



MYRA MYRL LONGHURST WHIPPLE, WITH DAUGHTER,
REAH LORINE

A HISTORY OF
MYRA MYRL LONGHURST WHIPPLE
1912 – 1992

INTRODUCTION

I began writing the history of Warren Longhurst, father of Myra Myrl Longhurst, in May of 2001. I soon realized it is a project which cannot be completed in just a few months. It is an undertaking which requires the input of all family members who have information on Warren and his family. It also requires research on historical events which occurred during Warren's lifetime, including comparisons of conflicting historical accounts. Nevertheless, I wanted to complete as much of the history as possible with the data I had.

As the project progressed, I became aware that the Longhurst family knew very little about Warren's only daughter, Myra Myrl. Myra is my mother, so my history of her, though by no means complete, is more extensive than what is known by other family members. I decided to write my mother's history as completely as possible at this time, so that I would have something to share at the family reunion.

I have included a lot of Warren Longhurst's history which pertains to the same time period as Myra's lifetime. I believe the information on three of Warren's wives will be enlightening to the family. I have attempted to be both compassionate and honest in Warren's history, which I hope will bring the reader a greater understanding of a character who I am discovering was quite complex.

Most information given to me by specific family members is credited to that family member. Direct quotations are in quotations marks, but I have sometimes paraphrased statements in parenthesis to facilitate meaning. Since the Longhurst legacy is rich in poetry, I have interspersed the manuscript with selected verses from different characters in the history.

Much of what I have written of Warren's early history (all of which is not included here) is taken from his and Myra Irene's writings and poetry. History of the Mexican Revolution years is taken from private accounts and "Ordeal in Mexico" by Karl E. Young.

I wish to give special thanks to Gay Longhurst, my encourager and cheerleader in this project, and to Woody, Brandon, and Betty Longhurst, who have shared our family history with me during past years and endured long telephone conversations with me during the past few months.

I will continue to add to Myra's and Warren's histories as new information surfaces. I am hoping family members who read this will provide additional information on Warren's family. I need data on Warren and his wives, and information on Warren's four children from birth to at least 1951, when Warren died.

I have identified some areas where I need additional information by using capitol letters such as RESEARCH, followed by the data needed in parenthesis. Please write me at the address below or at my e-mail address: delreahniblett@juno.com if you have additions, corrections or comments for the history.

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HISTORY OF MYRA MYRL LONGHURST WHIPPLE

Myra Myrl Longhurst was born June 12, 1912 in Colonia Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico to Warren Longhurst and Eva Allred. To understand her history, it is necessary to go back in time before her father, Warren Longhurst, married Myra Myrl's mother, Eva.

Warren Longhurst, Myra Myrl's father, and his first wife, Myra Irene Allred, were childless, and in those days, barren couples were sometimes sent on missions to the Pacific islands, hoping it would improve their fertility. Although they remained childless, their mission was a memorable experience, and Warren delighted in telling stories about this three-year mission the rest of his life.

After they returned from their mission to Samoa in 1903, Warren and Myra Irene moved to Mexico, where her parents, Byron Harvey Allred and Phoebe Allred lived. Myra's father had plural wives, so they had immigrated to Mexico after the Edmunds-Tucker act of 1887 made plural marriage illegal in the United States. This emigration was under the direction of the First Presidency.

After spending some time in Guadalupe, where the Allreds lived, Warren and Myra Irene moved to Colonia Juarez, where Warren taught horticulture in the Juarez Academy (equivalent to High School).

Not long after their move to Colonia Juarez, Warren discussed their childless situation with Apostle Ivins. Prior to becoming an Apostle, Elder Ivins had served as the Stake President in the colonies. At that time, the Manifesto had been passed forbidding plural marriage in the United States, but polygamy was not against the law in Mexico. Under the direction of the First Presidency, President Ivins had been given authority to perform polygamous marriages in Mexico.* To avoid persecution, few records of these marriages were kept.

The Smith Manifesto had ended plural marriages even in Mexico at the time Warren approached Apostle Ivins. However, Warren reported that Elder Ivins said to him something like, "I'm not officially telling you what to do, but I know what I would do in your position." He then said if he were Warren, he would take another wife in order to add children to the family.

On the 13th of July 1903, Warren was married to his second wife, Helen Margaret (Nellie) Clark. For reasons unknown, they never lived together. They were granted a temple divorce in 1905 by Joseph F. Smith.

Myra's younger half-sister, Eva Allred, came to live with them so she could continue her education at the Juarez Academy. Myra Myrl says that her mother, Eva, was the prettiest girl at school, 5 ft. 7 with curly chestnut hair and snapping brown eyes. When Myra and Warren again began considering the possibility of a plural marriage, Myra said to Warren one day, "Why not Eva?" Eva and Warren were married on November 18th, 1909. Eva was 21 and Warren was 41.

In 1910, a time of political unrest began in Mexico. Madero led the revolution against President Diaz, who was finally forced to flee to France. In 1910, bridges were burned on the railway, temporarily isolating the colonists from El Paso, Texas.

"Polygamy in Mexico as Practiced by the Mormon Church" by N. Grant Ivins

Bands of revolutionists began to demand supplies from local stores in the colonies, promising to pay later when both parties knew they would not. Petty thievery was common.

Eva and Warren's first child, William Preston, was born January 22, 1911. Myra welcomed and mothered Eva's children, as she would have her own.

The revolution in Mexico continued to gain momentum and colonists were on the fringes of skirmishes between Pancho Villa, a military leader of Madero's, and the Red Flaggers, another rebel band led by Orozco, who had defected from Madero. The colonists were continually preyed upon by bands of revolutionists passing through in need of fresh mounts and food. In most cases these demands were met in order to keep peace.

The summer of 1912, there was a sense of imminent danger in the Mormon colonies, Eva's second child, Myra Myrl, was born on June 12th, 1912.

As tension continued to mount, the Saints resorted to smuggling in rifles and ammunition with which to defend themselves if necessary. But Salazar, a leader of the Red Flagger revolutionists, got wind of this. The Federal army was on the way to put down the insurrection, and Salazar was badly in need of guns and ammunition for his cause. He demanded that Junius Romney, Stake President at the time, order the Saints to surrender all their guns. President Romney refused and Salazar threatened to keep him prisoner until his demands were met.

The situation became desperate. Six canons on flat cars were placed with barrels pointing toward Colonia Dublan, with threats that the Saints would be subject to the same treatment as the approaching federal army.

Under this pressure, President Romney agreed to order his men to deliver their guns to Salazar (some guns were to be secretly held back) if he would guarantee safe passage for women and children on the trains to El Paso.

It was July 25th. Perhaps Warren's family felt as many in Colonia Juarez did, that to surrender their guns and send their families to El Paso was unnecessary. Surely, they thought, they could continue their course of neutrality and remain to protect their homes and property. But probably they agreed with Bishop Joseph C. Bentley when he said, "If our Stake President's advice is to move women and children to a place of safety, mine will go right along with the others, and I'll instruct my ward members to do the same. No matter what private opinions I may maintain, I know that safety lies in obeying the priesthood, and I am always subject to its direction."

We can only imagine the scene at the Longhurst household as Myra and Eva hastily gathered a few belongings for the trip. Each woman was allowed one hundred pounds of luggage for herself and fifty pounds for each child. Baby Myra was only five weeks old, and Preston was 18 months old. Warren would stay behind with the other men, and they hoped when the Federal troops arrived, the revolution would soon be over and they could return to their homes. But there was no guarantee of this, and it was probably a terrifying experience for all of them as they prepared for this separation.

At daybreak, the Saints were notified by the firing of a canon ten miles away at the railroad station, that the train had arrived and they were to leave Colonia Juarez at once. When they arrived at the train station, there was a scene of great confusion. Women who had been up all night packing were confused, frightened and exhausted.

Some had packed more than their limit and had to leave luggage behind. Many were weeping at the prospect of going to El Paso alone and leaving their husbands behind in a dangerous situation.

Dave Brown, whose wife was close to delivering their child, had been chosen to accompany the group. It was an awesome responsibility for him. The trip across the desert was made in stifling heat and shortly after departure, two women fainted.

It was a miserable trip. The train windows had swelled shut from a recent rain and the close confinement in the railroad cars quickly became stifling. There wasn't enough drinking water on board and soon thirsty children were crying continually.

Dave was also responsible for delivery of the guns surrendered by the colonists. At Pearson, he was confronted with charges that the Saints had withheld guns, and surrounded by a mob with bayonets pointed at him. Women watching from the train thought he would surely be killed before he could satisfy their accusations. (Over three hundred guns actually had been held back by the colonists and were brought out later by the men.)

After Dave averted another crisis from a Mexican pickpocket demanding a dollar from every passenger, the train crossed the border and entered the Union station in El Paso. There citizens of El Paso met the refugees, helped them load up their belongings and took them to the Odd Fellows hall where they spent the night. Getting all the children and baggage up the stairs of the hall proved to be one of Dave's hardest tasks. He sent the women up first, so he had to depend on the children to take the remainder of the baggage up, but they were so tired they kept laying down and falling asleep on top of their bundles.

Finally bedrolls were broken out and the exhausted group rested in spite of the heat. The next morning pandemonium began. The excited children started running and sliding on the slick floor in the one big room, often falling down and bumping their heads, then howling in pain.

Refugees were taken to various places throughout El Paso. Many were moved to an abandoned lumber yard in El Paso, where families lived in crude sheds and army tents in miserable heat and unsanitary conditions. After a number of the refugees became ill, an outbreak of typhoid fever was feared and many left the refugee camp. The government did their best to provide accommodations and food for a time while the Saints waited to see if they could return to Mexico.

However, this was not to be, and soon the women received word that their husbands were leaving the colonies also and traveling overland to El Paso. There were anxious days of waiting as the trip took longer than expected. Surely their hearts were heavy as they realized they would not be returning to their homes soon. When the men arrived, many families relocated in El Paso, or traveled to other areas where family members resided.

Warren's family was probably still in El Paso when tragedy struck again. Early in September, Myra Irene suffered bowel obstruction, which may have been caused by adhesions from her previous appendectomy. She was taken to the hospital in El Paso, and passed away there. Bowel blockage is a painful and ugly way to die and it had to be a

traumatic thing for Warren to watch. Myra is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in El Paso.

This was probably one of the lowest points of Warren's life. The love of his life had been unexpectedly taken from him when he was only 44. He had left his home behind in a war torn country, and he was facing a most uncertain future.

In spite of his losses, Warren did the same as the Saints of his father's generation had done - he carried on. Surely Eva must have been a comfort to him at this time.

The United States government was willing to pay transportation for refugee families to travel wherever they wished to settle. Many families migrated to towns where relatives were already settled. Warren and his family eventually went to Blackfoot, Idaho.

(THERE IS AT LEAST A TWO YEAR GAP HERE. DETAILS ARE NEEDED OF THE YEARS IN BLACKFOOT)

Harvey Ashton was born in Blackfoot, Idaho, on May 7th, 1914.

Unrest continued in Mexico. After President Diaz fled to France, Madero moved into his quarters in Mexico City and assumed leadership. But insurrection continued, because Madero did not follow through on the land reforms he had promised.

Many of the Saints remained in the United States and rebuilt their lives there. Polygamous families were faced with the prospect of how to support children and wives when they were no longer able to live together. Some were not willing to make this choice, and felt they could do better by returning home rather than starting over. So despite continued revolutionary activity in Mexico, within two years of the 1912 Exodus, quite a few families had returned to their homes in Colonia Juarez and Colonia Dublan. Some houses had sustained damage through neglect and vandalism. Many dwellings had been taken over by local residents, but this wasn't all bad because it protected the homes from marauding revolutionists.

Some Saints had remained behind in the lower colonies and weathered the storm. Many sustained losses in spite of staying to protect their property, but few lost their lives. In retrospect, many of the returning Saints couldn't help but wonder if it had really been wise for them to leave. But they knew they would be blessed for their obedience to leaders.

At some point, Warren's family decided to go back to Mexico. DATE AND SITUATION NEEDED HERE Little Myra had pneumonia and this made it more urgent for them to return; a better climate might help her health.

Probably the Academy was no longer functioning RESEARCH ACADEMY HISTORY - making it necessary for Warren to provide a living from the land, rather than relying on his former profession as a teacher.)

Those who returned to the colonies did not find an easy life awaiting them. Furniture and belongings had been pillaged by the revolutionists or the native residents, and it was not uncommon for a woman to see a native wearing a dress she had once

owned. Fences had to be rebuilt, homes repaired and refurnished and livestock replaced.

Some of the men had returned after the 1912 Exodus to round up livestock they had set free to roam the hills before they left. They drove the cattle to the American border and after risky negotiations, they were able to get the livestock across to be reclaimed by the colonists who owned them. Probably some of this original livestock was brought back to Mexico by those who returned, but we do not know if this was the case with the Longhursts.

We know that hard work and determination were qualities Warren possessed, so we can assume he began immediately to rebuild what he had lost. We can be sure that Eva also did her part, mothering her three young children and providently preserving the bounties of their gardening. Myra remembered standing on a stool in the kitchen and stuffing fresh tomatoes into canning jars when she was four or five years old.

Their situation required that the family live providently. What they ate was mainly what they grew. The Longhursts bought milk from the natives because cows owned by the colonists were usually stolen.

To add to the trial of scarce supplies was the added burden of having to give "handouts" to bands of revolutionaries who were constantly passing through. The Saints had learned that their best course of action was not to resist the demands of the rebels who were looking for food and fresh mounts. But often they could be distracted from taking precious livestock with offers of food, bedding, clothing or other less desirable commodities.

The Saints were somewhat sympathetic with the plight of the revolutionaries, who were fighting for a good cause with limited resources. But this did not ease the strain on their own fight for survival. Pancho Villa was an illustrious but draining guest. In the winter of 1915, Villa and his army camped about three miles south of Dublan and made continual demands on the colonists for several weeks. He was usually willing to pay for the food they gave him, but he did so with worthless money he'd printed in an effort to aid the poor. Myra remembered helping Eva bake countless pies for Pancho Villa and his band, and the family had a trunk full of worthless money to prove it.

Myra recorded one frightening experience with Villa: "As I can remember, mama sent me out to tell Pancho's men that we didn't have any more food. I was so skinny they believed me. (Our canned food had been stored) in the granary, but she got the baby buggy, (loaded it up with canned jars of food and we) pushed it back and forth as we moved the jars. Mama (put) all the canned jars under the floor. I helped her on the dead run, and I mean I was scared."

American soldiers, under the leadership of General Pershing, came into Mexico the following spring to offer aid to Mexico during the revolution. The army camped about two miles north of Dublan, and Pershing hoped to capture Pancho Villa in the area. The soldier's presence offered some respite for the Saints, and they were able to sell baked goods to the army for bona fide currency.

On January 12, 1917, Eva's fourth child, Brandon, was born. History was repeating itself for the Longhursts, because their situation soon became similar to their plight shortly after Myra's birth in 1912. Myra has recorded the development of their

desperate straits a few days after Brandon's birth, and apparently these events happened in quick succession.

"I remember the night they burned Bishop Robinson's house down. (RESEARCH TO VERIFY DETAILS) It was going around that (the Revolutionists) were going to kill all the men and keep the women. Papa had a gun so mother hid in the evergreen trees with a club and us kids were out in the grapes. They like to scared Papa and Mama to death. . ."

Brandon was four days old when Warren and Eva decided it was best for her and the children to leave Mexico again. General Pershing was withdrawing his army from Mexico, which would make the Saints more vulnerable to the Revolutionists. Pershing took the women and children with him on the train to El Paso. Warren left later with the men and older children, traveling overland RESEARCH (Did the men take livestock, furniture, etc.)

The writer has skimpy information on history and length of the Longhurst's stay in the States after the exodus of 1917. The family left in Jan., 1917, and Eva died in Mexico Nov. 2, 1918 in Colonia Dublan, so it was less than two years. RESEARCH (Any information would be appreciated) Myra's memories were as follows:

"I remember living in a basement in El Paso, but I couldn't figure out why the windows were in the roof. I remember playing ball with Preston and getting in trouble with a shoemaker because the ball kept going in his shop. I also remember mama taking me to a circus and seeing monkeys and buying an ice cream cone. Mama took me to see the alligators in El Paso and then to a store where she bought me a doll.

We moved from El Paso to a farm in Canutillo (this is a little town right outside El Paso). Aunt Orissa (one of Eva's sisters) lived in the other part of the house. Papa didn't find good work in Canutillo, so they decided to go back to Mexico."

Myra remembers returning to the colonies: "I remember looking at the house that was ours from a neighbor's window, then mama took me over there. The house had bullet holes in it but it was in pretty good condition." RESEARCH Lucille Taylor, a widow school teacher, was living in the house at the time and it is not known if the house was in Dublan or Juarez, if in Juarez, the Longhursts would not have moved back into it.)

Warren and his family lived in Colonia Dublan and Warren continued to farm. Eva was expecting their fifth child in November of 1918. Different sources cite her cause of death as pneumonia, the flu (epidemic of 1918) or childbirth. It could have been a combination of all three.

Myra's story is as follows: "We only lived (there) a short while when mama died. We all had the flu and they brought her in a box and held the funeral outside. She had pneumonia with it and Lester was born and lived two hours because a doctor could not be obtained." Eva died November 2, 1918, and is buried in Colonia Dublan.

The pathos of this scene can hardly be imagined, even though it was typical of many such trials our ancestors endured. Both of Warren's wives had been taken in the space of just six years. The family had been displaced twice during that time, and may have lost much of what they had accumulated. Now Warren was the only parent of four little children, ranging in ages from seven to just under two years.

The flu epidemic of 1918 was rampant when Eva died, and all four of Warren's children were stricken with the disease. Lovinia Moffett was one of the sisters in the community who helped nurse the sick, and she came to provide nursing care for Warren's children. Lovinia and her two girls had been living with Lovinia's parents since she had been granted a divorce from her husband on the grounds of extreme cruelty.

Six months later, on April 15, 1919, Warren and Mary Lovenia Moffett were married by Bishop A. B. Call. Lovinia's record describes their situation in the following words: "So he and I took up the work of doing for six children. (On) April 15, 1919, . . . I married to act as mother of four additional children, and at the same time give my little ones a suitable father and myself a congenial companion."

The following verses, from a poem that Lovinia wrote, reveal that the marriage was more than one of just convenience for her:

HERO OF THE NIGHT

Duty for duty's sake joyfully done
Unsought for blessings for woman have won;
Now duty for love much lighter shall be
God's will be mine as the day dawns for me.

Star of that night which sent forth its ray
Giving me light till the dawn of the day.
Linger thou near me to brighten my way;
Let my free love all thy kindness repay.

When the two families were combined, it was a joyful occasion for Myra, almost eight at the time, and Lovinia's daughter, Bessie, who was a year younger. They had already become close friends through their association at school.

Following is a story told by Bessie: "Myra's father had a lovely collection of sea shells he had brought from his mission in the Samoan Islands. Sometimes they were out where we could enjoy seeing them, but at this time they were in the till of a trunk. We opened the trunk, enjoyed the shells, then, like the curious children we were, we wondered what other interesting things we might find.

Under the till was a package of envelopes. They were tied together neatly with a pink ribbon and a bow. Looking at them, one of us suggested there were enough letters there to play Postman. So that's what we did. We delivered one letter to each house as far as they would go. The houses were far apart. I don't know how Brother Longhurst found out, but he had us gather them all up and bring them to him. They were love letters that he had saved."

Myra Myrl remembered after Myra died, she saw her father crying over these letters and a lock of Myra's hair. The children remembered that Warren spoke more often of Myra than of Eva.

There is no doubt that Myra was a talented, spiritual, wonderful woman. But the writer feels sure Eva was also. Eva died so young that her children can remember very

little about her, and in compiling this history, there has been a dearth of information about her character and personality. CAN ANYONE SUPPLY DETAILS ON EVA OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO MIGHT HAVE RECORDS?

Bessie also told a story about another scrape that she and Myra Myrl got into.

"I recall a day our teacher was not there and we had the principle teach us. She was so strict we were afraid of her. Myra and I sat together in double seats. Behind us sat two Mexican boys, Francisco and Ramon.

Ramon and Francisco could talk to one another without moving their lips. The principle heard them talking and she asked, "Who is that talking?" and Ramon said, "Bessie and Myra."

Immediately the principle came with her scissors and tape and cut pieces of tape and taped Myra's and my mouth.

We were so embarrassed and mad. We got under our seat and took the tape off our mouths and the very first chance, we went out the door and the gate and toward home.

All the way home we were making poetry to satisfy the wrong that had been done to us . . . "Sister Pratt killed a rat, Sitting on her Sunday hat . . ."

Bessie remembered that Brother Longhurst was very strict, and she wasn't used to that. Being typical girls, it was hard not to giggle when they were together. But if they giggled during the prayer, they were sent from the table without dinner.

Lovinia had been frail as a child, and did not have much stamina. Her older daughter, Della, recorded that during Lovinia's first marriage, difficult circumstances and the necessity of hard work to support her children had already broken her health. Before her marriage to Warren, Doctors had advised her not to have more children, but like many women of that time, she trusted the Lord and left the decision to Him.

Lovinia became pregnant soon after the marriage. Before long she was so ill that she could no longer care for the children or even for herself. After a time, Lovinia's father, Joseph Moffett, and Warren decided it was best for all concerned if Lovinia and her girls went back to their home where Sister Moffett could take care of them. Lovinia's mother was a chiropractic doctor and midwife. Lovinia was so ill that she was taken from Longhursts to Moffett's on a cot.

Warren and Lovinia's son, Woodrow Wilson Longhurst, was born Feb. 10, 1920. Lovinia and her three children continued to live with her parents, but she and Warren were never divorced. Six years later, while working in El Paso, Lovinia suffered ptomaine poisoning, which further damaged her health and nearly caused her death. For the next year she pursued alternative health treatments and her health improved enough that she was able to study dietetics and help others.

In 1931, although she appeared to be in better health, Lovinia suffered a stroke. For a time she seemed to be improving, but passed away on April 19, 1931. Woody was eleven years old.

Lovinia received the following letter from Warren just three months before she died:

Dear Lovinia,

I have been thinking for some time I should write to you and inquire of you what your desires are about coming back home and starting anew, forgetting the past and living only in the present and the future? We have had long years of privation which I think need not continue providing we can and should get together. I can see that if we get together it must be now or never. Advise me soon definitely just how you feel about this matter.

With kind regards, W. Longhurst

Lovinia's sister, Della, recorded that Lovinia sent the following reply:

Brother Warren Longhurst: In reply to your note, I can only say that at present I am seeking only health. Nothing else has any attraction at present.

Now we will return to our story at the time of Warren and Lovinia's separation. We do not know how Warren felt when his marriage with Lovinia failed to meet either of their expectations. His daughter, Myra, was seven at the time and Preston was eight. We are not told how Warren managed at first. Probably he had already instilled a strong work ethic in his children and he expected a lot of them. Myra began to assume household duties and her brothers, Ashton, Preston and Brandon did outside work with Warren.

Myra's friend, Bessie, remembered that Myra was not able to play with her as much after that because of heavy home responsibilities. We can quickly see evidence of history repeating itself when we remember that Warren, himself, was left motherless at a young age and his older sister, Marantha, assumed motherly responsibilities at the age of 16.

Eva's only daughter, Myra, had probably already learned some domestic skills from her mother, as evidenced by her memory of helping to bottle tomatoes when about five. We do not know how she learned many necessary skills such as making bread, ironing, doing laundry, preparing meals and canning fruit. But learn them she did, and she continued as the "chief cook and bottle washer" in the home even after her brothers were young adults. Myra remembers learning how to make shirts for the boys when she was twelve.

Regardless of Myra's capabilities, she obviously could not substitute for a nurturing mother, and this was a great loss in the lives of all four children.

Brandon remembers that as a young boy he tore the seat of his pants out. He kept asking Myra to fix them, but she didn't get around to it. One day he got into the sugar lumps and Myra said if he didn't get out, she was going to kick him in the seat of his pants. To which Brandon replied, "But I don't have any seat of my pants to kick!"

Myra remembered that the family continued live frugally during these years. They lived from what they produced. For meat they raised a pig every year. The pig was kept inside a high adobe pen with pieces of broken glass stuck around the top of the adobe walls to keep the local natives from climbing over the wall and stealing the pig.

The children attended grade school in Colonia Dublan. When they advanced to High School, most students boarded with someone in Colonia Juarez to attend the Juarez

Stake Academy. Brandon remembers boarding with William Walser. By this time, Warren was in the tree nursery business and he traded nursery trees for their board.

Myra had a hard time with her grades and never did graduate from the Academy, but perhaps this was partly due to heavy duties at home. It was possible to take the bus from Juarez to Dublan, and Myra remembered sometimes riding the bus an hour to get home and do her work, then returning on the bus to school the next day.

Myra was in High School when Woody returned to Mexico at the age of 13. He felt sorry for Myra being the only girl in the family with no women to relate to. She worked very hard to take care of the domestic needs of the family. She was quite restricted in her social life. He doesn't remember her going to dances and other social activities. The young people walked to social functions so it was difficult for her to be out at night.

However, Woody noticed that Myra didn't seem to mind any of this, and was "happy in herself." Sometimes the Mexican boys paid attention to her, and this may have been a problem between her and her papa.

Myra was always singing and she and Woody enjoyed singing together. Although Warren sang during his younger years, he'd been hit in the throat with a baseball, and had a raspy voice after the accident.

A widower with children was a rarity in Colonia Dublan, and the Longhursts were not very involved in social life. The family seldom went on outings together.

At some point, Warren married Mabel Ruth Farnsworth, a divorced woman from El Paso who had a son and a daughter. (DATE NEEDED HERE) Little is known about the marriage or the reason it ended a few months later. Warren remained single for the rest of his life.

Observers of Warren's family and even his children felt Warren was strict and sometimes rigid. Things were black and white for him and there was little room for veering to the left or right. This "straight arrow" quality, though admirable in one who is true to his convictions, is sometimes less appreciated by the younger generation. Warren had high standards for his children, and without a woman to soften what some have considered strictness, he sometimes had little tolerance for youthful hi jinks.

Bessie remembers the girls getting into a squabble by the canal and Warren settling the quarrel by coating their faces with mud and sentencing them to stand by the stove until the mud dried. However, such punishments were not that uncommon in those days.

Warren raised a lot of watermelons, tomatoes, onions, and other produce which he sold to the community. Brandon admits that Warren's own children got into his watermelon patch. Warren didn't know it was them and fired a gun over their heads to frighten them, as he would have anyone who raided his garden.

Regarding his sternness, one has only to look to Warren's past to see the many factors that molded his life. Many who have suffered less grief have reacted less graciously. Surely none of his children can complain that he did not teach them to work, and no doubt that has served them well in their adult lives.

The writer believes that in his later years, Warren mellowed and softened, as most

of us do. In a tribute given to him at the time of his death, the following was said of him, "I believe that Uncle Warren's outstanding characteristic was kindness."

Myra continued to keep house for Warren and her brothers until she was about 22, when she decided to set out on her own. None of the boys in Colonia Dublan appealed to her and she hoped to work and earn the means to buy nicer clothing and be independent. She took the train to El Paso and went to work for an LDS family doing housework.

Myra was not in El Paso very long when she met Joseph Leo Whipple, who had also been born in the colonies, but had not returned after the 1912 Exodus. Leo said Myra was a "green country girl in a strange city. I felt sorry for her, but I also liked her and enjoyed being with her."

In the spring, Leo went back to his home town of Virden, New Mexico to work. Myra visited him in Virden, staying with his sisters. One of Leo's sisters observed that Myra was "unstable," which may indicate she was beginning to develop some symptoms of mental illness at the time.

On June 28th, 1935, Myra and Leo were married by Bishop Junius Payne under an elm tree by Leo's sister's home. They spent their wedding night sleeping by a haystack to avoid the local custom of the chivaree. Myra wrote the following poem about that day:

IN A WHIRL

A sacred moment so divine;
When I took your hand; you took mine
And underneath that shady tree
Our lives were bound in unity.

You held me close, and whispered low,
"The road is hard but sweet, you know."
That holy day we'll not forget
And oh, much less will ne're regret.

Leo and Myra returned to El Paso in September when Leo's farm work ended. Although there were problems early in the marriage, Leo did not realize what was happening to Myra. She was beginning to develop symptoms of schizophrenia, a disease caused by physical impairment of the brain, often beginning in young adulthood. It is not uncommon for victims of schizophrenia to remain silent about their voices and delusions at the onset.

In 1937 they moved to Los Angeles. In 1938, after three years of marriage, they were childless, but after consulting a doctor, Myra was able to conceive. Their daughter, Reah Lorine, was born two years later on May 20, 1939. This child was called Lorine until she entered school, and Reah thereafter.

After Lorine's birth, Myra's mental illness worsened considerably, but Leo still did

not recognize what the problem was. Myra seemed unable to care for her baby, and since Leo was also inexperienced, he wrote and asked his sister, Evalina, to come and help them for a short time. Evalina performed the traditional "mother role," since she and Leo had also lost their mother at a young age. No doubt she taught the couple how to make formula and care for their baby. But Myra was unable to assume those duties when Evalina left. Since Leo owned a small grocery store with living quarters in the back, he was able to provide for most of Lorine's care.

Even though Myra was unable to care well for her child, she loved her dearly. Myra knew she wasn't well, and in a baby book she made for Lorine, she wrote this poignant line: "My darling daughter, hope you'll have a mother, I didn't." The following poem that Myra wrote was also inside the book.

LORINE

Oh! Precious lamb, a gift from God,
Who made your smile divine;
Can I forget to thank Him
Now that he's made you mine?

When Lorine was eight months old, Leo sold the store in Los Angeles and moved to El Paso where he went to work in a Gulf Service Station. His job made it necessary for Myra to care for Lorine during the day. In her delusions, Myra was not aware that she was neglecting her child. The neighbors in the apartment building told Leo that Myra would leave Lorine alone in the apartment for periods of time, or leave the door open when she left, and Lorine would crawl out into the hallway.

In the spring Lorine became very sick with diarrhea, probably caused from poor nutrition. Before Leo went to work one morning he told Myra to take her to the Dr. Later in the day Myra called Leo from the Dr's office and said he must get down there at once. The Dr. took Leo alone into his office and told him that Lorine was critically ill and must be admitted to the hospital. He also said Myra was not mentally capable of caring for a sick baby.

After a few days in the hospital, Lorine's condition worsened to the point that the Dr. said he could do no more for her, and he predicted that she would die. Leo found another Dr. and moved Lorine to a different hospital. Lorine was lifeless and did not recognize him. She was in the hospital over two months and in critical condition much of that time. The Dr. used several new techniques to save her life.

Soon after Lorine came home from the hospital, Leo's health broke, the Gulf station where he worked was sold, and he lost his job. The depression was in full swing, there were hospital bills to pay and they were desperate for cash. Leo's brother, Willard, loaned him money to buy another small grocery store enabling him to provide a living and care for Lorine.

The marriage was rapidly deteriorating. Myra decided to visit her father, Warren, in Colonia Dublan and she took Lorine with her. When Lorine caught a cold, Myra came back to El Paso and a few days later, she left again by herself and spent several weeks with

her father.

When Myra returned to El Paso again, Leo learned from a friend that Myra was planning to leave him permanently and take Lorine with her to Mexico. He immediately hired a lawyer, who told him he would have to file for divorce to gain custody of Lorine. The court served Myra with a restraining order forbidding her to take Lorine from Leo's custody. Myra returned to Mexico for a while, then came back to El Paso and got a job at a movie confection. When the divorce was final, Myra was given visitation rights and occasionally took Lorine for short walks or rode the bus with her to shop.

Victims of schizophrenia often maintain an independent lifestyle for periods of time, seeming to be normal, even without medication. Apparently Myra did better for a while and then worsened again. About a year after the divorce, Warren came to El Paso and put Myra through the commitment process, which consisted of a judge declaring Myra mentally ill. She was institutionalized in the State Hospital in Big Springs, Texas.

This was surely a sad and traumatic time for both Leo and Warren, and probably brought back an old memory for Warren. When he had been in Evanston, Wyoming, settling the dispute on his land in Star Valley, he and his companions had visited a mental asylum there. He had written, "(it was) a very elegant building, but it was a most horrible sight to look upon the inmates, who numbered about 35 in all."

Warren could probably have not imagined that his own daughter would one day be an "inmate" in such a place.

Brandon traveled through Texas during this time, purchasing some pecan trees to take back to Mexico. He visited Myra in the hospital at Big Springs. (DOES ANYONE KNOW OF OTHER VISITS OR LETTERS FROM MYRA TO THE FAMILY DURING HER TIMES AT DIFFERENT HOSPITALS?)

Myra remained in the hospital for a little over a year, receiving shock treatments and medication. Leo kept in touch with her Dr. and sent her small amounts of cash so she would have spending money for personal items and treats from the commissary. It is not known what contact her family had with her.

In the spring of 1943, Myra had improved, and the Dr. felt she was ready for a one year furlough. Since Warren was now Myra's guardian, Leo notified him and Warren and his son, Preston, took Myra out of the hospital, with the understanding that she was to return in a year for evaluation or her furlough would become a permanent release.

Today, schizophrenic victims can lead fairly normal lives if they remain on their medication. It is not known if Myra was released on medication and if she was, whether she continued to stay on it.

Warren found Myra a place to board in El Paso and she got a job. Lorine was four years old and Myra enjoyed visiting her and taking her to town. Leo kept track of how Myra was doing on her own and that fall, the people where she boarded told him she had left. Apparently Myra suffered a psychotic break at this time, and Leo found her sleeping in his garage. Years later, he told his daughter that there were many bizarre and upsetting things that Myra did, but it was better that she not know about them. Leo notified Warren of Myra's condition and took Myra in until something could be resolved. She continued to work, but did not do well mentally.

Myra spent the winter with Leo and Lorine and there were some happy times and

some bad times as Myra's illness went through typical highs and lows. Leo was in the radio repair business and he made wax phonograph records of the three of them singing and telling stories with Lorine. These records are in the writer's possession.

Through the winter, Myra's mental condition deteriorated and Leo realized it was not good for his daughter, Lorine, to continue to live under her influence. He made arrangements for Lorine to spend the summer with his sister, Evalina, in Virden and notified Warren that Myra needed to go back into the hospital. Because the year's furlough had expired, it was necessary to go through the commitment process again, and this time she was sent to the hospital in Austin, Texas.

Two years later, in 1948, Leo and Reah Lorine moved to Virden, New Mexico. Right before the move, Leo and his dad visited Myra in Austin, probably hoping that Myra had improved enough to be released.

Leo wrote, "I spent two days visiting her; she was in bad shape mentally and physically. The last evening after telling her goodbye, I went back to the motel, lay on the bed and cried for over an hour; the visit had been heartbreaking for me." Leo still loved Myra, and may have hoped that she would get well and they could be a family again. If so, he now realized this was not going to happen.

In his history, Leo recorded that Myra had a sweet, loving personality and was cheerful and happy when she was normal. He also said that he knew she could not help her mental illness, and was not responsible for the things she did when under its influence, any more than someone with a crippled leg could help limping.

Leo recorded, "I continued to send money to Myra's account at the hospital commissary. At the request of a nurse I sent the nurse money to buy Myra clothes so she could take her out on weekends. The nurse promised to take Myra on trips to town, but I never knew if Myra got the benefit of the money I sent. I continued to write her and Myra wrote occasionally but her letters were sketchy and very disorganized."

Leo remarried in November 1950 to Iva Chapman, a widow with an adopted son in the service. When Leo prepared a Christmas package for Myra, as was his custom, Iva became jealous, so he did not send the package, and decided it was best to not be in touch with Myra. So at that time he didn't learn that Myra had already been discharged from the hospital and had returned to Mexico to live with her father.

Warren was 83, living alone, and tending chickens. Probably he was comforted to have Myra with him and she may have been in fairly good mental condition after being discharged from the hospital.

However, they were not together for very long. On May 13th, Warren told Myra that he wasn't feeling well. The next morning she found Warren had died in his sleep of a heart attack. He is buried in Dublan, Mexico.

After Warren died, Myra lived with Brandon and Betty in Safford for a period of time. Since Leo and Reah were only 40 miles away in Virden, Brandon felt Leo should know Myra was in Safford. This news was alarming to Leo, who not only had to deal with a jealous wife, but was also fearful that Myra might try to kidnap Reah who was 13 at the time, but quiet small for her age. Myra probably never would have made such an attempt, nor did she have the means to do it, but Leo warned Reah to not go with anyone she didn't know. This caused a great deal of fear for Reah, who felt uneasy any time she

saw a strange car pass through the little town of Virden.

That Christmas, Myra sent Reah a box of fudge. Leo, still fearful, warned her that it might not be safe to eat, so she threw it away. Her fear was so great that she wanted nothing to do with her mother.

Reah was in the same Stake as Myra and usually attended Stake Conference with her Aunt Geneva. That spring, Leo felt uneasy about letting Reah go to conference in Safford, so her stepmother, Iva, took her. In the morning session, Iva thought she saw Myra, and asked Reah if she thought it was her mother and if she wanted to stay. Reah asked to go home and they promptly left.

Leo visited Betty and Brandon in Safford to find out more about Myra's situation. Although protective of Reah, Leo was also concerned about Myra's welfare, but unable to help because of Iva's jealousy.

Myra stayed with Betty and Brandon several months. She was very withdrawn and sometimes uncooperative. At some time previous to this, Myra had begun smoking, but she usually smoked outside while she stayed with them. Then her brother, Preston, took Myra with him to Farmington, New Mexico. She lived with him and helped care for his ill wife, Pearl. She probably remained with Preston until Pearl passed away November 2, (YEAR?).

At some time Myra was committed to the mental hospital in Las Vegas, New Mexico. She spent time in the hospital and time in State operated or State supported boarding homes. Little is known about these years. At some time in her life, Myra says she supported herself by picking cotton, but the place is unknown. While she was in Las Vegas, New Mexico, she was in contact with some people she had known in Old Mexico, and tried to help them.

During these years, Reah grew up, married Del Niblett in 1957, and moved to Alaska. Del was an electrician and they were both very involved in the church working with the youth. While Myra was in Las Vegas, New Mexico, she was anxious to know where her daughter was and how she was doing. She learned through a bishop, probably Reah's uncle, Willard Whipple, a bishop in El Paso, that Reah was in Alaska.

After the 1964 earthquake in Alaska, Myra was especially anxious to know if her daughter was all right. She wrote Reah's uncle, Willard Whipple, and asked him to forward a letter and some lace she had crocheted to Reah. Myra wrote in her letter to Reah, "I have wanted to contact you for years, hoping that since you grew up you might reason that I never was a bad woman, only a sick one that wanted to learn about what our trouble was."

By now Reah had three children and was less afraid of her mother. She wondered if she should write back, and asked her dad and her uncle for advice. Because of their experiences in the past, they felt it wasn't wise for her to contact Myra. Leo was concerned that a correspondence might develop into a situation where Reah might be too close to her mother, resulting in heartache for her and her family. He was fearful that the situation wouldn't be good for her marriage. Reah decided they were right. Her heart had begun to soften but she trusted other's advice more than she trusted what the spirit was telling her.

At some point, during these years Myra again lived with her brother, Preston and

his wife (CLAUDIA? RESEARCH) in (Farmington, New Mexico?). This marriage must have ended (in divorce?) and Preston and Myra came to Mesa where Betty and Brandon lived. For a short time, Myra lived with her brother, Brandon, and Preston lived in a little house behind Betty's mother's home.

When they arrived in Mesa, Myra was ill so Betty and Brandon took her to Dr. Haws, an LDS Doctor who had known Myra in Mexico.

After Myra was better, Dr. Haws recommended that Myra be committed to the Phoenix State Mental Hospital. With his and Brandon's testimony, he was able to "pull some strings" and get her into the hospital without a court hearing. By this time, mental hospitals were much more livable and medications more advanced. Myra enjoyed it there and was free to roam the fenced in grounds; she liked to be outside.

Myra was in this hospital over two years, where her mental health improved. Schizophrenia typically "burns itself out" during the 50's, but the shock treatments and strong medications had taken their toll with her, and she began to be senile before her time. Myra was released into a State supported boarding home. In the boarding home, she helped with laundry, dishes and household chores, and was free to come and go on her own. Her SSI furnished room and board and some spending money. Medications were provided to help maintain her stability.

Betty and Brandon visited her regularly and occasionally took her to their home for the day or a weekend. Myra still smoked extensively, "rolled her own," in fact, because it was cheaper. Since Betty and Brandon were non-smokers, Myra's smoking caused them some discomfort, but they wanted to help her.

In 1972, Reah began to feel strong promptings to contact her mother. She was hesitant to tell her father, Leo, about these feelings because she feared he would object. After praying about it, she tried to locate her mother through church records but was unsuccessful. A year later, she wrote to her Aunt Evalina in Mesa, Arizona, and mentioned her search. As destiny would have it, Evalina soon learned that her daughter, Ione, was in the same ward as Brandon, and of course Brandon knew where Myra was.

Reah was still unsure about whether to have direct communication with her mother, but wanted to help her if her needs were not taken care of. She contacted Leo and brought him up to date on what she had done. Leo had divorced Iva in 1959, and married Mildred Lee, a nurse. Leo's wife had compassionate feelings toward Myra, was anxious that she be helped, and was probably instrumental in alleviating Leo's doubts. They were living in Prescott, Arizona and went to Mesa to meet with Brandon and Betty to find out more about Myra. Their objective was to provide Reah with information to help in making her decision.

Reah's Aunt Evalina visited Myra and her observations were even more helpful to Reah. She said that she felt what would be of more benefit to Myra than financial aid was to see her daughter whom she loved. The following spring, in 1973, Reah flew from Alaska to Mesa for a reunion with Myra. Reah was 34, Myra was 61 and they had been apart almost 30 years.

Brandon and Betty took Reah to Myra's boarding house, and Myra got into the car beside her daughter. When she first saw her mother, Reah began crying and held onto

her for a long time, feeling like she never wanted to let go. The rest of the day, Myra couldn't seem to take her eyes away from her "baby" whom she had waited so many years to see.

Brandon and Betty had recently learned that Myra was not in a good situation in her boarding home and together with Reah they were able to find a better place and move Myra into it. Reah made arrangements with the new home to provide for Myra's extra needs. Reah took her shopping for clothes and to be fitted with glasses.

Reah was only able to visit Myra once a year while she was in Alaska, but in 1979, she moved to Idaho and was able to go a little more often. She decided it was best for her mother to stay in Arizona, rather than to risk the possibility that she might not qualify for SSI in Idaho. On their visits, Reah usually took Myra shopping for clothes, for car rides and outings and for Myra's favorite thing - out to eat hamburgers! Although Myra had dentures, she never wore them, and it was amazing to Reah how fast she could eat a hamburger. Of course, if the hamburgers were juicy, this feat could be a little messy too!

Leo Whipple passed away July 6, 1986 in Meridian, Idaho.

About 1990 Myra began to have some problems with her lungs. She had a serious episode of pneumonia and while she was in the hospital under oxygen, she finally was forced to give up her cigarettes, which was a blessing.

From the hospital she was moved to a nursing home. There she was a favorite with the nurses; although quiet by nature, she was cheerful and uncomplaining. Myra never cut her hair and wore it in a long braid down her back or coiled around her head. The nurses liked to brush out her hair and braid it.

Betty and Brandon continued to visit and when Woodrow came from Idaho to Arizona, he would visit also. What a treat it was for Myra as Woody played his harmonica and they sang the old songs from Mexico.

Best of all, Myra's friendship with her childhood pal, Bessie, was renewed when she was moved to a nursing home close enough for Bessie to ride the bus there. Bessie volunteered to come once a week to the home and play the piano for "singing time." She was always sure to play Myra's favorite songs, such as "Red River Valley," and "Jesus Wants Me For a Sunbeam," and Myra would sing along. Then they would have lunch together and visit.

During the last few years of Myra's life she was quite senile and childlike. Sometimes Reah had felt uncomfortable with her mother during their visits together, because at times Myra was very quiet and at other times uninhibited by social norms. But as Myra grew more childlike, Reah relaxed and spent their time together telling her mother stories and singing primary songs with her. Myra could still remember the words to a few song in Spanish, which she sang for Reah.

Although the relationship was not a typical mother-daughter one, Reah never regretted her decision to find her mother and bring a little happiness into her last years. And she feels extremely grateful for Betty and Brandon's compassionate care and many visits to her mother.

Myra passed away suddenly on New Year's Day, 1992, in Mesa, Arizona with lung and heart problems. When she was taken to Emergency, Betty and Brandon were notified and went to see her there. She appeared to be stabilized, but soon after they got

home, they were called again. Myra had passed away by the time they got back to the hospital.

Since she had been frail for some time, Reah had made most of the arrangements for her funeral and burial a year or so before, knowing it would take some time for them to drive from Idaho. Myra's funeral was held in Bunker's Funeral Home for the small number of family and friends who were able to attend. Woody came from Idaho also, and gave the funeral message at Reah's request. His compassionate remarks about Myra and her situation of "never really having the free agency that most of us enjoy," were very healing for Reah.

After the funeral, Reah, spent with emotion, returned to her brother-in-law's home to try and get some rest in the afternoon. As she rested, there came unbidden into her mind a lucid dream of Myra as she would someday be in her resurrected state - beautiful, young, and whole in body and mind. Reah loved to dance, and in this dream/vision she saw herself and her mother whirling and dancing in joyous formations, and felt in a small measure the relationship they had not been privileged to experience, but would one day be given.

Reah, Del, and his brother Larry, who also lived in Mesa, transported Myra's body 200 miles, where she was buried in Reah's hometown of Virden, New Mexico. Myra is buried not far from Leo, where Reah feels he will one day have the opportunity to call her forth on resurrection morning.

Reah completed Myra's temple work a year later and was sealed to her father, Leo Whipple, and her mother, Myra Longhurst. Reah's daughter, Debra Farrell, who looks very much like Myra at the same age, served as her proxy and her husband, Del Niblett, served as Leo's proxy.

After the burial, Reah wrote the following poem.

A NEW YEAR GOODBYE

Goodbye
To the mother I never really knew.
The care worn face,
Relaxed now;
The braided hair coiled neatly;
Hands that were idle, lie idle yet;
White and still.

Goodbye
To hopes never reaching fulfillment.
No time now to rock
On a soft, sweet breast.
No use now to question
Why our dreams weren't fulfilled;
Let go.

Farewell,
Damp earth falling quickly
Around her pale, blue casket,
Christmas red and white flowers,
Flaming against the mound.
We walk slowly away;
"It's over."

But in dreams,
Mother, daughter are dancing;
Hands reaching, then tenderly touching;
Set free from the prison of body and mind;
All whole, all new, and all youthful;
Sharing decades of unspoken promises
And Celestial hellos.

Reah Niblett Jan. 4, 1992 - Mother's burial