

Sherbondy DNA Ancestry

Here's some recent info on Sherbondy/Cherpantier genealogy. Cherpantier (our ancestor spelling) is a version of Charpentier. Charpentier in French means "worker with wood." The American version is Carpenter. The German version is Zimmerman. They all have the same meaning. Many people changed their name when they moved from country to country so at least the name would blend in.

Two Sherbondys have had their DNA tested. They match exactly with two American Carpenters who descended from Jacob Zimmerman (born 1777) with ancestry from Germany. Here are some comments made on the Carpenter DNA web site (<http://carpentercousins.com/carpdna.htm>) about this match (Group 17):

"This group was established upon recognition of four participants who match each other exactly and have been traced back to two immigrants who apparently came from France and Germany. In one case, the immigrant bore the name Cherpantier (i.e., French in form), but settled in a German Lutheran community in Pennsylvania and used German forenames for his children. Furthermore, the surname was anglicized to Sherbondy, indicating that its pronunciation included the voiced "B" and "D" sounds instead of the "P" and "T" we would normally associate with its original spelling. One place where this same "softening" of the hard consonants can be found is in the French/German border region.

In the other case, the immigrant was called Zimmerman in the earliest known records in the USA (also in Pennsylvania), but soon changed to the English form Carpenter. We surmise that the name of this line may have originally had a French form, but was converted to the German form at some point in the past, presumably to fit into a German-speaking area. (The area along the French/German linguistic boundary has suffered many wars over the centuries, and people fleeing from the devastation may well have crossed back and forth between languages.) However, the only evidence for this hypothesis at present is the exact DNA match. Indeed, perhaps the family in question originated in Germany and then spread to France. More research will be needed, perhaps much more, to find the link between the two progenitors."

Because Johann Cherpantier (John Sherbondy) was a member of Christ Church in Monroe County, PA where all of his children's birth records were written in German, it seems likely that his native country / language would be German. When coming to America, it seems he would settle in an area and speak the language that he was most familiar with. Jacob and Margaret Zimmerman (Carpenter) were members of the North Mill Creek Lutheran Church in Virginia where all the records were also written in German. Given this and the DNA matches between Johann and Jacob, the Sherbondy Family Association believes that their ancestry and country of origin to be Germany. The DNA source is the strongest evidence of this. This also links Germany with the U.S. Sherbondys.

Similarly, there would need to be a positive link between a French record and the U.S. Sherbondys (please send it if it exists) to give credibility to any claim that Johann Cherpantier was born in France.

Sherbondy Family Association

www.sherbondy.org