**Rudolf** **Schärer (Scherer/Sherer), California**

born May 3, 1839 in Schönenberg, Switzerland, died June 26, 1898 in Los Angeles

(youngest brother of Johann Jakob Scherer-Studer, subsequently Federal Council of the Swiss Confederation)

8th child of

**Hans Jakob Schärer (Scherer)**, February 3, 1788 – July 10, 1856 and

**Elisabetha Schärer (Scherer) - Eschmann,** June 9, 1804 – December 5, 1882

Tanne, Schönenberg ZH,

**Robert Sherer** (son of Rudolf Schärer/Sherer)

constructor of roads and railroads in California and Mexico in the years between 1902

and 1916

1859, at the age of 20 years, **Rudolf Schärer/Scherer** migrated to the USA. Whether he did this on his own accord or as a result of differences with his brothers and sisters following his father’s death, is not known. However, Rudolf apparently was more interested in commerce rather than agriculture.

In order to get rid of unpopular relatives it was not uncommon in those days to pay them the fare to a destination abroad and – in more fortunate cases – a modest amount as starting money.

His father died on July 10, 1856; hence it is possible that Rudolf inherited some money.

According to a deed dated October 10, 1862, the siblings Caspar, Anna, Heinrich, Johann Jakob (later Federal Council of the Swiss Confederation) and Elisabeth, on October 10, 12, 14 and 16, 1862 respectively, signed an assignment for a claim out of the inheritance of the deceased in favour of their uncle Hans Caspar Schärer (Scherer)-Isler, domiciled at Feldmoos, Samstagern.

In lieu of the emigrated Rudolf, and almost one year later, on September 20, 1863, the document was signed by „the guardian of Rudolf Schärer, J. Heinrich Rusterholz von Richtersweil“. This guardianship was established on July 10, 1856 on the occasion of the demise of Jacob Schärer (Scherer)–Eschmann.

In the transfer of title to the heirs dated October 29, 1857, J. Hch. Rusterholz, Gemeindeammann (head of the community council), Schönenberg, was appointed guardian for Rudolf, at the time 17 years old, and his sisters Elisabeth (23) and Barbara (13).

The signature of their mother, Widow Elisabeth Schärer (Scherer)–Eschmann, is missing on this document. Accordingly this asset was a claim to an inheritance due to the direct descendants.

Rudolf Schärer (Scherer/Sherer), as became known later, settled at first in Michigan, where he lived many years.

In 1860 he married Elisabetha Schneider, from Richterswil, Switzerland, who emigrated with her parents some years before.

During the American Civil War (War of Secession) from April 1861 to April 16, 1865, Rudolf Schärer (Scherer/Sherer) served with the Company Edes of the 10th Cavalry Regiment from Michigan.

In fall 1873 he moved with his family to Ventura County in California, where for six years he was heading the Shipping Department of a large company.

Around 1879, he moved to Compton, near Los Angeles, where he joined the ‘Common Council’ which he subsequently was to preside.

Later he opened a General Store, a co-operative, in Los Angeles. Finally he lived in Los Angeles and commuted daily to his Store at Compton.

With his wife Elisabetha Schneider he had 13 children, of which three died at an early age.

Following are the ten descendants. With the exception of Robert Sherer, no addresses are on record. It is clear, however, that all of them lived in California.

Mrs Bertha Thompson - Sherer

Robert Sherer, Contractor, Los Angeles

H.E. Sherer, bank manager

Mrs. Mary Harrison - Sherer

A.J. Sherer, lawyer

Mrs. Barbara Coomes - Sherer

E.T. Sherer, lawyer

Mrs. Lizzi Haley - Sherer

Dr. William - Sherer, (dentist ?)

Mrs. Nellie Baker - Sherer

Until the death of Rudolf Schärer (Scherer/Sherer)-Schneider in 1898, no communication between him and his family in Switzerland has been recorded.

Rudolf’s older brother Caspar (born January 4, 1829) married Emma Staub from Horgen in 1868, they lived in Oberort, Au-Wädenswil and had two children: Emma (June 25, 1869-September 6, 1940) and Arnold (1877–1908).

Emma, an active and enterprising woman, who remained unmarried, among other things learned the English language. Sometime between 1908, the year her unmarried brother died, and 1912, she got in touch with Robert, son of Rudolf Schärer (Scherer/Sherer)-Schneider.

Meanwhile the Schärers/Scherers had changed their family name to Sherer, which seemed more appropriate in a country where English was spoken.

Robert Sherer ran a large contracting construction company based in Los Angeles, which was active in railway and road construction.

As present he gave his cousin Emma a large number of photographs depicting his family, his places of residence as well as impressive pictures of various construction sites. Detailed explanations and years are indicated on the photos. In chronological order they comprise:

**Family**

 **1903** Holidays at the bathing beach on Catalina Island

 Home address: 1103 East 14 th Street, Compton ?, Los Angeles ?

 **1904** Children: Blanche, Arthur, Edgar; Wife: Belle

 **1905** Farm at Compton

 Journey to the Niagara Falls

 **1907/8** Purchase of first car, convertible

 **1908** Journey to Lake Tahoe, 5 weeks, with the whole family

 **1909** Purchase of second car, model 1909, son Arthur is driving, too

 **1912** Purchase of a new car, model 1912

**Construction**

 **1902** Construction of Pan Electric Rail Road to Whittier

 **1902** Construction to Huntington Beach

 **1903** Construction of Rail Road to San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Rail Road

 **1904** Construction of Pacific Electric Rail Road to Glendale

**1904** Construction between Los Angeles and San Pedro. Robert Sherer uses his

 first own steam shovel.

**1904** Construction of Rail Road to Garavanza ?

**1905** Construction between Los Angeles and Pasadena. A precipice buried

 one of our Railway engines

 Construction near San Pedro completed

**1905** Road construction on Catalina Island

**1906** Construction of Rail Road to Huntington Beach

**1906** Construction of Rail Road to Whitti(e)r

**1907** San Pedro, Los Angeles, Salt Lake

**1908** Work in Nevada

**1910** Work in Mexico

**1912** In Mexico.

During this construction 7 camps with tents were established.

Each camp housed 50 to 125 men.

**1912** Construction has been going for over 3 years and it will take another

4 or 5 years to complete the 130 miles.

**1912** Address: 1325 Alverado Terrace, opposite Terrace Park,

 Los Angeles ?

Following an invitation by Emma Scherer, her cousin Robert visited Switzerland around 1927. I seem to darkly remember that for this occasion ‘auntie Emma’ drove up in a light coloured car with glittering trim and wheels with lacquered wooden spokes. As a two to three year old boy this made a huge impression on me and remained engraved in my mind for ever.

Written based on knowledge up to date.

Feldmoos-Samstagern, Christmas 1997.

 Hans-Jakob Scherer - Leuthold

 Feldmoos 7

 CH - 8833 Samstagern