

About the Sharpe's In My Family Lines

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I find that perhaps 2/3's or more of the Sharpe (or Sharp) names about whom I learn of their ancestry do come from English beginnings. My Sharpe's really are Germans (Von Scharff, Scherp) whose names became Anglicized in America.

Our Sharpe family name derives its earliest roots that I have discovered to have been in Germany, specifically in what was known as the [Palatine region](#) in the 1600's. The full genealogical descendants report is 164 pages, available for your viewing at this URL:

<http://www.dasharpe.com/Genealogy/Scherp,Otto.pdf>

We have learned much of the earlier Sharpe family information through the published writings of Mr. Henry (Hank) Z. Jones, Jr. Hank is a retired RCA recording artist and film and TV actor, residing in San Diego, California. Though he authored numerous articles and books, the series that most impacted my research is his two volumes, [“The Palatine Families of New York, 1710 Volume I & II”](#) and his follow-up volume, “More Palatine Families,” then succeeded by the three-volume “Even More Palatine Families.”



As we had occasion to interface in 2017 about this autobiography, Hank helped by giving some previewing and evaluation that was heart-warming to me. Hank is President & Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, and is a Fellow of

the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society. Hank and I met February 7, 2004 when he was the keynote speaker at a Dallas Genealogy Society Seminar at the Public Library in Richardson, Texas. He autographed and dated my book of his, "[More Palatine Families.](#)" We've kept in touch since then. His professional career has included appearances in roles in Walt Disney movies and entertainment venues of like-positive character. He also has a church background in common with me. He has been an usher and a Deacon at a Presbyterian Church in the San Diego area.

"[Scharff](#)" is thought to be perhaps the earliest German form of our Sharp(e) name. Perhaps it was "Von Scharff." It is a South German nickname for an energetic, active person from the Middle High German. One of the most common given names used with it was Otto, which is the name of the earliest ancestor of whom we know, where our story begins.

The Sharpe story begins with [Otto Scherp](#), my 7th great grandfather. German-born Otto Scherp is thought to have had more than one wife, as the Laubenheim Church records said that Peter was by his first wife. We have a name for one of his wives, perhaps his second and last wife. Be believe Otto gave issue to five children all together. Otto was born about 1628 in Laubenheim, Germany, and his death date is unknown, but thought to be prior to 1691 (Age 63).

His son through which our family descended, was Peter, born about 1660, but who died about 1690. Peter also had two brothers and two sisters. According to church records a Laubenheim, Germany, Peter served as a warden at the church. A warden was a lay person (non-ordained) who served administratively the clerk leadership of a church. This person was often a volunteer or employed only part time. It did signal that the person was a person of perceived value and use to the ministry of the church.

Below is the image of what was the Sharp family crest back in the 1600s.



It was Peter's son, Jacob A. Scherp, my 5th great grandfather, who was born in Laubenheim, Germany, and who migrated to America. His first documented appearance in America was appearing on the Hunter Lists on August 4, 1710. He was among a group of some 3,000 Germans there in servitude to English overseers. Henry Z. Jones' introduction to his book, "*More Palatine Families*," tells of the negative conditions in Germany around 1700 and following which caused numbers of Germans to depart from Germany. For one thing, Germany had been the scene of several military conflicts, often fought near the doorsteps of German homes, a frightening enough experience. The ruling

Princes levied heavy taxes and other oppressive burdens on the people. And the winter of 1709 was especially harsh, devastating to the agricultural communities.

Several thousand Germans from the Palatine Region of Germany came basically as a group to England, seeking work and a more livable life. Such did not develop very well. The ruling Queen Anne Stuart was my 26th cousin, 7 times removed. Described another way, Queen Anne is the 8th cousin to the husband of the stepdaughter of my 6th great grand uncle. [Here is a relationship chart.](#)

The overflow of German migrants to England were a problem, so Queen Anne had offered a servitude package for them. If they would go with England shipping them to the New World, they would have free passage and could work for their expenses by working the forests (in what would later become New York state) and harvesting sap from the trees. The agreements were reached and about 3,000 Germans were shipped in 1710, landing on Manhattan Island, and going up the Hudson River about 75 miles to settle on the east bank in what became named (and still is named today) Germantown, New York. The agricultural pursuits were not well planned and proved to become a failure, with the English abandoning ownership of the project. The German Palatines were left to survive on their own, and so they did. Amidst great poverty, their industrious spirits enabled them to evolve into a successful community.

Certainly, their steeped experience as Christians and faithful worshippers was a prime element in the well-being that developed for them, prospering them to lives of worth and value.

Jacob A. Scherp, a grandson of our earliest German Sharpe, Otto Scherp, was the first family member to immigrate to the New World, or what later would become the United States of America. Jacob is my fifth great grandfather. As already cited, he was in the group of some 3,000 Germans brought to America by the English Crown to pursue a forest agricultural endeavor in servitude.

Jacob lived to the age of 54. He was apparently the victim of a horse-riding accident when his steed stumbled in the Livingston's Creek. Jacob drown resulting from the fall, and was discovered by his one of his sons. This was in [Livingston Manner, in what later was Columbia County, New York.](#)

My family descending was through his son, Johann Peter Scherp, known as Peter. He's my fourth great grandfather. Peter married twice, but his 13 children were through his first wife, Eva Schneider.

Anne



Portrait by Michael Dahl, 1705

Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland

George P. Sharp (notice the Anglicization of the surname from Scherp), my 3rd great grandfather, was the family member who came into the American Revolution. the Revolutionary War. He is cited in the "Calleudes of Revolutionary Manuscripts" in the office of the Secretary of State at Albany, New York (according to some private notes written in 1897 by an unnamed writer).

George served as a 2nd Lieutenant in Captain Herman Hoffman's Company, Colonel John Van Ness' Regiment of Minute Men. He was also 2nd Lieutenant in Captain Andrea Herman's Company, Colonel Morris Graham's Regiment of Foot Service of the U.S. under Command of Brigadier General Clinton. In the National Archives in Washington DC, I located a record (M-804, Roll #2158, Pension Applications for the American Revolutionary War) citing that a Pension was drawn by his widow. Even though George was only age 45 at his death, Rebecca, his widow, lived to an age of 93. This death date was estimated by the Pension record stating when the pension payments ceased. George and his wife, Margaret Rebecca Teater, gave issue to eight children.

John Elsefer Sharp, one of George's children, gave issue to nine children through his first wife, Eve Markie, and four children thorough his second wife, Elizabeth Bodine. This was in [Sharon Springs, New York](#). John is my great grandfather.

It is through John Elsefer Sharp's second marriage that John Elsefer Sharp II was born January 25, 1830 through whom my descending develops. This John is my great grandfather. The move of himself and his family to [Ravenna, Portage County, Ohio](#) most probably had to do with his being employed by the Erie Railroad around 1850 or after. However, earlier, in the 1860 US Census, his occupation is listed as a farmer. The 1880 Census lists him as a mason. That may or may not have been with the railroad. It is thought most of his job life was with the railroad.

The US Census of 1880 shows a 19-year old servant named Phoebe Roberts residing. We might assume the presence of a live-in servant reflects some degree of economic affluence for the family.

John Elsefer Sharp and Sarah Lavenna Kellogg gave issue to three sons: Alfred Lansing, Dwight Elsefer and Henry Seth Sharp. After Sarah died, John married a year later to Mary E. Thompson Cope. They gave issue to one child, Charles R. Sharp. The family's Christian beliefs continued here, as they had been from their earliest German roots, in the Lutheran Church.

Here is where surname change occurred. All the records I can find about the family in its Ohio setting spell the surname as "Sharp." Alfred and Henry moved

to [Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas](#) in 1882 and about 1895. All the records I've found in Texas for these two brothers spell the surname "Sharpe." Dwight, who moved to [Chicago, Cook County, Illinois](#), in every instance spells the surname "Sharpe." Charles, the son from the second marriage, remained all his life in Ohio, apparently always spelling the surname "Sharp." I can find no reason as to which the "e" was added by the three sons who left Ohio, but not the son who remained in Ohio.

Another name change noticeable is that my grandfather, whom we always knew in his life in Georgetown, Texas, was named Harry Seth Sharpe. In recent years, researching online records of Ravenna, Ohio, it came to light that his birth record there gives him the name of Henry Seth Sharp. Harry is a known nickname or AKA for Henry, so it is understandable to see that change. It's just that I do not know of anyone in our Texas Sharpe's who ever said his original name was Henry!

Another interesting matter about this Sharp family in Ravenna, Ohio is John's marriage to Sarah Lavenna Kellogg. Sarah descends from a deeply rooted British family, going back to Nicholas Kellogg of Debden, Essex, England, born October 18, 1458! Joseph Kellogg, born in England 1626, came to America and lived till 1707. Sarah is Joseph's 4th great grandchild. In this famous Kellogg family is John Benjamin Kellogg, the Texian soldier who died in the famous Battle of the Alamo, fighting for independence of Texas from Mexico. John is my half sixth cousin, twice removed. To Sarah Kellogg Sharp, the Alamo hero is her half 5th cousin. Additionally, Sarah is related to Frank Billings Kellogg, her 5th cousin, twice removed. Frank was the United States Secretary State who was awarded the second ever Nobel Peace Prize to an American for his diplomatic negotiations for bringing peace in the world. That was in 1939. Another political connection with the Kellogg family was the 31st Vice President of the United States, Charles Curtis, who served with President Herbert Hoover. Charles was Sarah's fifth cousin, once removed.

Obviously, well-heeled family lines connected with our Sharpe family in this Ravenna, Ohio marriage of John Elsefer Sharp and Sarah Lavenna Kellogg.

There are some Sharpe's of note to whom whole chapters are devoted in this autobiography, so they aren't covered in this chapter.

The whole Kellogg family report is in Chapter 24. There is Chapter 37 about Willis Sharpe Kilmer, the wealthy New York businessman who made money on advertising, on patent medicine and on horse racing (He owned the 1918 winner of the Kentucky Derby).





Chapter 39 is about Alfred (Fred) Lansing Sharpe who came to Texas in 1882. A distinction for him was being the first Republican elected to the Texas House of Representatives. That was in 1904, representing an area near El Paso. At the time, he was the owner of a large cattle ranch. In Chapter 48, there is another distinctive thing that Fred may not have realized when he was there is that the first Thanksgiving Celebration observed on the North American Continent was in 1598 probably on land that later was part of Fred's ranch.

A man of world fame with connections to our Sharpe family is [Sir Winston Churchill](#). He is so famous, and so much has been written about him that his life and activities will not be included in this autobiography. Suffice it to say that Churchill is the 11th cousin, once removed, to U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, my half eighth cousin. [Here is a chart detailing the relationship.](#)



My grandfather, Henry (Harry) Seth Sharpe came to Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas about 1895. Highlights of the story are cited here, but a detailed section of the genealogy details is found here. These are his descendants flowing from his Texas establishment of the Sharpe family.

<http://www.dasharpe.com/Genealogy/Sharpe,Harry.pdf>

He was recruited by a military officer named Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, we believe at the [Menger Hotel](#) in San Antonio, downtown at Alamo Plaza. It is the oldest continuously operating hotel west of the Mississippi River in the United States. It was when Theodore Roosevelt was gathering his Rough Riders in the Menger Bar in preparation for the [Spanish American War](#) on Cuba in the Caribbean. A hand-me-down telescope that Harry used in that conflict came to my father, to me and has now been passed on to our son, Todd Wittman Sharpe. Harry was a private in that war, and began drawing a pension in 1927 as a result. He would have been age 53. In 1904, Teddy was elected [President of the United States](#) on the Republican ticket.

Harry Seth Sharpe married Mattie de Noailles Simons, Friday, June 7, 1900. Their established church life became the Presbyterian Church there in Georgetown when they joined in 1903. Harry's Lutheran Church background and Mattie's Christian Church background was compromised in selecting the Presbyterian Church, both joining by re-statement of their Christian faith.

His primary occupation seemed to be on the staff at the Williamson County Courthouse in various offices.



Harry and Mattie bore two sons, Dwight Alfred (1901 - 1981 and Harry Simons Sharpe (1904 - 1977). Chapter 33 of this autobiography details his primary life and ministry as a pastor.

As a Presbyterian Pastor, Dwight and his family moved about, mostly in Texas, but residing once in Little Rock, Arkansas (1929 - 1935). His wife was Martha Dixon Chapman (1904 - 1979). Stories about them and their three children, Taylor, Tiffany and Todd, are in the primary parts of this autobiography.

<http://www.dasharpe.com/Genealogy/Sharpe,DwightAlfred.html>

Harry Simons Sharpe married Virgie Lois Stapp (1908 – 1988). Aunt Lois might roll over in her grave if she notices my printing her first name. She detested it, and always insisted on being addressed as Lois (or as Aunt Lois in my case). Harry was known as Dee Dee. Early in his life, we served the United States in the Navy. Here is Dee Dee with Lois and their son, Harry, taken about the time Dee Dee would have been entering the Navy (about 1943).



Their two sons were Harry Franklin Sharpe (1936 – 2015) and John Earle Sharpe (1946 – 1997).

One of the favorite family pictures was one taken by Uncle Dee Dee, himself, of all the family gathered to bid farewell to him as he departed to be in the U. S. Navy!



(L to R – adults) Aunt Lois, my sister, Betty Ann, my mother, my sister, Martha, my father, Papa Sharpe and Mama Sharpe. Boys in front were Harry and me.

When Dee Dee returned home after World War II, he and Lois operated a laundry and dry cleaning shop on the south of the Georgetown City Square where the Williamson County Courthouse was. Papa Sharpe work in the Courthouse, and Dee Dee & Lois' shop was in the center of the block on the square. I remember fondly our family visits to Georgetown in the 1940's and visited them in the shop and at the courthouse. Dee Dee and Lois, Harry and Johnny shared the large home of Papa and Mama Sharpe at 1005 Main Street through the rest of our grandparents' lives.

Their home was immediately next door to the First Baptist Church of Georgetown. After Papa and Mama and Dee Dee died, the home was sold to the church, and the Sharpe family moved to 1601 Olive Street. That location ended up being Johnny's home, with ownership split with Harry, as the two sons inherited the home. Johnny bought Harry's share.