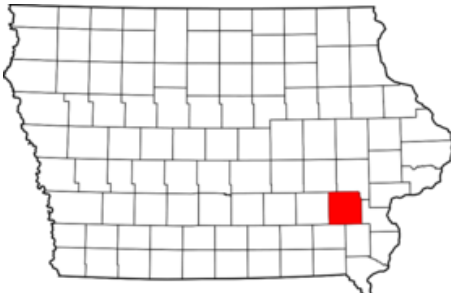


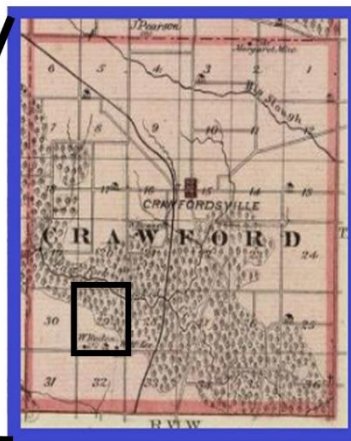
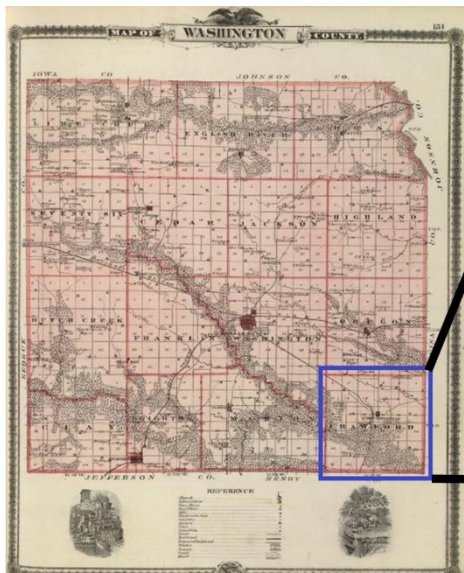
Celebrating the Schantz Century Farm!

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship has a recognition program for those families that have owned farmland for 100 years or more, called Century Farms, or for 150 years or more, designated Heritage Farms. Eligibility states that the farm consists of at least 40 acres of the original holding and that the present owner must be related to the person that first owned the land.ⁱ My first cousins, the daughters of my aunt, Ruth (Schantz) Johnston, applied for and were granted Century Farm status for a 71 acre parcel of farmland in southeast Washington County that is part of the Johnston Schantz Family Farm and has been in the family since 1891.ⁱⁱ

The property is still actively farmed and includes acres in cultivation with soybeans and corn as well as some timber. Washington County is in southeastern Iowa and the Schantz Century Farm property is in the southeast portion of the county, very near the county border with Henry County, Iowa. The closest town to the farm in Washington County is Crawfordsville, a community of 277.ⁱⁱⁱ



"Washington County, Iowa", *Wikipedia*, en.wikipedia.org, accessed 5 Feb 2022



Crawford Township, Section 29

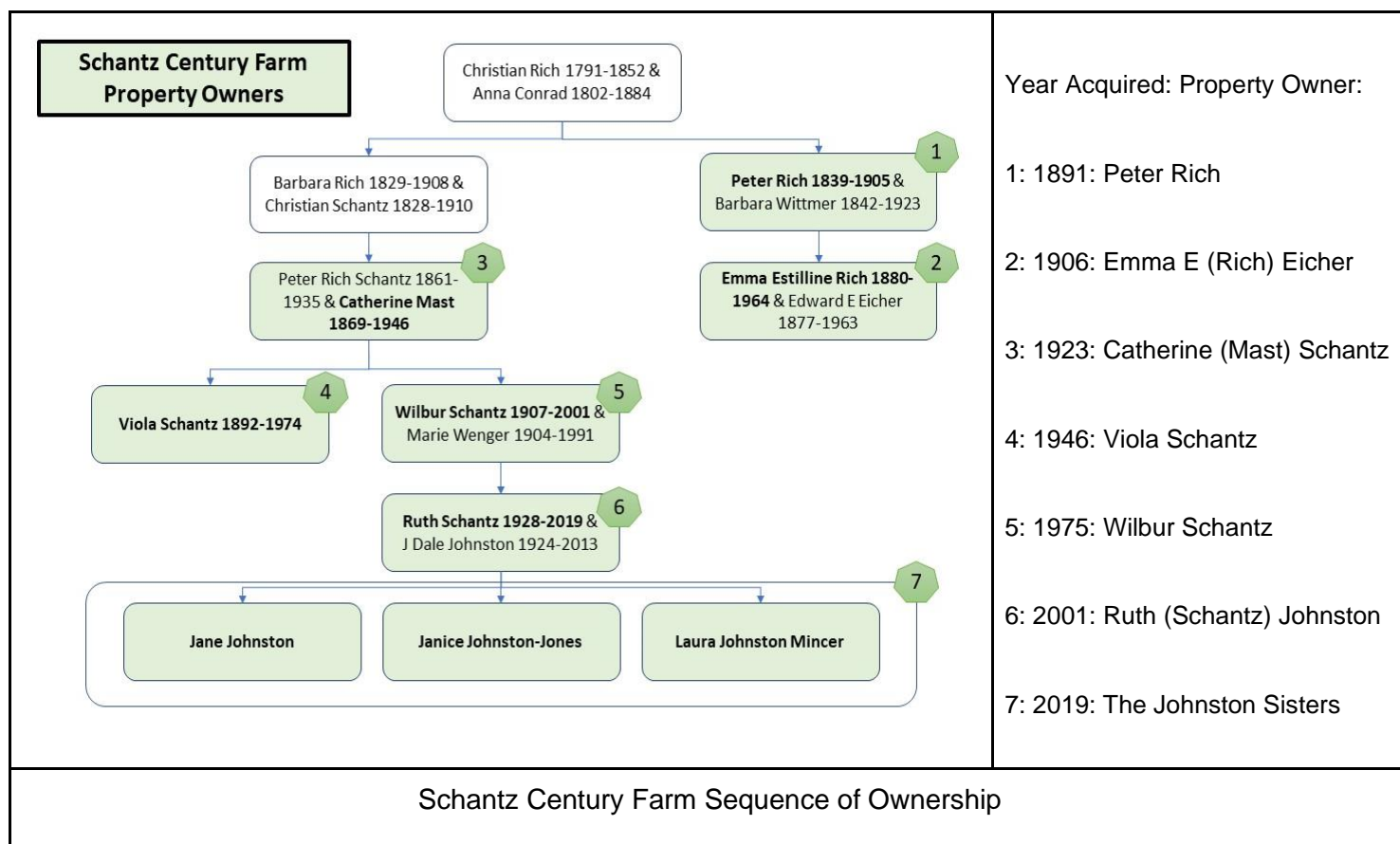
"Map of Washington County, State of Iowa," p. 151, Chas. Shober & Co. published by Andreas Atlas Co. 1875, David Rumsey Map Collection, davidrumsey.com accessed 5 Feb 2022



Current aerial view of the Schantz Century Farm. The farm includes cultivated land as well as timber. Washington County (Iowa) Assessor, Parcel Number: 16-29-400-001, Legal Description: 29 74 06 Lot 3 W ½ SE ¼, <https://washington.iowaassessors.com/parcel.php?gid=295666> accessed 8 Nov 2021

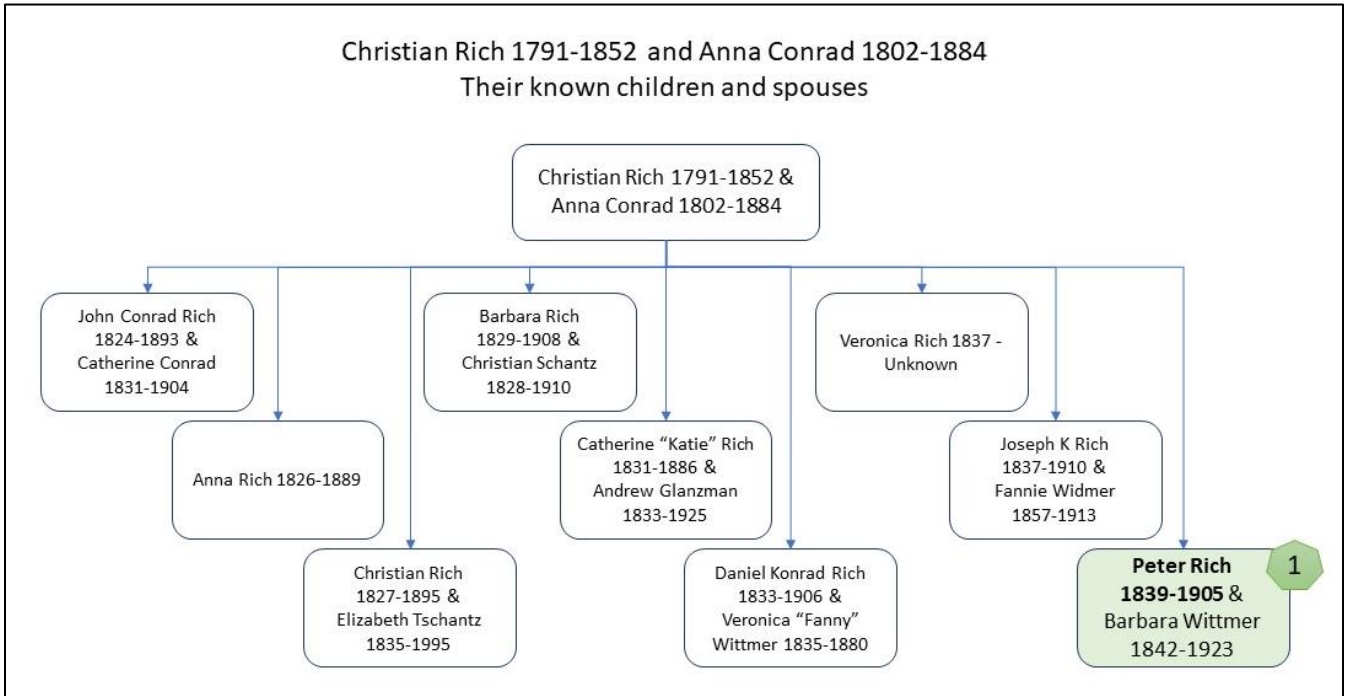
Property History Overview

1. The farm came into the family on 13 Aug 1891, when my second great-granduncle, **Peter Rich**, of Washington County, Iowa, purchased the land from William McKee, Jr.
2. The farm passed down to Peter's daughter, **Emma Estilline (Rich) Eicher**.
3. In 1923, **Catherine (Mast) Schantz**, my great-grandmother, acquired the farm. Catherine, known as Katie, is the wife of Peter Rich "P.R." Schantz, my great-grandfather, and the first cousin to Emma.
4. When Catherine passed away, the farm passed to her oldest daughter, **Viola Schantz**.
5. Viola's brother, **Wilbur Schantz** was the next owner of the farm.
6. Wilbur's oldest daughter, **Ruth (Schantz) Johnston**, inherited the farm from her parents.
7. The farm is now held by **Ruth's daughters**!

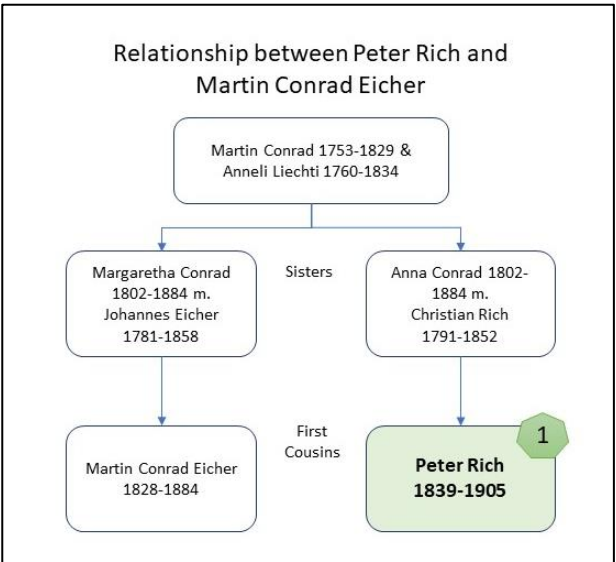


First Family Owner: Peter Rich

The first family owner for the Schantz Century Farm was Peter Rich. Peter is the younger brother to my second great-grandmother, Barbara (Rich) Schantz.^{iv} Their parents, Christian and Anna (Conrad) Rich are third great-grandparents to myself, my siblings and my Schantz first cousins. Peter was 19 years old in 1858 when he immigrated to the United States with his widowed mother, Anna (Conrad) Rich, and sisters Anna and Catherine.^v The family joined Peter’s sister, Barbara, and her husband, Christian Schantz (who had come to the U.S. five years earlier), in Iowa.



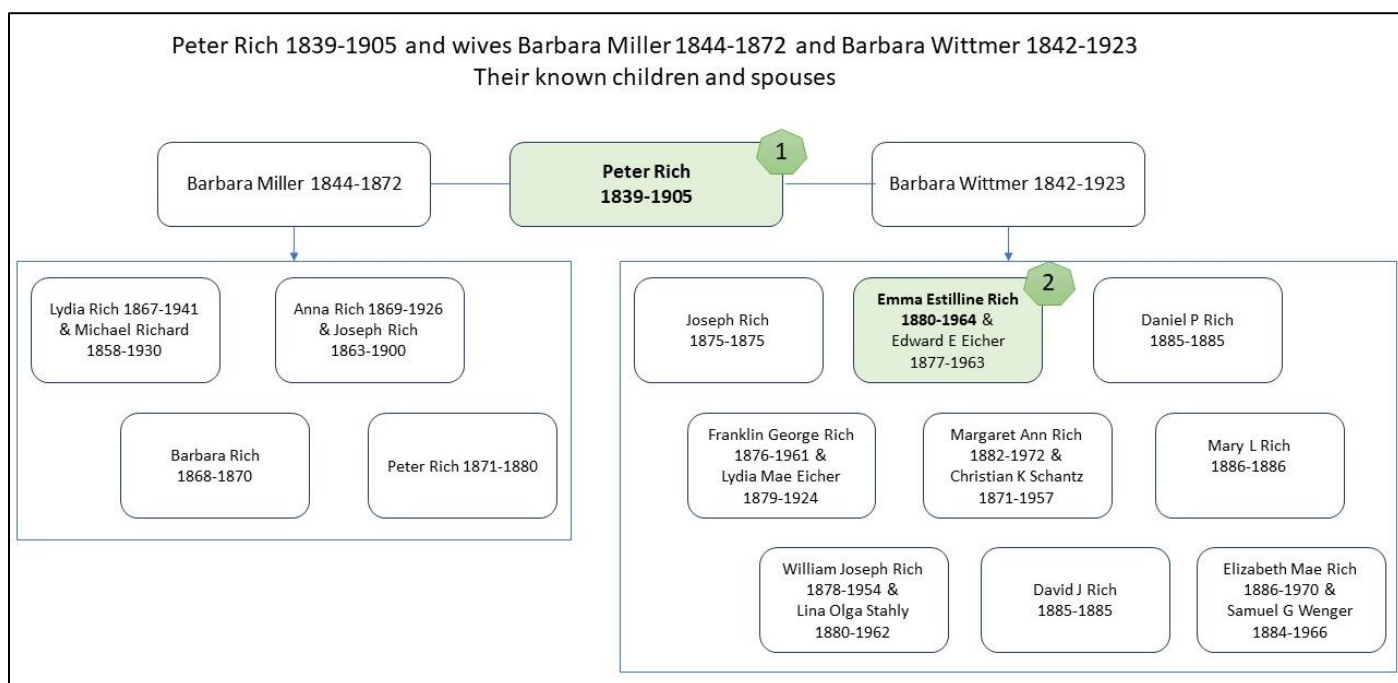
When he arrived in Iowa, Peter first worked as a farm laborer for his first cousin, Martin Conrad Eicher who had immigrated around eight years earlier. It was a common practice in the Mennonite community for parents, uncles and aunts, cousins, brothers and sisters to welcome their immigrant family to work with them and help them embark on a successful path. Martin Conrad Eicher was paying it forward; he had also worked on the farm of a first cousin when he immigrated to the US.





Peter and Barbara (Wittmer) Rich from the collection of Bob Henss, Shared by Betty Allen on Ancestry.com 7 Dec 2017

Peter Rich married Barbara Miller on 11 Dec 1866^{vi} in Washington County, Iowa and they had four (known) children before Barbara died on 21 Jun 1872.^{vii} Peter then married Barbara Wittmer on 11 Nov 1873.^{viii} Like Peter's mother, Barbara Wittmer's parents immigrated in 1867 with eight of their children, following several of their older children who had previously come to the United States.^{ix}

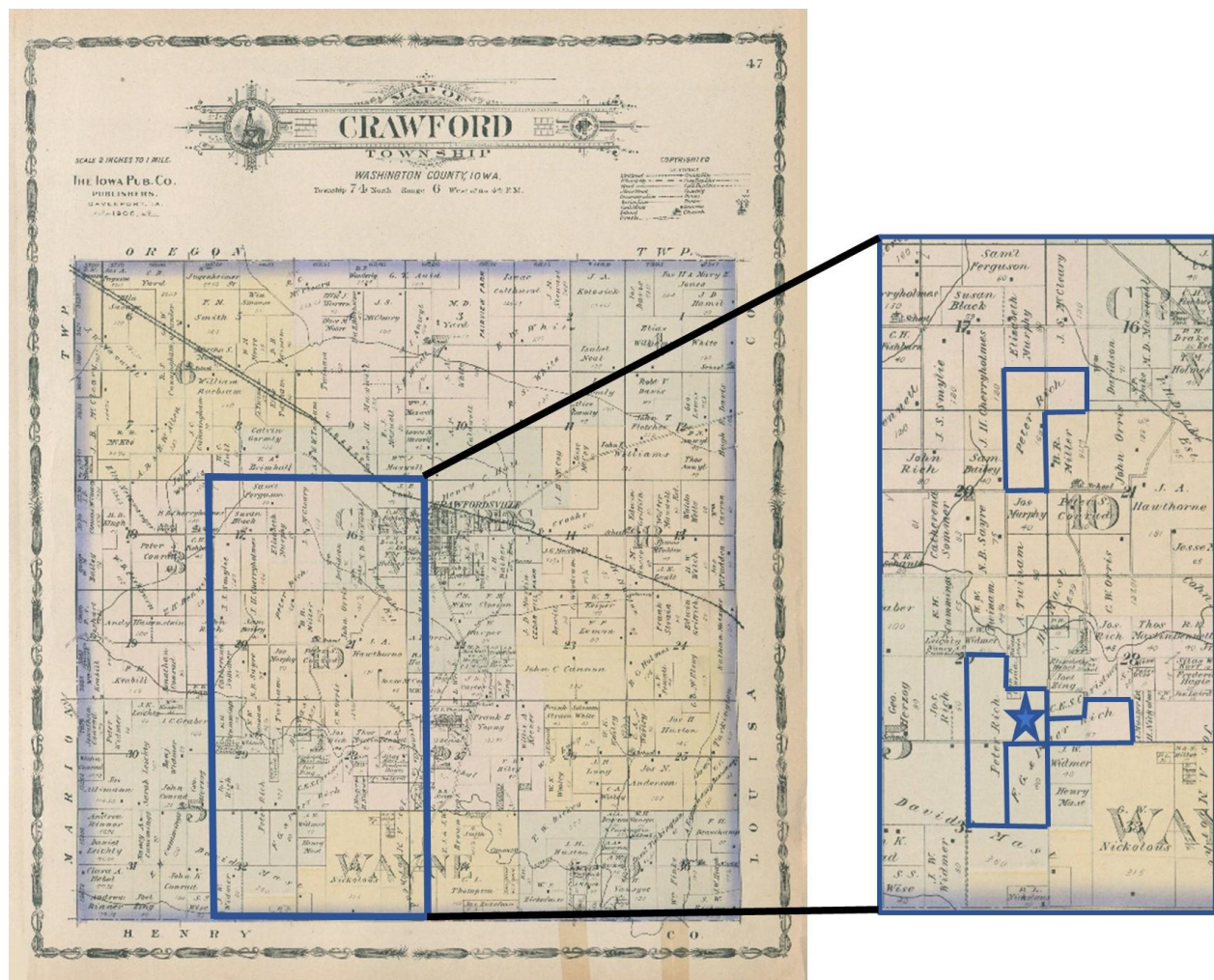


Peter Rich acquired the land from William McKee, Jr. on 13 Aug 1891.^x William McKee Jr.'s father, William McKee Sr. 1811-1888, was an immigrant from Ireland and an early pioneer in Washington County, Iowa along with his father and brothers. The McKees homesteaded in Crawford Township in 1852.^{xi}

The 1880 Federal Census and the 1885 Iowa State Census both show that Peter, Barbara, and their children were living in the same township and neighborhood as the McKee family.^{xii} Most of the McKee siblings left Iowa after the death of William McKee Sr.

Over the years, Peter advanced from a young immigrant farm laborer with no assets in the 1850s to a landowner with many holdings. In November of 1903, Peter and Barbara retired and moved to a home in the town of Wayland in Henry County, Iowa just south of the farm.^{xiii} Peter was not in good health; newspaper reports in 1904 mentioned an illness that kept him down for five weeks. Peter Rich died on 11 Dec 1905 in Wayland, Iowa, at the age of 66.^{xiv}

A map of Washington County, Iowa, including Crawford Township, documented in 1905 and published in 1906, shows the holdings of Peter Rich in Crawford Township. His land was located in several sections, including 29, where the Schantz Century Farm is located.^{xv}



"Atlas of Washington County, Iowa," Iowa Publishing Co. published by Andreas Atlas Co. 1906, p. 9, Iowa Counties Historical Atlases, State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City)

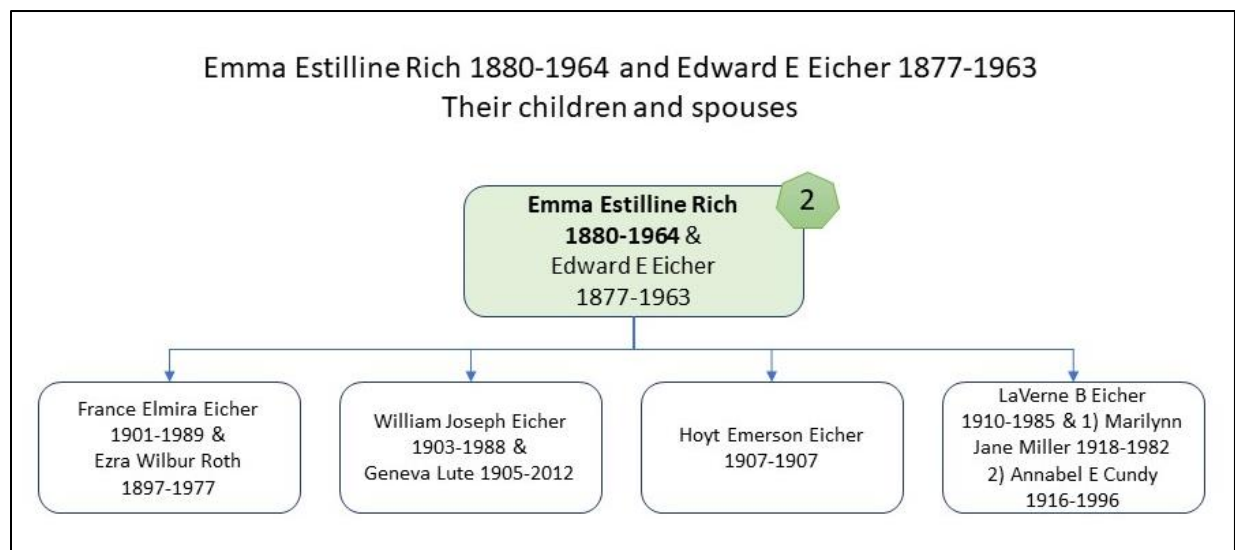
Despite his financial successes and business acumen, Peter died intestate (i.e. without a will) and his wife and surviving children from both marriages were left to divide his large estate. Daughter Emma and her husband inherited the property in Washington County, Section 29, that would become the Schantz Century Farm.^{xvi}

Second Family Owner: Emma Estilline Rich

Emma Estilline Rich married Edward Eicher, known as Ed, in 1900. They first made their home with his parents in Henry County. Ed and Emma's family was living near the Schantz Century Farm by the time of the 1905 Iowa State Census. Emma and Ed, who was a carpenter as well as a farmer, had four children, Frances Elmira, William Joseph, Laverne, and Hoyt Emerson (who died as an infant).



Emma Rich and Ed Eicher wedding photo 14 Feb 1900. Photo Courtesy of Sarah J. (Eicher) Purcell shared by Betty Allen on Ancestry on 21 Jan 2019

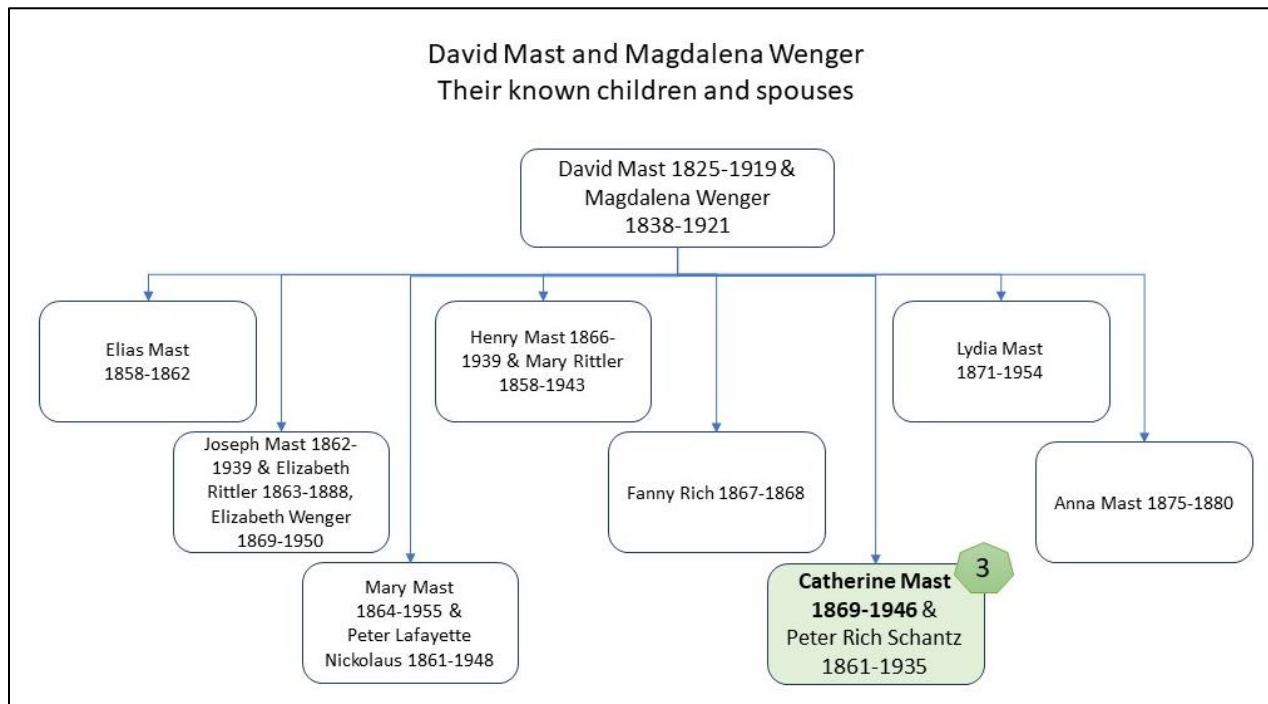


The year 1923 held a great deal of challenge and change for Emma and her family. Both Emma and Ed lost their mothers that year; Emma's mother, Barbara (Wittmer) Rich, died in February 1923 and Ed's mother, Bina (Schlatter) Eicher, died in March. Their daughter, Frances, received a degree in teaching from Parsons College in Fairfield, Iowa in June.^{xvii} In August 1923 the Eicher family moved to Kansas to follow and support their daughter, Frances, who was off to teach in Newton, Kansas. Emma had family there as her older brother, William Joseph Rich, had relocated to Newton, Kansas in 1910.^{xviii}

Prior to their move, the Eicher family held an estate sale and sold the property to Catherine (Mast) Schantz.^{xxix} Ed and Emma and family resided in Newton, Kansas for just two years, moving back to Wayland, Iowa, in August 1925. In the 1930's they moved to Washington, Iowa. Ed passed away in 1963; Emma in 1964. They were married for over 63 years.

Third Family Owner: Catherine “Katie” (Mast) Schantz

Catherine Mast, known as Katie, was born in Henry County, Iowa.^{xx} Her parents and older siblings had arrived in Iowa from Wayne County, Ohio around 1864.^{xxi} David Mast, the family patriarch, opened a general store in Wayne Township, Henry County. David bought land and moved his family just over the county border to Washington County around 1872. By 1911, several years before his death, David distributed 320 acres of farmland to his children.^{xxii} The family was very active in the Mennonite community and churches in southern Washington County and northern Henry County. Katie is also a great-granddaughter of Bishop Jacob Mast, one of the earliest Amish Mennonite Bishops in the United States.



Katie Mast married Peter Rich “P.R.” Schantz on 3 Feb 1891 in Washington County, Iowa at her parents’ home.^{xxiii} P.R. is a nephew to Peter Rich (first family owner) and so is a first cousin to Emma Estilline (Rich) Eicher (second family owner). P.R. was born in Marion Township in Washington County, Iowa on 1 Feb 1861 to Christian and Barbara (Rich) Schantz.^{xxiv} After their arrival in the United States, Christian and Barbara first lived in a Mennonite community in Stark County, Ohio where they had close relatives. They moved to Iowa about four years later. P.R. was the 4th child and the only boy in the family; he had six sisters. Christian and Barbara’s farm in Marion Township was on the border with Crawford Township. The neighborhood included all of their Mennonite siblings and cousins with familiar surnames; Schantz/Tschantz, Conrad. Eicher, Leichty, Wenger, Wittmer, Graber, and Kauffman.^{xxv}

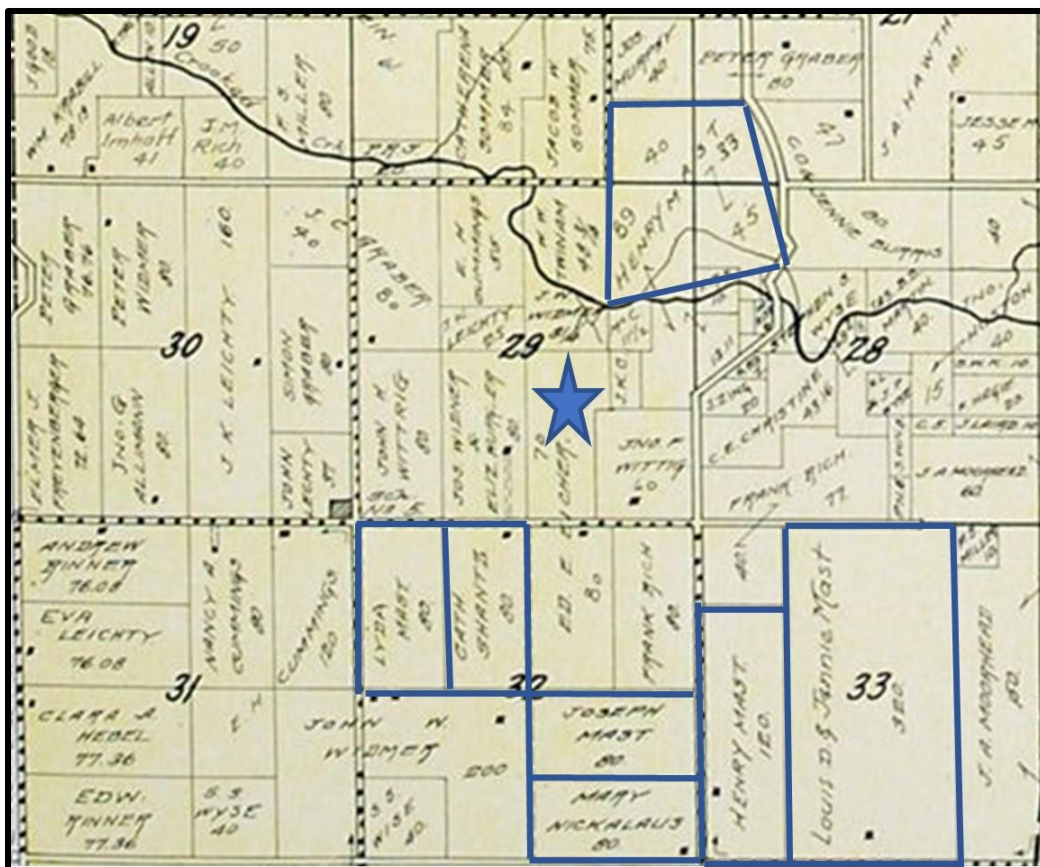


Lydia and Katie Mast, abt. 1890, from the private collection of Renee (Love) Cue.

Katie, my great-grandmother, purchased the farm from the Eicher family in 1923 a few years after her parents' death. The property was across the road from the property Catherine inherited from her parents as well as adjacent to many of her Mast siblings' properties.

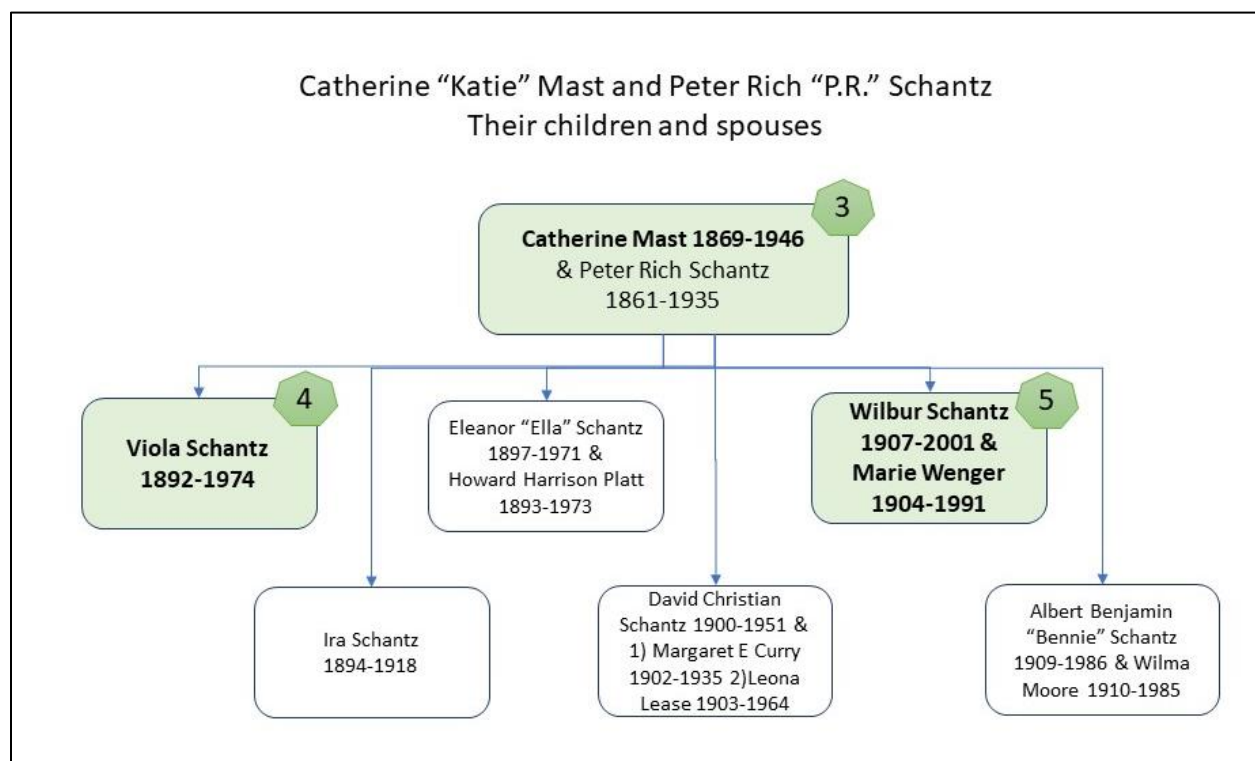
The Mast Family holdings in 1920 (outlined) in Crawford Township near the Schantz Century Farm included:

- Lydia Mast
- Catherine (Mast) Schantz
- Joseph Mast
- Mary (Mast) Nickolaus
- Henry Mast
- Louis & Jennie Mast (Louis is the son of Henry)



"Atlas of Washington County, Iowa, Township Maps" Iowa Map Company 1920, Iowa University Libraries Iowa Digital Library, <https://digital.lib.iowa.edu>, accessed 24 Jan 2022.

P.R. and Katie lived on a farm in Crawford Township in Section 20, north of the property. They had six children: Viola, Ira, Eleanor “Ella,” David, Wilbur (my grandfather), and Albert Benjamin “Bennie”.



Katie and P.R. lived in Crawford Township throughout their marriage, raising their children and farming. P.R. was a master horseman, specializing in large draft horses such as Belgians and Clydesdales. The family was very active with the Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church and in their community. P.R. suffered a series of strokes starting 1926 that left him disabled until his death in 1935.

Fourth Family Owner: Viola Schantz

At Katie’s death in September of 1946, per the terms of Katie’s will, the Century Farm property passed to their oldest daughter, Viola.^{xxvi} Viola lived a life of service on the farm with her parents and family. As a little girl, Viola went to the country Stringtown School in Crawford Township with 16 other children where she received commendations for her attendance and timeliness.^{xxvii} She never married or had children; she lived with and cared for her parents as they aged. After P.R.’s death, Viola bought a house “in town” in Wayland, Henry County, Iowa and moved there with her mother, Katie. Viola socialized with her brothers and sister, cousins, and their families. According to my mother, Katie and Viola went to church in Wayland, never learned to drive, and kept to conservative Mennonite dress.

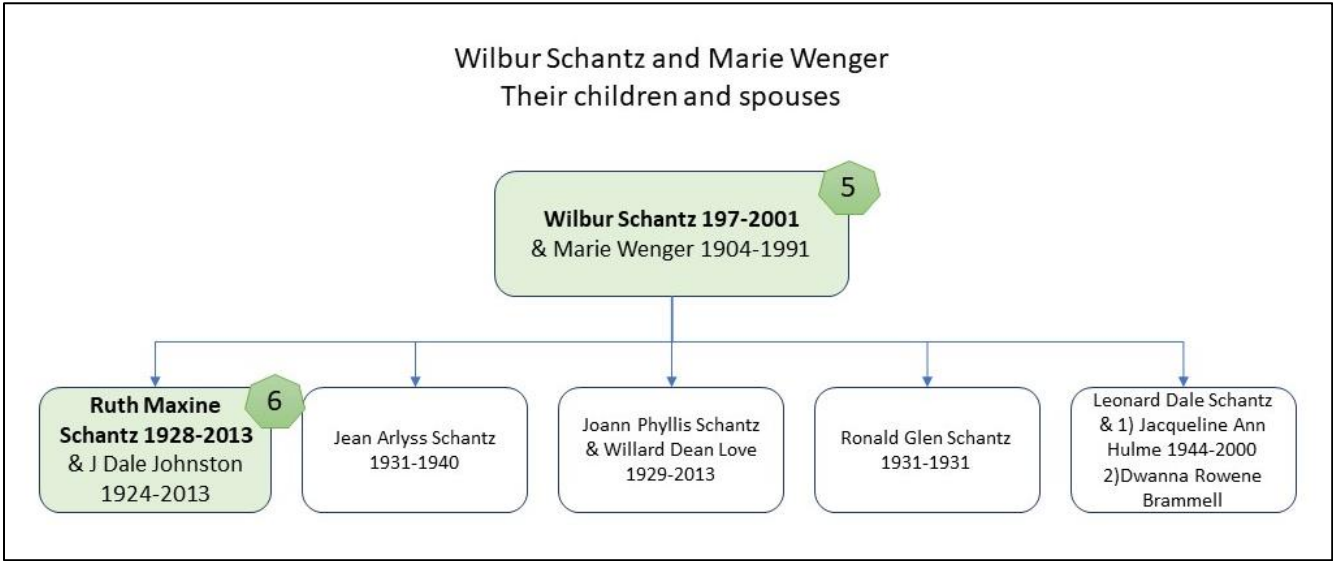
Viola also helped her brothers and sister when they had need. My mother, Joann Phyllis Schantz, was a very tiny baby at her birth in 1931, along with the other surviving triplet, her sister Jean Arlyss Schantz. Viola helped her brother Wilbur and his family as the little girls faced challenges and illnesses in their childhood.^{xxviii} Viola cared for her mother through her older years. After the death of her mother, Viola continued as a caregiver in homes and in local nursing homes. Newspaper reports shared who Viola was staying with and taking care of in the community. Viola’s family was there to care for her, as well. Wilbur and his family took care of Viola when she faced illness after her mother passed away.

Viola eventually moved to the Kennedy Home in Mt Pleasant, Henry, Iowa around 1971. Viola died there on 24 Jul 1974 at the age of 81. She was buried at Eicher Cemetery next to her parents.^{xxix}

Fifth Family Owner: Wilbur Schantz

In settling Viola’s estate in 1975, the Century Farm property passed to Viola’s younger brother Wilbur Schantz. Like Viola, Wilbur grew up in Crawford township and attended school at the Stringtown Country School. After Wilbur’s 8th Grade Graduation in 1920 he attended high school in Crawfordsville for a few years and then worked with his father P.R. on the family farm.^{xxx}

Wilbur and Marie and their families both attended church at Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church near Noble, Washington County, Iowa. Marie completed high school at Washington, Iowa and went on to receive her teacher certification. She taught in two country schools near Washington for several years until Wilbur and Marie were married on 3 Mar 1928 at the church parsonage.^{xxxi} They first made their home on a farm just east of Wilbur’s parents’ home until they purchased a farm and house near Crawfordsville around 1934.



Wilbur and Marie had five children. Three of them, Ruth Maxine, Joann Phyllis, and Leonard Dale, lived to adulthood; Ronald died in infancy and Jean died at age 9 in 1940 (Jean, Joann, and Ronald, were triplets). By the time the Century Farm property came into Wilbur Schantz’s holdings, Ruth, Joann, and Leonard were married with families of their own.

Marie suffered with Parkinson's Disease for the last 30 years of her life. The couple moved into the city of Washington in the early 1960's and then moved in 1973 to a single-story home because of her declining health. Marie's health continued to challenge her daily abilities and she moved into the McCreedy Home in Washington in 1976.^{xxxii} Wilbur was there with Marie every day, and our extended family celebrated many holidays with our grandparents at the home. Marie passed away 15 October 1991.^{xxxiii}



Wilbur and Marie (Wenger) Schantz with their children Leonard, Ruth, and Joann. About 1965 from the private collection of Renee Cue.

Wilbur and Marie planned well to leave a legacy for his beloved children and grandchildren. They divided their properties for their children and the Century Farm property became part of Ruth (Schantz) Johnston's holdings. Wilbur passed away in October of 2001.^{xxxiv}

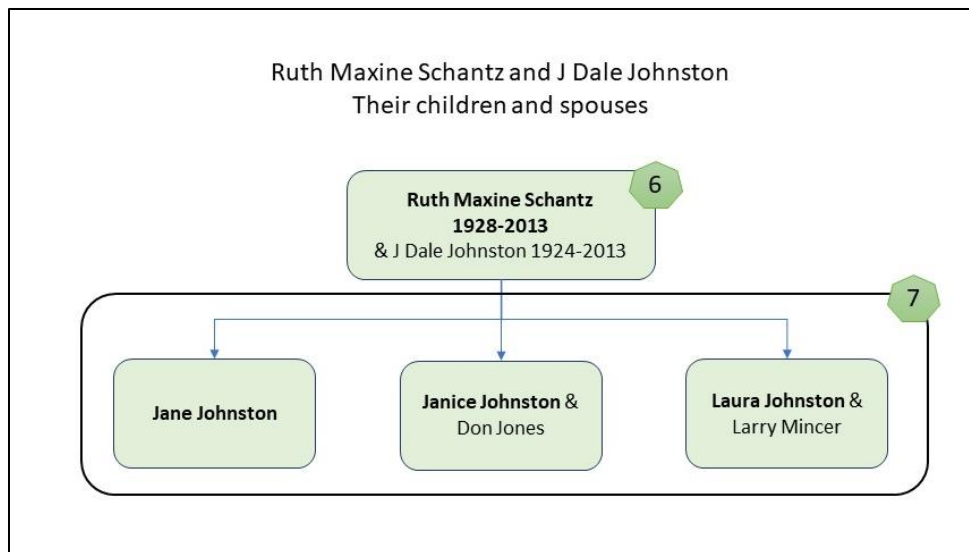
Sixth Family Owner: Ruth Maxine Schantz



Dale and Ruth (Schantz) Johnston Abt 2010 from the private collection of Renee Cue.

Wilbur and Marie's oldest child, Ruth Maxine Schantz, was born 17 Dec 1928 at the Washington County Hospital.^{xxxv} Ruth first attended school at the Stringtown Country School and then Crawfordsville School, where she graduated in 1947. Ruth went on to business school in Davenport at the American Institute of Commerce and returned to Washington County to work at the courthouse.^{xxxvi}

Ruth married J. Dale Johnston, a World War II veteran, in 1948 at Wilbur and Marie's house near Crawfordsville. The couple lived in Ankeny, Iowa, briefly but returned to Washington County to farm and raise their family. Ruth and Dale's three daughters, Jane, Janice, and Laura, grew up on their farm south of Ainsworth, Iowa, in Washington County. Dale passed away in 2013 and we lost Ruth in September of 2019.^{xxxvii}



Seventh Family and Current Owners: The Johnston Sisters



The children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of J. Dale and Ruth (Schantz) Johnston celebrating the Century Farm designation, 19 Aug 2021 from the private collection of Laura Johnston Mincer.

Ruth and Dale left their daughters the legacy of their properties, including the Schantz Century Farm. In 2021, the daughters proudly applied for and were awarded the Iowa Century Farm status where they were celebrated at the Iowa State Fair.

The Schantz Family Farm was well represented at the recognition ceremony by the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Ruth and Dale. It is a wonderful testament and remembrance to have a Century Farm in our family.

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- ⁱ *Iowa Century and Heritage Farm Program*, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, <https://iowaagriculture.gov/century-and-heritage-farm-program> accessed 25 Oct 2021.
- ⁱⁱ *Iowa Century and Heritage Farm Program*, application for the Iowa Century Farm Program from the Johnston Schantz Family Farm, <https://centuryfarms.iowaagriculture.gov/application/?22136>, accessed 25 Oct 2021.
- ⁱⁱⁱ "Crawfordsville, Iowa," *Wikipedia* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crawfordsville,_Iowa, accessed 24 Oct 2021.
- ^{iv} Barbara (Rich) is the second great-grandmother to me, my siblings, and our first cousins via Wilbur and Marie (Wenger) Schantz.
- ^v Peter Rich, Year: 1858; Arrival: *New York, New York, USA*; Microfilm Serial: *M237, 1820-1897*; Line: 1; List Number: 279, Accessed on Ancestry.com.
- ^{vi} "Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XJH9-84X> : 3 November 2017), Peter Rich and Barbara Miller, 11 Dec 1866, Washington Co., Iowa, United States; citing reference 213, county courthouses, Iowa; FHL microfilm 969,339.
- ^{vii} "Peter Rich Obituary," *Washington Democrat*, published in Washington, Iowa, 20 Dec 1905 p7.
- ^{viii} "Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XJHM-M2Z> : 4 November 2017), Peter Rich and Barbara Wittmer, 11 Nov 1873, Washington, Iowa, United States; citing reference , county courthouses, Iowa; FHL microfilm 969,331.
- ^{ix} Peter Eicher Wittmer, Year: 1900; Census Place: *Jefferson, Henry, Iowa*; Page: 5; Enumeration District: 0033; FHL microfilm: 1240436.
- ^x Janice Johnston-Jones, *Abstract for the Schantz Family Farm*.
- ^{xi} John McKee, *Land Patent Certificate 8893*, Bureau of Land Management, 1 Jan 1846, 74N 6W Section 29.
- ^{xii} William McKee Year: 1880; Census Place: *Crawford, Washington, Iowa*; Roll: 369; Page: 218A; Enumeration District: 146.
- ^{xiii} "Peter Rich moved to Wayland," *Mt. Pleasant Republican*, published in Mount Pleasant, Iowa on Thursday, November 26th, 1903, p.8.
- ^{xiv} "Peter Rich," *Washington Democrat*, Published in Washington, Iowa, 13 Dec 1905.
- ^{xv} Peter Rich died in December 1905 after the documentation had been gathered for the map and just prior to the publication in 1906. The map was not updated to reflect any changes in ownership between documentation and publication.
- ^{xvi} "Peter Rich Estate", *Washington Democrat*, published in Washington, Iowa, July 18th, 1906, p.3.
- ^{xvii} "Frances Eicher, Parsons Graduate," *Wayland News*, Thursday, 14 Jun 1923. p.1.
- ^{xviii} "William Joseph Rich obituary," *Mennonite Weekly Review*, 22 Apr 1954, p.6.
- ^{xix} "Ed Eicher public sale," *Wayland News*, published in Wayland, Iowa, 9 Aug, 1923, p.5.
- ^{xx} 1870 United States Census, Wayne Township, Henry County, Iowa, Mast Household, Roll: M593_395; Page: 388A; Family History Library Film: 545894, accessed via Ancestry.com.
- ^{xxi} Based on the timing of events in the life of the family. Son Joseph Mast was born in Ohio, David Mast registered for the Civil War draft in Wayne County, Ohio in 1863, and Mary Mast was born in Iowa in 1864.
- ^{xxii} "Real Estate Transfers: David Mast land transfers," *Washington Democrat*, published in Washington, Iowa on Wednesday, 22 Feb 1911, p.3.
- ^{xxiii} Peter R. Schantz and Katie Mast, Iowa Department of Public Health; Des Moines, Iowa; Series Title: *Iowa Marriage Records, 1880-1922*; Record Type: *Marriage*.
- ^{xxiv} "Death Claims Peter Schantz," *Washington Democrat* published in Washington, Iowa 25 Jul 1935.
- ^{xxv} Christian Schantz, *U.S., Indexed County Land Ownership Maps, 1860-1918* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: Various publishers of County Land Ownership Atlases. Microfilmed by the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- ^{xxvi} "Viola Schantz Probate No. 13281," *Washington Evening Journal*, published in Washington, Iowa, 6 Aug 1974, p.9.
- ^{xxvii} "Stringtown School," *Washington Democrat*, published in Washington, Iowa 17 May 1899, p.7.
- ^{xxviii} "Viola Schantz," *Washington Democrat Independent*, published in Washington, Iowa, 19 Oct 1933, p.5.
- ^{xxix} "Viola Schantz," *Winfield Beacon*, published in Winfield, Iowa, 1 Aug 1974.

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- xxx "Eighth Graders to Hear Alex Miller" *Evening Journal*, published in Washington Iowa, 9 Jun 1920, p.5.
- xxxi Wilbur Schantz and Marie Wenger, 3 Mar 1928, Iowa Department of Public Health; Des Moines, Iowa; Series Title: *Iowa Marriage Records, 1923–1937*; Record Type: *Marriage*.
- xxxii "Hospital Notes: Marie Schantz," *Washington Evening Journal*, published in Washington, Iowa, 16 Feb 1976, p.3.
- xxxiii U.S. Social Security Death Index, Marie Schantz, 1935-2014, accessed via Ancestry.com.
- xxxiv U.S. Social Security Death Index, Wilbur Schantz, 1935-2014, accessed via Ancestry.com.
- xxxv Iowa State Department of Health Vital Records Section Delayed Certificate of Birth, Ruth Maxine Schantz, Certificate No. 540507, accessed via Ancestry.com.
- xxxvi "Ruth M. Johnston," Ainsworth, Obituary *Southeast Iowa Union* 25 Sept 2019
<https://www.southeastiowaunion.com/obituaries/ruth-m-johnston/> accessed 9 Nov 2021.
- xxxvii *ibid.*