



# PANNEBAKKER FAMILY NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE PANNEBAKKER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

## BOY GENERALS OF THE CIVIL WAR

I was watching Book Notes on C-SPAN in July while web surfing. C.W. Goodyear was being interviewed about his recently released Simon & Schuster book, the first authoritative, originally-researched biography of President James A. Garfield in almost fifty years. This history lover knew very little about Garfield so I kept an ear open.

**C.W. MENTIONED THAT  
 “GARFIELD WAS THE YOUNGEST GENERAL IN U.S. HISTORY.”  
 NO SELF RESPECTING PENNYPACKER COULD LET THIS GO UNCHALLENGED.  
 I RESEARCHED GARFIELD.**

**IN 1862 AT AGE 31  
 GARFIELD BECAME A  
 BRIGADIER GENERAL.**

Participating in battles like Shiloh and Chickamauga, he was nominated for, and elected to Congress in 1880 as a Republican.

President Abraham Lincoln asked him to serve because he wanted men in Congress who knew the Army.



**AS THE LAST OF THE LOG CABIN PRESIDENTS,  
 HE WAS PERHAPS THE POOREST MAN EVER TO HAVE BECOME PRESIDENT.  
 HE HAD SERVED 200 DAYS WHEN ASSASSINATED.**



### C. W. GOODYEAR

*Born in New Orleans, he's a graduate of Yale University and now lives in the Washington, DC area. He worked on General Stanley McChrystal's memoir "My Share Of The Task," about his reform of Joint Special Operations Command in Iraq*

**THEN I EMAILED C.W. A LINK TO GALUSHA PENNYPACKER. HE REPLIED.**

Dear Mary,

Thank you for dropping a line! Yes, Gen. Pennypacker was given a brevet promotion to brigadier general in 1865...thereby making him **the youngest general ever to serve in the Army, at 20 years old. However, at the moment Garfield was promoted to brigadier general -- far earlier in the civil war -- he was at that point in the conflict the youngest of his rank in the army.**

**It's interesting how both statements can be true.** I might need to rephrase in the interest of clarity for further editions of the book. Thanks for your interest, and I hope we can meet down the line to swap more tidbits, Charlie

**HERE IS WHAT I FOUND WEB SURFING “YOUNGEST GENERALS.”**


**GUESS WHAT? GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER BECAME ONE OF THE YOUNGEST CIVIL WAR GENERALS IN THE UNION ARMY AT 23 ON 29 JUNE 1863.**

**MAJOR GENERAL AT 20, GALUSHA PENNYPACKER, WAS HIS FIFTH COUSIN,  
TWO OF THE FOUR "BOY GENERALS" OF THE CIVIL WAR  
WERE PENNYPACKER COUSINS**

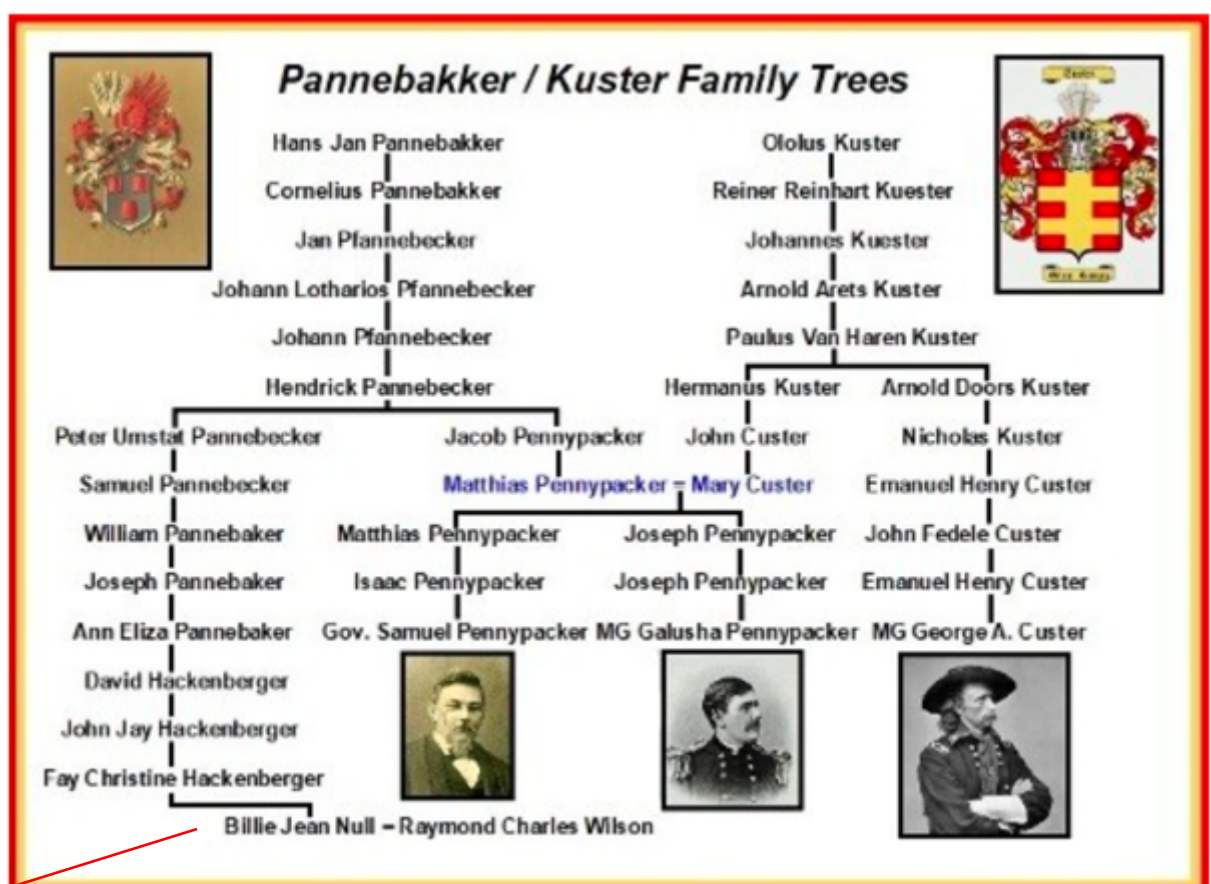


**NOTE: THERE WAS A CONFEDERATE "BOY GENERAL," WILLIAM P. ROBERTS (1841-1910) PROMOTED TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL AT 23.**

**GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER  
AND THE  
PENNYPACKERS OF PENNSYLVANIA**



**WRITTEN BY  
RAYMOND C. WILSON**



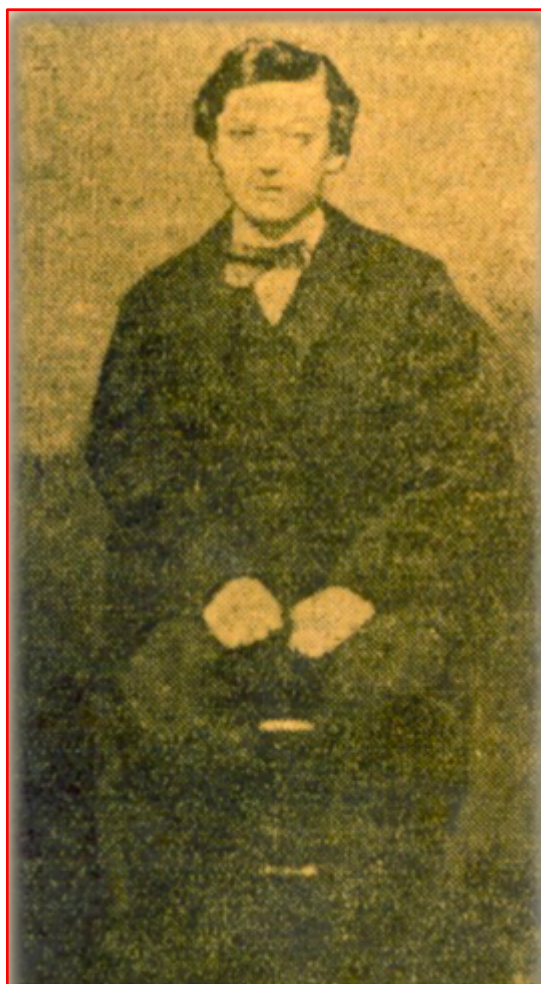
**WILSON'S WIFE IS OUR  
COUSIN BILLIE JEAN NELL**

**VISIT WILSON'S WEBSITE TO SEE HIS IMPECCABLE CREDENTIALS  
AND HIS MANY OTHER BOOKS.**

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/1175726>



**COUSINS GALUSHA AND CUSTER WERE NEVER IN THE SAME BATTLE. BUT CUSTER WAS AT GETTYSBURG, AS WAS THEIR MUTUAL COUSIN, A YOUNG PRIVATE FOR SIX WEEKS – SAMUEL WHITAKER PENNYPACKER**



*"In 1863 I was a private in Company F of the Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania Emergency Regiment which met Early's division of Lee's Army as it advanced upon Gettysburg before the coming of the Army of the Potomac under Meade . . .*

*It was the only emergency regiment which participated in that decisive battle of the war and it is an historical fact that owing to the advance movement of Colonel Jennings' regiment, Gettysburg became the battle ground . . .*

*When I returned home, I was at once drafted. I had no idea of returning to the service in this way and my grand- father, who was much pleased with the outcome of my military experience, paid \$300 for a substitute at Norristown only too willing to go to the front in my stead. I do not know of his name or his fate."*

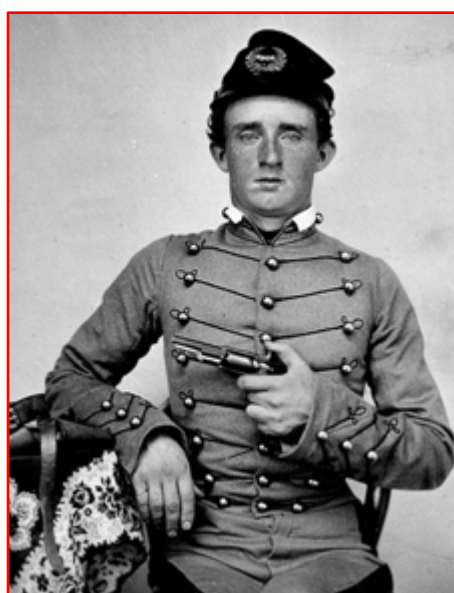
Private Samuel W. Pennypacker left the 26th Pennsylvania Volunteer Militia in late July 1863 and resumed his education. He studied law at the University of Pennsylvania and opened his own law practice in 1866.

**SAMUEL AND GALUSHA CORRESPONDED THROUGHOUT THEIR LIFETIMES - AND PASSED AWAY JUST A MONTH APART IN 1916.**

Samuel Pennypacker (Gov of PA 1903-1907) in his 1918 *The Autobiography of a Pennsylvanian* tells a story about his buddy, Teddy Roosevelt. "On Decoration Day 1905 . . . AT GETTYSBURG . . . he asked me whether I had ever seen any military service. . . This . . . opened the way for me to tell him of the unequalled contribution of our family to that war, it having furnished two major generals, five colonels and in all one hundred and forty-eight men." Samuel heard Teddy was still telling this story two years later.

GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER was born in New Rumley, Ohio in 1839. But when he was 10 years old, he moved to Monroe, Michigan to live with his half-sister Lydia Ann and her new husband David Reed. Their only son, Henry Armstrong Reed, would perish at age 18, with his uncle at Little Big Horn.

In Monroe, at dawn on 22 January 1813, Indians allied to the British killed and scalped a countless number of wounded American soldiers from the previous day's battle in the War of 1812. Custer would have undoubtedly heard about the River Raisin Massacre from the many survivors who were willing to tell newcomers and eager youngsters of their experiences. We can imagine hearing about this horrific event from actual survivors left a lasting impression.



Though Custer struggled in the classroom, he excelled on the battlefield. After joining the Army of the Potomac's cavalry following his **graduation from West Point (last in his class) on 24 June 1861**, Second Lieutenant George Armstrong Custer left West Point on 18 July 1861, for Washington, D.C. The Custer boy was going to war as a cavalry officer.

**On 29 June 1863, Custer received a general's star** and command of the Michigan Brigade of cavalry, comprising the 1st, 5th, 6th and 7th regiments. **At 23, Custer became one of the youngest generals in the Union army.**

July 3, 1863 he fought at Gettysburg, defeating Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart despite being badly outnumbered.



**AT GETTYSBURG, CUSTER'S FIGHT HELPED SAVE THE DAY FOR UNION FORCES, AND, ACCORDING TO SOME EXPERTS, THE BATTLE ITSELF.**

**CUSTER ROSE TO THE RANK OF MAJOR GENERAL, JUST BELOW ULYSSES S. GRANT.**

During the Civil War, the **"Boy General"** seemed to have such a streak of good fortune, which included his avoidance of serious injury in spite of his daring command and having 11 horses shot out from under him, that it was referred to as **"Custer's luck."**

After the surrender ceremony at Appomattox Courthouse, April 9, 1865, General Sheridan confiscated the table Grant had used and had it delivered to Libby Custer. In an accompanying note, Sheridan wrote in part, **"Permit me to say, Madam, that there is scarcely an individual in our service who has contributed more to bring about this desirable result than your gallant husband."**

In 1866, Custer was put in command of the 7th Cavalry Regiment based at Fort Riley in eastern Kansas. At this time, the Indians across the West were increasing their attacks on all forms of white people's encroachments -- forts and supply outposts, the new railroads, overland wagon trains, and settlers. In 1867 Custer left his post to visit his wife. For being AWOL, Custer was court-martialed, sent to Fort Leavenworth, and suspended for a year without pay. He and Libby returned briefly to Monroe, Michigan. Within months, he was reinstated amid hostility with the Plains Indians.

After Reconstruction duty in the South, Custer returned to the Plains. He and his regiment guarded survey parties from the Northern Pacific Railroad on the 1873 Yellowstone Expedition. In 1874, Custer led an expedition of some 1,100 men, 110 wagons, a thousand horses and a wide variety of people, into the Black Hills of what is now South Dakota. Included in the General's expedition were scientists, surveyors, professional miners, geologists, newspaper reporters, and a professional photographer.

## **CUSTER'S LAST STAND**

25 June 1876, in Montana Territory, **Crazy Horse**, the magnetic leader and silent mystic, and the most dynamic and revered Indian warrior ever, led a large force of Lakota Sioux and Cheyenne warriors against Custer's Seventh Cavalry Regiment, hitting the fatal blow in the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

**Custer, nine officers, and 280 enlisted men, all lay dead after the fighting was over.**

**THERE HAVE BEEN MORE BOOKS WRITTEN ABOUT THIS BATTLE THAN ANY OTHER BATTLE IN U.S. HISTORY. THE MYTHICAL AMERICAN WEST THAT CUSTER EMBODIED IS ALIVE AND WELL.**

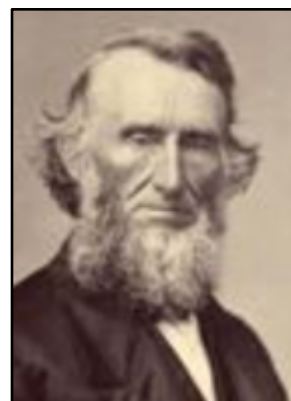
## **AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY WAS A FAMILY TRAGEDY**

War has brought overwhelming tragedies to three American families.

MRS. BIXBY OF BOSTON, who lost five sons during the Civil War and was acknowledged by President Lincoln

THE SULLIVAN FAMILY OF WATERLOO, IOWA who suffered the tragic loss of five sons killed on the U.S.S. Juneau in WW II and

**EMANUEL AND MARIA CUSTER who lost five family members at the Battle of Little Bighorn in Montana Territory on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1876.**





## GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER AND FOUR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CUSTER FAMILY DIED THAT DAY.



### Henry Armstrong Reed Age 18

Custer's favorite nephew, only son of his sister Lydia and her husband David who raised him, was born in Monroe, Michigan. In the Little Bighorn campaign, Reed rode with his uncle's 7th Cavalry Regiment as a beef herder with the pack train. Hearing the battle was beginning, Custer's orderly John Burkman suggested that Reed stay with the pack train, to which Reed replied, "You're mad because you can't go along," and gave Burkman a playful kick before riding off. He died near his uncle Custer's brother, Boston, on Last Stand Hill.



### Thomas Ward Custer Age 31

Tom was the ONLY man to receive TWO Medals of Honor in the Civil War (making him the first of 19 double recipients of the Medal of Honor). During the Little Bighorn campaign of 1876, Tom was Captain of Company C, but served as aide-de-camp on George Custer's staff.

Tom died with his brother at the 'Last Stand' area of the battlefield.



### Boston, Custer Age 27

The youngest, he supervised the herds of saddle and wagon horses which accompanied the Cavalry's movements throughout the West.



### James Calhoun Age 31

Married Custer's sister, Margaret, on 7 March 1872, just a little over four years before his tragic death at Little Big Horn. Calhoun joined the 7th Cavalry when his brother-in-law George Custer took command of that unit. He also accompanied the more than 1,100 people who made up the 1874 Black Hills Expedition to what is now Custer, South Dakota, and wrote an accurate and historic daily account of the 60-day expedition.

## GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER WAS AMERICA'S FIRST ROCK STAR

His picture was everywhere. Known as "Long Hair" because of his flowing locks, he emerged from the Civil War with the golden image of a fearless and dashing leader. As he prowled the Plains at the head of the 7th Cavalry, he was accompanied by the nation's first paparazzi—a wagonload of embedded reporters and photographers. The breathless dispatches and images sent east were inhaled by an American public eager to know more about Custer's fantastic exploits. He and his beautiful wife, Libby, were destined to become the iconic couple of their time

Despite Custer serving as a military commander during the Civil War, he courted and married the woman he nicknamed "Libby" on February 9, 1864 in Monroe, Michigan.  
**FROM THAT DAY ON, THE COUPLE WAS INSEPARABLE.**

**MOST HISTORIANS HAVE NOTED THAT GENERAL CUSTER AND HIS WIFE LIBBY GATHERED FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS AROUND THEM WHENEVER POSSIBLE. LIBBY ORGANIZED DINNERS AND PICNICS AT NEARLY EVERY MILITARY FORT WHERE HER HUSBAND WAS ASSIGNED.**



## BUFFALO BILL CODY AND LIBBY CUSTER KEPT THE LEGEND ALIVE



Thomas, George's brother, Civil War veteran and two-time Medal of Honor recipient, perished at Little Bighorn.

Libby, Custer's beautiful, intelligent, and vivacious widow, ingratiated herself in any society circle she encountered.

She remained a widow until her death in 1933 just days shy of her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday, dedicating her life to elevating the memory of her husband to legendary status.

WILIAM F. CODY 1870



Buffalo Bill is onstage engaged in fierce battle. He and his scouts are fighting a ferocious group of Cheyenne warriors. The audience holds its breath as the terrifying Cheyenne appear to be gaining the upper hand. But just when it seems all hope is lost, Buffalo Bill takes aim at the Cheyenne war chief Yellow Hand and fires. Their chief shot dead, the Cheyenne are defeated. Buffalo Bill walks over to Yellow Hand's lifeless body, takes out his knife, and removes Yellow Hand's scalp. Buffalo Bill triumphantly raises the scalp in the air.

**"FOR CUSTER!" HE DECLARES. THE AUDIENCE ERUPTS INTO WILD APPLAUSE AND CHEERS.**

**"FOR CUSTER!" THEY CRY.**

**IN BUFFALO BILL'S STAGE SHOW *THE FIRST SCALP FOR CUSTER*,  
THE SCALPING OF YELLOW HAND WAS AN ACT OF JUSTICE.**

## THE JUDGMENT OF HISTORY

The personality of this flamboyant cavalier, dead at 36, gave rise to much of the controversy that followed. A gloriously triumphant **"boy general"** in the Civil War, he had achieved new fame on the western frontier as Indian fighter, sportsman, plainsman, and author.

Among acquaintances, he inspired veneration or loathing, never indifference. Some saw him as reckless, brutal, egotistical, unprincipled, and immature. Others looked on him as upright, sincere, compassionate, honorable, above all fearless in battle and brilliant in leading men to victory. And he was lucky.

In reality, George Armstrong Custer was neither a hero nor a fool at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. He simply mishandled the fight. He had a coherent, sensible plan but failed to communicate that plan effectively with his key subordinates.



There are five "Medals of Honor" received by members of these families.

Two Medals of Honor awarded to Captain (Brevet Major) Thomas Custer (General Custer's younger brother), one Medal of Honor awarded to General Galusha Pennypacker, one Medal of Honor awarded to President Theodore Roosevelt (descendent of Gertrude Tyson's brother Reiner who was his 4th great-grandfather), and one Medal of Honor awarded to Major General Theodore Roosevelt Jr. (son of President Theodore Roosevelt).

## ALL FOUR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS WERE COUSINS



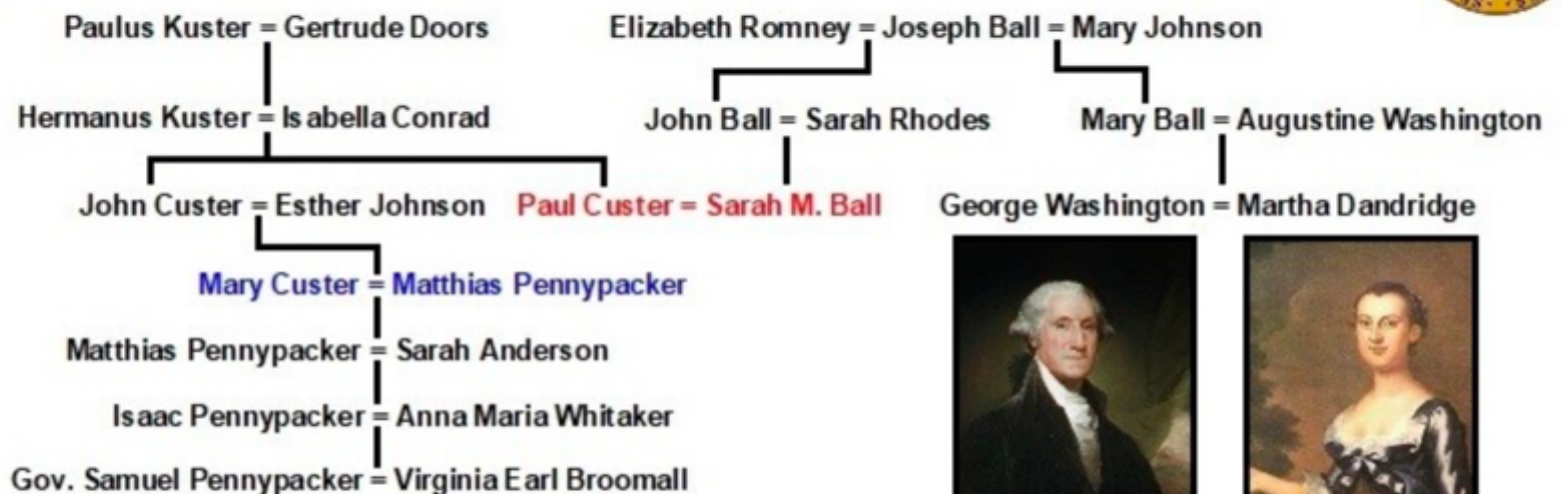
Thomas Custer, Galusha Pennypacker, Theodore Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt Jr.

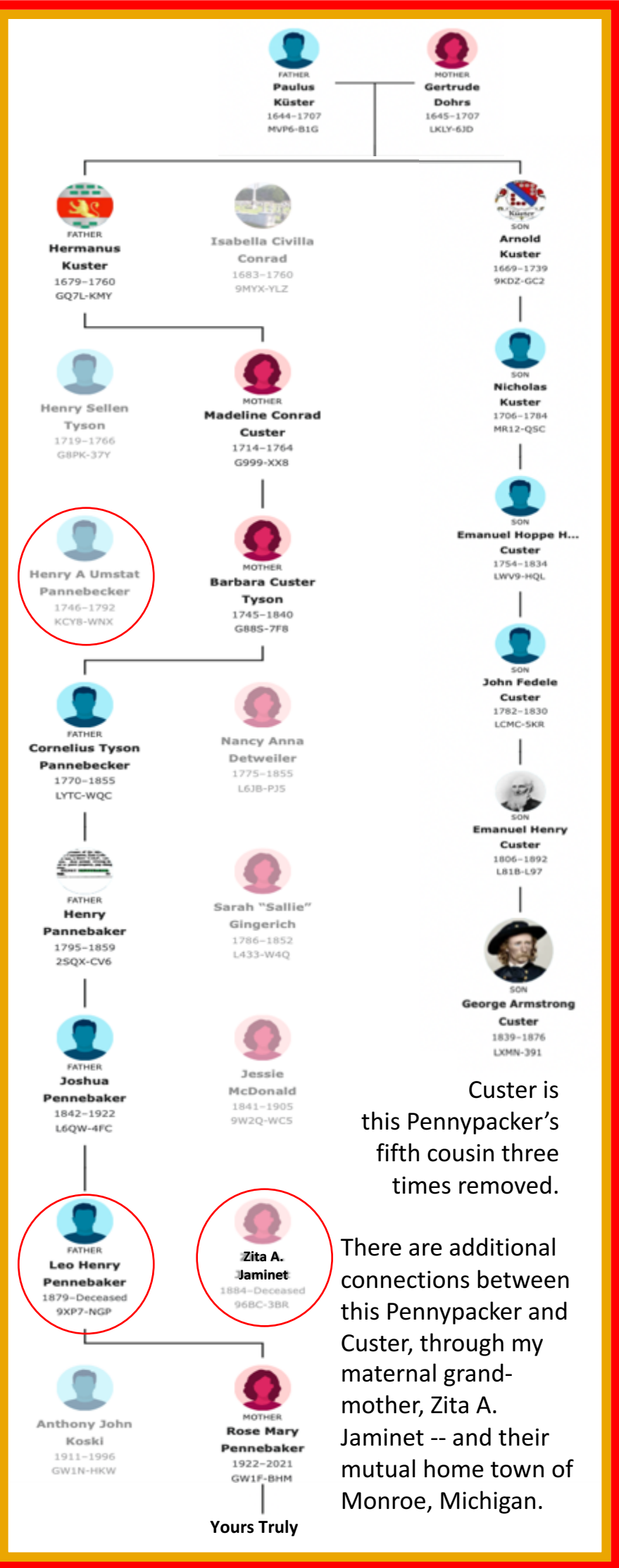
## THE PENNYPACKERS & GEORGE WASHINGTON

The Pennypacker family has a familial connection to George Washington through the marriage of Matthias Pennypacker to Mary Custer, the marriage of Paul Custer to Sarah Martha Ball, and the marriage of Joseph Ball to Mary Johnson -- the grandparents of George Washington.

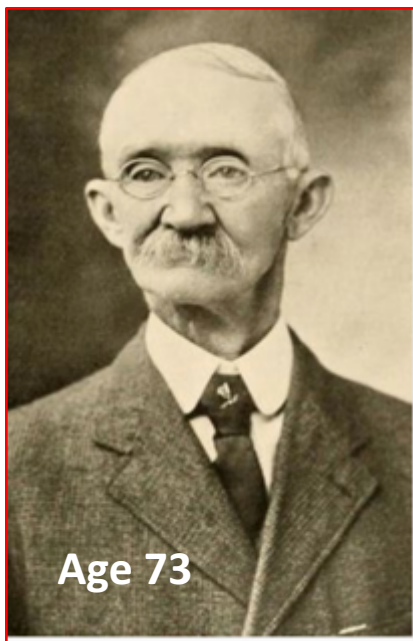


### Kuster / Pennypacker / Ball / Washington Connection





Libby Custer's last visit to her hometown, Monroe, Michigan, was made in February, 1915, when she came from her New York City home to attend the funeral of Nevin Johnson Custer, a younger brother of her late husband General Custer. She spent several days speaking frequently to small gatherings of her recent trip to India, and her exciting return trip through the war-torn countries of Europe.



Nevin Johnson Custer

Nevin Custer died on 25 February 1915 of a sudden attack of acute gastritis while visiting at the **William Steiner Hardware Store.**

William Steiner is this Pennypacker's great great uncle through the marriage of Zita Apollonia Jaminet to Leo Henry Pennebaker.



Jacob was Samuel's second great grandfather. Jacob is this Pennypacker's fifth great grandfather.

Custer is this Pennypacker's fifth cousin, 3X removed