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# Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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## Generation 1

1. **Willis Sharpe Kilmer** (son of Jonas M Kilmer and Julia E Sharpe) was born on Oct 18, 1868 in Brooklyn, New York. He died on Jul 12, 1940 in Windsor, New York. He married **Beatrice Richardson** (daughter of Robert Richardson) in 1895. She was born in 1873. She was born in 1873.

Notes for Willis Sharpe Kilmer:

[Willis Sharpe Kilmer](#) is my half second cousin, once removed. Our ancestor in common is John Elsefer Sharp, Willis' great grandfather and my great, great grandfather. Willis is descended through John and his first wife, Eve Markle. I am descended through John and his second wife, Elizabeth Bodine.

Willis Sharpe Kilmer was born October 18, 1868 in Brooklyn, New York. His family moved to Binghamton, New York in 1878 where he lived the rest of his life, which ended in 1941.

Willis Sharpe Kilmer was born on the first anniversary of the United States' acquisition of Alaska from Russia. He was born in the year that the Great Train Robbery took place near Marshfield, Indiana, as seven members of the Reno gang made off with \$96,000 in cash, gold and bonds.

Source:<http://home.mindspring.com/~railroadstories/rrmmv1n1/great1.htm>

**"Binghamton** is a [city](#) in the [Southern Tier](#) of [New York](#) in the [United States](#). It is near the [Pennsylvania](#) border, in a bowl-shaped valley at the confluence of the [Susquehanna](#) and [Chenango](#) Rivers. Binghamton is the [county seat](#) of [Broome County](#) and is the principal city and cultural center of the [Greater Binghamton](#) metropolitan area (also known as the [Triple Cities](#)), home to a quarter million people. The population of the city itself, according to the [2010 census](#), is 47,376.

"The city was named after [William Bingham](#), a wealthy Philadelphian who bought the surrounding land in 1792. Before that, the first known people of European descent to come to the area were the troops of the [Sullivan Expedition](#) in 1779, during the [American Revolutionary War](#).

"The community was first settled around 1802 at the junction of the Susquehanna and Chenango rivers and was known as **Chenango Point**. Binghamton was first incorporated in 1834 as a [village](#) of the [Town of Binghamton](#). Binghamton became a city in 1867. Abel Bennett, who was elected as secretary on January 30, 1845 of the Pennsylvania Coal Company, was the city's first mayor. His extensive property on the city's west side is known as the [Abel Bennett Tract](#)."\*

\*[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binghamton,\\_New\\_York](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binghamton,_New_York)

*The Cleveland (Ohio) Plain Dealer* newspaper article by Dan Parker in the Sunday, December 8, 1946 issue provides very interesting information on Willis Sharpe Kilmer, published some six years after his death. The heading claimed, "Everything the Patent Medicine King Touched Turned to Gold - Even Horse Racing." He was known to have amassed a \$10 million plus fortune, mostly on a cure-all patent medicine known as Swamp Root, but also in newspaper publishing, real estate development and horse racing.

The greatest medicine he gave the public was what was considered a bag of horse bones named Exterminator, the winner of the Kentucky Derby on May 11, 1918 in a field of eight contenders. The jockey riding the winner was William Knapp, the breeder was F. D Knight and the trainer was Henry McDaniel. In 1928, Willis was the breeder for the winner of the Kentucky Derby, Reigh Count. That horse was ridden by jockey Charlie Lang, trained by Bert Mitchell, and owned by Mrs. John D. Hertz. That same year, Reigh Count was voted

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the American Award for Horse of the Year. Also in that 1928 Derby, Willis owned the 11th place horse out of 22 running, Sun Beau. The rider was jockey John Craigmyle and the trainer was Charles W. Carroll. Willis, of course, was the breeder as well. This horse racing information came from an Internet search on Willis' name.

Another major source of the Kilmer family wealth under the leadership of Willis was vast elements of real estate development. He built the first sky scrapper in Binghamton, New York, a towering six stories high! It was the Kilmer Building, 141 Chenango Street, built in 1903, which was originally used as the home of the Kilmer product, Swamp Root. It was at the corner of Chenango and Lewis Streets.

"When you step off the railroad train, the Swamp-Root laboratory is the first striking object that confronts you - a beautiful, white, high-towering building." This description of a first impression on arriving in Binghamton and seeing the Kilmer Building, appeared in a 1917 issue of *New York Sunday World*. The article continued: "In many respects this building stands unique. The main office is wholly unlike anything of the kind in the country. The massive columns of solid marble and beautiful hand-carved molding, cornices and ceiling, and the marble mosaic floor, is of a type that forces admiration."\*

Even in 2010 when the Kilmer Building was undergoing renovation (there have been several owners over the years), the project head was quoted as saying about the Kilmer Building that it is "one of the last riveted steel buildings made, and will probably be here for another 500 years."\*

\*<http://nyslandmarks.com/treasures/07sep.htm>

About 1914, Kilmer brought Alfred (Fred) Lansing Sharpe up from Texas to manage his buildings. Fred is a first cousin to Willis' mother, Julia Sharpe Kilmer. In 1904, Fred had become the first Republican elected to a state office in Texas, following the Days of Reconstruction, Post War Between the States. In 1916, Fred's life ended with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, following an argument and shooting of Fred's daughter, Holland.

He generally was referred to by his full name of Willis Sharpe Kilmer, with the emphasis on the middle name. This not only accounted for the strong heritage of his Mother, but a general acknowledgement about the acumen he was perceived to possess. This reflected his success in the four wildly divergent endeavors he pursued, medicine, publishing, real estate development and horse racing.

Kilmer was age ten when the family moved to Binghamton. His father obtained an interest in the proprietary medicine business owned by Dr. S. Andral Kilmer, Willis' uncle. Their product, Swamp Root, was reputed to be a cure-all for kidney, liver and bladder ailments. During those years, the business was mostly in and around Binghamton.

This all changed when Willis returned home from his Cornell University education in marketing. His first step was to insert advertisements in small newspapers all over the country. It was one of the first national advertising campaigns in the country, a bold act which almost drove the small company into bankruptcy. However, sales gradually increased into a steady stream of growing and significant business.

All went well with the Kilmers until the turn of the century, when newspapers and magazines began to attack patent medicine firms which made extravagant claims for their products. Swamp Root, the maiden aunt's favorite beverage when she wanted to get a "glow" without losing her membership in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, was as high on the list of nostrums under fire, as it was in alcoholic content - 12%.

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The result of the campaign against the medicine makers was to bring about stricter regulatory laws.

By this time, young Kilmer, now in control of the company, had come to regard the City of Binghamton as his feudal estate. Many of the townfolk worked for him, and the Kilmer wealth had a powerful influence on the local politics.

Kilmer was a big, impressive looking man, six feet one inch tall, weighing 215 pounds and crowned with a shock of iron gray hair, which later turned pure white (that's a description of me today, except I'm not quite all white hair yet). Under beetling eyebrows, he had a pair of piercing blue-gray eyes which turned dark whenever he was challenged. An immaculate dresser, he always carried a cane as his scepter of office as Baron of Binghamton. If common folk weren't frightened or at least awed by all these props, there was the Baron's deep, booming voice to keep them in line.

More extensive light is shown in the following material taken from *Seward's History of Binghamton and Broome County*, pages 148-149. I've paraphrased it for you.

Swamp Root is still available on the market today, and I purchased four bottles recently at over \$5 each for the four ounce bottles! I notice it is 10% alcohol, which I assume adds to its attractiveness.

In 2004, I was phoned by Steven Palmatier, who lives in Greene, New York, near the Binghamton area. We planned to compare some information he has. Steven is the grandson of a man who was an employee of Willis Sharpe Kilmer, and a distant relative of Willis. I am indebted to Steven for sharing much of his Willis Sharpe Kilmer files, which has enabled me to enhance greatly this report on Mr. Kilmer.

Steven told me that Willis died while at his country estate, Sky Lake, out side of Windsor, New York. It is now a Methodist Camp (conference meeting grounds). Kilmer also was a founding member of the Binghamton Country Club, being an admirer of the sport of playing golf.

There is a very interesting source on the Internet giving a narrative about Willis Sharpe Kilmer, by a Mr. John E. Golley, (e-mail: [ByGolley@email.msn.com](mailto:ByGolley@email.msn.com)) at the web site address:

<http://www.antiquebottles.com/kilmer.html>

Below is an excerpt:

"Willis Sharpe Kilmer was born in Brooklyn, New York on October 18, 1869. He graduated from Cornell University in 1880, and went to work in the family business. Willis was put in charge of the advertising department of Dr. Kilmer and Company, which lead to a swift increase in business. Advertising in the late 1800's was not the "science" that it is today, and Willis Sharpe Kilmer was one of advertising's earliest pioneers. His first wife was Beatrice Richardson who's socially prominent father was one of the brightest executives in a fledgling newspaper advertising agency in New York City. Willis Kilmer had a more metropolitan upbringing than many of his peers, and his relationship with Mr. Richardson and his family connections all helped benefit Willis and his new ideas. Dr. Kilmer and Company utilized all the forms of advertising of the day, including painted wooden signs, posters and printed circulars, but with the entrance of Willis' leadership, began purchasing advertisement space in newspapers, expounding the virtues of their numerous cures. They were amongst the fore-runners in printing Almanacs, which not only would list the normal items, such as moon phases, best planting times and the like, but at every turn of the page, listed one or more of the products, printed testimonials for the same and helped diagnose 'ailments' of which one of their products would 'cure.'

"The packaging of their products was also easily noticed on the shelf. For ease of finding

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the correct cure, their Heart Remedy had an embossed heart on it, Swamp Root Kidney Cure had a kidney embossed on it and so forth, and their packaging was bright orange, with the likeness of a whiskered Dr. S. Andral Kilmer, printed boldly on the front. The package also invited customers to write to Dr. Kilmer for advise and prescription, which, long after Dr. S. Andral Kilmer had sold his share of the business, caused Dr. Kilmer to initiate a lawsuit against his brother and nephew in which he accused Dr. Kilmer and Company of representing him as the physician in charge of their medical department. He contended that they pretended to give medical advice and prescribe medicines for diseases which they pretended to diagnose. When a lower court ruled against Dr. Kilmer and Company, Willis pursued the suit in The Appellate Court, and in 1917, the decision against the company was reversed. It was Willis Sharpe Kilmer's advertising prowess, as well as his 'muscle' via political and professional contacts, that made Swamp Root a household word. When other patent medicines were losing popularity, due to The Pure Food and Drug Act, as well as an increased respect for medical science, Swamp Root was still filling the Kilmer coffers. When asked what Swamp Root was good for, Willis Kilmer once replied, 'About a million dollars a year!'

"Patent medicine wasn't the only thing in which Willis Sharp Kilmer was involved. On April 11, 1904, Mr. Kilmer founded *The Binghamton Press*, which became a very well-respected newspaper in the country. It has been alleged, although never proven, that he started the newspaper for the purpose of putting *The Binghamton Evening Herald* out of business, and he also could control the advertising of various patent medicines and any articles condemning the same. There were several people, such as Samuel Hopkins Adams, who were very much against patent medicines, and were lobbying very hard for the passage of The Pure Food and Drug Act. Mr. Kilmer was very successful in 'squashing their stories, and did eventually put *The Evening Herald*, run by his long-time personal and political enemy Guy Beardsley, out of business. Mr. Beardsley later sued Willis Sharpe Kilmer, charging conspiracy to put him out of business; Beardsley lost the suit.

"Willis Sharpe Kilmer was also a very fine judge of horses. The family mansion is still located on Riverside Drive in Binghamton, and on the surrounding grounds, Mr. Kilmer built Sun Briar Court, which had a 1/5 mile indoor track, an outdoor track connected to a half-mile circular track, 100 fire-proof stalls, and the main stable, included offices, quarters and a clubhouse. The Kilmer racing colors were brown, green and orange. He owned many fine horses; Genie, the son of Man O'War, Sun Briar, Sun Beau and Exterminator, which won the 1918 Kentucky Derby, and was the leading money winner for four straight seasons. Sun Beau held the American record for money won, until Sea Biscuit broke the record in 1939. Mr. Kilmer owned a large estate on the Rappahannock River in Virginia known as Remlik (Kilmer spelled backwards), as well as a game preserve near Binghamton, called Sky Lake. He was a pioneer in forest and game preservation in New York as well as in Virginia. He established the Kilmer Pathological Laboratory in Binghamton, and started Binghamton's first nine-hole golf course, which later became the Binghamton Country Club.

"Willis Sharpe Kilmer died of pneumonia on July 12, 1940, leaving an estate estimated at \$10 to \$15 million dollars, and is interred in the family mausoleum in Floral Park Cemetery in Binghamton, New York.

"After World War II, his second wife, Sarah Jane Wells, sold the rights to make and manufacture Swamp Root to Medtech Laboratories of Cody, Wyoming. The six-story Kilmer Building, built in 1903 after the original building was damaged by fire, still stands at 141 Chenango Street, and Swamp Root was still on the shelves of the E. C. McKallor Drug Company in Binghamton in 1983. It can still be ordered today, more than almost 120 years after it was first produced, a testament to the advertising skill of Willis Sharpe Kilmer and the strength of the Kilmer name and reputation.

About in 1914,

Steven Palmatier loaned me a paper-bound book, well over 100 pages long, that used as

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the catalog for cautioning off the race horse stock of Willis' estate on October 30, 1940 at the Farm, Court Manor, near New Market, Virginia. The elaborate book gave the schedule for the day, including lunch, displayed an inventory of all the stallions, weanlings, and brood mares, had an individual page devoted for the genealogy and pedigree of each of the 102 horses being sold, including photographs of a number of them, and a table showing the race winnings of Kilmer annually, totaling \$3,919,519 for the previous 18 years. This, of course was not all of his winnings, for we know he owned a Kentucky Derby winner in 1918. This table of winnings begins at 1922. The book states that Kilmer's horses had won over 220 races in 1940 alone. The Forward in the book thoroughly establishes the preeminence of Willis Sharpe Kilmer in the world of thoroughbred horse racing.

Here is a web site that gives a history for Exterminator, who it shows won over a quarter of a million dollars in his races:

<http://www.thoroughbredchampions.com/gallery/exterator.htm>

Bingham was an interesting town. "Located in the Southern Tier of New York state where the Susquehanna and Chenango rivers meet, the city is the birthplace of IBM, Endicott-Johnson Shoes and the Link Co., which developed flight training simulators. Binghamton is home to cartoonist Johnny Hart, creator of "B.C." and "Wizard of Id." Also born there: TV producer and 'The Twilight Zone' creator Rod Serling."

Source:<http://www.gannett.com/about/map/ataglance/ingham.htm>

As an aside, IBM was my employer in 1957-58 half time as a college student, and full time from 1962-1969. Those placements were in Sherman, TX and in New Orleans, LA, where I met my wife, Suzanne Margaret Boggess.

Willis Sharpe Kilmer, not only is an extraordinarily interesting historical man, he is a primary reason which led me into the interesting pursuit of genealogy and the learning more extensively about my family ancestry and heritage.

It started about 1978 with my brother-in-law, Victor (Vic) Marcus Ehlers, Jr. (1923-1985). My father, Dwight Alfred Sharpe (1901-1981) had mentioned to him something about potentially being heir to a portion of a significant state. He mentioned Maybelle Alberta Sharpe (1883-1973), his first cousin, as someone who had tracked the information on this estate. Vic was able to contact the daughter of Maybelle Alberta Sharpe, whose name was Alberta Killie (who was my second cousin). She passed on information about the estate of Willis Sharpe Kilmer.

In my files is a PDF copy of the Bingham Press issue of Tuesday, February 20, 1945, page 15 (7th column from the left, toward the bottom, the first item in the "Legal Notices" section). Since Willis Sharpe Kilmer died without ever giving issue to any children, his estate was left to all of his lateral relatives alive at the time, with his widow given the privilege to enjoy the estate throughout her lifetime before distribution was made to the lateral relatives. The notice listed all of what the attorneys at the time understood were the legal lateral relatives. My father, Dwight Alfred Sharpe is one of them listed.

A reality affecting greatly the administration of this estate is the fact that when Willis married his second wife, to whom he was married at his death, she was a very young woman. At the time of their marriage about 1920, he was age 62 and Sarah Jane Emily Wells Sharpe was age 24. Additionally, Sarah Jane lived to the age of 81, not dying until 1985.

Upon her death, there became a realization among some potential heirs that the will had a vagueness that ultimately would interpretation by the courts. The idea about the estate going to his living lateral relatives alive at his death would dictate who would be eligible to inherit from the estate. The vagueness was that stipulation existed: Would it be the lateral relatives alive at the time of his death OR the time of her death! Willis died in 1940 and

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Sarah Jane died in 1985! Quite a few relatives died in the course of those 45 years!

Through Maybelle Alberta Sharpe's estimation, my father would be in line to receive about 1/6th of the estate, if interpreted as those relatives living at Willis' death. However, since my father died in 1981 and Sarah Jane died in 1985, the court's decision, among other things, would dictate whether my father would receive anything at all, which would trickle down to his descendants. As it turned out, the court decided in favor of the relatives pressing for the interpretation being those alive at the time of her death. So, my father was eliminated from possible distribution.

The value of the estate was never publicized, either at the probaton of Willis' will, nor at the occasion of Sarah Jane's death, which concluded Willis' will. However, outside estimates, by newspaper articles and others, placed the estate's value between 10 and 15 million dollars! With prudent investment, even with Sarah Jane's living expenses taken out, surely by 1985 the estate was quite a large sum!

Death Notes:  
Pneumonia

Notes for Sarah Jane Emily Wells:

Sarah Jane, as a Pennsylvania-born young lady, is recorded as residing in the 1920 US Census at the home of her sister, Mary and her husband, John Quinn. Florence, another sister, is also shown residing there.

We do not know why the three daughters lived there, but possibly their parents by then had become deceased. Sarah is shown as having the occupation of a Milliner.

Notes for Beatrice Richardson:

Willis Sharpe Kilmer's first wife was Beatrice Richardson, whose socially prominent father was one of the brightest executives in a fledgling newspaper advertising agency in New York City.

Source: <http://www.antiquebottles.com/kilmer.html>

Beatrice was born the year Enrico Caruso (2/25/1873 - 8/2/1921), the Italian operatic tenor, was born.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enrico\\_Caruso](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enrico_Caruso)

Willis Sharpe Kilmer's first wife was Beatrice Richardson whose socially prominent father was one of the brightest executives in a fledgling newspaper advertising agency in New York City.

Source: <http://www.glswrk-auction.com/037.htm>

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### Generation 2

2. **Jonas M Kilmer** (son of Daniel Kilmer and Maria Shafer) was born on Apr 11, 1843 in Cobleskill, Schoharie County, New York. He died in 1912 in Binghamton, Broome County, New York. He married **Julia E Sharpe** (daughter of Peter G. Sharpe and Christiana Brown) in 1869.
3. **Julia E Sharpe** (daughter of Peter G. Sharpe and Christiana Brown) was born on Mar 05,

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1847 in New York. She died between 06 Jul-10 Aug 1912.

Notes for Jonas M Kilmer:

Jonas M Kilmer was born Apr 11, 1843 in Cobleskill, Schoharie County, New York. He is the husband of Julie E. Sharpe, the granddaughter of John Elsefer Sharp, my great, great grandfather.

He was president of the patent medicine company as well as the local bank. In addition, he developed real estate in the Binghamton area, according my friend, Steven Palmatier ([191 Balf Rd., Norwich, NY 13815](#)). Steven corresponded me numerous times in 2004 about the Kilmer family.

The 1888, 1889 and 1890 Binghamton Telephone Directories list Jonas Kilmer at Dr. Kilmer & Company, #14 Virgil.

Source Information: Ancestry.com Binghamton, New York Directories, 1888-90. [database online] Provo, UT: Ancestry.com, 2000. Original data: Binghamton, NY, 1888: J. E. Williams, 1888. Binghamton, NY, 1889: J. E. Williams, 1889. Binghamton, NY, 1890: J. E. Williams, 1890.

Jonas was a graduate of the Bryant and Stratton Business College in Albany, after which he worked for a year in the general store of Joseph Taylor of Schoharie Court House, and then worked the next eighteen years in the mercantile business in New York City with several different firms, rising to important positions. His brother convinced him to move to Binghamton in 1881, where he ran the business end of the "patent medicine" business as an equal partner. In 1892 he bought out Dr. S. Andral Kilmer's interest in the company, though some would say he "swindled" his brother in the deal; the purchase price is unknown. Jonas' son, Willis Sharpe Kilmer, became the Head of Advertising for the company, and business began to increase rapidly. The company was incorporated in 1909 as Dr. Kilmer & Company and had branch offices in New York, Chicago, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil and Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies.

In 1899, Jonas Kilmer was elected Director of The People's Bank of Binghamton, in which capacity he served from October 2, 1899 until February 9, 1907. Then he was elected President; he served in this capacity until his death. On December 4, 1907, he was chosen as a trustee of Binghamton Savings Bank and also served as President of the Binghamton Press from 1904 until his death. People's Bank merged with Broome County Trust Company on April 20, 1914 and became People's Trust Company. From 1893 to 1908, Jonas Kilmer also served as a member of the Board of Police Commissioners. Jonas Kilmer died in Binghamton in 1912, but not without first giving all the credit of the success of the family business to his son, Willis Sharpe Kilmer.

Source: <http://www.antiquebottles.com/kilmer.html>

Notes for Julia E Sharpe:

Julia Sharpe is a half first cousin, twice removed to me. She is the granddaughter of John Elsefer Sharp, my great, great grandfather. Julia is descended through John Elsefer Sharp's first wife, Eve Markle, and I am descended through he second wife, Elizabeth Bodine.

In the same year that Julia was born, Thomas Alva Edison (2/11/1847 -10/18/1931), the American inventor holding 1,093 patents, was born. Thomas A. Edison, one of the premiere inventors in American History, is the sixth cousin, once removed, to United States President, Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt. Teddy is the fifth cousin to U S President Franklin D. Roosevelt, my half eighth cousin. Also, Teddy's niece, Eleanor Roosevelt, married President Franklin D. Roosevelt. So again we see much indirect relationship with very

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interesting personalities of our historic American stage.

Julia was born the year that Joseph Pulitzer, influential 19th-century American newspaper editor and publisher, was born in Hungary, on April 10, 1847. The year of Julia's birth also brought into the world Scottish born inventor, Alexander Graham Bell.

Source: <http://www.thomasedison.com/biog.htm>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Graham\\_Bell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Graham_Bell)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph\\_Pulitzer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Pulitzer)

Adding to the interest of family ties, near and far, the mention above about Thomas Edison's relation to our family through the Roosevelt connections can be expanded to remember a business relationship Edison had. Dr. Goslin, credentials described below, told me that Edison purchased the supplies he used to create the first electric light bulb from a drug store in New Brunswick, New Jersey owned by Frederick B. Kilmer, the father of famed American poet Joyce Kilmer (formal name being Alfred Joyce Kilmer). Joyce Kilmer is the third cousin, once removed to Julia E. Sharpe's husband, Jonas M. Kilmer.

It may be conjectured that the family was Presbyterian in its Christian affiliation, since Julia left \$2,000 in her will to the North Presbyterian Church, which today is at 38 Broad Avenue, Binghamton, New York. She detailed various funds and items of value to named relatives and friends that totaled over \$160,000. The residue and remainder of her estate was left to her son and only child, Willis Sharpe Kilmer. There was no public estimate of the value of that residue, but my impression is that it would be considered by most people as somewhat substantial. So, the share to the church certainly was modest.

Source: Binghamton Press, August 15, 1912, article, "Mrs. J. M. Kilmer Remembers Many," about distribution of her will.

A Daughters of the American Revolution inquiry I made in 2007 about any of its members being proven from American Revolutionary soldier, Lt. George P. Sharp, they said that Julia Sharpe Kilmer was the very first member confirmed as descended from Lt. Sharp.

According to a 2011-11-23 e-mail I received from Dr. Sheldon (Shel) Gosline of Ithaca, New York, he said that Julia did not remarry following Jonas' death. Among other things, Dr. Gosline is a genealogical researcher in the Kilmer family lines.

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### Generation 3

4. **Daniel Kilmer** (son of Johannes I Kilmer and Anna Margaretha Sipperlee) was born on Jan 07, 1800 in New York, USA. He died on May 04, 1859 in New York. He married **Maria Shafer**.
5. **Maria Shafer** was born on Jan 06, 1802 in New York. She died on May 01, 1890.
6. **Peter G. Sharpe** (son of John Elsefer Sharp and Eve Markle) was born on Nov 25, 1813. He died on Aug 15, 1893 in Sharon Spings, Schoharie County, New York. He married **Christiana Brown**.
7. **Christiana Brown** was born about May 01, 1818. She died on Sep 23, 1865.

Notes for Peter G. Sharpe:

Peter G. Sharp was the first of four children born by John Elsfer Sharp and Elizabeth Bodine. This was John's second marriage, as his first wife, with whom he bore nine children, died.

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Peter was born the same year as was born Henry Ward Beecher (6/24/1813- 3/8/1887), a theologically liberal American Congregational minister of renown. Rev. Beecher's sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe was the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the book published in 1852 which treats slavery as a central theme and contributed to growing public emotion that contributed to the forces which created the War Between the States.

Source:[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_Ward\\_Beecher](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Ward_Beecher)

Peter owned the Sharon House Hotel situated on the Northeast corner of Centre and South Streets in Sharon Springs, Schoharie County, New York. It was constructed in the early 1850's and he opened the Hotel in 1882. The hotel burned on November 21, 1926, over thirty years after his death. Suzanne and I visited its site during our visit to New York State in 1988.

Source: "New Topographical Atlas," Schoharie County, New York)

Notes for Christiana Brown:

Her Christian character is given testimony on her grave marker, "A friend of the friendless, a faithful wife, an affectionate mother, a consistent Christian."

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### Generation 4

8. **Johannes I Kilmer** (son of Johannes Kulmer and Elizabeth) was born on Aug 16, 1763 in Germantown, Columbia, New York, USA. He died on Jan 27, 1849 in Schoharie, Schoharie, New York, United States. He married **Anna Margaretha Sipperlee**.
9. **Anna Margaretha Sipperlee** was born in 1763 in New York, USA. She died in 1835 in New York, USA.
12. **John Elsefer Sharp** (son of George P. Sharp and Margaret Rebecca Teater) was born on Jul 16, 1787 in Germantown, Columbia County, NY. He died on May 22, 1862 in Sharon Spings, Schoharie County, New York. He married **Eve Markle** before 1811.
13. **Eve Markle** was born on May 31, 1791. She died on Jun 10, 1826 in Sharon Springs, Schoharie County, New York.

Notes for John Elsefer Sharp:

John Elsefer Sharp spent all of his life in New York state. He was born in 1787, just as the nation was being born and was trying to learn how to govern itself. He is my second great grandfather. I am descended through his second wife, Elizabeth Bodine. His first wife died, whose name was Eva Markle. John and Eva bore nine children. John and Elizabeth bore four children.

The New York State Assembly imposed duties on foreign goods. The Philadelphia Convention met to frame what became the United States Constitution, which was signed that year and the ratification process by the states began. The United States Federal Government was formally established in 1789. The Inauguration of the first United States President, George Washington, was done in New York City on April 30, 1789. Future U.S. President John Adams wrote "*A Defense of the Constitution of Government of the U.S.A.*" President Adams was the husband of Abigail Smith, a 29th cousin, four times removed to me. About that same time, another future U.S. President, James Madison, wrote, "*The Vices of the Political System of the United States.*" President Monroe is my 31st cousin, twice removed.

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American inventor John Fitch (1743-1798) launched a steamboat in 1787 to operate on the Delaware River. The Dollar currency was introduced in the United States.

Source: "The Timetables of History" 3rd Revised Edition, Bernard Grun, Simon & Schuster, New York 1991, pages 364-365.

The 1850 U.S. Census report shows for his household to have himself (age 62), his wife, Elizabeth (53), and children Elsefer (20), Thomas (20), Ellen (16), Edward Ishaw (5) and Elizabeth Ishaw (49) (The Ishaws probably were servants.) John's occupation was "none," and Elsefer's was Mason. The value of real estate owned was \$300. John and Elizabeth (parents) were indicated as unable to read or write. Their son, Thomas was indicated as having attended school within the past year, as did the 5 year old servant girl.

John is my great, great grandfather. Suzanne and I located the gravesite of John and Elizabeth in Sharon Springs, New York while on an exploratory trip in 1988. Our photographs of this grave site represents the oldest grave markers we have discovered in my Sharpe lineage.

Actually, we located a public campground nearby and went into the little town to what may have been the only eating establishment. We had a very friendly conversation with the waitress, who learned of the genealogical interest for our visit. She immediately put us in touch with the town genealogist. The genealogist ably led us to the cemetery, where we discovered our family members.

Truly, it was a fun and rewarding experience, and I cannot say enough about the winsomeness of those citizens for us in that little, beautiful New York town of Sharon Springs, New York.

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### Generation 5

- 16. **Johannes Kulmer** He married **Elizabeth**.
- 17. **Elizabeth**
- 24. **George P. Sharp** (son of Johann Peter "Peter" Scherp and Eva Schneider) was born about 1747 in Germantown, Columbia County, New York. He died on Apr 24, 1792. He married **Margaret Rebecca Teater** (daughter of Henrich Teater and Beletje Neher) on Apr 23, 1771.
- 25. **Margaret Rebecca Teater** (daughter of Henrich Teater and Beletje Neher) was born on Oct 27, 1750 in Rinebeck, Dutchess County, New York. She died on Feb 29, 1844.

Notes for George P. Sharp:

George is my third great grandfather. He was born the year that John Paul Jones was born, who later became famous as a naval officer in the American Revolution. That year, English scholar Dr. Samuel Johnson began his eight year marathon creation of the "Dictionary of the English Language," which sealed his place in American history as a truly significant contributor, even though he did not live here.

Source: "The Timetables of History" 3rd Revised Edition, Bernard Grun, Simon & Schuster, New York 1991, page 344.

George Sharp served in the Revolutionary War. He is cited in the "Calleudes of Revolutionary Manuscripts" in the office of the Secretary of State at Albany, New York

## Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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(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 was able to locate 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's American Revolutionary service is documented in files at both the Daughters of the American Revolution offices and the Sons of the American Revolution offices. He is the ancestor relationship by which I was certified to become a member of the Texas Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Dallas (Texas) Chapter, October 26, 1988. My sponsor was Mr. Peter W. Orlebeke, President of that Chapter that year. Pete also is Suzanne's (my wife) seventh cousin, once removed, through their Wellborn ancestry.

George Sharp's post war experience was as a hardware merchant in the firm of Sharp & Sahler in the Hudson River village of Germantown, New York.

In 1792, the year that George died, Kentucky became a state. The world's first chemical society was formed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. George P. Sharp died the same month of George Washington's casting of the first presidential veto on April 5, 1792, rejecting a congressional measure for apportioning representatives among the states.

Sources:

<http://www.infoplease.com/askeds/first-veto.html>

"The Timetables of History," 3rd Revised Edition, Bernard Grun, Simon & Schuster, New York 1991, pages 368-369.

In 1989, Suzanne and I made a long automobile trip from Texas through the northeast United States, which included touring around this part of New York State. In Germantown, just on the north side of it, we found a street named Sharp's Landing Road. It ran west of the main street of town, Highway 9G, down toward the nearby Hudson River. We imagine that this is a location where some of George's enterprise endeavors took place. We understand he was a merchant and it could well have been that he operated a river ferry service in that vicinity, which could have been the reason for the road's name.

One thing impressed us as we visited Germantown and the Hudson River. It is a very beautiful countryside, and one in which most anyone would consider it a pleasure to live.

Notes for Margaret Rebecca Teater:

Even though George P. Sharpe was only age 45 at his death, Rebecca, his widow, lived to an age of 93.

This death date is interpreted by George's Pension record stating the date when the payments ceased. I located that record at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

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### Generation 6

- 32. **Johannes Kulmer** He married **Anna Becker**.
- 33. **Anna Becker**

## Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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48. **Johann Peter "Peter" Scherp** (son of Jacob A. Scherp and Maria Catherina "Anna" Becker) was born between 04 Aug 1710-25 Mar 1712 in New York State. He died on Feb 17, 1781 in Germantown, Columbia County, New York. He married **Eva Schneider** (daughter of Johann Wilhelm "William" Schneider and Anna Gertraud Betzer) on May 13, 1735 in Catskill Dutch Reformed Church, Germantown, New York.
49. **Eva Schneider** (daughter of Johann Wilhelm "William" Schneider and Anna Gertraud Betzer) was born in 1712. She died on Nov 30, 1780.

Notes for Johann Peter "Peter" Scherp:

Johann Peter Scherp, known as Peter, was born the year Queen Anne of England established the Ascot races. and it was the year Jonathan Swift published the *Conduct of the Allies*. (Source: "The Timetables of History" 3rd Revised Edition, Bernard Grun, Simon & Schuster, New York 1991, pages 326-327)

Peter is my fourth great grandfather. He was a first generation birth in America for this family line of German Palatine emigrants. It is evident that Peter and his wife, Eva, were prominently known citizens among the Palatine community settling in the New York section of this New World. They were baptism sponsors for quite a number of various infants in several different Reformed Churches of New York.

Peter Sharp was a freeholder at East Camp in 1763 (Albany County Freeholders Register). This means he owned land.

He was a store owner that was subjected to some burglary. Peter's death came between the writing of his will in December 1780, which was at a time of illness, and when the will was proved in public record in February 1782. The will cites his sons George and Peter, his daughters Maria (wife of Peter Wisner), Gertie (wife of Frederick Maul), Margareta (unmarried), Catherina (widow of Philip Rockefeller & their children Petrus, Eva and Catharina). The executors were sons George and Petrus, along with friends Christian Philip and Henrick Will. Witnesses were Johannes Peter Russ, Abraham J. Delameter and Gerhard Daniel Cock, minister.

Peter died the year Herschel discovered the planet, Uranus. (Source: "The Timetables of History" 3rd Revised Edition, Bernard Grun, Simon & Schuster, New York 1991, page 363)

Notes for Eva Schneider:

The year of Eva's birth hailed the occurrence of the first fines for speeding being levied against reckless carters in Philadelphia! It also was the year that the first sperm whale was captured by an American, an event that radically changed for the good the Nantucket, Massachusetts whaling business.

Source: Gorton Carruth, "Encyclopedia of American Facts & Dates," Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1st edition 1817, 8th edition 1987, page 49.

50. **Henrich Teater** (son of Georg Teater and Anna Marie Meyer) was born in Pfalz, Germany. He married **Beletje Neher** (daughter of Johann Frans "Frans" Neher and Rebecca Kohl) in 1747 in St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Rhinebeck, New York.

51. **Beletje Neher**

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### Generation 7

## Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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96. **Jacob A. Scherp** (son of Peter Scherp and Margaretha Menke) was born about Feb 1680 in Laubenheim, Germany. He died on Feb 16, 1734 in Livingston Manor, Columbia County, New York. He married **Maria Catherina "Anna" Becker** on Dec 26, 1702 in Laubenheim, Germany.
97. **Maria Catherina "Anna" Becker** was born in Herrstein, Germany. She died between 1712-1725 in Germantown, New York.

Notes for Jacob A. Scherp:

Jacob's ancestral home was in Laubenheim, Germany, five KM south of Bingen. The church books in Laubenheim begin 1659. His first documented appearance in North America was appearance on the Hunter Lists on August 4, 1710.

"A petition from Jacob Sharp, Christophel Hagadorn and Jacob Shoemaker, dated June 13, 1724, was presented to Gov. Burnet. Captain Jacob Sharp was an officer in the Albany County Militia of ye Palatines Villages in ye Manor of Livingston in 1733 ("Report of the State Historian," vol. I, p. 573)."

Though Jacob obviously was a leader, we have little to report of actual details about his pursuit of life in North America. *Zanger's New York Weekly Journal*, dated May 18, 1734 says,

"....We hear from Livingston's Manor that one Mr. Jacob Scherp, a noted Trader and Farmer there, on the 16th of February last, had the misfortune to be drowned in Livingston's Creek, by the stumbling of his Horse. His Body was found some days after by his own Son and at a small Schoal in the Mouth of the Creek."

Source: Jones, Henry Z., Jr., "The Palatine Families of New York, Volume II, Picton Press, Rockport, Maine, 1st printing 1985, 4th printing 2001, pages 850-851

Jacob married Maria Catherina Becker in Laubenheim, Germany, December 28, 1702. They bore two sons and two daughters.

Notes for Maria Catherina "Anna" Becker:

Maria was from Herrstein, Germany. Their marriage took place in Jacob's hometown of Laubenheim, however.

Source: Jones, Henry Z., Jr., "The Palatine Families of New York, Volume II, Picton Press, Rockport, Maine, 1st printing 1985, 4th printing 2001, page 850.

98. **Johann Wilhelm "William" Schneider** (son of John Dietrich Schneider and Anna Maria Dunschman) was born on Oct 24, 1690 in Germany. He died between 15 Sep 1760-26 Feb 1764 in Rynbeck, Dutchess County, New York. He married **Anna Gertraud Betzer** about 1711.

99. **Anna Gertraud Betzer**

Notes for Johann Wilhelm "William" Schneider:

Destined to become the father-in-law of Peter Sharp, husband of his wife, Eva, Johann is found on the Rotterdam lists of 1709, sailing as a single man by the name of Johan Wilhellem Sneiter in the 6th party.

His will named his wife, Gertruy, and included among his children, "Eva, wife of Pieter

## Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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Scherp."

Notes for Anna Gertraud Betzer:

Anna was undoubtedly a relative, but not necessarily a daughter of Herman Betzer, a passenger in the 1709 shipping of German Palatines to New York.

100. **Georg Teater** (son of Johann Thaeter and Anna Maria Meyer) was born in Wurttenburg, Germany. He married **Anna Marie Meyer** (daughter of John Frederick Meyer and Anna Barbara Scheurmann) on Apr 25, 1715 in New York City, New York.
101. **Anna Marie Meyer**
102. **Johann Frans "Frans" Neher** (son of Johann Carl Neher and Louise Hornberger) was born on Jul 04, 1703 in Birkenfeld, Pfalz. He died on Nov 28, 1733. He married **Rebecca Kohl** (daughter of Wilhelm Kohl) on Nov 24, 1724 in New York City, New York.
103. **Rebecca Kohl** (daughter of Wilhelm Kohl) was born in New York City, New York.

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### Generation 8

192. **Peter Scherp** (son of Otto Scherp and Margaretha Kerb) was born about 1660 in Laubenheim, Germany. He died about 1690. He married **Margaretha Menke** (daughter of Thielman Menck and Apollonia) on Nov 24, 1674.
193. **Margaretha Menke** (daughter of Thielman Menck and Apollonia) was born about 1650 in Laubenheim, Germany.

Notes for Peter Scherp:

His dates of birth and of death are not certain, but the confidence is that he was deceased by 1690. Peter was a warden at the church in Laubenheim.

Notes for Margaretha Menke:

196. **John Dietrich Schneider** He married **Anna Maria Dunschman**.
197. **Anna Maria Dunschman**
200. **Johann Thaeter** He married **Anna Maria Meyer** (daughter of Johann Fridrich Meyer) on Apr 26, 1715.
201. **Anna Maria Meyer**
202. **John Frederick Meyer** He died in 1709 in Wurttenburg, Germany. He married **Anna Barbara Scheurmann**.
203. **Anna Barbara Scheurmann**
204. **Johann Carl Neher** He died on Jan 25, 1733. He married **Louise Hornberger** (daughter of Franz Hornberger) on Mar 08, 1701 in Birkenfeld.
205. **Louise Hornberger**

Notes for Johann Carl Neher:

## Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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Johann was a Palatine volunteer in the Canadian expedition of 1711. He was naturalized with his son, Frans, at Kingston in 1715.

206. **Wilhelm Kohl**

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### Generation 9

384. **Otto Scherp** was born about 1628 in Laubenheim, Germany. He died before 1691. He married **Margaretha Kerb** on Nov 20, 1666 in Laubenheim, Germany.

385. **Margaretha Kerb**

Notes for Otto Scherp:

"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. He is my 7th great grandfather.

From the Laubenheim, Germany Church records, we have a marriage date of November 20, 1666. Otto would have been 38 years old at that time, so it is easy to assume that record is the second of his two marriages. We do not have information about his first marriage.

After our family came to North America in 1710, the name changed by the mid 1700's to the English form of Sharp. It is of interest to note, not only its similarity to the German form, but that it's Middle English meaning is 'keen,' 'active,' and 'quick.' All of the meanings we see represent attractive, wholesome characteristics with which we would want to identify.

Source: Patrick Hanks, Editor, Dictionary of American Family Names, Oxford University Press, New York, New York, 2003, Card #929.40973D554 2003 V.III, Dallas Public Library, Genealogical Section, pages 283 and 331.

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. Otto is my 7th great grandfather.

Otto was born the same year as famous John Bunyan was born, author of *Pilgrims Progress*. This was the year that Peter Minuit, Director-General of the Dutch West India Company's settlement in North America, buying the entire island of Manhattan from native American Indian chiefs for merchandise valued at 60 guilders (about \$24). The Dutch colony of New Amsterdam was founded on the Hudson River, not far from where Otto's grandson, Jacob Scherp, was to settle with some 3,000 other German Palatines in 1710.

Source: "The Timetables of History" 3rd Revised Edition, Bernard Grun, Simon & Schuster, New York 1991, page 283.

386. **Thielman Menck** He married **Apollonia**.

387. **Apollonia** was born in 1619. She died on Sep 10, 1687.

392. **Anthonus Schneider** He married **Christiana**.

393. **Christiana**

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## Ancestors of Willis Sharpe Kilmer

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- 394. **Adam Dunschman** He married **Catherine Frantz**.
- 395. **Catherine Frantz**
- 402. **Johann Fridrich Meyer** He died before 1715.
- 404. **Thomas Meyer**
- 406. **Ulrich Scheurmann**
- 408. **Jacob Naher**
- 410. **Franz Hornberger**

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