The following is a letter from the First Presidency of the Church that Luke Syphus was given when he left for England on his mission. On his mission in England, he taught the gospel to his parents, Mathew Syphus and Mary Long Syphus. Following their baptism, they came to America.*

#### HOLINESS TO THE LORD

TO ALL PERSONS TO WHOM THIS LETTER SHALL COME:

This Certifies that the bearer, Elder Luke Syphus is in full faith and fellowship with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and by the General Authorities of the said Church, has been duly appointed to a Mission to the British Isles to Preach the Gospel, and administer in all the ordinances thereof pertaining to his office.

And we invite all men to give heed to his Teachings and Counsels as a man of GOD,

sent to open to them the door of Life and Salvation-and assist him in his travels, in whatsoever things he may need.

And we pray God, THE ETERNAL FATHER, to bless Elder Syphus and all who receive him, and minister to his comfort, with the blessings of heaven and earth, for time and for all eternity. In the name of Jesus Christ: Amen.

Signed at Salt Lake City, Territory of Utah, October 14, 1872, in behalf of said Church.— Brigham Young, George A. Smith, Daniel H. Wells (First Presidency)

### **Letters Written to Luke Syphus by his Family while he was on His Mission to England**

*Note by Clara Syphus (Luke and Christiana Syphus' daughter),*

*"These letters will give the date that dear Pa went back to England on a mission and to bring Grandfather and Grandmother Syphus to this Country. Letters from my sister Lovina, written to dear Pa when he was in England, before I was born. Written by her for dear Ma and herself." Signed: Clara.*

*I believe there were more of these letters, written by Lovina Syphus Whitney, my grandmother, and if I remember correctly, when Effie B. Syphus gave them to me, she said she thought they ought to be distributed to Lovina's children's families, so these three were the ones that were to go to my mother, Mabel Clara (Whitney) Macfarlane. I think they are interesting and contain information that might be of interest to other people and I wouldn't mind having a copy of the others. Georgia Macfarlane McGarvie. (Lovina in 1872 was 18 years of age.)*

Oct the 21, 1872  
Panaca City

Dear Father,

I sit down to write a few lines to let you know that we are all well. We received your kind letter and was glad to hear that you was well and I pray the Lord to bless you on

your journey that you may arrive to your father's home safe. I believe you will.

Bro Jones come home with the intention of moving rite off but he got a Dispatch to tell him to stay here, which pleased everyone very much, us not excepted. We had a good meeting yesterday and we are going to have meeting and Sunday School regular now. Bro Gould was put into assist Bro Lee in Sunday School. William Matthews (or Matthus) to take charge of the Deacons School will start a week from today and most of us will go.

We are still in the tripe and cow heel business. We got home from Pioche all rite but it was a very warm day and it seemed very lonesome when we got home. We did not get the presents you bought for us. Bro Wood forgot them and left them at his house, but he thinks Anna Burgess will bring them down with her. Mrs. Burgess got hers. Bro Wood and Arthur and Mrs. Burgess spent the evening with us Sunday the 20th. We had a long and interesting chat. Bro Wood is very talkative and good company. He told us all about your traveling arrangements and we were pleased to hear that you had a bed to sleep in on the cars. I expect by this time you know the name of the vessel you will sail in.

I don't think Arthur thinks of having the little mules as his horses has not come down yet and he is not prepared to pay for them. He told me he saw Edward (Lovina's brother) go through Bullionville with his load of lumber and he thought he would not think of selling them, but have them keep to work and be earning a little and I think it best at present, as we are not obliged to sell them and Edward [16 years of age in 1872) can manage them very well. He has made one trip from Clover to Pioche and started again this morning. George and him started the Sunday after you left, was detained at the mill, got home Friday, started to Pioche Friday night, got back Saturday. Went to meeting on Sunday. Heard Bro Jones preach. He gave good council to the young men and called their attention

to the Sunday School and wished them to attend and as much as possible. Bro Jones invited George to be in on Sunday to help in Sunday School as much as he possibly could.

Maggie Lee has been very sick and lost another baby, a little boy. Little Mary is well and very lively. We gave her some candy, asked her who bought it for her and she said, "papa did, papa good boy" asked her where pa was and she said "papa gone". Alfred wanted me to tell you that he was going to try and be a good boy while you are gone. George says he will say his prayers every night and pray the Lord to bless you and bring you safe home. We asked Levi if he wanted to say anything and he burst out a crying and said he hoped you would come home and bring him a pocket knife. We asked Crissey if she wanted to say anything to Pa and she said she would be a good girl, she hoped you would not get drowned and hopes you will get there safe and wants you to bring her two Vazes. Ma wishes me to say she was better today than she has been for several days.

I must now conclude as it is 10 o'clock, with kindest love to you and to Grandpa and Grandma from your affectionate wife and daughter,

Christiana and Lovina Syphus.

Panaca City  
November the 4, 1872

Dear Father,

Mother wished me to say that we received two letters from New York, one on the first and the other on the 3rd. The first you sent came the last and we was very glad to hear from you and glad to hear that you arrived at New York safe after such startling scenes on the railway cars. I think it was a miracle indeed that none of you was hurt, but I suppose that the hand of providence was over you for good. While we are writing we are wondering whether you are on the sea or at home with your mother, as this is the

14th day since you set sail. Ma says she wishes she was a little bird hovering over you, then she would know how you are and where you are. But that cannot be but she must sit here with little Mary on her knee and wonder and think and think and then at last go to bed dissatisfied about it, but then I suppose it cannot be helped.

Bro Jones come to see me when he got back from the City. Told me all about you and told me that you was a going to be home by Christmas but I fear that will not be the case. It is a dark stormy night to night. The election will take place tomorrow. The Clover mill is stopped again for two or three days so he will not start today as he expected. He has got a chance to haul railway ties with Losser for a month or more at which I think he will do better, as he is quite discouraged waiting so long at the mill. I must tell you that Bro Stanton departed his life the 25th of Oct and was buried on a very cold Sunday.

Virge and Willey and their wives has got back from the City and Jake Keele and Jane Macimoch has got married and come down here. Hatty Grange and Frank Willis has got married, quite unknown to her folks, except her sister. George [this would be George B. Whitney, Lavina's future husband] is going to teach school with Bro Gool by the request of Bro Jones and Bro Gool. It will take up next week and most all of us will go George sends his best respects to you. Aunt Amelia came up last night and went back tonight. Quite sad talking about you. Pa please bring us some cotton stocking darning thread. You will find Mary's letter, I held her hand while she wrote it.

I wrote a letter to Sister Unthanks after you left. 'We have not got a letter from Sister Ridges yet. Bro Newman is digging potatoes. Bro and Sister Jones and Bro and Sister Wadsworth have gone down to the St. George Conference. We are all well at the present and hope these few lines will find you the same. I hope Grandpa is better and I hope Grandma is well. We send our kind love to them all. Please write often

and tell us what kind of a voyage you had and tell us all about things. We will write again soon. No more at present. From your affectionate wife and Daughter,

Christiana and Lovina Syphus

*[A note from each of the children was enclosed.]*

Panaca City  
November 12, 1872

Dear Father,

I again sit down to write a few lines to let you know that we are all well at present and hope this will find you the same. we have all had very bad colds. It has been very cold weather and very sharp frosts, unusually so for this time of the year. They are finishing digging the potatoes today. A great many of them were froze in the ground and a very poor turn out. I sent the taxes up yesterday \$65.13 and got the receipt. School started today. George Whitney is teaching school and we are all going. We have got a little stove and put down in that house and George Whitney and the boys are sleeping there. The meeting house is fixed up good now and we had a good Sunday school and meeting last Sunday. Bro Jones had come back from the St. George Conference and gave us a good sermon last Sunday and told all about the conference report.

Edward is working the big mules to haul railway ties. He goes towards dry Valley for them and brings them down the canyon about 12 miles, nearly all down hill and goes back in the afternoon to the camp. The little mules are home. Have been hauling up the potatoes. Arthur did not buy them. I have not been able to sell them as yet. If I do not sell them in a week or two I will have to send them over to Clover to run out for Edward says he can earn as much where he is with one span as he can hauling lumber with two. He says he can haul 50 ties at once, which will be ten dollars per day. He says he can bring 5 loads a week. perhaps six but he will have to buy hay at \$2.00 per hundred so he will not have to hunt mules

these cold mornings. He took the notion that he could do better at that and I could not turn him. I think if I can keep track of the little mules if anything should happen that you should not come home so soon as you think for I should have to hire a hand to drive them both towards Christmas and let Edward go to school. Bro Jones says he ought to go now as all the other boys of his age are going. but that cannot be for a month or six weeks and by then I will hear from you. I would like you to bring an English hair broom home with you. We often wonder if you arrived home safe and if so we trust that you will have a safe trip home. We are very anxious to know when you will start for it will seem a long time to us before you will get home. Give our kind love to all our friends and relations and accept the same yourself.

No more at present from your affectionate wife and daughter,

Christiana and Lovina Syphus

## **The Syphus Family's Journeys in Verse**

*By Luke Syphus*

### **Departure From England**

*Blessing by the Elders, before leaving Liverpool, England.*

My Brother and my Sister  
I to the Lord do Pray  
To keep you safe from danger  
Upon your onward way  
You shall arrive in safety  
Though you will suffer loss  
Upon the gallant vessel  
For the ocean waves shall turn and toss.

### **The Dream**

I dreamed a frail bark so tiny  
Sailed o'r the ocean's brine  
I reached out hand to grasp it  
It seemed the bark were mine  
I reached out arms so eager

This little bark to save  
But e're I woke from dreaming  
My bark sank in the wave.

### **The Meaning of the Dream**

We lived to know the meaning  
Of all this dream did warn  
For on our Sailing Vessel  
Our little son was born  
Just one short month was given  
Our little one to keep  
And then in India's Ocean  
He found his grave so deep

Oh, desolate hearts so saddened  
Our little bark was gone,  
Our little son, our darling  
A better life had won  
The little bark in dreaming  
I yearned so much to save  
The little tiny vessel  
The symbol of our babe.

### **Departure From Australia**

Dear Brethren and Sisters  
Our God commanded us.  
To leave our wives and children  
And in Him put our trust.  
And cross the mighty Ocean  
Unto this distant land.  
To gather out his children  
As he should give command.  
He has blest us in our labors,  
Since in this land we've been,  
His hand has e're been with us,  
Through every changing scene,  
We've relied upon His Spirit,  
And unto it adher'd.  
And thus the truth we've taught it,  
As often times you've heard

Pray Brethren then be faithful  
And all your covenants keep,  
Twill prove your own Salvation  
Behold the thought how sweet,  
The Lord He will be with you  
If you will only live  
In strict obedience unto

The words that He shall give

Likewise our sisters all  
Were now prepared for going  
It is our God who calls  
Adieu to Australia  
With all thy golden mines  
We are now going to Zion  
Where perfect riches shine.

Our vessel is in the harbour.  
The Genny Ford is her name  
She has all things in order  
To bear us o'er the main  
Our course is for Tahita  
We'll tarry there awhile  
To aid our ship-wrecked brethren  
Who're wrecked and cast upon that Isle.

From thence unto San Pedro  
Our vessel she must sail  
And then we'll cross the country  
The Saints of God to hail  
With friends and wives and children  
We're going with Zion's throng  
And render up our praises  
To God where they belong.

To gather to the mountains  
We sail the Ocean Blue  
To join the saints of Zion  
Australia, now adieu.

### **Departure From England After a Two-Year British Mission**

Upon her knees my sister bent  
And thus to me did say  
Your visit has been so very short  
So stay another day  
With pleading in her eyes  
She did me imply  
Do a little longer stay  
We may never see you more.

Dear sister pray do arise  
I cannot thus so be  
I can see with mine eyes  
I will tell you what I see  
My wife she doth humbly bow  
And thus she prays for me  
Great God preserve my husband now  
His face I long to see

My children too, a kneeling group  
Upon the ground I see  
God of Heaven to invoke  
In their simplicity  
Preserve our father on the way  
And grant that he may come  
Let Angels guard his steps they say  
To our dear family home.

Dear Brother I will arise  
Nor ask you more to stay  
I will wipe my weeping eyes  
We'll meet another day  
God Bless you on your journey  
Preserve you on the deep  
And grant you soon may see

Your wife and family--adieu

*(Then probably written on board ship as he thinks  
of home and his wife, Christiana. Written by Georgia  
Macfarlane McGarvie.)*

The moon is on the waters  
The stars are shining too  
The world appears much brighter  
If seen love with you  
Tho at times my path is dark  
To me it does appear  
Thy presence can light impart  
If thou art only there  
Christmas on the water  
Before I have seen—

*(The verse stops there unfinished.)*

### **Patriarchal Blessing of Luke Syphus received May 24, 1875**

*(On this date that Luke and Christiana Syphus received  
their Patriarchal Blessing, Luke's parents Mathew and  
Mary Long Syphus also received their blessings.)*

Panaca, Lincoln Co., Nevada, 24 May  
1875

A Blessing by John L. Smith Patriarch,  
upon the head of Luke Syphus, son of  
Matthew and Mary (Long) Syphus, born  
Leafield, Oxfordshire, England, 23 Jan.  
1827.

**B**rother Luke, In the name of Jesus of  
Nazareth I seal upon thee a Patriarchal  
Blessing. Thy name is recorded in the  
Lamb's Book of Life never to be erased  
except through willful transgression. Thy  
guardian angel hath preserved thy life  
many times and will watch over thee until  
thou shalt return to the Father.

Thine inheritance shall be with the  
children of Ephraim, and to the extent of  
thy dominions there shall be no end. Thy  
councils shall be deemed wise, thy power in  
the Priesthood mighty, for in the humility  
of thy soul thou shalt overcome all. Though  
thou feelest many times thy littleness,  
the mighty God of Jacob shall make thee  
strong.

Thou shalt see peace established in Zion  
and thy Savior reign triumphant over all  
the Earth. Thou shalt stand with him one  
of the hundred and forty and four thousand  
spoken of in the Revelations of John. Thy  
posterity as numerous as the sand upon  
the sea shore, houses and lands, flocks and  
herds with every good and perfect gift, even  
all thou canst desire in righteousness, with  
riches, honors, immortality, and eternal  
lives with all thy former gifts and blessings,  
in the name of Jesus thy redeemer I renew  
upon thee, and if thou art faithful to the  
end there shall be no desire in thine heart  
but that thou shalt receive even so Amen.

C. Pulsipher (scribe).

### **Patriarchal Blessing of Christiana Long Syphus received May 24, 1875**

Patriarchal Blessing by John L. Smith,  
Patriarch upon the head of Christina  
(Christiana) Syphus, daughter of John Long  
and Martha Ignol (Hignell) born Standlake,  
Oxfordshire, England on Jan 1822. (It  
should be 1832, copied wrong.)

Blessing No. 45, 24, May 1875, Panaca,  
Lincoln co., Nevada.

**S**ister Christina by the authority of the  
Holy Priesthood invested in me to bless

the fatherless, I seal upon thee a Patriarchal Blessing. The Lord hath given his angels charge over thee, to preserve thy life, until thou hast accomplished that which is necessary to extend the Gospel to thy kindred, back to the days of Adam. Thine inheritance shall be with the children of Ephraim, and thy posterity as numerous as the stars of Heaven, to the increase of which there shall be no end. Thy children and thy children's children shall rise up and call thee blessed, and hear thy name in honorable remembrance to the end of time. In company with thy companion thou shalt be crowned a Queen to reign over thy children through all eternity, have power in the Priesthood to preserve the lives of thy children, and drive the destroyer far from thy habitation. In thy house there shall be no lack, and thy storehouse filled to overflowing. Thou shalt see thy sons and thy daughters classed among the honorable ones of the earth, mighty and wise in Israel. All thy former gifts and blessings I renew upon thee, with every desire of thine heart, in righteousness not one word of which shall fail, if thou art faithful to the end, for I seal them upon thee in the name of Jesus thy Redeemer, Amen.

**Letter written to Lovina Whitney by her father, Luke Syphus, on July 20, 1896**

Panaca Lincoln Co., Nev  
July 20th 1896  
Mrs. Lavina Whitney  
St Thomas

My Dear Daughter

I will try and write you a few lines to night. I am pleased to say to you we are all well in Panaca and hope you and your husband and children are all well. We were so very sorry to hear that Poor Ellen is ill again. We do hope she is better. I dont know how aney one can be well down their this hot weather. It is very hot and dry up hear scarsley aney rain in this valley yet.

I hope Harey has got home. We are so anxious to hear from you again. Hope it

will be good news. Ma is very restless. She wants to be on the road to the Muddy, but it is so very hot I am afraid she would not be able to stand the Journey.

I hope all the rest of the folks are well. Poor Mr. Logan passed away last Saturday night. We laid him away in the Panaca Grave yard this morning. Dan Rice is not expected to live very long. He is in Salt Lake City.

Levi talks of coming down to see you, and Ma wants to see you all so much. I do too but I dont think I could undertake it now.

Dear Lavina, I wish it was posable for all of you to come up and spend a cople of months with us while the hot weather lasts down their. Please tell Harey he must bring Poor Ellen out of their if she is able to come. The young folks are prepairing for the 24th but we little know what may happen to spoil all our antiseptians. My crops are looking well but very dry that is the Grain. John McQuarie and Bro Miller spent the evening with us yesterday. Sister Anne Renow and a Miss Rose Young from Provo took supper with us to night. She was acquainted with Poor Mary.

Jane Lee got a dispatch to night stateing that Dan Rice died at 3 oclock this afternoon. Please tell Ellen that I sent the money to Julia as she requested \$3.80 etc. Tell Edward I will write to him soon. George Riding is working at Bunkerville on the night shift so Chrisie and children come down here to sleep every night.

Please remember me kindly to my Bro Matthew to John B. and all the folks.

We hope to get word from some of you next mail. If Ellen is no better some of us will start down. My sister Martha Parsons died in Salt Lake City on the 22nd of June. It was published in the Desert News so I sapos some of you saw it.

Ma says Please write and tell us what you think about Ellen. Good night. God Bless you all X from your affect Father

Luke Syphus

**Letter Written to Lovina Syphus Whitney on February 24, 1902 by Luke Syphus**

Panaca, Lincoln Co Nev  
Feb 24th 1902  
Mrs. Lavina Whitney  
St. George Washington Co Utah

My Dear Daughter, after so long I will write you just a little in answer to your ever wellcome letter and thank you and George for the papers you sent us and hope this will find you and all your Children enjoying good health. We are about as usual as far as health. As concerned in fact I have been much better this last month than for along time. Been able to do quite alot of work around home but I am apoor pay master but it keeps me out of mischief. So far we have had a very dry winter but it has been raining all the afternoon to day and is still raining but very light.

Business is very quiet out this way. The Georges are not doing aneything at present their familyes are well. They are talking of taking a trip to Oregan or Canada but weather they will or not I am unable to say. You say you would like us to leave to St George and pay you a visit. I want to come and see you so much and stay a month or two but unless I can dispose of some property to get some money I dont see how we can come at present. There seems to be no chance to rent and money is so scarce with the people here they cant buy but I do hope to make aturn some way that we may be able to visit St George for we have quite alot of work to do in the Temple and time is sliping away very fast. We hear from St Thomas quite often but failed to hear to night but they were all well the last we heard. We are expecting Levi home aney time now. The people here have made no move at farming yet, but the frost is about

out of the ground so I expect they will be bussy as soon the weather clears up again. I dont know that I shall try to do more than attend to the lots in town this season.

Our school like all the rest of the big Companey's out this way is expected to shut down in about two weeks. You can learn all we know about the RRs through the newspapers. Please give our kind love to your dear husband all your Children and all enquiring friends. We are allways pleased to hear from you good night from your father and mother.

Luke and C Syphus

**Letter Written to Luke Syphus by his Son Edward on September 19, 1905**

*This letter tells of the death of Uncle Matt Syphus. It also tells of the birth of Uncle Ed's son, Lester, and is a good example of the Syphus humor.*

St Thomas, Nevada  
Sept. 19, 1905

Mr. Luke Syphus  
Panaca, Nevada

Dear Father:

I received Clara's letter today. Was sorry to learn that you and dear Mama were feeling so poorly and that brother George had met with an accident. Hope it is not very serious and that he will soon be all right again and that you and Mama are both feeling better again.

Well, Pa, I have to write you the sad news of the death of your brother Mathew. He passed away today about one o'clock. It is two weeks yesterday since he was taken sick and he said from the first that he never wished to get up again. There has been someone with him constantly day and night since he was taken sick. He made his will the first day he was taken sick, leaving all his personal effects to Luke Whitney and the cash proceeds derived from his real estate were to be divided equally between

his wife and two daughters. The funeral will be tomorrow as early as possible. The first two days he suffered a good deal of pain, but after that I don't think he suffered very much. He has been very patient and has a peaceful contented expression on his face now he is at rest.

We had a young man call at our house on the night of the 14th. He seemed very hungry and had no clothes on and only weighed 10 lbs. We gave him something to eat, dressed him up and made him as comfortable as possible. He seems quite contented and has expressed a desire to make his future home with us, and of course we haven't objected for he seems like a very clever, promising young chap, and Eleanor seems to have taken quite a liking to him.

We had written to Aunt informing her of Uncle Matt's condition. He appointed Luke Whitney administrator to dispose of his property here as soon as possible and send the proceeds to his folks. Sam Gentry has bought one 40 acres for two hundred dollars, the price Uncle offered it for a short time before he was taken sick. The place where he lived is a nice little place of six or seven acres with water rights. I was thinking if George Riding was coming here he might get it on reasonable terms if he wrote to Luke right away. It is a nice location and he could make a living on it with a little rustling on the outside, but I hardly think you and Mama would want a place so far out of town.

Give our kind love to George and family, also Chrissy and her folks, yourselves included.

Your affectionate son,

Edw. H.

**Patriarchal Blessing of Luke Syphus  
received June 17, 1913**

Panaca, Lincoln Co., Nevada, 17 June  
1913

A Patriarchal Blessing given by Patriarch Thomas S. Terry, upon the head of Luke Syphus, son of Matthew and Mary (Long) Syphus, born 23 Jan. 1827, at Leafield, Oxfordshire, England.

**B**rother Luke Syphus, in the spirit of my high and holy calling, I lay my hands upon thy head, and confer and seal upon thee a Patriarchal blessing. Brother Syphus, today you are in great favor with your Heavenly Father, and the hosts who dwell with him. Because of the valor of your heart while in the spirit world, in the defense of your Saviour, you was fore-ordained to come forth upon the Earth, in the fulness of time, to become a father in Israel, and a high priest in the Church of the Living God. I confer upon you and renew all the blessings of former Patriarchs who have blessed you with Patriarchal blessings and I, the servant of the Living God, in the renewing of those blessings still bless you.

I bless you with life and a better enjoyment of health. You shall still live and have comfort and joy with your beloved companion and your children. You shall know when you are called to pass away, you shall have your children with you. They will ever love you and never will depart from you. In them your name shall continue worlds without end. With your beloved companion and children, you shall stand upon Mount Zion and see your Redeemer. You shall be numbered with the hundred and forty and four thousand who shall have the name of their God written in their foreheads. You shall be a Patriarch in your father's house for ever and ever.

You shall live to be a comfort to your family, as long as life shall be desired by you.

You shall stand at the head of your father's family in the blessings of the Redeeming and sealing powers of the Lord Jesus Christ. I pray my Heavenly Father that your health may be better, that you may have more comfort and more happiness during the remainder of your life. Your

crown will be bright with many stars. With your companion and children you shalt reign eternally in the Celestial Kingdom of your god. Brother Syphus, I seal these blessings upon your head in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Patriarchal Blessing of Christiana Long Syphus received June 12, 1913**

Panaca, Lincoln Co., Nevada  
June 12, 1913

A Patriarchal Blessing given by Patriarch Thomas S. Terry, on the head of Christiana Long Syphus, daughter of John Long and Martha Hignal Long, born 10 Jan. 1832, Stanlake, Oxfordshire, England.

**S**ister Christiana Syphus, in the spirit of my high and holy calling, I lay my hands upon thy head, and confer upon thee a Patriarchal blessing. Beloved sister, the Lord your God is pleased with you because of your integrity and purity of heart. Your life has been lengthened out to you, when many have fallen. I seal upon you all the blessings and renew them, of those who have blessed you in your former life. You are of the house of Israel and lineage of Joseph who was sold into Egypt.

Before you came to earth you made a covenant, in coming to earth, you would fill the mission of woman, in giving birth to sons and daughters. You have filled this mission, which will be a great honor to you in the resurrection of the just. You have been blessed in bringing up your children in the new and everlasting covenant. They will not depart therefrom. In them your name shall never be forgotten. With them, your name shall ever be upon the Lamb's book of Life.

I bless you still with health and strength. You shall yet live till you are fully satisfied with life. I need not say that you shall go down to your grave in peace, having filled the mission faithfully, that you came to earth to do. You shall rise in the morning of

the first resurrection, with your companion and with your children.

You shall stand at the head of your father's family, during the thousand years of the reign of peace, in administering to those of your father's family of your sex, who have died without the gospel. Thousands will rise up and call you blessed.

At the end of the great thousand years, when the earth shall pass away, a new heaven and a new earth, with your beloved companion and children, you shall be crowned a queen. Your crown will be bright with many stars.

It shall be said unto you, Come thou blessed, enter into the glory prepared for you before the foundation of the earth.

Sister Syphus, while you live, I bless you with health and with strength, and with the pleasure that you have had with your beloved companion and children, shall remain with you and never depart from. I need not say unto you be faithful, you have been. The spirit of almighty God will be with you. At the end of your life, your children will be with you.

I seal these blessings upon you Sister Syphus, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **The Trouble with the Indians and their Sojourn in Clover Valley**

**I**n Utah, there was an appropriation of \$50,000.00, the same to be distributed to the Indian War Veterans. Luke Syphus, apparently made application for same. He received a letter from Mr. J. M. Westwood, telling him that his name did not appear on the list of Indian Veterans that he had, but that if Luke Syphus would appear in St. George, with witnesses to vouch for his participation in the Indian troubles, between the date of July 11 to 16, 1913, that he would get his share of the appropriation. This was less than two years before Luke Syphus died and his health was not too

good, so he dictated this letter to his daughter Clara and then he signed it.

This is the copy that was sent to Lovina (Syphus) Whitney, who at that time was living in St. George, and the accompanying letter tells Lovina that they had fancied up a little the one that was sent to Mr. Westwood, but that this one had all the facts in it so she would be informed if the occasion arose that she could help the matter along.

### **The Letter**

Panaca, Lincoln Co., Nevada  
July 10, 1913  
Mr. J. M. Westwood  
St. George, Utah

Dear Sir:

My health not permitting me to make the journey to St. George, to appear before you from the 11th inst. to the 16th inst., inclusive with my two witnesses, in order to secure my part in the distribution of the appropriation of \$50,000 for the Indian War Veterans, I hereby make to you under oath, the following statement.

The scene of the Indian troubles which I experienced, was at Clover Valley, (now called Barclay, in Nevada) but at the time of the most serious Indian depredations, during the years 1854-5-6, it was in Washington Co., Utah, or was supposed to be and it was to Utah we paid our taxes.

In the Spring of 1864 I moved with my family, together with a number of other families into Clover Valley. We had been there but a short time, when the Indians became very troublesome, continually jeopardizing the lives of ourselves and families, and making frequent raids upon our cattle and horses.

Acting upon the advice of General Erastus Snow, we built a Fort for the protection of our families, and I was personally appointed by him as Captain's Adjutant, under Captain Maltire Hatch, of

the Nauvoo Legion. I was furnished with a book of instruction, entitle Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics, prepared expressly for the use of the Militia of Utah, by Colonel L. B. Pace, Nauvoo Legion.

We were compelled to herd our cattle by day and guard them by night, many times in bitter cold weather and deep snow, but with all our vigilance we lost many cattle and horses by the Indians, who greatly exceeded us in numbers.

Upon two occasions, after raids upon our cattle, we followed the Indians, leaving a few men to guard the Fort.

Upon the first occasion we followed them onto the West fork of the Beaver Dam Wash, where we found them with a heard of our cattle, all killed, and the meat being dried upon the rocks. We surprised the Indians, and succeeded in dis-arming four of their number, the others escaped with their guns, and fired upon us from ambush—as we traveled home-ward up the stream single file. We had some very narrow escapes, but reached the Fort unharmed.

In this party there were, besides myself five other men, namely, Joseph Huntsman, Samuel Knight, James Hunt, Geo. W. Edwards, Sr. and one other, whose name I can not now recall.

About one week later, I in company with Joseph Huntsman, Dudley Leavitt (deceased), Samuel Knight (deceased), John Huttley (deceased), George W. Edwards, Sr. (deceased), and two other men trailed the Indians about forty miles west into the mountains, where we found a herd of our cattle all killed as before, but we did not come upon the Indians at the time, they having retreated farther into the mountains. They made numerous other raids, when we were unable to leave our families to follow them.

We felt the loss of our cattle and animals keenly as it deprived us in a great measure, of the means of subsistence.

Finally, the peril to our families and ourselves becoming so great, and owing to several families having left, we who remained, were advised by General Erastus Snow to abandon the settlement, which we did in November, 1866.

Signed: Luke Syphus

### **Grandmother and Grandfather Syphus**

*by Mabel Whitney Macfarlane, daughter of George B. Whitney and Lovina Syphus, and granddaughter of Luke Syphus and Christiana Long. The following was written just a few months before her death.*

I well remember both Grandmother and Grandfather Syphus. In 1907 Levi and Clara [their unmarried son and daughter] wanted to take Grandmother to Salt Lake to a special eye doctor. She was to have an operation to remove cataract growth from her eyes. I remember she was blind. Now to go and leave Grandfather was the big problem. I was about 18 or 19 years of age and living in St. George, Utah. Levi wrote to Mother to see if I could stay and keep house for Grandpa. Mother consented and sent me to Panaca, Nevada at the appointed time. It must have been about the month of July.

I remember Panaca and Pioche played baseball while I was there, either the 4th or the 24th of July, and Chance Macfarlane was working at a mine in Pioche at the time. Chance and I had gone to school in St. George together but were just friends. Both being away from home seemed to make the difference. Chance wanted to come and see me so I asked Grandfather about his coming. He agreed it would be alright, but told me how with all his children they had insisted on ten o'clock being the hour for young people to part.

I knew all about this ten o'clock habit of the Syphus family from hearing my mother and Aunt Ellen Gentry tell about it. My instructions from Mother and Father were to abide by Grandfather's wishes to the letter. After Chance got through work

for the day and ate dinner, bathed, and rode horseback from Pioche to Panaca, it was nine o'clock. One hour was not very much time for all that time and energy and expense, for he had to hire the horse to ride down to see me.

When it was drawing near the time for me to go back to St. George we decided to make some excuse for me to stay with Aunt Maggie Syphus one night and Chance would come that night to see me. Aunt Maggie was very co-operative and persuaded Grandfather to let me stay at her place under some pretense or other and let one of her girls stay with Grandfather. She had not forgotten when she was young, and what the restrictions were in the Syphus family. I am not sure if this little trick was made known to Grandfather or not, but it was twelve-thirty that night before Chance started back to Pioche. That was the beginning of our courtship.

Luke Syphus, to me, was one grand person. He was kind and had a very rare sense of humor, something like his oldest son, Ed Syphus. Very dry and unpretentious in his wit and everything else he did. I have never known him to be angry at anything I did, but when he said ten o'clock was the hour for nice girls to be in, I knew I was going to be in at that time.

He was of medium build with nice, sharp eyes of dark blue. He had a beard and mustache at that time that were gray like his hair. He rose very early each morning and never went to bed early. As I remember, when Grandmother was there, midnight was bedtime for them, and the last thing was to have cheese and crackers or bread and butter and a cup of tea. They served that in the living room.

Grandmother was a very nice looking old lady; dark brown, sharp eyes until she went blind, small in stature. As I remember her she always wore a black or dark dress and a bonnet of black that was a protection to her eyes. She was slim and very neat in her dress. I always thought she was quite

stern with Grandfather, but it never seemed bad because his reaction was so calm and sweet.

I remember helping him sprout potatoes in the old dug-out potato cellar with the dirt roof. He was a very efficient gardener. I think all his life in Panaca he got a large part of their livelihood from selling vegetables and currants and gooseberries.

I will never forget their lovely front yard of pansies and pinks. The fragrance and beauty have always stayed in my memory. There were two large trees north of the flowers that always had a hammock swinging from one to the other. The gooseberries were just north of the hammock. As a small child I remember how handy it was to swing in the hammock and slip into the gooseberries if we could find a time when Grandmother was not looking. Sometimes we misjudged her watch, then we got a good tongue lashing. The gooseberries were very precious for there was a good sale for them. If we would help pick currants, we could eat a few of them. In those days everything that could be sold was needed for the keep of the family.

There were many years before they passed away that they needed care. Grandmother being blind made it hard for Aunt Clara, who never married. Besides keeping up the home Clara had to wait upon her mother, and of course she cared for her father in his last years. Uncle Levi tried to help her financially, but he was away from home a great deal.

In those days all the water for house use had to be carried in buckets from the irrigation ditch which was across the dirt sidewalk outside the fence, which had to be maintained to keep stock from their gardens. Everyone turned their cattle out on the public streets to graze. I remember one time when someone left the front gate open and someone's milk cow came into the lot and drank from the barrel that had been filled with water for use in the house. She did damage to the flower garden with

her big feet, as well as what she ate of the beautiful pansies and pinks.

The most outstanding vegetables Grandfather raised were those clean turnips with their pretty purple tops and white bottoms and the green leaves, tied in bunches and stacked in piles ready to be loaded on the wagon and hauled by teams to Pioche, Caliente and other surrounding towns. The folks worked hard for what they had, but to me they always seemed happy. When breakfast was ready and on the long table in the dining room, the family kneeling at their chairs for morning prayers just seemed to give everyone a good start for the day.

I have never heard any unkindness nor a swear word in their home. They were devoted to each other.

I think Clara felt it was her duty to stay home and take care of her parents. For so many years she played the organ for all the church functions. I think of Clara as having won a great reward in heaven for her devotion to her parents, but she deprived herself of the blessings and happiness of having a family of her own.

### **As I Remember My Grandparents**

*The following was written by Julie Riding Duffin, granddaughter of Luke Syphus and Christiana Long, and daughter of Chrissie Amelia Syphus and George Riding.*

**W**hen I was a small child, I lived in Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada. This was also the home of my grandparents, Christiana and Luke Syphus, the parents of my mother Chrissie Amelia Syphus Riding. I have many happy memories of them and their home. I lived near them and saw them often.

My father used to haul freight from the railroad terminal, and of course, was away from home, sometimes weeks at a time. Many times my mother became very lonely, and she dreaded to stay alone at night, so

she would take her little family and spend the night at Grandma's and Grandpa's. We children looked forward to these visits for many reasons.

I remember my grandfather as a man with a very kind face, with a twinkle in his eye, and a smile that made you love him at sight. He had a great sense of humor. He would tell us funny stories and riddles, and sing little English songs that would make us laugh.

Then it seemed to me that the meals served at Grandma's were the best meals that I ever tasted. As children, we looked forward to having a great treat at meal times at their table. Always before eating breakfast my grandfather gathered us all around him, and we knelt in prayer. and he thanked our Father in Heaven for His loving care and protection, and asked for strength to carry on in a way that would be right and good, and pleasing to Him. He always taught us to be good and kind and live lives that would make us happy and others around us happy also.

My grandmother was a small, dainty, little woman with brown eyes and a smile on her face. She was very neat about her person. She managed her home with system and order. Everything was clean and in its proper place. She had a time for every household duty to be done. She always seemed to have some goodie to bring out as a surprise for us, and she was an excellent cook.

She was all kindness and love, and still she was firm in what she told you. She expected you to mind what she told you, and if you did not she would gently remind you. She commanded your respect and good manners at all times. She, too, would tell us stories of old England and her life there before she met and married our grandfather and came to America.

After my grandparents arrived in the new land, they passed through many hardships such as floods, Indian scares,

crop failures, etc. Nothing ever weakened their testimony of the truth of the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In her later life, our dear grandmother had cataracts on her eyes. One of them was worse than the other, and she lost partial vision of the one. Of course, in those days, medical help was hard to get in those small towns. No doctors were within miles, and if there were any, they were not specialists as we have today. At that time, medical help was not perfected as it is today, and so people just had to get along as best they could. She did, however, get medicine for her eyes, but she would suffer so much after the drops were put in her eyes, and she would have to be down for a long time after each application before she would be able to open her eyes at all. When she would come to our house, we would darken the rooms so the light would not hurt her eyes and make her as comfortable as we could, for it was a treat we always looked forward to when she and Grandfather came for dinner and to spend the evening.

With all this, Grandma still managed to get around and do a lot of her work. She usually wore a bonnet when she was outside to protect her eyes from the bright light.

We all loved our grandparents and were very close to them. I have heard many of their friends talk about them and say what wonderful people they were. When my grandmother was younger she spent much of her time caring for the sick.

It would be nice if their grandchildren and great-grandchildren could pattern their lives after them. I am sure if they did they would grow up to be fine men and women.

■

# Family Group Record for Luke Syphus Sr.

1

<b>Husband</b>		<b>Luke Syphus Sr.</b>		
<small>LDS Ordinance Data</small>				
Born	23 Jan 1827	Leaffield, Oxfordshire, England	<b>B</b>	Feb 1850
Christened			<b>E</b>	10 Aug 1861 EHOUS
Died	19 Apr 1915	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Buried	21 Apr 1915	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Father	Mathew J. Syphus Sr. (1799-1896)		<b>SP</b>	17 May 1878 SGEOR
Mother	Mary Long (1807-1879)			
Marriage	25 Dec 1851	St. Pancras, London, Oxfordshire, England	<b>SS</b>	10 Aug 1861 EHOUS
<b>Wife</b>		<b>Christiana Long</b>		
Born	10 Jan 1832	Stanlake, Oxfordshire, England	<b>B</b>	Apr 1851
Christened			<b>E</b>	10 Aug 1861 EHOUS
Died	17 Aug 1918	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Buried	19 Aug 1918	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Father	John Long (1803-1857)		<b>SP</b>	10 Jul 1936 LOGAN
Mother	Martha Hignall (Abt 1798-1839)			
<b>Children</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Luke Syphus</b>		
Born	3 Mar 1853	Cape of Good Hope, Table Bay, South Africa	<b>B</b>	Child
Christened			<b>E</b>	Child
Died	29 Mar 1853	On Ship "Java", Near Africa	<b>SP</b>	26 Sep 1879 SGEOR
Buried	1853	Buried at Sea, Near Africa		
Spouse			<b>SS</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Lovina C. Syphus</b>		
Born	31 Aug 1854	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia	<b>B</b>	3 May 1863
Christened			<b>E</b>	9 Oct 1873 EHOUS
Died	10 Dec 1934	St. George, Washington, Utah	<b>SP</b>	26 Sep 1879 SGEOR
Buried	Dec 1934	St. George, Washington, Utah		
Spouse	George Burton Whitney (1846-1927)		<b>SS</b>	9 Oct 1873 EHOUS
Marr. Date	9 Oct 1873 - Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah			
<b>3</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Edward Henry Syphus</b>		
Born	22 Aug 1856	San Pedro, Los Angeles, California	<b>B</b>	1864
Christened			<b>E</b>	26 Sep 1879 SGEOR
Died	10 Jun 1941	Logandale, Clark, Nevada	<b>SP</b>	26 Sep 1879 SGEOR
Buried	11 Jun 1941	Logandale, Clark, Nevada		
Spouse	Anna Vilate Burgess (1864-1886)	30 Mar 1884 - Tunnel Point, , Arizona	<b>SS</b>	17 Jul 1887 SGEOR
Spouse	Eleanor Amanda Beebe (1874-1937)		<b>SS</b>	21 Dec 1892 SGEOR
Marr. Date	21 Dec 1892 - St. George, Washington, Utah			
<b>4</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Martha Ellen Syphus</b>		
Born	6 Mar 1859	Toquerville, Washington, Utah	<b>B</b>	1867
Christened			<b>E</b>	9 Mar 1877 SGEOR
Died	18 May 1925	St. Thomas, Clark, Nevada	<b>SP</b>	26 Sep 1879 SGEOR
Buried	May 1925	St. Thomas Cem., Overton, Clark, Nevada		
Spouse	Henry Gentry (1854-1921)	9 Mar 1877 - St. George, Washington, Utah	<b>SS</b>	9 Mar 1877 SGEOR

# Family Group Record for Luke Syphus Sr.

2

Children (cont.)				
<b>5</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Alfred Luke Syphus Sr.</b>		
Born	22 Dec 1861	Santa Clara, Washington, Utah	<b>B</b> 1869	
Christened			<b>E</b> 17 Feb 1887	
Died	10 May 1894	St. Thomas, Clark, Nevada	<b>SP</b> BIC	
Buried	16 May 1894	Overton, St. Thomas, Clark, Nevada		
Spouse	Julia Ann Wardell (1868-1950)	17 Feb 1887 - St. George, Washington, Utah	<b>SS</b> 17 Feb 1887	SGEOR
<b>6</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>George Alvin Syphus</b>		
Born	23 Dec 1863	Santa Clara, Washington, Utah	<b>B</b> 1871	
Christened			<b>E</b> 12 Sep 1893	SGEOR
Died	28 Jan 1933	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada	<b>SP</b> BIC	
Buried	Jan 1933	Panaca Town Cemetary, Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada		
Spouse	Margaret Ann Wadsworth (1875-1927)		<b>SS</b> 12 Sep 1893	SGEOR
Marr. Date	12 Sep 1893 - St. George, Washington, Utah			
<b>7</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Levi Walter Syphus</b>		
Born	22 Apr 1866	Clover Valley, Lincoln, Nevada	<b>B</b> 14 Jun 1874	
Christened			<b>E</b> 17 Sep 1895	SGEOR
Died	14 Apr 1949	, Clark, Nevada	<b>SP</b> BIC	
Buried	Apr 1949	St. Thomas (Moved to Overton), Clark, Nevada		
Spouse			<b>SS</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Chrissie Amelia Syphus</b>		
Born	17 Mar 1868	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada	<b>B</b> 9 Apr 1876	
Christened			<b>E</b> 6 May 1890	SGEOR
Died	2 Jan 1936	Oakland, Alameda, California	<b>SP</b> BIC	
Buried	4 Jan 1936	Oakland, Alameda, California		
Spouse	George Kerry Riding (1867-1946)	6 May 1890 - St. George, Washington, Utah	<b>SS</b> 6 May 1890	SGEOR
<b>9</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Mary Etta Syphus</b>		
Born	5 Jan 1871	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada	<b>B</b> 2 Nov 1879	
Christened			<b>E</b> 12 Sep 1895	SGEOR
Died	30 Nov 1895	St. Thomas, Clark, Nevada	<b>SP</b> BIC	
Buried	Dec 1895	St. Thomas (Moved to Overton), Clark, Nevada		
Spouse	John Matheson Bunker (1870-1946)		<b>SS</b> 12 Sep 1895	SGEOR
Marr. Date	12 Sep 1895 - St. George, Washington, Utah			
<b>10</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Clara Melissa Syphus</b>		
Born	6 Jan 1874	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada	<b>B</b> 7 May 1882	
Christened			<b>E</b> 12 Sep 1895	SGEOR
Died	18 Jan 1952	Panaca, Lincoln, Nevada	<b>SP</b> BIC	
Buried	Jan 1952	St. Thomas Cem., Overton, Clark, Nevada		
Spouse			<b>SS</b>	

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# Pedigree Chart for Christiana Long

