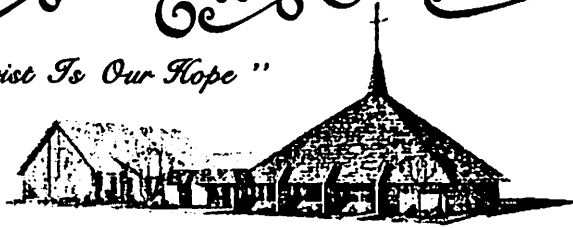


Eden Mennonite Church

"Christ Is Our Hope"



- E. F. Cater, Pastor -

~~Confidential and not to be published~~
September 6, 1985

Milam B. Cater
~~1000 1st St. N.E.~~
~~Wichita, Kansas 67202~~

Dear, Dear Distant Cousin:

How delighted I am to hear from you! What is better is to find a brother in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is indeed interesting to be found through an article I wrote more than a year and a half ago to be printed in another church magazine titled "The Mennonite". I was totally unaware of the reprint in the "Gospel Herald".

In answer to your question--Yes--- we are of the same lineage, however, we are more distantly connected than you might imagine. Thomas Cater settled in Berkley county around 1689 if I recall the tree correctly. Thomas was a grandson of Ernau Catoir a Huguenot who fled French Persecution. King James of England brought many artisans like Ernau and family to Jamestown to settle the new world on his behalf. Rather than take gentry from his own country he took unhappy French religious dissenters and signed a pact with them. In exchange for their loyalty and passage they would settle and tame and make profitable the new world. Ernau signed this agreement which remains in royal archives in London. It is lettered in a circular pattern and is in Old North French dialect. Ernau Catoir came to Jamestown in 1621 with his wife and six children. He was a wooler by trade. Thomas being his grandson is what I term the 'proginator of the southern family.' Another grandson departed the Jamestown area at nearly the same time and went north into Maryland near the Washington D.C. area. Both settled into Huguenot related communities. (The Huguenots were the french version of the Reformed Church of Zurich formed by Ulrich Zwingli in 1521. A Frenchman named John Calvin became principle spokesperson for the Reformed churches. The Scottish branch is known as the Presbyterian church.)

My family continued to move west with the need for land. In 1775

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~~Study Home. 843-2003 of Providence and Study at Eden Mennonite Church, Okla. 1910~~

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my family remained in the Washington D.C. vicinity and signed fidelity papers under the name of William W. Cater. William with sons George, Thomas and William settled in east Ohio. Later my part of the family under James moved to northern Illinois. And still later under Edward H. Cater my family moved to western Iowa. I am native to Iowa. My Father's name was William W. Cater.

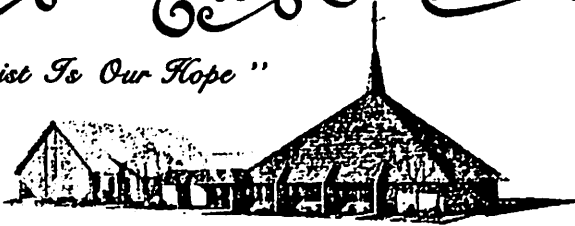
Several years ago when I was tracing the migration of my family it was necessary to trace your family. I have a complete tree on the Thomas Cater branch through some research I did at the Ohio archives in Columbus. At that time the same oral tradition was handed down to our family as yours. We were told our family had been Huguenots who came to this country early. They were of french lineage. The name was changed "anglicized" with the new freedom of culture. We were also told of considerable wealth which largely was spent in western migration and family inheritance spread out among too many heirs. I have noticed a great many matching names in both families. In fact the names Thomas and William appear quite frequently. I myself own a very old walking stick which is made of ebony wood with a silver tip and gold crown bearing the initials of T. H. Cater. I assume the name is that of Thomas and likely belonged to the family around the year 1689. The date it bears is July 30 '89.

At the time I was tracing, the Southern family had not yet located the original immigrant. Not long after that while researching in Fort Wayne, Indiana at the Geneological library there I discovered the record of arrival for Ernau Catoir. The name matches perfectly the spelling of the name our family was told we arrived with, except that we were told it was de Catoir. Since, I have found that French, Flemish and Dutch surnames often place the 'de' in front as a simple designation meaning 'of' or 'from' the house of Catoir. But the 'de' is not necessary and its being dropped might well represent the beginning of name change.

I have not been able to trace the Catoir family after arrival at Jamestown. Since you are in Virginia you may want to do some checking on that in the tidewater communities of Jamestown and Williamsburg. I am sure early gravestone and church and civic records will reflect some of the information which is missing.

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~~Study the Bible, the Scriptures, and the Gospels, and the Book of Acts, and the Epistles, and the Revelation.~~

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Just a note on the name "Catoir". It is a very old name and is a variety of the word "Cathari". It is derived from the greek "Catharsis" and means "pure". The "Cathari" or "purists" were a religious desenting body as early as the eleventh century. They were a part of the "Waldenses" movement of south France. The followers of Waldo were one of the early evangelical groups who formed out of the strict Catholic control. Waldo asked only that lay people be allowed to preach in the streets the true faith of Jesus Christ. The Church was quite severe on the movement killing whole communities to stomp it out. In north France the movement were called "Cathari" because of the pure lives they sought to live. The Cathari were very severely persecuted and finally went underground. When they did this many of them adopted surnames which reflected their religious views. Hence the name Catoir arises in the twelfth century in protest of the persecution in the eleventh century.

Our family has a very long history of being involved in evangelical religious movements and most likely were labeled as trouble makers long before Erna left France with his family and six other families.

This is the long way around to simply say "Hi!" to a cousin. May the Lord Jesus richly bless your Virginia home. Continue sharing with the Gideons-- they are among the blessed of the kingdom.

In Christ's Service,

E. F. Cater, pastor