

5. Felipe and Mary Shamay Solano

Phillip or Felipe Solano was born in 1887 in South America, probably Argentina. (*Author's note: There needs to be further research in this area, as there is some contradictory but less compelling evidence of a Mexican origin*). There also appears to some name discrepancies, as the spelling "Soleno" and not Solano appear on Robert's birth certificate.

Little is yet known regarding Phil's early years. It is known that he arrived in America in the early 1900's, and found his way to the Ford City / Pittsburgh area. As the waves of immigrants feeding the growing American industrial machine were primarily European at the time, it is probable that Phil dealt with race discrimination issues in addition to economic trials.

Mary Shamay was born on August 2, 1901. There are conflicting stories and documents as to the place of her birth: one story has her being born



Mary's Brother Frank Shamay



Felipe with Leonora and Bob

on the boat on the way to America, one document has her birthplace as Ford City, one document has her born in Czechoslovakia. Although the boat story was the best, and included a part that had her almost thrown overboard due to her birth health, the most probable location is Czechoslovakia. Mary's death certificate indicates Czechoslovakia, and Mary used to say she was a Czech and not U.S. citizen. She also relayed that at one point, shortly after World War II, she was given the choice of multiple European citizenships, given the realignment of nations after the war.

Mary's mother's name was Anna Shamay. Anna was married and widowed three times, and had sons Frank, Steve (Nicknamed Jack) and Joe, as well as daughter Mary. Her last husband's name was Strasik. She was