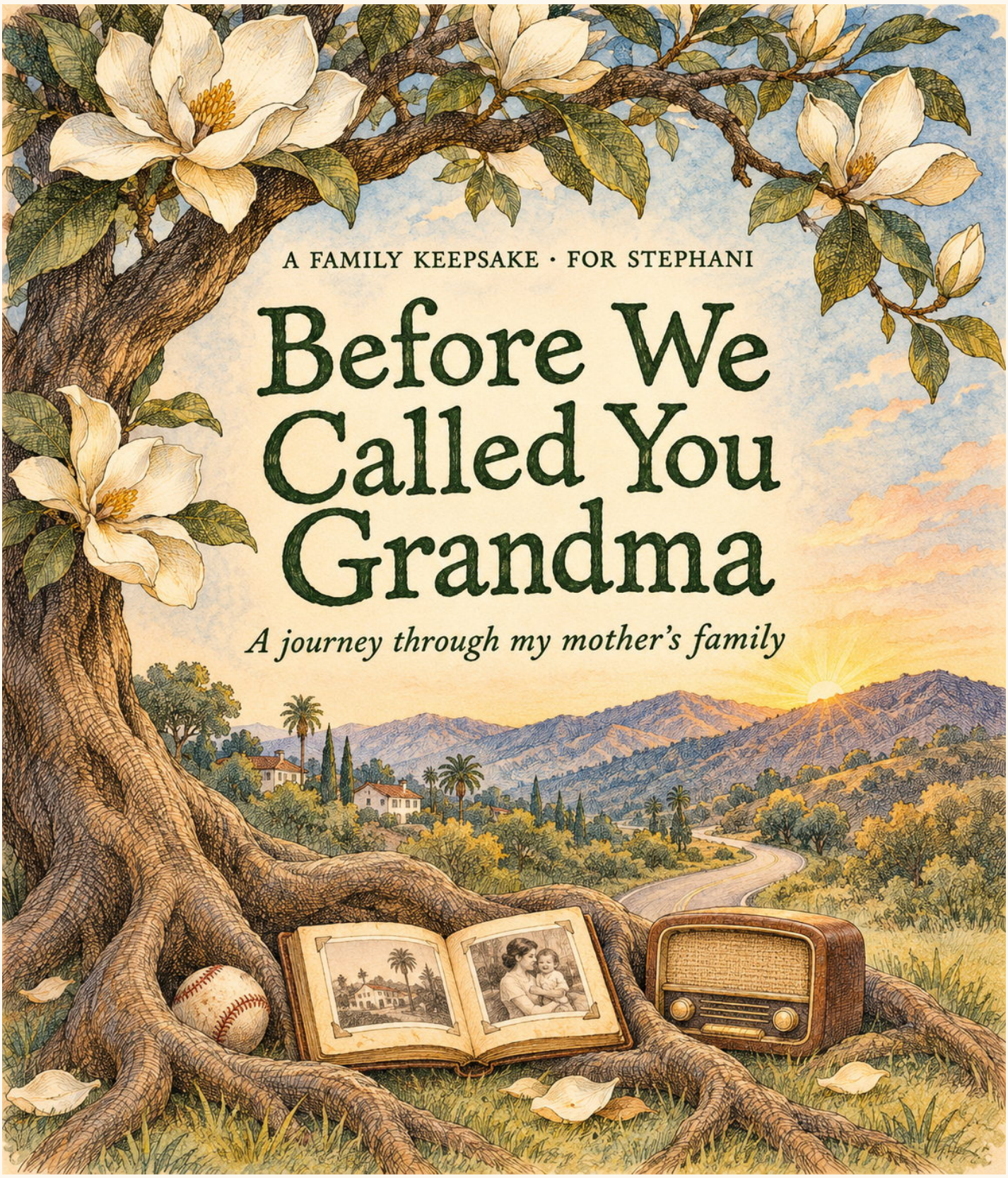


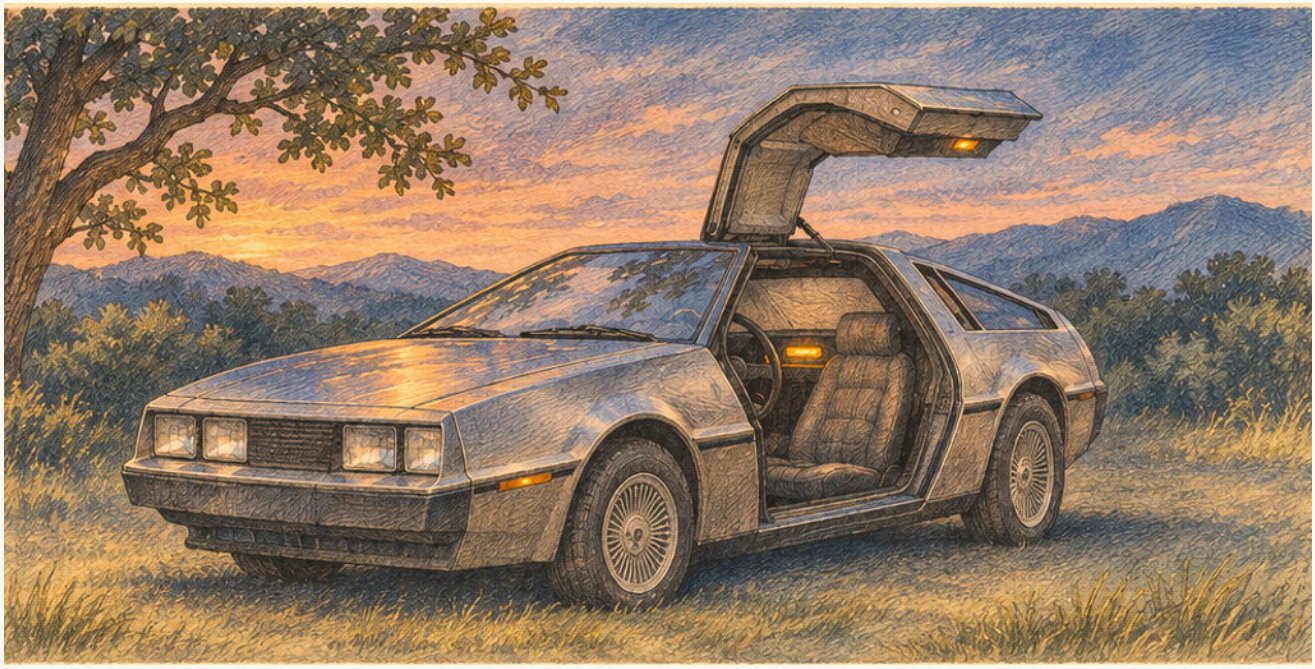
Joseph Valenzuela

Have you ever sat back and wondered what your parents were like when they were young, before you came along? Or their parents? Well, I did.

It's the fall of 2026. Picture me sitting at home in Burbank, California, on an ordinary afternoon. The city is getting ready for the holidays. A question comes to me. What was life like for my mom when she was a kid? I've called you Mom my whole life. Somewhere back there, you were a little girl who called out "Mom!" and waited for Mary to turn around. What did that little girl sound like?

I was determined to see how far back we could go and how much family history I could uncover. Most of all, I wanted to remind my mother how incredibly special she is. So everyone, hop in the make-believe DeLorean. There's room for everyone. Mom gets the front seat, though.

Our first stop, Germany, May 2, 1792. There's a ship at the riverbank, and if we miss it, I have absolutely no idea how to reset this clock.



Our make-believe DeLorean. A gull-wing door opens between the dates.

DELOREAN / CHAPTER MENU

Destination times

FIRST STOP

2026

Select a destination, or turn to its page.

MENU 01 / 02

DATE	DESTINATION	PAGE
Fall 2026	Mom gets the front seat Burbank, California	02
May 2, 1792	The DeLorean lands Altona on the Elbe	05
1757 / 1792	Four feet of family baggage At the gangplank	06
May–July 1792	Vinegar on the Atlantic The North Atlantic	07
Summer 1792	Water, water everywhere Newport • Philadelphia	08
1792	Three days on an empty stomach Philadelphia and inland	09
Winter 1792–93	Christmas snow and two huts Painted Post • Williamsburg	10
1793–94	Turn one page. There's Philip. Genesee • Upper Canada	11
1794 and after	A barge on the Rouge The Rouge River, Markham	12
1792–2026	Six generations to Stephani Six generations	13
1794–1824	Two sisters and one old chest The Eckardt log house	14
1827–41	Four chimneys The Markham farm	15
1869–1901	Twins in the orchard family Markham • Pelham	16
Dec. 23, 1915	Two days before Christmas Pelham, Ontario	17

DELOREAN / CHAPTER MENU

Destination times

FIRST STOP

1940

Select a destination, or turn to its page.

MENU 02 / 02

DATE	DESTINATION	PAGE
1940 / 1946	June 22 again Welland, Ontario	18
1942–60	Mary Wallace, Glendale High Detroit • Glendale	19
Mar. 13, 1963	Mary and Ruby on the dial Glendale, California	20
Mar. 13, 1963	Hello, Stephani At Mary's bedside	21
1963–81	Before everyone needed you Burbank, California	22
1963 / 1981	Two babies, two World Series Los Angeles • New York	23
May 10, 1981	Five minutes Mission Hills, California	24
By Nov. 1990	The house with two soundtracks At Ruby's and Mary's	25
About 1993	The Christmas jacket Costa Mesa, California	26
2007 and after	Auntie Anne's invitation A remembrance • Utah	27
1981–2026	A trophy and a vacation Stephani and her family	28
Fall 2026	Back home Back in Burbank	29
1757–2020	Look closer The family album	30
1757–2026	Where the story comes from Records and recollections	55

The DeLorean lands



We step out on the bank of the Elbe River at Altona, beside Hamburg in present-day Germany. At the dock is the Catharina, bound for North America. It's May 2, 1792. At least 132 people, the "settlers" in this story, are leaving everything they've ever known. They couldn't even check the Google reviews for the place they were headed.

William Berczy recruited settlers for the Genesee country in New York. One of the people boarding the ship was Johann Gottlob Schellenberg. He signed up for six years of work. The company would advance his travel costs and pay him wages. If he kept his agreement and saved four Spanish thalers a year, he could earn twenty-five acres, a cow and calf, a sow and piglets, and poultry.

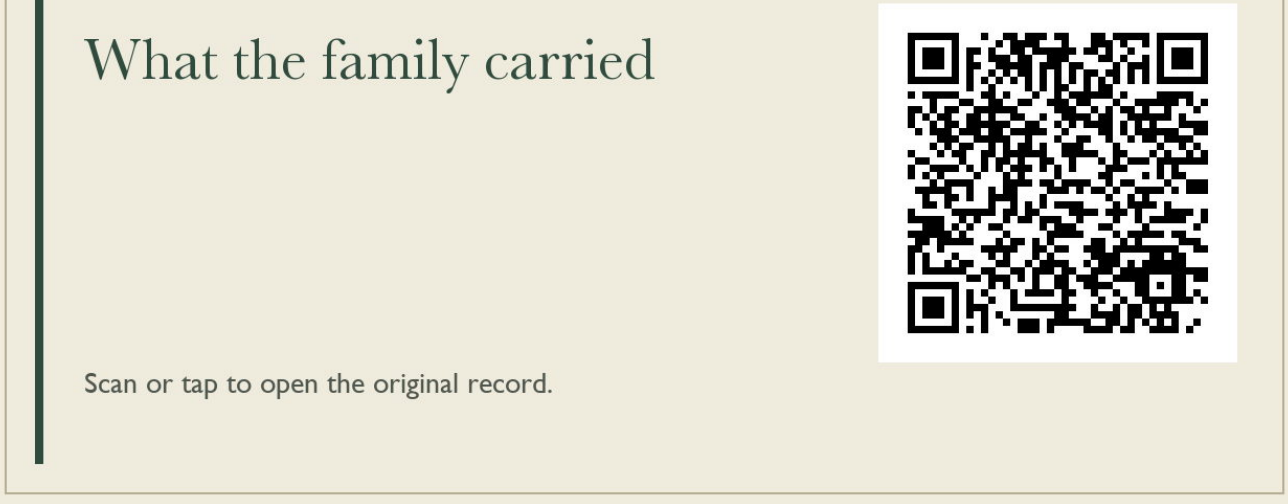
Think about being twenty and putting your name on that paper. Six years is a long time. But somebody has just told you that one day you might swing open a gate and the land on the other side could be yours. I can only imagine what each passenger was leaving behind that morning.

Four feet of family baggage

IN THE ARCHIVE

What the family carried

Scan or tap to open the original record.



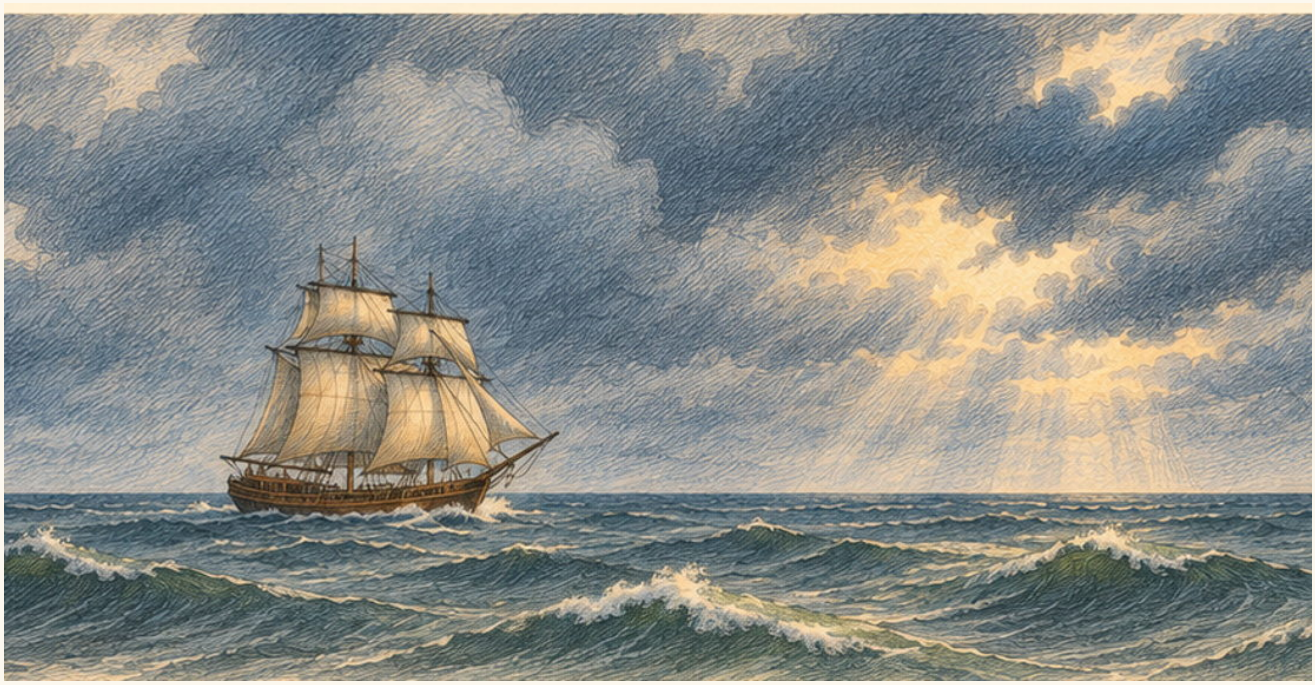
Jochim Pingel's blanket chest. Markham Museum, object M.L.1980.6.

Jochim Pingel boarded with his wife and their five children. We would later be tied to their family through marriage. They brought a wooden chest over four feet long. Let's throw that in the back of the Tesla after baggage claim.

Here, look at it. That same chest is at Markham Museum in Ontario, Canada, today. The museum records the name and date carved into the chest as "Jochim Pingel 1757."

There's another person boarding the ship that day, too. His name is Philip Eckardt.

Vinegar on the Atlantic



Altona's waterfront had shipbuilders, sailmakers and ropemakers. Picture the smell of a freshly cut board, like the lumber aisle back home. Now put a wet rope in your hand and listen for the knock of a hammer. That's how I imagine it.

The ship traveled down the Elbe, into the North Sea, then out toward the Atlantic. I haven't found a weather reading for the morning they left.

It's May 8, 1792. We've been sailing for six days, and we're finally reaching the open ocean. One passenger, John Henry Sommerfeldt, saw to the daily provisions. He wrote that they scrubbed the ship twice a week and fumigated it with vinegar and juniper berries. Open a pickle jar and think of a sharp, piney smell alongside it. Now imagine thirteen weeks at sea, which is how long he remembered the crossing. Thirteen weeks.

Water, water everywhere

IN THE ARCHIVE

The list that reached Philadelphia

Scan or tap to open the original record.



Philadelphia passenger list, printed transcription. The endorsement is dated August 3, 1792.

Imagine being five years old on a ship with water in every direction and hearing that there might not be enough to drink. That was how old Francis Helmke was when his father, Johan, noticed the drinking water running low. The Catharina stopped at Newport, Rhode Island, to take on fresh water.

From there the Catharina sailed on to Philadelphia. They made it to Philly. Two hundred and thirty-four years later, the Phillies drafted your son Matthew.

On the passenger list, endorsed August 3, 1792, someone wrote the name "Pilip Ekhart," age twenty-four. Your fourth-great-grandfather had made it across the ocean.

There he is, Philip Eckardt Sr. Now I can show you how we get all the way from his name on that ship's paper to yours.

Three days on an empty stomach

IN THE ARCHIVE

A passenger remembers

Scan or tap to open the original record.



John Henry Sommerfeldt's account in English translation. Markham Museum, document 43, page 1.

On the dock in Philadelphia, the ocean crossing was over. John Henry Sommerfeldt still had twelve wagons to load. He'd been going from store to store buying supplies. Shovels by the dozen. Spades by the dozen. Twelve dozen of each.

Three days it took to load those wagons. In his account of the journey, Sommerfeldt tells us what he ate over those three days. Nothing.

Farther up the road, he was the one baking bread. He had to carry in the firewood himself. Every other day, he supplied 125 loaves. Of all the people I'd like to have heard tell this story, he's near the top of my list.

Christmas snow and two huts



An imagined winter landscape.

By the time the travelers came down out of the mountains into Painted Post, New York, Christmas snow was falling. Some stayed there for the winter. Others pressed on toward Williamsburg, where houses and farmland were supposed to be waiting.

The first fifty men found two huts. In the settlers' own account, the huts together couldn't shelter twenty-five. There weren't even pails to fetch water. One work party spent nearly five weeks in the woods with four axes to share among thirty men.

Then came the news that made the whole journey look different. Back in Germany, these families had signed on for a chance to own land. Here in New York, they learned they would be tenants. They could clear every tree, build the house, work the soil, and somebody else would still own the ground beneath their feet.

The settlement they had crossed the Atlantic for had failed. They were still here.

Turn one page. There's Philip.

IN THE ARCHIVE

Their own account of what went wrong

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The settlers' German appeal, August 6, 1793. The two names are on successive leaves.

Here's the page I'd put my finger on. On August 6, 1793, the settlers put their complaint in writing. They described the huts, counted the axes, and set down what they had been promised. Near the end of the German document is Jochim Pingel, the man whose name is carved into the chest. Turn one page. There's Philip.

A year earlier, somebody else had written down their names as they stepped off a ship. This time they put their names to their own account of what had happened to them.

The dispute reached the jail in Canandaigua, where some of the settlers were imprisoned. By 1794, families were ready to leave. Charles Williamson, the land company's agent, posted guards to stop them.

Indigenous people from the Grand River helped the families get past those guards. Men hired by a merchant named Samuel Street helped, too. Most of the settlers made it through. By late June they reached Upper Canada, in what is now Ontario. They went on by way of York, today's Toronto. By year's end they had established a settlement in Markham.

I want our family to remember who lent a hand on that road. We've got Philip's name on paper. We owe part of our story to people whose names that account never gives us.

A barge on the Rouge



An imagined view of the next generation's home in Markham.

Philip himself helped clear fallen trees from the Rouge River and built a flat-bottomed barge. I like knowing that about him. After everything that had stood in his way, we can still point to something he made so other people could get through.

And there in Markham, in 1794, Philip Eckardt married Ann Elizabeth Koepke, known as Elizabeth.

When one of my girls works hard for something and it doesn't go the way they planned, I want to tell her this part of our family story. Philip had already crossed an ocean for a home that wasn't there. He put his name on the truth of what happened. He accepted a hand when he needed one. And he kept going far enough to stand beside Elizabeth in Markham and begin a life with her. Neither of them could have imagined you. But when I think about what came of their perseverance, yours is the face I see.

Six generations to Stephani



Philip Eckardt Sr. and Ann Elizabeth Koepke. Philip Jr. and Susannah Hegler. Edward Eckardt and Catherine Braithwaite. Florence Gertrude Eckardt and George Tunnacliffe. Ruby Catharine Tunnacliffe and John Braceland Wallace. Mary Gertrude Wallace and George Howard Smith.

Their daughter Stephani Smith is my mother. Her four sons are Joseph, Anthony, Marco and Matthew.

Two sisters and one old chest

IN THE ARCHIVE

The family on the Sixth Concession

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The 1803 household return, William Berczy fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

Philip was your fourth-great-grandfather. Ann Elizabeth, his wife, stands beside him in that spot on our family tree. Philip Eckardt had crossed the Atlantic on the Catharina. In 1794 he married Ann Elizabeth Koepke. Her sister Maria married George Pingel, the chest owner's son. Two sisters are how that old wooden chest comes into our family story.

Philip and Ann lived in a log house in Markham, in what is now Ontario. Philip farmed, helped clear fallen trees and beaver dams from the Rouge River, and built a flat-bottomed barge. Their neighbors came to the house to pray. In the 1803 census, I can read the names of three boys at home with Ann. Philip was five. Henry was four. George was one.

The church remembers their daughter Mary, too. She was buried that year near the house, the first burial in what became the church cemetery. A historian counted eighteen children and a great-grandson remembered seventeen. We can still put names to only some of them, including Gottlieb, Frederick, Andrew, born in 1811, and Salem, born in 1824.

Four chimneys



Philip Jr. and Susannah Hegler were your third-great-grandparents. His father sold him a hundred acres in 1827. Two years later he married Susannah. Their brick farmhouse faced the Rouge River and had four chimneys. You raised four boys. I wonder what you'd have given for four bathrooms.

Their five children were Sarah Ann (1832), Thomas Philip (1833), Andrew (1837), Barbara Ann (1840) and Edward (1841). Andrew and Barbara Ann died young. Thomas became a doctor. Edward stayed on the land. Susannah and Philip belonged to the local congregation, and the visiting student minister lodged with them.

Twins in the orchard family



Edward Eckardt and Catherine Braithwaite were your great-great-grandparents. They married in 1869. The Markham farm was sold in 1883. They got it back in 1886, with both their names on the land. By 1891 Edward was growing fruit in Pelham.

Across three censuses we can follow eight children: Homer (1869), Clarence (about 1871–72), Florence Gertrude (1876), Maude (1880), Jessie (1881), Eva (1883), W. Roy and Wilhelmina (both 1885). Florence grew up to work as an office clerk. Jessie became a teacher.

Look at those last two names. Roy and Wilhelmina have the same birthday, November 21, 1885. Florence was nine when she got a baby brother and a baby sister on the very same day.

Two days before Christmas

IN THE ARCHIVE

Florence registered two daughters

Scan or tap to open the original record.



Pelham birth register, page 149. Florence gave the particulars for both girls.

Florence Gertrude and George Tunnacliffe were your great-grandparents. George worked in a nursery. When they married in Ridgeville in 1903, Florence's sisters Eva and Maud signed as witnesses. Then came Jean Ladell in 1903, Eve Gwendolyn in 1905 and Marion in 1909.

On December 23, 1915, two days before Christmas, the girl who had grown up with twins had twins of her own. Ruby Catharine was your grandma. Ruth Eliza was her twin sister. Their little brother Donald came along about 1918–19.

Florence registered both girls' births. Ruby is at the upper right of the page and Ruth at the lower left. More than a century later, I still have to move my eyes clear across the page to find both your grandma and her sister.

June 22 again



Ruby's bouquet, imagined from the Welland–Port Colborne Evening Tribune, June 25, 1946, page 3. The attendants wore red roses, white sweet peas and fern in their hair and carried matching bouquets.

The twins were fifteen when Florence died. Nine years later, on June 22, 1940, Ruby married John Braceland Wallace, your grandpa, in Welland. They made their home in Detroit.

Six years later Ruth walked into St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church to marry Edwin Hilder. Beside her stood Ruby, with red roses, white sweet peas and fern in her hair. Look at the date. June 22 again. Your grandma spent her sixth wedding anniversary standing up for her twin sister.

Their mother had Eva and Maud at her wedding. Ruth had Ruby at hers.

Mary Wallace, Glendale High

IN THE ARCHIVE

Mary's page in the yearbook

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Stylus, Glendale High School, 1960, page 93. Mary's name is printed. The face is Joseph's tentative identification.

Ruby and John's daughter Mary Gertrude Wallace was your mother. She was born in Detroit on April 8, 1942. At the 1950 census she was seven. Her brothers John, later called Mike, and William, called Bill, were six and three. Their birth years work out to about 1943–44 and 1946–47.

Their sister Anne is the Auntie Anne who later invited everybody to Utah to honor Mary.

Then there's this picture. Your mother in the Latin Club at Glendale High. Her name is printed on page 93. I think I recognize her among the standing girls near the right. In the album you can see the whole yearbook page, then look a little closer for yourself.

Down at the bottom, the students tell us their club gave three scholarships and held a cookie sale to help pay for them. I knew Mary as my grandma. Here she is, still in high school, with a whole life ahead of her.

Mary and Ruby on the dial



Wednesday, March 13, 1963. Glendale. Up in the foothills, Bob Gregg penciled two numbers into his weather log that day. The low was 41 degrees. The high was 79. Mary was twenty. Her little boy Kevin had been born in 1961. Now she had a daughter, and she named her Stephani.

I don't have a photograph of the room where you were born. I do have a radio dial. Let's see what we can hear.

Imagine turning the knob very slowly. The number-one record in America that week was "Walk Like a Man." One place down the chart came Ruby and the Romantics singing "Our Day Will Come." A little farther down came Johnny Mathis singing "What Will My Mary Say."

The baby's mother was Mary. Her grandmother was Ruby. I went looking for the music from the week my mom was born and there was her family on the dial.

Ten days after you were born, the record I'd pick for you reached number one. "Our Day Will Come."

In Los Angeles the Yellow Cars were still running. Their last scheduled runs came eighteen days later.

Hello, Stephani



Mom, if I could walk into that room, I'd have to introduce myself. My voice wouldn't mean a thing to you yet.

"Hi, Stephani. I'm Joseph. You and I are going to know each other pretty well."

I imagine Mary looking up. "You're her son?"

"Her first," I'd say. "There'll be four of us. Maybe save that news for tomorrow."

Then I'd ask, "Grandma, could I hold her a minute? Someday I'll have a little girl, too. The name you gave my mom today? I'm going to give it to her. We'll add one more e."

Before everyone needed you



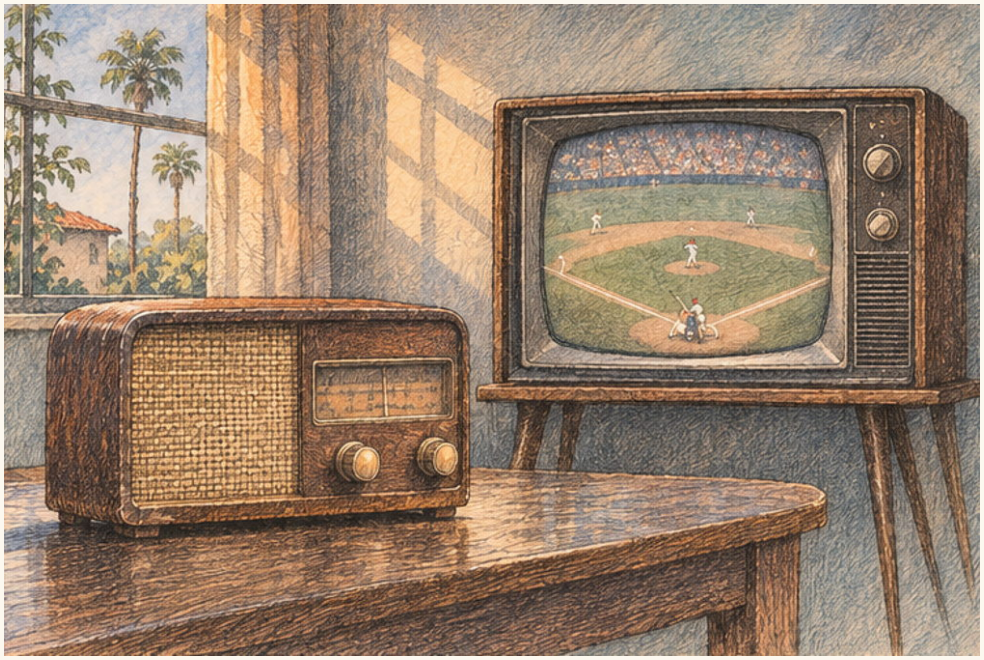
You remembered that Mary had five boys and three girls. The boys' names I remember are Kevin Smith, Timmy Smith, Ricky Gaughn, Michael Gaughn and Patrick. The girls are Stephani Smith, Windy Gaughan and Cindy Gaughan. Patrick was adopted and later reunited with the family. He's one of your brothers.

Your father George Howard Smith's notice names Christopher Smith and Carol M. Smith, too. His later marriage brought two stepbrothers, Jim Trucano Harp and Eric Harp.

You went to John Burroughs High School in Burbank. Years later, Anthony and I went there, too. Before the four of us ever called you Mom, before everyone needed you, you were just Stephani.

In March of 1981 you turned eighteen. For almost two months you were eighteen and still had all four of us boys ahead of you.

Two babies, two World Series



The year Mary had you and the year you had me.

The fall of 1963. You're six months old, Mary's baby girl, and the Dodgers sweep the Yankees in the World Series.

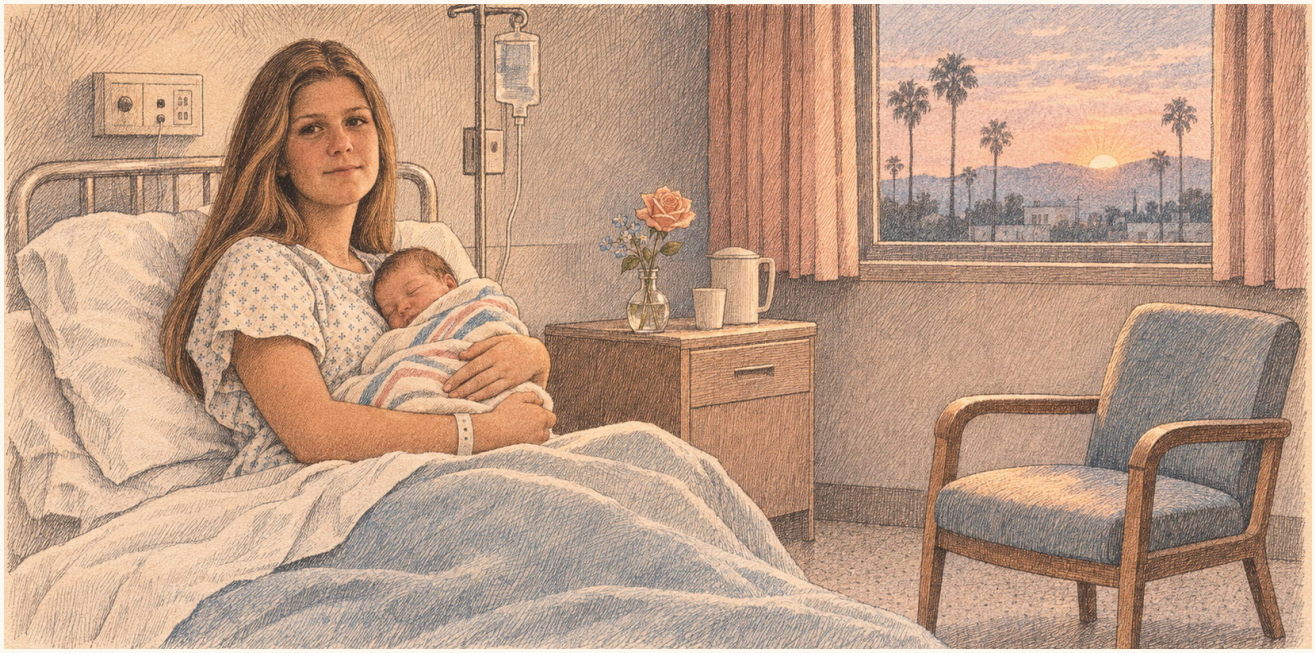
Friday night, May 8, 1981. Shea Stadium, New York. The Dodgers give Fernando Valenzuela one run to work with. He pitches the first inning, the ninth, and every one in between. Eleven Mets strike out. Dodgers one, Mets nothing. I'd have loved to hear Ruby's radio that night.

Saturday, May 9, in Mission Hills, along comes another Valenzuela. Joseph Valenzuela. Your first boy, Mom. Three more would follow. You were eighteen years and fifty-seven days old. Mother's Day was the next morning. Your very first Mother's Day.

That October, I'm five months old, your baby boy, and here come those Yankees again. The Dodgers lose twice. Fernando wins the third game, and Los Angeles takes all three after that. Another World Series for the Dodgers.

Two babies, two championships. You'd think they could at least get us tickets.

Five minutes



An imagined first Mother's Day in Mission Hills.

Of all the dates we've put into the car, this is the one where I'd turn the engine off.

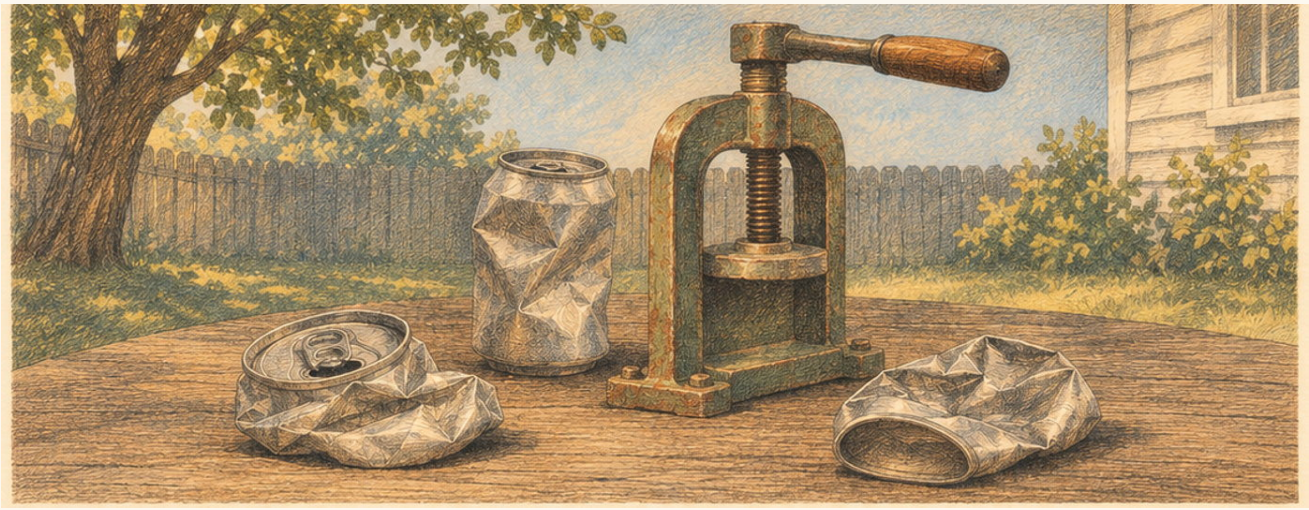
Mom, if I could borrow five minutes from any day in your life, I know which day I'd pick. May 10, 1981.

You were eighteen. I was one day old.

If I could borrow five minutes from that Sunday, I'd ask you how you were feeling. Then I'd give you the hug a one-day-old boy couldn't manage.

I've just spent a couple of hundred years chasing people I can't sit down beside. You and I can open this book, turn to this page, and spend those five minutes together.

The house with two soundtracks



The Dodgers are on television at Ruby's house. You can see the game just fine. But if your eyes are on the screen, your ears are pointed somewhere else. Ruby has Vin Scully on the radio.

She explained that she liked his call better. I've forgotten her exact words. I remember her ruling. A person could buy my great-grandmother a television. That did not mean she was going to let whoever came with it call her ballgame. With the Lakers she had Chick Hearn. Ruby knew how she liked things to sound.

I remember watching Jeopardy! with Grandma Mary once. Another time she let me crush aluminum cans with the can crusher in her backyard. I remember how much fun that was.

The last time I saw her, she was asleep in the hospital. When she passed in November 1990, she was forty-eight. My mother was twenty-seven. I was nine.

She was a sweet grandma to me.

The Christmas jacket

IN THE ARCHIVE

George before he was Grandpa

Scan or tap to open the original record.

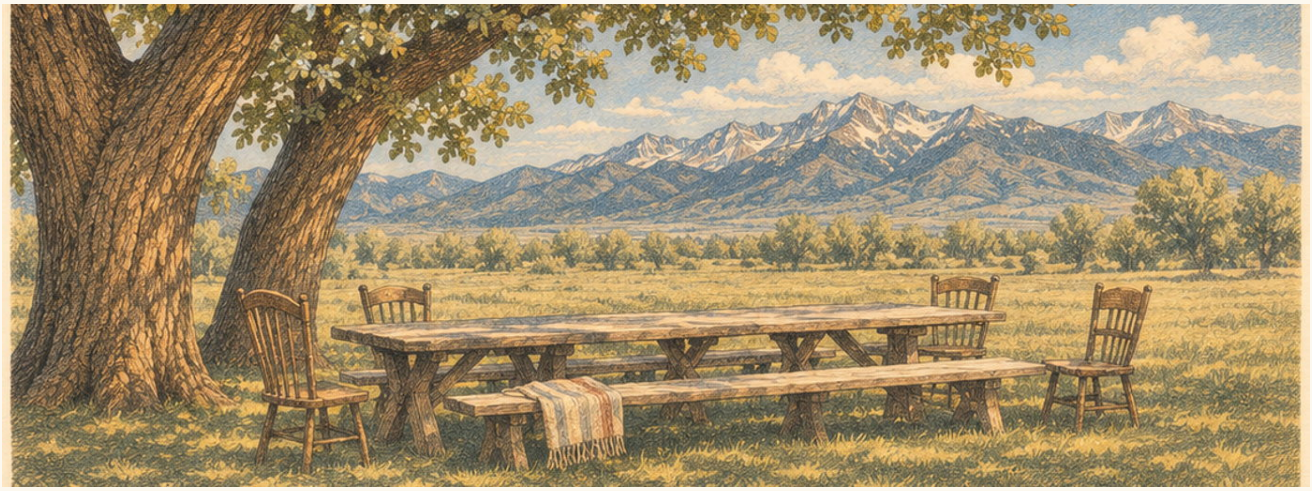
George Howard Smith's senior portrait, Cathedral Boys High School in Springfield, Illinois, 1958.

When Mom was around thirty, she found her father, George Smith, in Costa Mesa. They had a little time together before they lost touch again, years before he passed away.

The part I remember about him is a Christmas present. He gave me a Chicago White Sox jacket. The boy in the jacket didn't understand what it had taken for those two people to meet again.

I got to meet my grandfather because you took that first step. I know enough now to thank you.

Auntie Anne's invitation



On November 8, 2007, you wrote about your mother, Mary.

"Everyone called her Trudy."

Those are your words about your mother. You put them down seventeen years to the day after she died. You remembered her generosity, how deeply she cared about people, and how much you missed her.

Auntie Anne put her sister's whole name in the first sentence of her invitation. This is what she wrote to the family.

"Family I am hosting this gathering in in Utah to honor my sister, Mary Gertrude Wallace Smith Gaughan. Everyone coming is here because she was someone who created family through love, blended, and biological. We can look forward to seeing family we haven't seen in a while and meeting new family."

I love that Anne called them family before some of them had even met.

I didn't make that trip. My relatives told me they had a wonderful time. What I can tell you is that my mother and her brothers and sisters could turn to Anne. Sometimes what an aunt gives you is a shoulder to cry on and time enough to stay there.

A trophy and a vacation



The women and girls of the Catharina applaud Stephani in Joseph's imagination.

The day I was born, you were eighteen. You're in your sixties now. For more than forty years, there's been a kid at home who could count on you. First came the four of us boys. Now you have several grandchildren, and you're still going.

Samantha, your husband Marco's daughter, was a mother of four when we lost her. Those kids lost their mom. You and Marco are helping raise them. Years from now, they'll have their own words for what it meant that you were there. For now, these are mine. You deserve a trophy. And a vacation.

I keep thinking about the girls and women on that ship. If I could pull the DeLorean up alongside the Catharina one more time, I'd tell them about you. I can picture one woman setting down what she's carrying to clap. Then the girl beside her joins in. Pretty soon you can hear them from the dock. That round of applause is for you, Stephani.

Back home



I want to give my mom something I was too young to give hers. An afternoon when she gets to be the girl in the story and I'm the one who listens.

I kept the promise I made in that imaginary hospital room. When my first daughter was born, I gave her your name, with that extra e. On paper it's a single letter. Every time I write it, I think of you.

And to all the grandkids reading along, don't worry. We can wait to read your version one day.

I made this book for you because I want you to know how glad I am that I came from you.

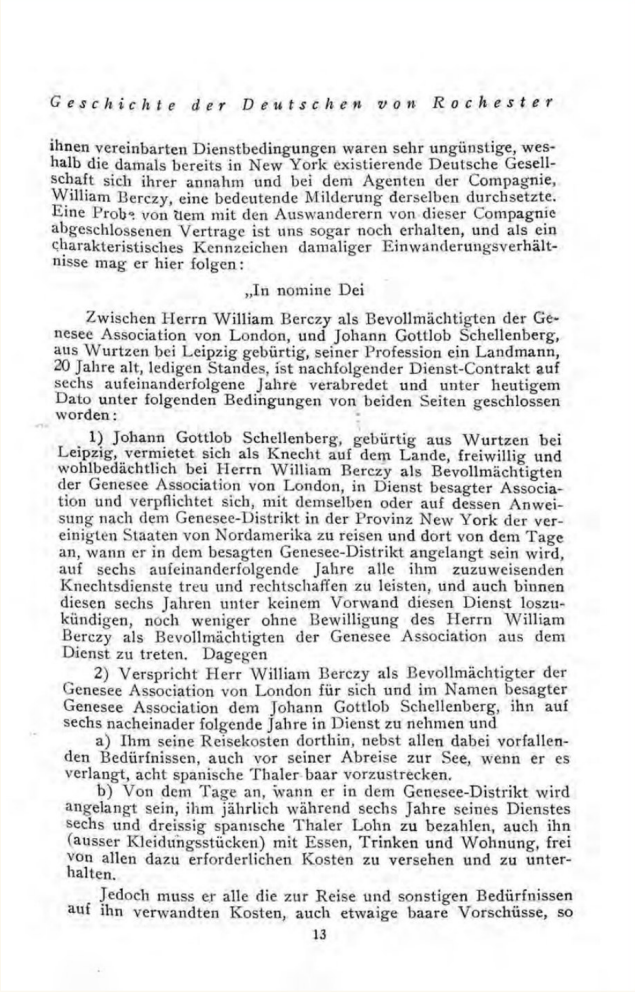
Our next family trip should be to Markham. I think it's fair to say our day has come. Look at us now.

And now, Mom, my girls get to call out "Grandma!" and see you turn around. That's the part I wish I could show Mary in that room.

Love you, Mom.

Joseph

Six years for a chance at a farm



Geschichte der Deutschen von Rochester

ihnen vereinbarten Dienstbedingungen waren sehr ungünstige, weshalb die damals bereits in New York existierende Deutsche Gesellschaft sich ihrer annahm und bei dem Agenten der Compagnie, William Berczy, eine bedeutende Milderung derselben durchsetzte. Eine Probe von dem mit den Auswanderern von dieser Compagnie abgeschlossenen Vertrage ist uns sogar noch erhalten, und als ein charakteristisches Kennzeichen damaliger Einwanderungsverhältnisse mag er hier folgen:

„In nomine Dei

Zwischen Herrn William Berczy als Bevollmächtigten der Genesee Association von London, und Johann Gottlob Schellenberg, aus Wurtzen bei Leipzig gebürtig, seiner Profession ein Landmann, 20 Jahre alt, ledigen Standes, ist nachfolgender Dienst-Contrakt auf sechs aufeinanderfolgene Jahre verabredet und unter heutigem Dato unter folgenden Bedingungen von beiden Seiten geschlossen worden:

1) Johann Gottlob Schellenberg, gebürtig aus Wurtzen bei Leipzig, vermietet sich als Knecht auf dem Lande, freiwillig und wohlbedächtlich bei Herrn William Berczy als Bevollmächtigten der Genesee Association von London, in Dienst besagter Association und verpflichtet sich, mit demselben oder auf dessen Anweisung nach dem Genesee-Distrikt in der Provinz New York der vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika zu reisen und dort von dem Tage an, wann er in dem besagten Genesee-Distrikt angelangt sein wird, auf sechs aufeinanderfolgende Jahre alle ihm zuzuweisenden Knechtsdienste treu und rechtschaffen zu leisten, und auch binnen diesen sechs Jahren unter keinem Vorwand diesen Dienst loszukündigen, noch weniger ohne Bewilligung des Herrn William Berczy als Bevollmächtigten der Genesee Association aus dem Dienst zu treten. Dagegen

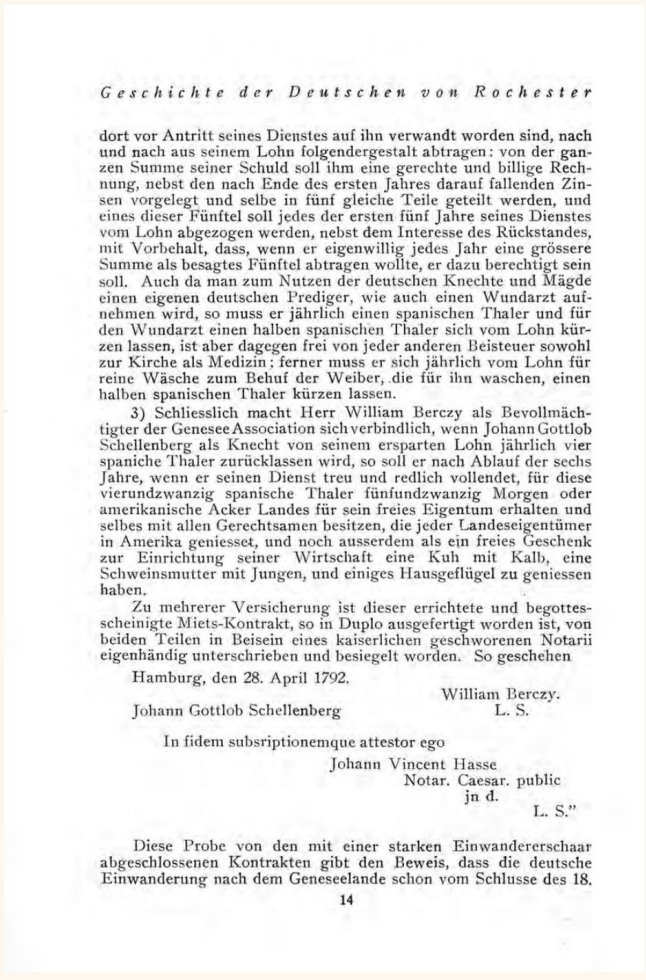
2) Verspricht Herr William Berczy als Bevollmächtigter der Genesee Association von London für sich und im Namen besagter Genesee Association dem Johann Gottlob Schellenberg, ihn auf sechs nacheinader folgende Jahre in Dienst zu nehmen und

a) Ihm seine Reisekosten dorthin, nebst allen dabei vorfallenden Bedürfnissen, auch vor seiner Abreise zur See, wenn er es verlangt, acht spanische Thaler baar vorzustrecken.

b) Von dem Tage an, wann er in dem Genesee-Distrikt wird angelangt sein, ihm jährlich während sechs Jahre seines Dienstes sechs und dreissig spanische Thaler Lohn zu bezahlen, auch ihn (ausser Kleidungsstücken) mit Essen, Trinken und Wohnung, frei von allen dazu erforderlichen Kosten zu versehen und zu unterhalten.

Jedoch muss er alle die zur Reise und sonstigen Bedürfnissen auf ihn verwandten Kosten, auch etwaige baare Vorschüsse, so

13



Geschichte der Deutschen von Rochester

dort vor Antritt seines Dienstes auf ihn verwandt worden sind, nach und nach aus seinem Lohn folgendergestalt abtragen: von der ganzen Summe seiner Schuld soll ihm eine gerechte und billige Rechnung, nebst den nach Ende des ersten Jahres darauf fallenden Zinsen vorgelegt und selbe in fünf gleiche Teile geteilt werden, und eines dieser Fünftel soll jedes der ersten fünf Jahre seines Dienstes vom Lohn abgezogen werden, nebst dem Interesse des Rückstandes, mit Vorbehalt, dass, wenn er eigenwillig jedes Jahr eine grössere Summe als besagtes Fünftel abtragen wollte, er dazu berechtigt sein soll. Auch da man zum Nutzen der deutschen Knechte und Mägde einen eigenen deutschen Prediger, wie auch einen Wundarzt aufnehmen wird, so muss er jährlich einen spanischen Thaler und für den Wundarzt einen halben spanischen Thaler sich vom Lohn kürzen lassen, ist aber dagegen frei von jeder anderen Beisteuer sowohl zur Kirche als Medizin; ferner muss er sich jährlich vom Lohn für reine Wäsche zum Behuf der Weiber, die für ihn waschen, einen halben spanischen Thaler kürzen lassen.

3) Schliesslich macht Herr William Berczy als Bevollmächtigter der Genesee Association sich verbindlich, wenn Johann Gottlob Schellenberg als Knecht von seinem ersparten Lohn jährlich vier spaniche Thaler zurücklassen wird, so soll er nach Ablauf der sechs Jahre, wenn er seinen Dienst treu und redlich vollendet, für diese vierundzwanzig spanische Thaler fünfundzwanzig Morgen oder amerikanische Acker Landes für sein freies Eigentum erhalten und selbes mit allen Gerechtsamen besitzen, die jeder Landeseigentümer in Amerika geniesset, und noch ausserdem als ein freies Geschenk zur Einrichtung seiner Wirtschaft eine Kuh mit Kalb, eine Schweinsmutter mit Jungen, und einiges Hausgeflügel zu geniessen haben.

Zu mehrerer Versicherung ist dieser errichtete und begottescheinigte Miets-Kontrakt, so in Duplo ausgefertigt worden ist, von beiden Teilen in Beisein eines kaiserlichen geschworenen Notarii eigenhändig unterschrieben und besiegelt worden. So geschehen

Hamburg, den 28. April 1792.

William Berczy.

Johann Gottlob Schellenberg L. S.

In fidem subsriptionemque attestor ego

Johann Vincent Hasse
Notar. Caesar. public
jn d.
L. S."

Diese Probe von den mit einer starken Einwandererschaar abgeschlossenen Kontrakten gibt den Beweis, dass die deutsche Einwanderung nach dem Geneseelande schon vom Schlusse des 18.

14

Hermann Pfaefflin printed Johann Gottlob Schellenberg's agreement in his 1915 history. The service term starts on the left. Clause 3 on the right sets out what the recruit could earn. The date near the bottom is Hamburg, April 28, 1792.

Hermann Pfaefflin, Hundertjährige Geschichte des Deutschtums von Rochester (1915), printed p. 13.

Hermann Pfaefflin, Hundertjährige Geschichte des Deutschtums von Rochester (1915), printed p. 14.

What the family carried

IN THE ARCHIVE

What the family carried

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The closed chest is over four feet wide. Opening the lid gives a sense of what one family could take with them. The museum preserves it as object M.L.1980.6.

© Markham Museum, Artefacts Canada, M.L.1980.6. Photographer and photograph date unlisted.

A name cut into wood

IN THE ARCHIVE

A name cut into wood

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The museum reads the two carvings across the front as “Jochim Pingel 1757.” Below them are the keyhole and a carrying handle. The year is thirty-five years earlier than the sailing. Its meaning remains unknown.

© Markham Museum, Artefacts Canada, M.L.1980.6. Photographer and photograph date unlisted.

A clue to the stop at Newport

IN THE ARCHIVE

A clue to the stop at Newport

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The Town of Markham recorded the Helmke family's account in the historical description of a house. The first paragraph under "Historical Attributes" names the father and son who sailed together.

Town of Markham, By-law 2004-214, Schedule B, printed page 3. Ontario Heritage Trust.

Johan notices the water

IN THE ARCHIVE

Johan notices the water

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Francis was five. The town credits his father, Johan, with finding the shortage that led to a stop at Newport. This account was recorded in 2004, more than two centuries after the voyage.

Town of Markham, By-law 2004-214, Schedule B, printed page 3. Ontario Heritage Trust.

The list that reached Philadelphia

IN THE ARCHIVE

The list that reached Philadelphia

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The printed transcription preserves the spelling used on the passenger list. Look down the right column. The date above it is August 3, 1792.

Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, vol. 3, list 370, p. 50.

Pilip, twenty-four

IN THE ARCHIVE

Pilip, twenty-four

Scan or tap to open the original record.

On the right column, the printer set “Pilip Ekhart, 24 years old.” Farther down comes Jochim Pingel with his wife and five children. Here their names still travel together.

Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, vol. 3, list 370, p. 50.

A passenger remembers

IN THE ARCHIVE

A passenger remembers

Scan or tap to open the original record.

John Henry Sommerfeldt helped see to the provisions. This is the first complete page of the English translation of his account. The upper lines describe the crossing. Halfway down the page, he is in Philadelphia buying tools.

John Henry Sommerfeldt, diary, c. 1794, English translation, translator unknown. Markham Museum, document 43, p. 1.
John Henry Sommerfeldt, diary, c. 1794, p. 1 part a. Markham Museum.

Twelve wagons and 125 loaves

IN THE ARCHIVE

Twelve wagons and 125 loaves

Scan or tap to open the original record.

In the upper passage he buys shovels, spades and hoes and spends three days loading twelve wagons with nothing to eat. Farther down he is baking and carrying wood. His task was to provide 125 loaves every other day.

John Henry Sommerfeldt, diary, c. 1794, English translation, translator unknown. Markham Museum, document 43, p. 1.

Their own account of what went wrong

IN THE ARCHIVE

Their own account of what went wrong

Scan or tap to open the original record.

These are two successive leaves of the settlers' German appeal of August 6, 1793. Jochim Pingel's name is on manuscript page 50, at left. Look near the middle of page 51 for the lighter ink.

Settlers' German-language address, August 6, 1793. Library and Archives Canada, William von Moll Berczy fonds, MG 23 H II 6, handwritten p. 50. Digitized by Canadiana.

Settlers' German-language address, August 6, 1793. Library and Archives Canada, William von Moll Berczy fonds, MG 23 H II 6, handwritten p. 51. Digitized by Canadiana.

Two names, two hands

IN THE ARCHIVE

Two names, two hands

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Jochim Pingel's name stands out in dark ink on the first leaf. The lighter name on the next leaf is read as Philip Ekhard. Putting the two enlargements together lets you see the difference in the handwriting.

Settlers' German-language address, August 6, 1793. Library and Archives Canada, William von Moll Berczy fonds, MG 23 H II 6, handwritten p. 50. Digitized by Canadiana.

Settlers' German-language address, August 6, 1793. Library and Archives Canada, William von Moll Berczy fonds, MG 23 H II 6, handwritten p. 51. Digitized by Canadiana.

Philip and the house that survived

IN THE ARCHIVE

Philip and the house that survived

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The log-house study identifies the man at left as Philip Eckardt. The photographer and portrait date are unknown. At upper right is his house in 1885, long after his lifetime. The lower photograph shows the house nearing the end of its restoration in 2020.

William D. Finlayson and George W. J. Duncan (2021). Figure 2.5, printed p. 9. Kathleen Gormley McKay collection, courtesy of the York Pioneer and Historical Society.

William D. Finlayson and George W. J. Duncan (2021). Figure 2.7, printed p. 14. Markham Museum, M.1988.0.192.

City of Markham Heritage Section. Figure 2.14 in W. D. Finlayson's study of the Eckardt Log House.

The family on the Sixth Concession

IN THE ARCHIVE

The family on the Sixth Concession

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Under “Sixth Concession” the enumerator wrote the Eckardt household on a single line. Read along the columns for the parents and then the children.

William Berczy fonds, Library and Archives Canada, microfilm H-2298, frame 135, via Canadiana. Full-resolution scan retained in the family’s Philip Eckardt account, page 4.

Three boys in a row

IN THE ARCHIVE

Three boys in a row

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Under the column headings, the handwriting places Philip, Henry and George beside their ages of five, four and one. Elisabeth appears in the household. This return records who was there that year.

William Berczy fonds, Library and Archives Canada, microfilm H-2298, frame 135, via Canadiana. Full-resolution scan retained in the family's Philip Eckardt account, page 4.

Florence registered two daughters

IN THE ARCHIVE

Florence registered two daughters

Scan or tap to open the original record.

December 23, 1915, Pelham Township. Ruby Catharine's birth is at upper right. Ruth Eliza's is at lower left. Florence recorded the two girls on opposite sides of this one page.

Ontario birth registrations, p. 149, via Ancestry.

Ruby and Ruth, side by side

IN THE ARCHIVE

Ruby and Ruth, side by side

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Each entry gives December 23, 1915. Look below the birth date for the space recording a multiple birth. The same word appears twice, once for each sister.

Ontario birth registrations, p. 149, via Ancestry.

The first June 22

IN THE ARCHIVE

The first June 22

Scan or tap to open the original record.

John Braceland Wallace and Ruby Catharine Tunnacliffe married in Welland on June 22, 1940. The place and date appear at left on the complete registration, then again in the enlargement below. Six years later came Ruth's wedding on the same day of the year.

Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1944, image 7921_09bf6d4b_0209-00208, via Ancestry.

THE FAMILY ALBUM

Ruby at her sister’s wedding

IN THE ARCHIVE

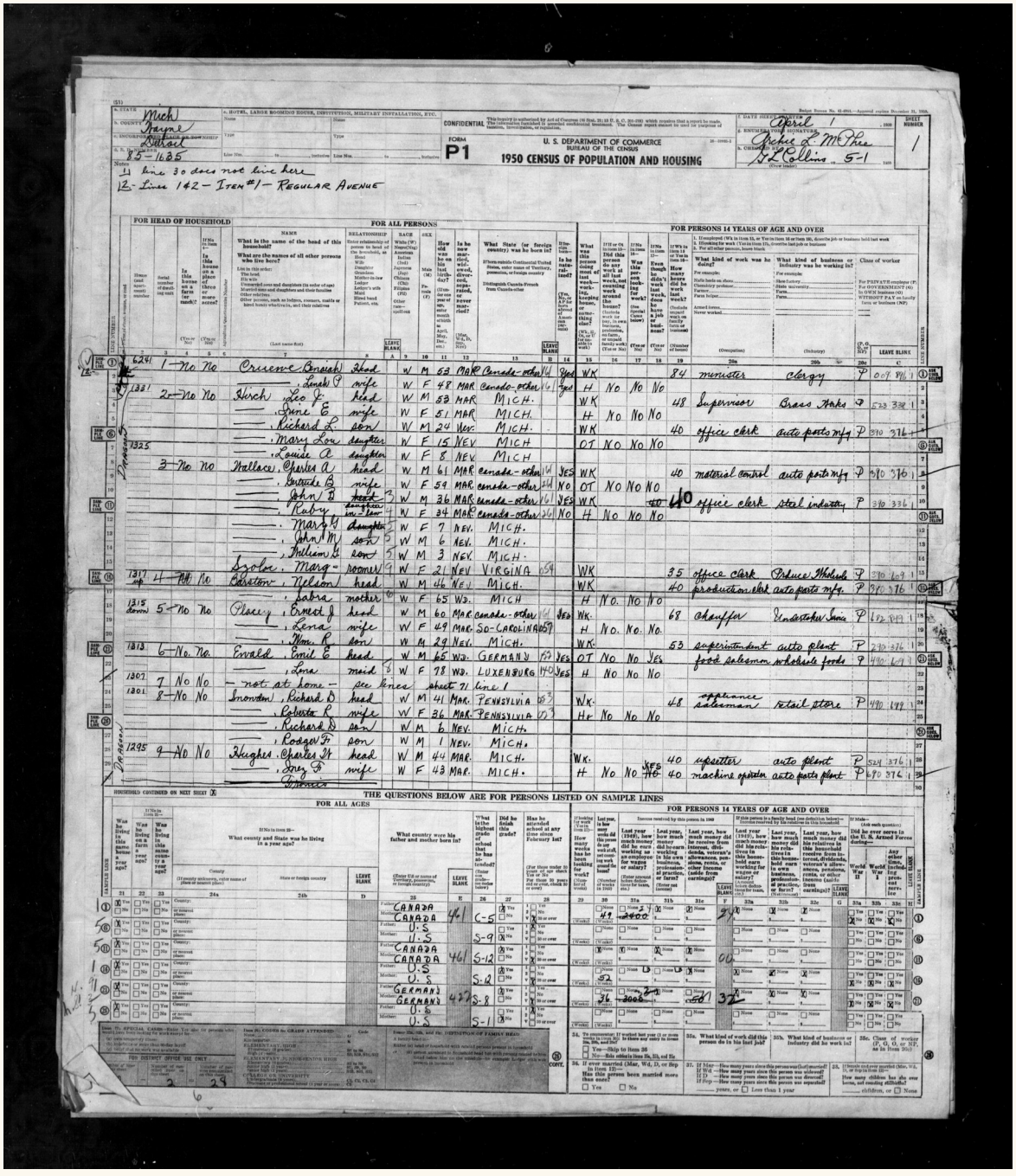
Ruby at her sister’s wedding

Scan or tap to open the original record.

At left is Ruby Catharine Tunnacliffe Wallace. At right, the contemporary newspaper calls her Mrs. J. B. Wallace, twin sister of the bride and matron of honor. It describes the attendants’ red roses, white sweet peas and fern. The surviving excerpt is shown in full.

David Weir, Van Wyck family tree, Ancestry. Photographer unknown.
Welland–Port Colborne Evening Tribune, June 25, 1946, p. 3. Newspapers.com.

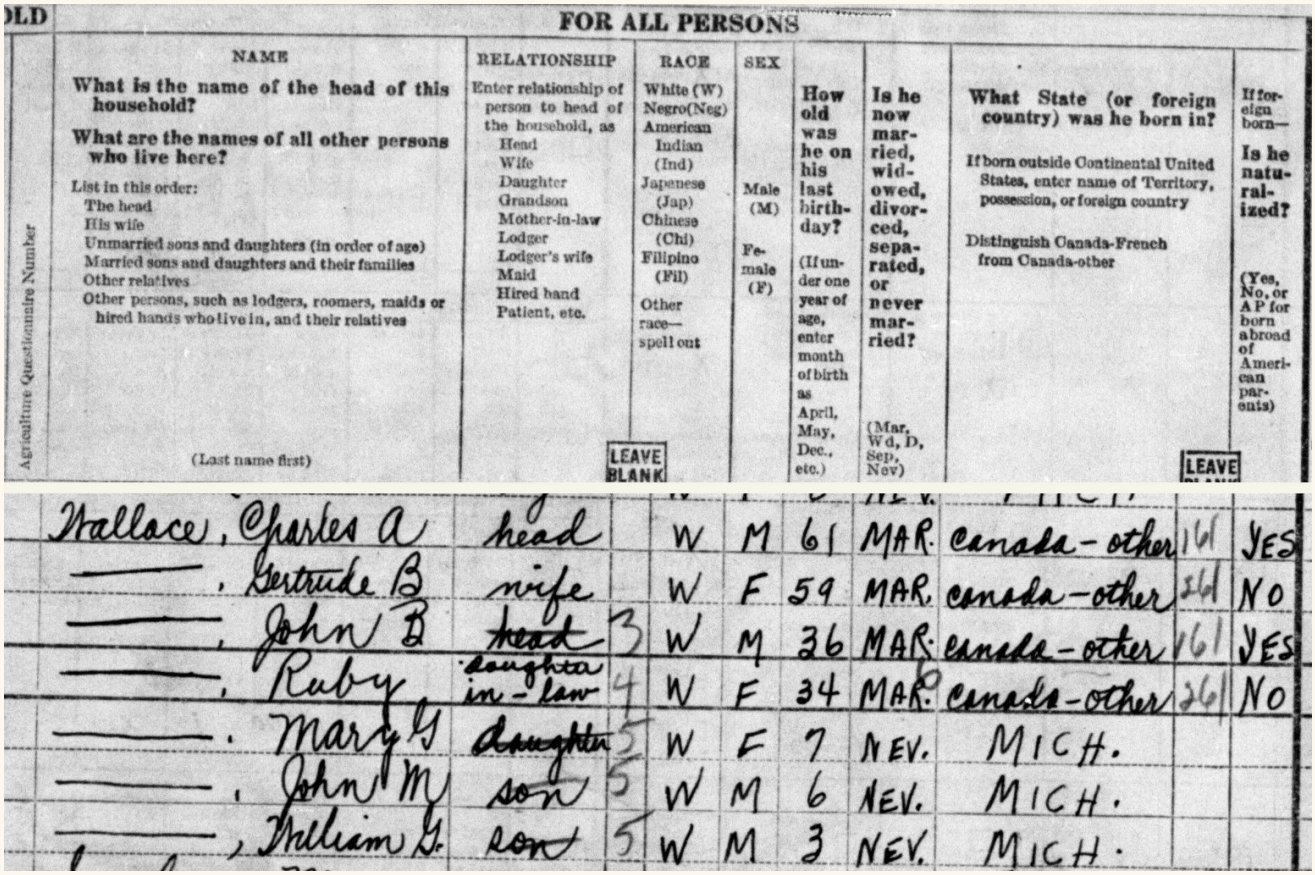
A girl named Mary in Detroit



In the 1950 census, look to the upper part of sheet 1, at the household with the surname Wallace. Lines 8–14 run from Charles and Gertrude down to Mary's little brother William.

U.S. Census Bureau, 1950 Census of Population and Housing, U.S. National Archives.

Mary is seven



Agriculture Questionnaire Number	NAME (What is the name of the head of this household? What are the names of all other persons who live here? List in this order: The head; His wife; Unmarried sons and daughters (in order of age); Married sons and daughters and their families; Other relatives; Other persons, such as lodgers, roomers, maids or hired hands who live in, and their relatives) (Last name first)	RELATIONSHIP (Enter relationship of person to head of the household, as Head, Wife, Daughter, Grandson, Mother-in-law, Lodger, Lodger's wife, Maid, Hired hand, Patient, etc.)	RACE (White (W), Negro (Neg), American Indian (Ind), Japanese (Jap), Chinese (Chi), Filipino (Fil), Other race—spell out) LEAVE BLANK	SEX (Male (M), Female (F))	How old was he on his last birthday? (If under one year of age, enter month of birth as April, May, Dec., etc.)	Is he now married, widowed, divorced, separated, or never married? (Mar, Wd, D, Sep, Nev)	What State (or foreign country) was he born in? If born outside Continental United States, enter name of Territory, possession, or foreign country. Distinguish Canada-French from Canada-other	If foreign born—Is he naturalized? (Yes, No, or AP for born abroad of American parents) LEAVE BLANK
	Wallace, Charles A	head	W	M	61	MAR.	canada-other	YES
	——, Gertrude B	wife	W	F	59	MAR.	canada-other	NO
	——, John B	head	W	M	36	MAR.	canada-other	YES
	——, Ruby	daughter-in-law	W	F	34	MAR.	canada-other	NO
	——, Mary G	daughter	W	F	7	NEV.	MICH.	
	——, John M	son	W	M	6	NEV.	MICH.	
	——, William G	son	W	M	3	NEV.	MICH.	

The ages form their own little portrait of this household. Mary is seven, her brother John is six, and William is three. Listed just above them are Ruby and John.

U.S. Census Bureau, 1950 Census of Population and Housing, U.S. National Archives.

George before he was Grandpa

IN THE ARCHIVE

George before he was Grandpa

Scan or tap to open the original record.

The 1958 Cathedral Boys High School yearbook in Springfield, Illinois, places George H. Smith at lower right. His photograph and activity line appear again at right. The school listed him in the variety show, glee club and track.

1958 Cathedralogue, image 40, Cathedral Boys High School, via Ancestry. Photographer unknown.

Mary’s page in the yearbook

IN THE ARCHIVE

Mary’s page in the yearbook

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Glendale High School’s 1960 Stylus, page 93. The group posed above the words “Latin Club.” On the left the student editors printed the members’ names. At lower right they described the club’s cookie sale and scholarships.

Glendale High School, 1960 Stylus, p. 93, via Ancestry. Photographer unknown.

Find Mary in the club roster

IN THE ARCHIVE

Find Mary in the club roster

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Her name breaks across two lines, “Mary Wal-” and “lace,” between Shelly Stimson and Mary Salyer. Joseph tentatively recognizes her among the standing girls near the right. The roster confirms her membership. The other excerpt tells what the club did for its students.

Glendale High School, 1960 Stylus, p. 93, via Ancestry. Photographer unknown.

The day Stephani was born

IN THE ARCHIVE

The day Stephani was born

Scan or tap to open the original record.

Bob Gregg kept a high-and-low table at his Glendale foothill station. This is the complete March 1963 sheet. March 13 is near the middle of the left column.

Bob Gregg, Weather Station No. II, Glendale foothills. March 1963, sheet 22.

From the hillside to Brand Boulevard

IN THE ARCHIVE

From the hillside to Brand Boulevard

Scan or tap to open the original record.

On row 13, Gregg's low is 41°F and his high is 79°F. Below, a Los Angeles Herald Examiner photograph shows Brand Boulevard in Glendale on August 23, 1963, a little over five months after Stephani's birth.

Bob Gregg, Weather Station No. II, Glendale foothills. March 1963, sheet 22.
Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library, image 00047171.

Notes & sources

1 What a man signed away on the Elbe

Altona stood beside Hamburg, under the Danish crown in 1792. David Minor dates the Catharina's departure to May 2 and her passage into the open Atlantic to May 8. The dockside trades are documented. No observation for that particular morning has been located. One surviving contract belonged to Johann Gottlob Schellenberg. For six years' work he was to receive passage and thirty-six Spanish thalers annually. Saving four a year could earn twenty-five acres, livestock and poultry. Philip's individual contract has yet to turn up.

David Minor · Crooked Lake Review, 1792 timeline, May 2 and 8
https://crookedlakereview.blogspot.com/2010/02/central-western-new-york-timeline-1792.html?m=0

Port of Hamburg · History of the Port, shipbuilding at Altona
https://www.hafen-hamburg.de/en/experience/geschichte/

Hermann Pfaefflin · History of the Germans of Rochester, pp. 13–14, clauses 1–3
https://mcnygenealogy.com/book/history-rochester-germans.pdf

Hans Rohde · Die Küste 26, p. 4, Hamburg weather series
https://izw.baw.de/die-kueste/0/k026_1974.pdf

2 Two sisters and one carved chest

Markham Museum records a blanket chest 135 centimetres wide, made of six dovetailed boards. It has iron hinges, handles at both ends and three upright bands of flowers. The catalogue reads the inscription as "Jochim Pingel 1757." Its maker and the reason for the date remain unknown. Markham research identifies Ann Elizabeth Koepke as Philip's wife and Maria Koepke, Ann's sister, as the wife of Jochim's son George. Philip later named George a co-executor of his will. The chest belongs to the family story through those marriages.

Markham Museum · Artefacts Canada, blanket chest M.L.1980.6
https://app.pch.gc.ca/application/artefacts_hum/detailler_detail.app?colId=&d=ACRCM.L.1980.6&f=&i=false&in=Markham+Museum&k=&l=1&lang=en&n=0&o=&p=a&pID=3&r=10&s=1&t=1&v=none&w=

George W. J. Duncan and William D. Finlayson · The Philip Eckardt Log House, pp. 9–14, 51
https://billfinlayson.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/for-ebook-use-Finlayson-Eckardt-Log-House.pdf

City of Markham · Pingle–Brown House, Lot 21, Concession 6
https://www3.markham.ca/Markham/aspc/heritage/photo/details.aspx?FOLDERRSN=306108

Notes & sources

3 Thirteen weeks and the water at Newport

John Henry Sommerfeldt remembered thirteen weeks at sea, twice-weekly scrubbing and the smell of vinegar and juniper used to fumigate the ship. Markham's Helmke family history credits Johan, whose five-year-old son Francis sailed with him, with discovering the shortage that led to fresh water at Newport. The surviving Philadelphia list names "Pilip Ekhart," age twenty-four, and Jochim Pingel with his wife and five children among 132 passengers. Accounts give July 22, July 28 and August 3 for arrival. August 3 is the date on the list's endorsement. A Newport water receipt has yet to surface.

John Henry Sommerfeldt · Voyage account, Markham Museum document 43, p. 1
https://exhibit.markham.ca/detail.php?kv=5901&t=objects&type=related

Town of Markham · James Brander House, by-law 2004-214, schedule B, p. 3
https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/oha/details/file?id=10337

Ralph B. Strassburger and William J. Hinke · Pennsylvania German Pioneers, vol. III, list 370, pp. 49–51
https://archive.org/details/pennsylvaniagerm44stra/page/50/mode/1up

Michael Rüppel · Bremisches Jahrbuch 90, pp. 40, 42, including July 28
https://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/download/pdf/775301.pdf#page=19

4 The settlement that failed and the people who helped

Sommerfeldt describes the Philadelphia purchases, three days loading twelve wagons without eating, carrying firewood, and later supplying 125 loaves every other day. The settlers' 1793 petition gives the numbers of huts and axes and their understanding of the promised terms. Cowan documents the winter journey and imprisonment of settlers at Canandaigua. Stagg identifies Charles Williamson, the guards, and the help of Indigenous people from the Grand River and men hired by Samuel Street. He describes the group reaching Upper Canada in late June 1794 and settling at Markham by year's end. His account does not give the helpers' individual names or say the guards pointed guns or fired on the families.

John Henry Sommerfeldt · Voyage account, Markham Museum document 43, p. 1
https://exhibit.markham.ca/detail.php?kv=5901&t=objects&type=related

Helen I. Cowan · Williamsburg, Lost Village on the Genesee, Rochester History IV.3, pp. 6–7, 10–11
https://www.libraryweb.org/~rochhist/v4_1942/v4i3.pdf

Georg Siegmund Liebich and the settlers · German petition, August 6, 1793, manuscript p. 50, Pingel
https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_h2298/99

Georg Siegmund Liebich and the settlers · German petition, manuscript p. 51, Ekhard
https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_h2298/100

Ronald J. Stagg · Dictionary of Canadian Biography, "Berczy, William," vol. 5
https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/berczy_william_5E.html

Notes & sources

5 Inside the elder Eckardts' log house

Philip married Ann Elizabeth in 1794. He farmed, cleared obstructions from the Rouge and built a flat-bottomed barge. Neighbors worshipped in their log house. The 1803 household return gives Philip, five (about 1797–98), Henry, four (about 1798–99), and George, one (about 1801–02). Daughter Marie, also called Mary, was buried near the house that year. Family and local histories name Gottlieb, Frederick, Andrew (1811) and Salem (1824), and count seventeen or eighteen children. Duncan dates Philip Sr.'s marriage to Ann Elizabeth to 1794 (p. 10) and credits their eighteen children to Markham Museum genealogy (p. 13). The city dates the adult Philip Jr.'s birth to 1803, while a Philip listed in the 1803 household was already five. Both dates fall during Ann's marriage. We have not found the younger Philip's baptism or a record naming a different mother. The 1827 land history names his father (note 6).

William Berczy fonds · Markham census, 1803, manuscript p. 68, reel H-2298, frame 135
https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_h2298/135

George W. J. Duncan and William D. Finlayson · The Philip Eckardt Log House, pp. 9–14
https://billfinlayson.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/for-ebook-use-Finlayson-Eckardt-Log-House.pdf

A. J. H. Eckardt · The Eckardt Pioneers of Markham Township, family recollections
https://www.wurm-hastings.com/histories/eckhardtpioneers.html

Bethesda Lutheran Church · Cemetery bylaws, preface, p. 2, burial of Marie
https://bethesdalutheranchurch.ca/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/BLC-Cemetery-By-law-0916.pdf

6 A hundred acres and five children

Markham's land history identifies the elder Philip as the father who sold Philip Jr. one hundred acres in 1827. Philip Jr. married Susannah Hegler in 1829. Their children were Sarah Ann (1832), Thomas Philip (1833), Andrew (1837), Barbara Ann (1840) and Edward (1841). Andrew and Barbara Ann died young. Thomas became a physician. Edward inherited the farm in 1874. Their brick house overlooked the Rouge and had four chimneys. The younger couple took in a visiting student minister. An 1851 census, enumerated in 1852, finds Sarah Ann, Thomas and Edward at home.

City of Markham, Heritage Section · Philip Jr. and Susannah Eckardt House, Appendix D, 60 Meadowbrook Lane
https://pub-markham.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=89033

City of Markham · Philip Eckardt Jr. House, heritage register, architectural description
https://www3.markham.ca/Markham/aspc/heritage/photo/details.aspx?FOLDERRSN=913000

Library and Archives Canada · 1851 census, Markham, p. 245, lines 46–50, via Ancestry
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1061/images/e095-e002374366

Notes & sources

7 From the Markham farm to the Pelham orchards

Edward Eckardt married Catherine Braithwaite in 1869. He registered their son Homer Mark Philip, born October 24 that year. Homer's uncle, Dr. Thomas P. Eckardt, attended the birth. Other records name Clarence (about 1871–72), Florence Gertrude (1876), Maude (1880), Jessie (1881), Eva (1883), and twins W. Roy and Wilhelmina (November 21, 1885). The Markham farm was sold in 1883 and returned to Edward and Catherine together in 1886. By 1891 Edward was growing fruit in Pelham. The 1901 census gives the twins' same birthday on neighboring lines.

Ontario Registrar General · Homer Mark Philip Eckardt, 1869 birth return, MS 929, reel 3, frame 0778
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8838/images/ONMS929_3-0778?pid=1979948

Library and Archives Canada · 1881 Markham census, p. 37, household 181, via Ancestry
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1577/images/31229_C_13248-00428?pid=3155266

City of Markham, Heritage Section · 60 Meadowbrook Lane, Appendix D, historical associations
https://pub-markham.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=89033

Library and Archives Canada · 1901 Pelham census, p. 3, household 32, via Ancestry
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8826/images/z000079353?pid=13985284

8 Twins who shared a wedding date

Office clerk Florence Gertrude Eckardt and nurseryman George Tunnacliffe married in Ridgeville on March 20, 1903. Her sisters Eva and Maud witnessed the marriage. Their children were Jean Ladell (1903), Eve Gwendolyn (1905), Marion (1909), Ruby Catharine and Ruth Eliza (December 23, 1915), and Donald (about 1918–19). Florence registered the twins separately on the same page. Ruby married John Braceland Wallace on June 22, 1940, in Welland. On June 22, 1946, Ruth married Edwin Albert Hilder. The local newspaper identifies the matron of honor as Mrs. J. B. Wallace. Ruby spent her sixth anniversary beside Ruth. On page 3, the June 25 newspaper names the bride's twin as matron of honor. Both attendants wore red roses, white sweet peas and fern in their headdresses and carried matching bouquets. The watercolor depicts Ruby's flowers. The surviving family clipping reproduces the paragraph about the attendants.

Archives of Ontario · 1903 Welland marriage register, Ridgeville, witnesses on facing page
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7921/images/ONMS932_112-0675

Archives of Ontario · 1915 Pelham birth register, p. 149, Ruby and Ruth
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8838/images/48783_556590-00571?pId=3294539

Archives of Ontario · Welland marriage registration, Ruby and John, June 22, 1940
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7921/images/7921_09bf6d4b_0209-00208?pid=114808126

Welland–Port Colborne Evening Tribune · Hilder–Tunnacliffe wedding, June 25, 1946, p. 3
https://www.newspapers.com/image/1223223797/?article=6a6b3538-df9e-4b20-93af-6cbee11e91aa

Notes & sources

9 Mary before she became Grandma

Mary Gertrude Wallace was born in Detroit on April 8, 1942. In the 1950 census she was seven, John was six (about 1943–44) and William was three (about 1946–47). Bill's later notice names his siblings Anne and John "Mike." Other family evidence suggests Bill was the son Ruby called George. Mary Wallace appears in Glendale High's 1960 Latin Club roster. The club funded scholarships with a cookie sale. Identifying her face in the group is tentative. Mary married George Howard Smith in San Diego County on November 25, 1960. Joseph recalls one occasion watching Jeopardy! with Mary and another crushing aluminum cans with her backyard can crusher. Joseph recalls his mother finding George in Costa Mesa when she was around thirty and remembers the Christmas jacket. Anne's invitation is family correspondence preserved in the earlier edited Pages manuscript.

U.S. National Archives · 1950 Detroit census, district 85-1635, sheet 1, lines 8–14
https://nara-1950-census.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/1950census/43290879-Michigan/43290879-Michigan-150957/43290879-Michigan-150957-0002.jpg

Chicago Tribune · William "Bill" G. Wallace, November 18, 2012, p. 1-39
https://www.newspapers.com/clip/78246060/chicago-tribune/

Glendale High School · Stylus, 1960 yearbook, Latin Club, p. 93, via Ancestry
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1265/images/sid_1853_1960_0097?pId=409171573

State of California · Marriage Index, Wallace–Smith, November 25, 1960, file 91110
https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1144/records/7570435

Notes & sources

10 The morning Stephani was born

California's birth index records Stephani A. Smith on March 13, 1963, in Los Angeles County, with Wallace as her mother's maiden surname. The family remembers Glendale. At his Verdugo foothill station Bob Gregg recorded a daily low of 41°F and a high of 79°F. Regional streetcars were in their final weeks of service. The last scheduled runs were March 31. Ruby and the Romantics' "Our Day Will Come" was second on Billboard's March 16 chart and first on March 23, when Stephani was ten days old. The same chart ranked "Walk Like a Man" first and included Johnny Mathis singing "What Will My Mary Say."

State of California · California Birth Index, Stephani A. Smith, March 13, 1963
https://californiabirthindex.org/birth/stephani_a_smith_born_1963_8599320

Bob Gregg · Glendale weather notebook, PDF p. 22, March table, row 13
https://stormbruiser.com/chase/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Glendale-1962-and-1963.pdf#page=22

Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority · The Emblem, April 1963, final streetcar service
https://libraryarchives.metro.net/dpgtl/employeenews/Emblem_1963_Apr.pdf#page=3

Billboard · Hot 100, March 23, 1963, first place and previous-week rank
https://www.worldradiohistory.com/Archive-All-Music/Billboard/60s/1963/Billboard%201963-03-23.pdf

11 Mary's eight children, in the family's words

Stephani remembered five boys and three girls. Joseph recalls Kevin Smith, Timmy Smith, Ricky Gaughn, Michael Gaughn, Patrick, Stephani Smith, Windy Gaughan and Cindy Gaughan. Mary's notice calls the girls Windy and Cindy. The birth index gives Wendy S. (1969), Cynthia A. (1967) and Michael W. Gaughan (1970). Kevin was born in 1961 and Timmy in 1964. Ricky's given name comes from Joseph because the available obituary excerpt cuts off a son's name. Patrick's adoption and reunion also come from Joseph, who has no confirmed surname. The childhood loss remembered by the family remains unidentified. George's notice also names Christopher and Carol Smith, and stepchildren Jim Trucano Harp and Eric Harp. These belong to Stephani's paternal family.

Stephani Q. · Remembrance of Mary Gertrude Wallace, November 8, 2007, memorial 22758373
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/22758373/mary-gertrude-wallace

Las Vegas Review-Journal · Mary Gertrude Smith, November 15, 1990, surviving children
https://reviewjournal.newsbank.com/doc/image/v2%3A1508AFD0E83DBED6%40NGPA-NVLVRJ-16EF58EA852B4E98%40244821 1-16ED3A3CB67AE4A5%4016-16ED3A3CB67AE4A5%40?pdate=1990-11-15

State of California · Birth Index, Gaughan children with mother's surname Wallace
https://californiabirthindex.org/parents_lastnames/gaughan/wallace

The Telegraph · George H. Smith, June 2013, family notice and paternal household
https://www.thetelegraph.com/news/article/George-H-Smith-12651154.php

Notes & sources

12 Eighteen years and one Sunday morning

Joseph's family account places Stephani at John Burroughs High in Burbank, where Joseph and Anthony later went. Her childhood memories belong to her. The imagined conversation with newborn Stephani and Mary is Joseph's tribute. The Dodgers swept the Yankees in 1963 and beat them four games to two in 1981. Joseph gives his birth as May 9, 1981, in Mission Hills, eighteen years and fifty-seven days after Stephani's birth. President Reagan's proclamation designates Sunday, May 10, as Mother's Day. Mother and son spent their first one together when he was a day old. The night before Joseph was born, Fernando Valenzuela struck out eleven Mets in a 1–0 Dodgers win at Shea Stadium.

Major League Baseball · 1963 World Series recap, Dodgers and Yankees
https://www.mlb.com/news/1963-world-series-recap

Major League Baseball · 1981 postseason, World Series results
https://www.mlb.com/postseason/history/1981

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library · Proclamation 4834, Mother's Day 1981, April 13
https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/proclamation-4834-mothers-day-1981

Sports Reference · Dodgers at Mets, May 8, 1981 · Shea Stadium box score and Dodgers pitching line, Valenzuela, nine innings.
https://www.baseball-reference.com/boxes/NYN/NYN198105080.shtml

13 The family Philip could never have pictured

Joseph Valenzuela's family account, November 25, 2026, names Stephani's four sons as Joseph, Anthony, Marco and Matthew. He recalls more than forty years with a child in her home. He remembers Samantha, the daughter of Stephani's husband Marco, as a mother of four. After Samantha's death, Stephani and Marco are helping raise her children. The salute aboard the Catharina and the closing watercolor are imagined scenes illustrated with AI assistance. Minor League Baseball records the Phillies' selection of catcher Matt Quintanar in the sixteenth round, 489th overall, in 2026. Joseph identifies Matthew as his youngest brother. Joseph's private DNA results can guide research. The family relationships in this account draw on testimony, civil and church records, censuses and land history.

Minor League Baseball · Matt Quintanar, player 825578, 2026 Draft and transactions
https://www.milb.com/player/matt-quintanar-825578

City of Markham · Philip Eckardt Jr. House, family land history, 60 Meadowbrook Lane
https://www3.markham.ca/Markham/aspc/heritage/photo/details.aspx?FOLDERRSN=913000