BASAHIN SA TAGALOG →

UPDATED 17 OCTOBER 2026

26 PAGES

Lord,

Give Us This Mountain

VOLUME ONE · LANCASTER COUNTY ROOTS

From Lancaster County PA to Malvar Street Baguio City Philippines

Engle · Robson · Leonard · Haines

Ken and Mary Lou Engle · An Engle Family History

Volume One: Lancaster County Roots

Switzerland · Pennsylvania · Kansas · Ontario · England · 1743–1950

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Welcome to the Engle Family

This little book tells the story of one family: a Kansas farm boy named Ken Engle, a student nurse from Canonsburg named Mary Lou Leonard, and the six children they raised between the prairie and the Philippine islands. Behind them stand the Engles, Robsons, Leonards and Haineses, ordinary people who loved the Lord and wrote things down. Ahead of them are grandchildren and great-grandchildren who are still adding chapters.

From 1951 to 1975 Ken and Mary Lou served the Lord in the Philippines, and the work they began goes on today through keepm.org. These stories are where it all started.

A Book of Remembrance

Ken and Mary Lou Engle saved everything. Diaries kept almost every day from the 1940s until 2003. Several thousand letters. Some thirty thousand photographs and slides. Reel-to-reel tapes nobody had played in sixty years.

About twenty years ago Kevin and Gordon had most of it scanned. About ten years ago Kevin gave Gordon the hard copies so he could read them, and in 2026 Gordon began sending the family short true stories built from what he found. His archive now holds 4,669 documents, from 1719 to 2004, and more than 8,000 diary pages.

His rule is simple. The quotations are Mother and Daddy, word for word, with the diary and page cited. Nothing is invented. When a relative remembers it differently, the correction goes in.

> `For such a time as this.`
>
> Gordon, on why our parents saved everything (Esther 4:14)

Gordon says the diaries "are handing our own lives back to us a piece at a time, and a good half of what they hand back is something we would have sworn we already knew."

This series gathers those stories into one place, along with what the family has learned about where we came from. Gordon is still sending a story nearly every day, and each one will find its way in.

> `Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another… and a book of remembrance was written.`
>
> Malachi 3:16

PART ONE

Where We Came From

Switzerland and Pennsylvania · Kansas · Ontario · England

UPDATED 12 OCTOBER 2026

Karen and Patrick on Romblon

The Swiss Engels of Lancaster County

The Engle story in America begins with a Swiss family who sailed for Pennsylvania in the 1750s. Ken put it plainly in a 1952 letter: *"Pennsylvania Dutch, both grandpa and grandma… some call it Swiss and some German."* The family history says Swiss.

The best-documented early ancestor on the Engle line is **Ulrich Engel**, born in July 1743. He came over with his father, also named Ulrich, as a boy of about eleven, farmed in Donegal Township, Lancaster County, and married **Magdalena Bicksler**. Family tradition remembers him as the champion Maypole climber at Maytown. He was light enough to win, and he filled his pockets with ashes to rub on his hands for grip.

His gravestone still stands at the Reichs Church Cemetery near Marietta, carved in German:

> `Hier ruhen die Gebeine von ULRICH ENGEL … gestorben den 28sten September 1799 im 57ten Jahr seines Alters.`
>
> "Here rest the bones of Ulrich Engel… died the 28th of September 1799, in the 57th year of his age"

From Gordon's story "Ulrich Engle, Born 1743" (20 Aug 2026) and a 1952 letter of Ken's.

The River Brethren

Out of that same Lancaster County family came **Jacob "Yokeli" Engel**. Yokeli is the Pennsylvania Dutch pet name for Jacob. In the years around the American Revolution he became a founding leader of the River Brethren, the church known today as the **Brethren in Christ**. Kevin counts himself eight generations from Yokeli. Family records disagree on whether Yokeli was Ulrich's younger brother or his son. His birth, about 1753, points to brother.

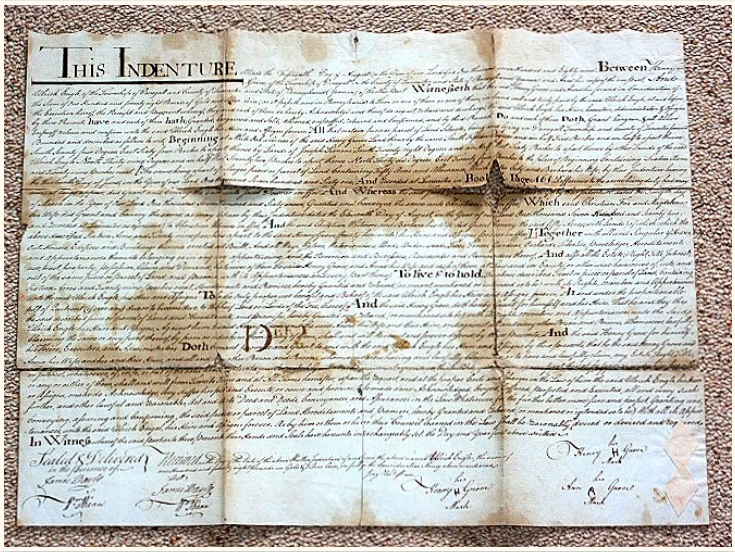
Two treasures from those years have come down to us. In 2009 Kevin found the **Engle Grove deed of 1789** for sale. It records sixteen acres in Donegal Township sold for 178 pounds by Henry and Anna Grove (Anna was Ulrich's sister) to Ulrich Engle Jr., signed with "their mark." Photos of the deed are on the next page. And Grandma Mabel Engle gave Kevin a German **Martyrs Mirror** printed in 1814, bound in wooden boards and leather and weighing about fifteen pounds.

The Pennsylvania kitchen came west with the family too. Kevin remembers that Great-Grandma Barbara Engle made cup cheese, and "you could smell it through the house for days." His cousin Lynette added that this might explain why their dads had trouble smelling things later in life.

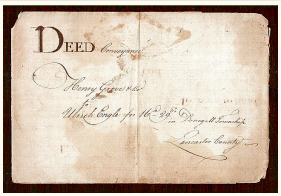
From Kevin's family papers and memories, and family emails.

The Engle Grove Deed, 1789

Here is the deed itself. Kevin found it on eBay in 2009 and bought it for fifty dollars. Dated 15 August 1789, it records that Henry Grove, yeoman, and Ann his wife, both of Donegal Township, Lancaster County, sold Ulrich Engle sixteen acres and twenty-nine perches there for £178 in gold and silver coin, the land "to have and to hold" for him and his heirs forever. Ann was Ulrich's sister. Neither she nor Henry could write, so each signed with a mark, an H and an A, beside a paper seal, before two witnesses.

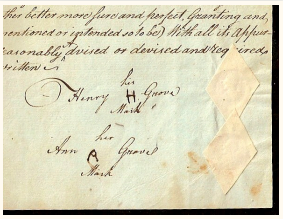


This Indenture: the whole deed, unfolded.

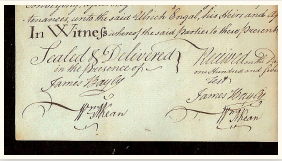


The outside, folded: "Deed Conveyance, Henry Grove & ux [and wife] to Ulrich Engle for 16 a. 29 p. in Donegall Township, Lancaster County."

Kevin Engle's collection



Henry Grove, his H mark, and Ann Grove, her A mark, with their paper seals.



"Sealed & Delivered in the Presence of" two witnesses, who also signed the receipt for the money.

West to Kansas

Around 1879 and 1880 a wave of Brethren in Christ families left Lancaster County for the prairie of Dickinson County, Kansas. Kevin's great-grandfather was among them. *"Kansas is where most of my people are,"* Kevin wrote in 2013.

Abilene's most famous son, Dwight D. Eisenhower, grew up in a River Brethren family that came out from Pennsylvania in the same migration. Our records show no kinship, only the same church roots and the same Kansas soil. Mary Lou noted the day in 1971 when the Eisenhower Museum was dedicated, with Mamie and the Johnsons in town.

Our line runs from **Harry Shelly Engle** and **Barbara Martin Engle** to their son **Grant Ercil Engle**, born 21 July 1899. Grant's uncle **Noah Martin** built the **Grace and Truth Gospel Chapel** in Abilene around 1918. The family worshipped there with the Plymouth Brethren for ninety years, and H. A. Ironside preached there in the early 1920s. The first wedding ever held in the chapel was Aunt Eloise's, in 1957. Its last meeting was in March 2010.

> The guy that built the chapel was Grandpa Engles Uncle, Noah Martin. The fellow who got saved (first among the Robson's), was Grandma Engle's (and Uncle Orvilles) dad, Robert A. Robson.
>
> Kevin, 2010

From family emails (Kevin, 2010 and 2013) and Mary Lou's 1971 diary.

Grant and Mabel

In September 1922 Grant Engle married **Mabel Emma Robson**. When he wrote his first letter asking her for a date, he spelled her name "Mable," the way his own sister spelled hers.

They farmed seven miles south of Abilene, and raised five children: **Ken** (1924), **Keith** (1929), **Eloise** (1935), **Elaine** (1938) and **Jan**. Keith later worked the place. Every November for about forty years the farm filled up with men and boys for the pheasant hunt.

Ken remembered a country school with three students in eight grades, 4-H chickens and pigs that lost money, and a Holstein calf that did better. His grandfather taught the Bible and once asked him whether he knew Jesus.

Gordon remembers Grandpa's big thumbs. *"Now if I could just get Grandpa to stop asking me 'IS THAT FELT' as he pinches me with those big thumbs…"*

In 1980 Grant and Mabel gave up the house and moved into Brown's Memorial Home in Abilene, where Ken had held services for years. *"It means more now that the folks are there,"* he wrote. When Grant turned ninety in July 1989, the party was at Brown's, and the family went up to his room in shifts.

From Ken's 1973 testimony tape, his letters, and Gordon's story "He Made Quite a Hit" (29 Sep 2026).

The Robsons

Grandma Mabel's people came to Kansas from Ontario. **John Ross Robson** and **Catharine Broadfoot Robson** had ten children; Albert, the youngest, was the only one born in Kansas. John's mother, **Amy Graham Robson**, came along in 1876 and lived about ten years near Abilene. Aunt Eloise kept a large photo of Catharine in her bedroom.

Their son **Robert Alexander Robson**, our great-grandfather, married **Cora Eva**. Her father, **Henry Eva**, was a Civil War veteran; he and his wife Hester are buried in the Abilene cemetery.

> I remember my mother telling me that her father loved to dance and gave that up when he was converted… I do believe he was saved under the message from H.A. Ironside.
>
> Aunt Eloise, 2014

Robert became one of the leading brothers at Grace and Truth Chapel. Kevin believes Grandma Engle and Ken "inherited his godly disposition."

Cora died in 1935, while Mabel was carrying Eloise. Grandma Robson was a little superstitious and thought an expectant mother should not be near the dying, so Mabel never told her about the baby. *"I wish I had ask more questions when I had the chance,"* Eloise wrote.

The Robson cousins still gather in Abilene on the first Sunday of August. In 2017 two Winslow cousins came in kilts of the Gunn tartan.

From family emails, among them Aunt Eloise's of 2014.

Robson Aunts and Uncles

Robert and Cora's children were **Mabel** (our grandmother), **Roberta**, **Harry**, **Orville**, **Cleason** and **Lela**. Lela died as a toddler. Cleason died as a young man. Ken always said *"Uncle Cleason was my favorite uncle."*

Roberta married **Wendell Koons**. Their eldest son, **Alvin Dean Koons**, became a U.S. Navy chaplain. Ken was his first cousin, and Kevin recalls hearing that Ken led Alvin to the Lord when they were boys. Alvin turns up again in the Philippines in 1966, carrying a flute (Volume Two).

Uncle Orville, the youngest, married **Aunt Lois**, whose bread, sticky cinnamon rolls and fudge are still talked about. A cousin remembers that Lois *"used to wash my hair in the sink and I played the pump organ."*

The Robson farmhouse near Abilene, where Mabel and her brothers and sisters grew up and Uncle Orville lived for many years, is back in the family. The family also keeps Mabel's eighth-grade graduation certificate and two of her childhood journals.

Kevin is the family's unofficial Robson historian. He started the RobsonHistory blog in 2008.

From family emails and Kevin's RobsonHistory blog.

The Haineses

Mary Lou's mother's people came from England. **Ernest G. Haines**, "E. G.," was born about 1871, a butcher's son who became a bookkeeper and loved figures. He married **Alice Bush**. They had twin girls, **Freda** and **Mary**, and a daughter they named **Avril**, the French word for April, because she was born in April, on the 26th, in 1902.

About 1908 the family crossed to America, first to Cincinnati and then to Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. Little Mary died at sixteen. Alice was crippled by arthritis in later years, and E. G. wheeled her to church. He loved the hymn "Rise, My Soul! Behold 'Tis Jesus."

Freda studied at Moody and married **Rev. George Bates**. Their daughter Ruth Elaine was Mary Lou's "little buddy."

Granddaddy Haines lived long enough to see great-grandchildren from Manila. Ken read Scripture with him the week before he died, at the turn of 1961, and spoke at his funeral.

> `Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.`
>
> the verse Ken shared with Granddaddy Haines (1 Samuel 7:12)

From family letters and emails.

The Leonards

John Reihner Leonard was born on Christmas Day 1899 in Washington, Pennsylvania, the son of Frank and Harriet Leonard. In September 1926 he married Avril Haines at First Baptist Church in Canonsburg. He ran a plant, bought and sold property and trucks, and between 1937 and 1944 shot twenty-five reels of home movies. Gordon has put them on video. In them Mary Lou grows from seven to about fourteen, playing the trombone.

In October 1952, the week Mary Lou sailed for Manila, John wrote her a letter that Gordon calls "The Hospital for Somnambulists." Avril had been sleepwalking in broad daylight and turned her bad ankle. Thirteen-year-old Betsy had leaned on the cellar door and tumbled all the way down.

> So you can see, between my being Supt of Hospital for somnambulists, cook & shipper, I am busy.
>
> John Leonard to Mary Lou, October 1952

> I am buying Mother a new typewriter like Ginny's because she likes to type letters & she has so many to write.
>
> the same letter

She did have many to write. Avril wrote for thirty-seven more years. Five hundred twenty-one of her letters survive, more than anyone's in the archive except Ken's and Mary Lou's.

John Leonard died on 1 August 1964, at sixty-four. Avril lived until 1 October 1989 and died at eighty-seven.

From John Leonard's letter of October 1952, in Gordon's story "The Hospital for Somnambulists" (8 Sep 2026).

The Preacher He Went to Fetch

Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, the winter of 1954. A church with no preacher, and a chairman of trustees who could not sit still.

John Leonard had already talked a bank into a loan to pay off what the church owed the Association. Then came the bigger problem. He typed it out for his daughter and son-in-law in Manila, question marks and all:

> Then,we must find a preacher?????? So mother keeps busy,calling, writing,praying,etc. and helps Emil keep the pulpit supplied. And then we get a recommendation on this fellow Romig. But he is WAY OUT WEST.they all say.
>
> John Leonard to Ken and Mary Lou, Thursday 1 April 1954

Way out west. That was Davenport, Iowa.

Way Out West

Most chairmen of trustees would write a letter. Maybe two. Then wait for an answer. Not this one.

> So I say nothing to anyone and jump into a plane and leave on late Saturday fly to Davenport Ia. go to his church Sunday AM take he and his family out for dinner,like him very much,arrange for him to come here for 4 days,etc etc. Hurry up,get a plane back,cause I got Business on Monday Morning.
>
> the same letter

Out on Saturday night. Back on Sunday night. At work on Monday morning. And he told nobody where he had been.

Mother and I Know Better

The man came for his four days. The church voted to call him. And then everybody held their breath.

> So the Church votes to call him and every one is afraid he wont accept,but mother & I know better.
>
> the same letter

Mother and I know better. Two weeks earlier Avril had already written to Manila:

> Romigs will be here the first of the month and he preaches April 4th for the first time. O joy!
>
> Avril Leonard, Sunday 14 March 1954

And in the very next line: *"Dad is a nut and sure makes us all laugh."*

Seven Years

So the Romigs came to Canonsburg, and the preacher from way out west became something more than the preacher. He went hunting with John Leonard, more than once, the letters say; one year the two of them set off at two in the morning. The Romigs came for Thanksgiving dinner. Mrs. Romig sent down a blackberry pie, warm from the oven.

Seven years of it. Then, in December 1961, the Romigs read their resignation to the church, after the Lord's Supper. Half an hour later, Avril wrote, the telephone rang: a church in Warren, Ohio, asking him to come and candidate.

And John Leonard was due to go hunting.

> Dad is away hunting but he kind of hated to leave Sunday afternoon; in fact our appetities were not too good for dinner that day. I think had the preacher been going with him, it would have altered his feelings
>
> Avril Leonard, Wednesday 6 December 1961

One More Party

Two weeks later Avril was planning one more party before the Romigs left. John Leonard's birthday was Christmas Day.

> We are having a birthday party for Dad and two of the Romigs Sat. night
>
> Avril Leonard, Wednesday 20 December 1961

And then they were gone.

Now come forward to Saturday, the first of August, 1964. In Villa Park, Illinois, Ken Engle opened his diary that morning and wrote down his verse for the day:

> Dad Leonard. I Peter 2:25 He is our Great Shepherd. How we need a shepherd in these days.
>
> Ken, Saturday 1 August 1964, the top of the page

Two Telephone Calls

That night the telephone rang in Villa Park. It was Betsy. And then, an hour later, Betsy again. Mary Lou wrote it down:

> Daddy went to Heaven today. Just stopped breathing near midnight. Betsy called once to tell us he was poorly, an hour later to say he was gone.
>
> Mary Lou, Saturday 1 August 1964

Three days later, on Tuesday afternoon, came the funeral. Mary Lou wrote down who led the service:

> Day of funeral. Ken Romig, Don Main and Ken had the service.
>
> Mary Lou, Tuesday 4 August 1964

And Ken, in his own diary, the same day:

> Dad Leonard — Funeral. Pastor Roming spoke at Funeral at 230. Don Main read Scripture. I had service at grave side. Read I Thes 4:15-18
>
> Ken, Tuesday 4 August 1964

The Man Who Would Bury Him

Pastor Romig, back in Canonsburg from wherever the years had taken him. The letters don't say from where.

Ten years and four months earlier, a businessman had flown out to Iowa on a Saturday night, told nobody, heard a stranger preach, taken him and his family to dinner, and hurried home for Monday morning.

He had gone and fetched the man who would bury him.

> `For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.`
>
> 1 Peter 2:25, the verse Ken wrote at the top of his diary page on 1 August 1964

What "mother & I know better" would turn out to mean, Gordon says, is the rest of the story.

From John and Avril Leonard's letters to Manila of 14 March and 1 April 1954 and 6 and 20 December 1961, Ken's and Mary Lou's diaries for 1 and 4 August 1964, and Gordon's story "The Preacher He Went to Fetch" (15 Oct 2026), written for Aunt Betsy and Uncle Carl.

Ginny, Mary Lou, Paul and Betsy

John and Avril raised four children in Canonsburg. **Mary Lou** (1930–2003), our mother, was the second.

Virginia "**Ginny**" (1927–1988) trained as a nurse in New York. Widowed on her honeymoon in 1950, she went to the Belgian Congo as a missionary nurse for about twelve years and was twice evacuated by the British Army. Back home she headed the student health center at Moody Bible Institute and married Paul Moldenhauer.

Paul Ernest Leonard (1933–2026) earned his doctorate at Manchester under F. F. Bruce, served on the NIV translation committee, taught New Testament at Trinity, and trained counselors for Billy Graham's New York crusade. As an Army chaplain and colonel he was called up for the Gulf War in 1991. Ken's diary said "To Saudi Arabia." Aunt Betsy corrected Gordon in 2026: Paul served the wounded at Landstuhl, Germany. Paul married **Carol Schmidt** of Kansas in 1957, and in seventy years of diaries they are always "Paul & Carol," like a law firm.

Betsy Jane, the youngest, married **Carl Armerding**, who taught at Regent College in Vancouver and helped translate Judges for the New Living Translation.

In 1978 the four children took turns caring for their mother, a month each.

> `Ginny (April) Betsy (May) Paul (June), ML July.`
>
> Ken's diary, 1978

The rota should have had a fifth name. Carol, the daughter-in-law, quietly took her turns too.

From Ken's 1978 diary and Gordon's stories about the Leonards, Aug–Sep 2026.

The Family Tree

ENGLE · Ulrich Engel (1743–1799) m. Magdalena Bicksler · Lancaster Co., PA
… Harry Shelly Engle (d. 1956) m. Barbara Martin

ROBSON · John Ross Robson m. Catharine Broadfoot · Ontario → Kansas
Robert Alexander Robson m. Cora Eva

Grant Ercil Engle 1899–1992 m. 1922	**Mabel Emma Robson** d. about 1983

Ken · Keith (m. Cleo Barten) · Eloise (m. Kevin Dyer) · Elaine (m. Charlie Corkill) · Jan (m. Ken Horst)

HAINES · Ernest G. Haines (b. ~1871, England) m. Alice Bush

LEONARD · Frank Leonard (1862–1952) m. Harriet

John Reihner Leonard 1899–1964 m. 1926	**Avril Haines** 1902–1989

Virginia (m. Paul Moldenhauer) · Mary Lou · Paul (m. Carol Schmidt) · Betsy (m. Carl Armerding)

Kenneth Ercil Engle 9 Nov 1924 – 5 Nov 2009	**Mary Louise Leonard** 20 Jul 1930 – 12 Apr 2003

married 26 April 1953 · San Juan Gospel Hall, Manila

Becky · Karen · Kevin · Stan · Gordon · Doug

Companion Books

Eight companion books stand beside the five volumes of the story.

In His Joy: The Life and Ministry of Ken Engle
Dad's own letters · 1951–1987 · his life and ministry

Herald of Christ: The Story of Rudy Ponce de Leon
San Juan, Rizal · 1951–1996

Grace Triumphant
the autobiography of Cyril H. Brooks · © 1985 Walterick Publishers

"Mary Lou, Mary Lou": The Story of Evelyn and Fred Balanag
Baguio City · 1968–2010

Cheryl
Cheryl Lyn Engle · her life, her music, her own words

Karen, Patrick, and Romblon: "Carrying the Vision"
keepm.org · the Emmaus app · Moments to Remember · Karen and Patrick

Family Stories and Friends
Friends of the work · family stories · family reference

Kevin's Recollections
Kevin Engle · in his own words · Stewards Foundation · In Dad's Own Words

> **Faithful Men: A Library of Christian Classics**, from PlymouthBrethren.org: Brethren writers and missionary lives, searchable by author, Scripture and topic. Open the library ↗

The Table of Contents for the whole series →

Every link in the series, in one place →

Sources

Gordon's stories used in this volume: Ulrich Engle, Born 1743 · The Hospital for Somnambulists · Ginny April, Betsy May, Paul June · Where the Wounded Came · The One He Never Had to Perform · He Made Quite a Hit · Aunt Eloise, two stories · The Preacher He Went to Fetch (John and Avril Leonard's letters of 14 March and 1 April 1954 and 6 and 20 December 1961; Ken's and Mary Lou's diaries for 1 and 4 August 1964). Also family letters from 2008–2026 and Ken's 1973 testimony tape.

Engle history online: Engle History and Family Records of Dauphin and Lancaster Counties · Ulrich Engel and Anna Brechtbühl · Rev. Jacob Engle (1753–1833) on FamilySearch · The Brethren in Christ.

Graves on Find a Grave: Ulrich Engel (1711–1757) · Anna Brechtbühl Engel (1715–1764) · Ulrich Engel (1743–1799) · Anna Engel Grove (1741–1805) · Elder Jacob “Yokeli” Engel (1753–1833) · Veronica “Fannie” Schock Engel (1750–1816).

What Comes Next

Volume Two, *The Call to the Philippines*, continues the story.

> Keep them for Jesus for eternity.
>
> the prayer behind KEE Philippine Missions

Edition of 11 October 2026 · through Gordon's "Prays for Us Daily" (10 Oct 2026), "ML + I," "Two Candles" and "The Wedding," Ken's War Years letters of 1943-45, the 1950-51 letters, "Herald of Christ" (the story of Rudy Ponce de Leon), "Mary Lou, Mary Lou," the story of Evelyn Balanag with her photographs, "The Landlord and the Projectionist," and a list of hyperlinks