

## THE LUCAS-HUNT STORY

Normandie, France -- Normandy, Missouri

Pont-au-de-Mer, Normandie, France, situated at the head of navigation on the River Brille which empties into the River Seine, was not a large town, but its role in history is very important. It was a town of about 8,000 people and the chief business was the manufacture of leather goods and cloth. The king's prosecuting attorney (procureur du roi) from 1760 was Robert Edward Lucas. This Lucas was a member of an old Norman family, with a long pedigree, and members in high standing of rank and social distinction.

Robert Edward Lucas married La Mademoiselle de L'Arche. He had a fine old family place outside town and the position of prosecuting attorney (which had been in the family for generations). A son was born to this family who would shape a large portion of our own mid-section of the United States--namely, the City of St. Louis found within the Louisiana Purchase and, more specifically, the county area we know today as Normandy. This son was named Jean Baptiste Charles Lucas, born August 14, 1758.

From his birth it was expected that J.B.C. Lucas would follow in the footsteps of his father and continue the family heritage of prosecuting attorney. As a child, he enjoyed the best possible education with the idea that he would become his father's successor. His education was liberal and exact, classical and technical, and divided between a university founded at Caen by King Henry VI of England, and at Honfleur and Paris Law School.

As was the custom in those days, families arranged the marriages of their children, but J.B.C. Lucas was an individualist, or "I'll do my own thing" type of person, and this wasn't what he wanted. At Honfleur, he met Mademoiselle Anne Sebin (also spelled Sabin in some books), whose father was a manufacturer of cloth. Her family was considered beneath Lucas' family and she was not looked upon as his social equal. As in a plot of a romantic novel, the affairs of the heart won out. Anne was beautiful, well-educated and extremely intelligent. J.B.C. decided to forego his family's plans for his future, and later married Anne Sebin.

The elder Robert Edward Lucas and his son had a disagreement over politics. J.B.C. Lucas, while residing in Paris and attending law school, became acquainted with Jacques Le Roy de Chaumot. This was at a point in history when the American Revolution was going on and Benjamin Franklin (then American Minister to France) and John Adams traveled to Paris, France. These two young people became interested in and indoctrinated with the American ideals.

Le Roy was so thoroughly impressed with the American ideal that he was coming to this country to buy land and settle in the State of New York. He and J.B.C. Lucas, by then married to Anne Sebin, traveled to the United States, arriving in 1784. They carried a letter of introduction from B. Franklin, recommending J.B.C. to Thomas Jefferson as an able judge who should prove valuable in forming the laws in a newborn republic.

As soon as Lucas had learned enough English, Anne was able to join him in their new home. They settled near Pittsburgh with his lifelong friend, Albert Gallatin, who had traveled to the United States in 1780. Gallatin originally purchased land in Virginia but the Indians prevented his using it.

Lucas purchased a farm called "Montpelier" on Coal Hill on the Monongahela River, six miles from Pittsburgh. The following children were born to the couple while living in Pennsylvania:

- Robert, the eldest - A West Point cadet who died in the service of his country along the Canadian frontier in 1813
- Charles, the lawyer - Killed on Bloody Island in a duel with Thomas Hart Benton
- Adrian, the planter - Died on Lake Loutre, Missouri, while crossing the ice in 1804
- Anne - of whom we shall tell more
- James H.
- William

There is some information to substantiate that there were more children born to this couple but, as seems to be the case, history tells of only surviving children in available records. Many small graves were left behind in churchyards and in traveling across country, records are lost forever.

J.B.C. Lucas took an active part in the politics of Pennsylvania. He was elected to the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1795 and rightly so, as he was a man of superior culture and remarkable judgment. Because of his abilities, his qualifications and his French heritage, President Jefferson asked him to go west and feel out the situation of French and Spanish settlers of Louisiana in 1801. Taking the name of Pantreaux, he traveled to St. Louis, Ste. Genevieve, and down river to New Orleans.

The year 1803 found the United States making the biggest purchase of its lifetime--the Louisiana Purchase--but also found J.B.C. Lucas as a member of Congress from Western Pennsylvania. At this time President Jefferson discovered that Napoleon Bonaparte was in financial difficulty. There was also a threat to our new republic from New Orleans northward, and the French under the rule of the aggressive Napoleon could have posed many a problem to our own St. Louis area. Upon the completion of the Louisiana Purchase, President Jefferson appointed Lucas Commissioner of Land Claims and Judge of the Territorial Court. He sold his Coal Hill farm for \$5,000 and traveled west, arriving in St. Louis in September, 1805.

JOE LUCAS

Starting a life in a new country may be exciting and fulfilling, but there are also many moments of heartbreak and terror. In a desolate spot about a mile from the Monongahela River is a little grave overgrown with briars and brambles, indistinguishable but for a crumbling headstone which marks the grave of a beloved child:

Joseph Lucas  
F. - J.B.C. Lucas  
M. - Anne Sabin  
\*\*\*\*\* D. 1795

A reminder to the bloody period in history from the time of Braddock's defeat to the close of the French and Indian War, scattered settlements of whites began to live on the banks of the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers.

In the white settlement was the J.B.C. Lucas family (Lucas and Anne Sebin). The settlers were on friendly terms with the Indians and little Joe Lucas was a favorite with Mililuki, the Queen of the tribe. The little boy was as much at home in the Indian wigwam as in his father's cabin. The dusky Queen was fond of chestnuts and to please her, Joe wandered off to the forest where he knew there was a big chestnut tree heavy with nuts. He had collected many nuts and had climbed into the tree to give it a good shake when, with a resounding warwhoop, Indian warriors of the Chartiers Tribe broke through the forest and surrounded him. A few minutes later, his scalp was hanging from the trunk of the tree and beneath was a defiance to Queen Mililuki's tribe, of which the Chartiers had been jealous.

The scalp was found the next day. The body was buried nearby and a tombstone erected over the grave. Immediately, the Indian braves and white settlers took to the warpath. The war lasted through the winter and far into the spring, until none were left but a few settlers and only the old of both tribes.

-- Documented by information from  
J.B.C. Lucas - 1908, booklet.

John Lucas, Grandson

## ANNE LUCAS HUNT - RECOLLECTIONS

Anne Lucas was born on September 23, 1796, at a place called Montpelier, on Coal Hill six miles from Pittsburgh on the Monongahela River. Her father, Jean Baptiste Charles Lucas, arrived in Philadelphia in the year 1784 and purchased their farm near Pittsburgh. (Pittsburgh then went by the name of Fort-du-Quesne.) Shortly after settling on Coal Hill, J.B.C. was elected to the Legislature of Pennsylvania. He subsequently became Judge of the Court of Common Pleas and finally took his seat as a member of Congress. He resigned this post on being appointed by President Jefferson as one of the commissioners for the adjudication of land titles in the Province of Upper Louisiana. The other two commissioners were Clement B. Penrose of Philadelphia and Mr. Donaldson of Baltimore. He was also appointed Judge of the first court which sat there for the purpose of passing on those titles.

One reason Lucas resigned his seat in Congress and moved to St. Louis was that the inhabitants of St. Louis at that time were nearly all French and he and his wife, Anne, were both desirous of French society. Also from his wife's point of view, his trips made on horseback to the capital were long and arduous and his long absences during the winter months were distressing.

Anne L. Hunt recalls at this time that the paper they took changed dates --from the 1700's to the 1800's. This would have made her about 4 years old. Considered a precocious child, she also remembered the newspaper motto: "Man is man, and who is more?"

The family went west from Pennsylvania in a flat-boat purchased by Lucas, and a corporal's guard (one man to steer and four men to row) furnished by the government. The boat had a little cabin in the after part for the wife and children. The rest of the boat was open and exposed to the weather. They took furniture and used their own bedsteads instead of bunks.

The following quotes are from Anne L. Hunt to her family--left in small booklet form:

"It was the 7th of June, 1805, when we bade farewell to our old homestead, which was the birthplace of the five children with them, for at that time my father's family consisted of my mother, my eldest brother Robert, who was a cadet at West Point, my brothers Charles and Adrian, myself, my brother William, two years younger, and my brother James, who was four years younger. I was then in my eighth year." (She must have regarded Robert as an adult).

"No other boats started when we did, but we occasionally passed boats and rafts on the way, some bound for as far as New Orleans."

"I remember one time at Shawneetown that my father, having grown tired of being cooped up so long, took his mattress and laid down on shore. During the night my mother was terribly frightened by hearing the whooping and yelling of Indians, fearing they might injure my father, but it turned out to be a festive occasion."

"At Louisville, we went ashore and visited Mr. Berthond, a friend of father's. The soldiers continued on rowing the boat over the falls and we embarked again below the falls. The distance from Cairo to Cape Girardeau we traveled on three horses hired or bought by father, one for himself, one for mother, and one for an indentured white girl whom we had with us. The three younger children rode behind which was the custom in olden times."

"We went from Cape Girardeau to St. Louis by keel boat. Cape Girardeau was not quite as big as St. Louis then, but very near it. The houses were not as fine as St. Louis houses. The one we stopped at was made of logs, half-hewn, so as to make a close joint, and was owned by Mr. Laurimier, the father of the gentleman of that name who has since become famous. Fort Laramie was evidently named for this family."

"Passing St. Genevieve, the Mississippi River had washed the old town away and even the cemetery, which stood behind the town, was fast disappearing, for we could see the ends of the coffins sticking out of the bank. The people were busily engaged in building a new town on the hill, out of the reach of the treacherous river."

"I don't recollect exactly when we reached St. Louis, but it was somewhere in the forepart of September, which would make the entire trip about three months, and that was considered a fast trip in early days."

"Father had been to St. Louis earlier on this trip to see about the keel boat and had made arrangements with Mr. Soulard to rent a house for him. Mr. Soulard was absent when we arrived and we were invited to stay at his home until ours was ready. Mr. Soulard's partner, Mr. Cerre, had a house for us in about a week. The house we first occupied in St. Louis was on Third St., about two squares below Market St. It was a one-story house, built of logs, vertical, like posts, and had a large room in the center, with two or three smaller ones around it. The roof was of shingle, and the shingles were hung to the rafters with wooden pegs. The chimney was a monstrous affair, and the black walnut mantle piece was so high that none of the children could reach it."

"We lived in the house on Third St. below Market for a year or two, and then my father bought a house and lot on Second and Cedar. The house had one stone wall on the south, and was built like a stockade. My mother died in 1811, and my father then built a house on the corner of what is now Seventh and Market. He had been cultivating ground before that between Seventh and Fourth Streets. Beyond and west of that were his pastures, and right alongside of the pastures he built this house. When we were about to move into it, I remember that people told my father that he was not doing a prudent thing in taking me, a fourteen-year-old girl, so far away, that the Indians might carry me off sometime when he was downtown attending to his business."

In 1814, when Anne Lucas was 17 year old, she married Capt. Theodore Hunt, formerly of the U. S. Navy. He commanded the original American Battleship Hornet, whose successor was to play an important part in World War II. Capt. Hunt settled in St. Louis, entering into partnership with Emanuel Lisa. After his marriage, he bought a place from his partner on Second Street where the Hunts lived for a good many years. Upon the death of Charles Lucas in 1817 (he was shot by Thomas Hart Benton), his land holdings were given to Anne Lucas Hunt, his sister. Thus, Anne and her brother James H. became heirs to all the land holdings of their father, Judge Jean Baptiste Charles Lucas. The feelings between the Lucas and Benton families were for a time so intense that Mrs. Hunt moved--not to her brother's former home, but to what was then a remote country section on the Gravois Road. She occupied the house which was later sold to Frederick Dent, the father-in-law of General Grant, into whose possession the estate was later transferred, and now is on the estate of the Busch family.

In 1820, Mme. Hunt and her family went to live upon the Lucas section in Normandy. She called her home the "Shelter", whimsically named because of her intention to keep it always for her old age. She retained only 120 acres and in 1820 she built a home on the ground of our present Normandy Schools Administration Building. At her death the property went to the wife of her cousin, Wilson P. Hunt, then to Mrs. Julia Hunt Turner and to Julia Turner Lee (her husband, William H. Lee, was president of Merchants-Laclede National Bank). In 1931, the property was sold to the Cenacle and in 1947 to the Normandy School District.

Capt. Theodore Hunt died in 1832. Four years later, in 1836, Anne married her former husband's cousin, Wilson Price Hunt. She relates: "Wilson P. Hunt (who became my second husband) had come out from New Jersey and gone in business here before our time with a man named Hankinson, and I recollect how I and the other children used to admire their guadily painted sign-- HUNT AND HANKINSON'S NEW CASH STORE. Their store and that of Falconer and Comegys were the only ones that had signs, and we children used to look upon them as great works of art."

Wilson Price Hunt won Anne's loyalty when she was a 9-year-old child by treats of almonds and raisins from his store. He achieved some measure of fame as one of the leaders on the trip financed by John Jacob Astor (mentioned in Washington Irving's "Astoria") to find a shorter route for trade to the Northwest by way of the Snake River to the mouth of the Columbia River. The expedition had been tragic, but it was not without achievements. Although Hunt, the youthful businessman, had been ill-chosen as its leader, his bravery and persistence in forcing his way through to the Pacific had added greatly to men's knowledge of the geography and terrain of the Northwest. His ordeals on the Snake River would show future travelers where not to venture, but his route as a whole did turn out to be shorter, faster and easier than that of Lewis and Clark. Almost all portions of the trail he blazed were used thereafter by Western pioneers.

As for the full Astorian venture, it fell victim to the War of 1812 and was eventually abandoned. But it lasted long enough to help establish the claim of the United States to the lower Columbian River and the Oregon country. Back in St. Louis where he became the operator of a large farm, Postmaster of the city, and successful dealer in furs until his death in 1842, Hunt had the satisfaction of knowing that his trails on the Snake River had provided a major basis for the American claim.

Widowed twice by the year 1842, Anne Lucas Hunt managed the large estate she had inherited. Seeming to look upon herself chiefly as an almoner of her large income, she gave generously to charities, some of which she planned and brought into existence. Nine religious institutions, many given their land by Mme. Hunt, have their share of the original grant of land (given Judge J.B.C. Lucas in 1805 for his work for the U. S. Government). They are the sites of St. Anne's Church and St. Anne's School, the home for the Loretto Sisters, the Convent of the Immaculate Heart for the Good Shepherd nuns, The Cenacle, St. Vincent's Orphans Home and Sanitorium, Incarnate Word Convent, Marillac, the Mother House for the Sisters of Charity, and the Oblate Sisters of Providence. She also aided materially the Little Sisters of the Poor and in money and real estate devoted nearly a million dollars to philanthropic and humanitarian purposes. She died April 13, 1879.

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On the advice of his wife, Anne Sebin Lucas, Judge Lucas invested his money in land. His original purchases were lots facing what is now Fourth Street. Each lot was one arpent wide by forty arpents deep. These were common fields for the city, with each man cultivating what he pleased. Soon the Judge owned all the land from Market Street to St. Charles Avenue, and from Fourth Street to Jefferson Avenue (or Pratte). His original idea of land purchasing was not for speculation but for what the land would produce. As he usually paid about \$100 for an area of land an arpent wide and forty arpents deep, he indeed did speculate in the increased value of land. The last purchase of land by Judge Lucas was Cote Brilliante, consisting of 240 acres, which he bought for \$150 in gold. This was undivided land owned by James H. and Anne Lucas Hunt (his children). He was offered land in New Madrid, Missouri in payment for government work. This land was damaged by an earthquake and, instead, he chose property in the County of St. Louis, naming it Normandy after the province in France from which he came. At the mouth of the Missouri River there were 640 acres. This was the site of the Old Spanish Fort where the Battle of Bellefontaine was fought. Charles Lucas, the Judge's second-eldest son, participated in the battle as a Colonel. Fort Bellefontaine was the forerunner of our present Jefferson Barracks in the south section of the city. Additional land consisted of 400 arpents near Eureka Station on the Meramec; 20 acres on Clayton Road, the old Barret place, was also in the estate. Again, it was his wife who saw the possibilities of this small fur-trading town with its mud streets moving westward and becoming a great cultural center.

Judge Lucas was a consistent member of the Catholic Church. He was a man of refined, scholastic tastes and habits and he gave to his family all the time he could spare from his business. He personally saw to the education of his only living daughter. He was a man of strong feelings and he grieved for the loss of five of his six sons who died suddenly in their youth. He lost his wife on August 3, 1811.

Charles Lucas, son of Judge J.B.C. Lucas, was sent to Pennsylvania for a classical education at Jefferson College. He returned to St. Louis in 1811. In 1812, he entered a volunteer group in St. Louis for service in our second war with England. He participated in a campaign up the Illinois River, and later became a member of a company of artillery which tended its service to the Governor of the Territory. He commanded the artillery based on an island near Portage des Sioux. He was later commissioned Captain, as successor to his eldest brother, Robert, who resigned to go into the Army. Robert died in the service of his country along the Canadian frontier in 1813.

In the year 1814 Charles was admitted to the bar, elected one of the representatives for the County of St. Louis in the Legislative Assembly. Later he was appointed U. S. Attorney for the Missouri Territory. He settled on the huge tract of land we know now as Bel-Nor. The site of his original home is now Incarnate Word Academy. He had been a distinguished lawyer and one of the most promising young men west of the Mississippi River. In 1817, while trying a court case, he became involved over an issue with another young lawyer, Thomas Hart Benton, later a politician and U. S. Senator. Dueling was the customary way to settle disputes during this era when a question of honor was involved. Their first duel was fought with pistols in August, 1817, on Bloody Island in the Mississippi River. Lucas did not attempt to kill Benton but merely wounded him in the leg. Benton recovered and challenged Charles to another duel on Sept. 27, 1817. Unfortunately for the

City of St. Louis in this era and for generations to come, Charles Lucas was killed. If we could have combined the talents of Charles with his brother, James H., the contributions the combination could have made is untold!

In 1814, we have a record of Judge J.B.C. Lucas and his son, James H., traveling by horseback to Washington, D. C. James H. has been described as a boy full of spirit, fun and humor--rather impatient of restraint. He attended college at St. Thomas, Nelson County, Kentucky. In 1816, he and his brother William were students at Jefferson College, Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania, and were still there when their brother Charles was killed. Young James H. studied law in New York and Litchfield, Connecticut. In 1819, he became tired of studying and had hopes of descending the Mississippi River to seek his fortune in South America. Instead, he finally settled on land in Arkansas, supporting himself by teaching school. In 1825, Governor James Miller of the Territory made him Major in the Militia and Judge of the Probate Court.

On May 10, 1832, James H. married Marie Emelie Desruisseaux, a native of Arkansas Post but French by descent. He was asked by his father, Judge J.B.C. Lucas, to return to St. Louis in 1837. His brother, William, had died and his father was becoming old and feeble. James settled his family on "The Farm" which was given to him by his father. It consisted of 50 acres and valued at \$30,000. His residence was near the fountain in Lucas Park (Locust Street in St. Louis). From 1837, James H. Lucas is identified with the progress of St. Louis and its growth in wealth and prosperity.

James H. was a State Senator from 1834 to 1845. In 1847 he consented to run as the Whig candidate for Mayor. He was the color bearer and ran for the sake of his party--not to be elected. Judge Bryan Mullanphy, Democrat, won heavily over Lucas and W. M. Campbell.

James' deep concern for the welfare of St. Louis paved the path for his conspicuous and leading part in giving of money and time to promote the welfare and prosperity of St. Louis. Some of the business operations profiting from his knowledge and judgment are listed below:

1. Subscribed \$33,000 for Missouri Pacific Railroad--twice elected its President.
2. Helped organize St. Louis Gas Company--was President.
3. Director of Boatmen's Bank.
4. Director or large shareholder in almost all moneyed institutions in the City.
5. In 1851, he established his own banking house in St. Louis, with branches in New York and San Francisco.
6. In 1859, was one of the founders of St. Louis Railroad Company.
7. Elected first President of Missouri Historical Society.

James H. contributed wisely and largely to enrich and beautify the city. He frequently had to borrow money to help forward his causes, although he was a very rich man. He was a man of remarkable capacity for work, a very positive character--modest and unassuming in deportment, retiring in his habits. His fortune was large. He owned 225 buildings previous to the division of the property in 1872. He and his wife had thirteen children--six sons and two daughters survived. Those surviving included Henry Victor, William, Robert J., James P., Nancy, Joseph, Elizabeth and John B. C. All lived in Normandy. On his deathbed he divided the 800 acres of his Normandy property among his six sons, a large portion given to Robert, the youngest.



Robert Lucas married Clara Kennedy and built his cupola-ed mansion on the site of the present driveway in front of Marillac Provincial House. Real estate was Robert's profession. He owned silver mines in Mexico, lead mines and oil wells in Colorado. The dirt road leading to the family estate from Natural Bridge was called Lucas Lane. Lining the driveway were pines, evergreens and oaks. He purchased two valuable Ginkgo trees, the sacred tree of China, at the World's Fair in 1904. The Lucas ball diamond was on the site where the Marillac Library now stands.

Nancy, their daughter, was drowned in a tragic accident on January 1, 1907. She was holding her traditional ice-skating party to celebrate her birthday. The weather was warm and three girls fell through the ice and were drowned--Nancy and two Rolling sisters attending her party. Anne Lucas Hunt recalls vividly the horsedrawn cart, with a white sheet covering the bodies, driving east on Natural Bridge. Anna Ramspot was a classmate of Nancy. Miss Anna, as she was called, attended Normandy Schools and remained to teach in Normandy. She still resides in Bel-Nor.

In 1911, Robert and Clara Lucas sold their property (62 acres) to the Daughters of Charity. By then they had added another generation to the Lucas line.

Joseph Lucas, son of James H. Lucas, built a splendid residence known as "Tranquillo" on his St. Charles Rock Road property. Our survey map indicates that he owned the property where Lake Charles Cemetery is now located. It was last owned and occupied by the Ghio family.

John B. C. Lucas, son of James H. Lucas and grandson of Judge Jean B.C. Lucas, was born December 30, 1847. He was born to an inheritance of a good name and an ample fortune and his lines were cast in pleasant places from his youth. He was educated at Washington University and at Eastern institutions of learning. In his young manhood, he assumed and worthily bore all the responsibilities resting upon those favored by fortune. Becoming the executor and principal manager of his father's vast estate, he was one of the largest representatives of real estate and other property interests in St. Louis. While he kept in close touch with the industrial and commercial development of St. Louis, he was most prominently identified with the banking interests of the city and devoted a large share of his time to the affairs of the Citizen's Bank, of which he was President prior to its consolidation with the Merchants'-Laclede National Bank in 1897. His father, whose ideas were broadly liberal and whose instincts were generous and philanthropic, planned for the future. He left much important work for the public good to be carried forward by the son. These trusts and obligations he discharged in strict accordance with the spirit of their conception, and through him, his illustrious ancestors still continued to be public benefactors. In taste, manners and disposition, Mr. Lucas was much of an old-school gentleman, easily approached, genial with friends and business associates, and always kindly and sympathetic in his dealings with those less fortunate. He was fond of outdoor sports and indulged his tastes in this direction with a regulation governed by the seasons. In 1896, he married Mary C. Morton of Louisville, Kentucky, and after her death was wedded to her sister, Isabel Lee Morton. His children were three daughters and two sons.