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Pasadena, March 16, 1947

Mr. Geo. Shier
Clunio
Calif.

Dear sir: -

My nephew, Charles Satterlee, told me about meeting you and that you wished to know something about the Shier family and the branch which I represent. I am always glad to know about other members and will give a slight idea of how much or rather how little any of us know.

In the first place the Shier family is "Palatine". That is, they originated in a small country on the headwaters of the Rhine just below Bavaria. Here they lived for many centuries. Julius Caesar conquered their principal town in the year 57 B.C., a place which is on the west bank of the Rhine ~~at the Rhine~~ at the junction of the Rhine and a tiny stream called the Spyerbach. He called the people Nemetii and their town Augusta Nemetium. For some reason unknown he took a fancy to the people and decided to take them under his own personal rule. The seat of the Roman rule was at that time on the Palatine hill in the city of Rome and so the people became Palatines because they were ruled directly by the Emperor. Hereafter during the middle ages the ruler was known as the Elector Palatine because he had the deciding vote on the election of the emperor of the Western Empire and was one of the most important of the great princes. Mannheim, Heidelberg, Speyer & Worms were the four most important towns but Speyer was the capital always. These last 4 important cities were almost totally destroyed by the French armies of Louis XIV in 1689 and again in 1707 and 1708. The people of these districts were destitute

A few years previously, agents of William Penn had circulated in these districts telling of the wonderful new empire which Wm Penn had secured in the great new world and which he offered at very low rates for settlers.

The winter of 1708-09 was one of the severest ever known and the Rhine froze over. Then the great migration started and a mass body of people started down the Rhine with what few belonging they could carry or bundle along in carts and made their way down to Rotterdam where they demanded to be sent to America. The Dutch were anxious to get rid of the great mob of destitute and got as many over to England as quickly as possible. Before summer there were over 13000 of them. England did not know what to do with so many indigents but finally sent a large number of them over to Ireland where a number of them were settled on English landlord estates in the county of Limerick, which even today has many descendants of the Shier family. Among them was John Adam Schener, wife, 2 sons & a daughter. Today they all spell their name Shier.

My own ancestor is supposed to be Henry the eldest son of John Adam and we have a record rather complete up to date.

The Canadian Shier family is derived from the 4th son Adams born in Limerick. The best book on the Palatine Migration is called Early Palatine Emigration written by Dr. Walter Allen Knittle and published in 1934.

Yours truly
Albert L. Shier
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