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THE WILTSIE FAMILY OF EARLY NEW YORK

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The purpose of this article is to up-date the parentage and sequence of birth of the first three generations of the Wiltsie family; and to list the children of the fourth generation. This list however is given with less certainty of correctness than those of the second and third generations. Further, this is not actually a history of the family other than of its first generation, as stress has been placed on genealogical rather than historical details in all other generations. And the traditional, but false claim that the family is of Walloon descent is discussed in the Appendix.

For the early given names of the family, standardized spellings have been used unless taken verbatim from church and civil records. The family surname is usually given as Wiltsie, but when it is apparent that an individual family consistently used a variant spelling, this has been used.

1. HENDRICK MARTENSEN¹ WILTSIE VAN COPENHAGEN, founder of the Wiltsie Family of New Netherland was born in Copenhagen, Denmark. We do not know with certainty when he was born there or when or with whom he came to New Netherland, despite family traditions to the contrary.

On 3 May 1910, Walter Wortley Wilsey applied for Holland Society membership based on descent from Hendrick Martensen Wiltsie who was "Born probably at Copenhagen and in New Netherland in the military service of the Dutch West India Company in or before 1660." The roster of The Dutch Settlers Society of Albany states that Hendrick Martense Wiltsie (van Copenhagen) settled in the Albany area in 1658.

This date matches that of the first known record concerning Hendrick. On 23 July 1658, he was sued at Fort Orange (now Albany) by Pieter Bronck for fl. 170 for beer and wine received. Hendrick denied the debt and said it was his partner who bought it. Bronck was ordered by the Court to prove the debt. The subsequent Court records are silent on this case, and the name of Hendrick's partner has not been ascertained.

On 13 August 1658, at Fort Orange, 15 Mohawks requested that someone who spoke French well accompany them and their French captives (one of whom was Louis Paraget) to assist them at *Trois Rivieres* in New France (now Quebec) in their negotiations on exchange of prisoners as well as a general peace. In response to a public offer of "one hundred guilders for his trouble." Hendrick Martensen (called "a soldier named Henry Martin" in a letter he carried) agreed to make the trip. The Indians agreed to return

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Hendrick to Fort Orange within 40 days after their departure from Fort Orange on 16 August.

There is nothing in the official records at Albany to indicate when Hendrick Martensen returned there. But had he not returned on or before October 1658, another French speaking soldier, Jacob Begyn, could not have departed on that day enroute to Quebec with some of the same individual Indians Hendrick went with. No mention of Hendrick's trip has been found in any other records. He is inaccurately mentioned by O'Callaghan and Brodhead in their histories of New York.

On 10 June 1659 in Fort Orange, Roelof Swartwout sued Hendrick Martensen for "the sum of fl. 93.5 arising from beer and brandy received of Hendrick, who admitted the debt, but claimed to have paid part of it." The Court ordered payment of the balance within one month.

The last known record of Hendrick in the Albany area was dated 21 August 1659. On that date in Fort Orange for "goods to his content and satisfaction [portion missing]" Hendrick Martense van Copenhagen transferred to Lucas Dirckse "the sum of fifty guilders, to be received in New Netherland for his monthly wages and subsistence due him. . . ." This legal document was signed "This is the mark of Hendrick Martense van Copenhagen with his own hand set."

Hendrick moved from Fort Orange to New Amsterdam at this time or shortly thereafter. The first known record concerning him there is his marriage intention recorded in the Dutch Reformed Church on 10 January 1660. His name is given in the marriage register as Hendrick Martenszen, previously unmarried man who was born in Copenhagen. We have no knowledge as to the exact year of his birth, and only his father's given name as a clue to his identity. No Hendrick son of a Marten . . . has been located in the few baptismal entries in the Copenhagen Lutheran church records available to us. It is probably not likely enough to cover our Hendrick's infant baptism. So there is little chance that his ancestry can be located in Denmark.

Hendrick's first wife was Margrietje/Margaret Meijering/Meyers, widow of Herman Jansen van Lenneps, by whom she had a son, Jan Hermansen, baptized 17 April 1658 in New Amsterdam. He was listed next to his step-father Hendrick Martinson in a list of inhabitants of Newtown in 1678. By mention recorded 7 November 1680 he married Aeltje Abrahams in the New York Dutch Reformed Church.

Margrietje was the daughter of Jan Meyers and his wife Teuntje Straitsman. She and her half-brother, Laurens Haff were born in Brazil. The exact spelling of Margrietje's surname is uncertain, but the frequent use of the suffixes "in" and "ing" plus the almost complete absence of her patronymic surnames, suggests German rather than Low Dutch ancestry. Her step-father, Gabriel Carbosie, was a German. Shortly after their marriage, Hendrick Martensen (16 March 1660) and Margrietje (on 13 April) were in the New Amster-

dam Schepens Court obtaining redress from Herman van Borssum for damages to their canoe.

Hendrick soon joined the military garrison at Kingston in Ulster County, N.Y., an area known to the Dutch at various times as Esopus, Wiltwyck, and Swanenburg. Here, Hendrick and Margrietje's first four children were baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church, the first on 11 December 1660. In early March 1661 Hendrick was assigned No. 2 of the New Lots at Esopus (now Hurley). His name appears on a muster roll of 15 June 1661. On 18 April 1662 Hendrick was sued by Anthony Cruemel for wages due, and on 12 December 1662, by Jan Broersen for six months rent due.

On 7 June 1663, the Esopus Indians attacked Wiltwyck and killed, wounded or took captive many of the residents, burned some of the houses, and destroyed the "new Village." Among those taken captive was one child of Hendrick Martensen. His children at that time were his daughters Sophia, three and a half years old, and Jannetje, six months old, and probably Jan Hermansen, his step-son, five years old. Among those reported killed was "Hendrick Martensen, soldier, on the farm"; however he was captured—not killed. Hendrick and his child were probably among the captives taken from the Indians in September 1663.

On 29 December 1663, he was sued by Tjerck Claesen de Witt (the schout) for "ten guilders, heavy money, balance of [Dominie Blom's] salary for the year 1662." Hendrick said he was not required to contribute to the minister's salary as "he is in the service of the Company . . . further . . . he has nothing to pay with, having been taken captive by the savages." The Court disagreed on both points and ordered him to pay "for though in the service of the Honorable Company he nevertheless has a house and lot here." Hendrick's service as a soldier was terminated when the English captured New Netherland in 1664; however, he was a corporal of the burgher-guard in 1665. On 28 April 1668, he signed a deposition as one of the burghers at Wiltwyck. This is the last known record concerning him in the Ulster County area.

The four youngest Wiltsie children were baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church in New York City, the first on 24 November 1669. Jerome Wiltsie said "Hendrick Martensen located in Newtown in the vicinity of [the] Hellgate soon after his departure from Wiltwyck in 1669. . . ." The statement is likely correct. His name appears on the Newtown Rate Lists for 1675, 1678, and 1683. The Town Records of Newtown show that, on 15 September 1681, he purchased, from Captain Thomas de Levall for 100 gl., a farm of 38½ morgen (about 77 acres) near Hellgate, with "housis build orchards gardens medowes pasturs & Cominage" on which he was then living. According to Riker, he sold the property to his son Teunis in 1706 and in 1852 it was owned by the Polhemus family. Hendrick Martensen was one of the patentees mentioned in Dongan's Patent to Newtown,

dated 25 November 1686. And in 1700 he and others were involved in an argument over the title to common lands at Hellgate Neck (now Steinway, L.I.). It seems evident that Hendrick lived in Newtown from about 1669 until after 1700, and probably until his death. During the Dutch re-occupation of New Netherland in 1673-1674, he petitioned the New Orange/New York Court on some matter pertaining to Staten Island. On 14 November 1673 he was told by that court to submit his petition "to the Court at Staten Island to demand justice there from them, or otherwise to act as he thinks proper; as this Court has no connection with that of Staten Island."

On 31 May 1674, (also during the period of Dutch control) "Margriet Maijers, wife of Hendrick Martenszen" joined the New York Dutch Reformed Church. In 1686 "Margriet Meyrinck, the wife of Hendrick Martenszen" was a member of that church, living at Arme Bouwerie (in Newtown.) Jerome Wiltsie said that Hendrick "and his family worshipped, and his children were baptized" in the Dutch Reformed Church, and because of this he was likely buried in the Reformed Churchyard in New York. But elsewhere Jerome said that when Hendrick married Margaret Meyers "the Lutheran church [was] affiliated with." Neither statement is correct. Margaret was a member of the Reformed Church, and Hendrick was not; he was a Lutheran. The marriage intention of "Hendrick Martensen, widower, and Steentje, widow," were recorded on 10 June 1705 in the New York Lutheran Church. And on 26 June 1705, "at the house of Mr. Pieter Woglum, Hendrick Martensen, widower, and an old widow, Steentje" were married.

We cannot be sure of the dates of death of Hendrick or either of his wives, or of his or their places of burial. Hendrick and Margaret witnessed a baptism in the New York Reformed Church on 6 July 1701. Mrs. Miriam Fares Wilsey said Margaret died 26 June 1704 at Newtown, perhaps a confused date stemming from Hendrick's second marriage on the same day one year later. "Hendrick Wiltzen and Stijntje Arianse" witnessed a baptism on 29 May 1707 in New York. This is the last entry concerning either of them found in known records, and it supplies a patronymic surname for Hendrick's second wife. Most likely it was her maiden name, but could have been the given name or surname of her late husband. Nothing more is known about her.

Of Hendrick, Mrs. Wilsey said "He died in 1712." Although no basis or authority is given for the assertion, it may be correct. Jerome said of him, "At length, enfeebled by age, he sold his farm and stopped doing business." Just what business is meant is not apparent. Jerome did say that Hendrick "did not [have] land enough in his farm to support his family, [so he engaged] in sailing on the sea, and at other work." Nothing has been found to support this statement that Hendrick moon-lighted as a sailor and so forth. Riker said he sold his farm in 1706 [Jerome gave the date as 13 April 1706]

to his son Theunis.

Hendrick Martensen Wiltsie van Copenhagen's arrival and early activities in America are shrouded by the absence of factual records. Then follows a long period where the records permit us to see him clearly as a faithful husband and father, and as a soldier and then a farmer. Yet at times he was a bit slow in paying his bills, and apparently had other human failings. Later, the shroud begins to form again, and we cannot clearly see his final activities. His greatest contributions to America were his children and grandchildren of increasing degrees of remoteness that collectively are the Wiltsie Family of America.

Hendrick Martensen¹ (Wiltsie) van Copenhagen, and his first wife Margrietje Meyers/Meyering had eight children, the first four baptized at Kingston, the four younger at New York Dutch Church:

- + 2. i. Sophia Hendricks² bap. 10 Dec. 1660 (KgB).
- + 3. ii. Jannetje Hendricks bap. 7 Jan. 1663 (KgB).
- 4. iii. Barber/Barbara Hendricks bap. 1 Mar. 1665 (KgB). No further information.
- + 5. iv. Marten Hendricksen bap. 3 April 1667 (KgB).
- 6. v. Hendrick Hendricksen bap. 24 Nov. 1669 (BDC). No further factual information.
- + 7. vi. Myndert Hendricksen bap. 11 Feb. 1672 (BDC).
- + 8. vii. Theunis Hendricksen bap. 10 Jan. 1674 (BDC).
- + 9. viii. Jacob Hendricksen bap. 18 Mar. 1676 (BDC).

(To be continued)

MAJOR REFERENCES

The principal accounts of this family are, in chronological order:

1. *The Annals of Newtown*, by James Riker, Jr. New York, 1852.
2. *A Genealogical and Psychological Memoir of Philippe Maton Wiltsie and his Descendants. With a Historical Introduction Referring to The Wiltsie Nation and its Colonies*, by Jerome Wiltsee, Sr. Atchinson, Kansas, June 1908.
3. *Scandinavian Immigrants in New York, 1630-1674*, by John O. Evjen, Minneapolis, 1926.
4. *Wilsey Genealogy Book*, by Nelson S. and Roger H. Wiltsie. Salt Lake City, 1964.
5. "The Wilsey Family," *The Dutch Settlers Society of Albany, Year Book—1968-1970*, Albany, N.Y. 1970. (Partially based on data collected by the late Mariam Fares Wilsey, wife of John E. Wilsey.)

The traditional Walloon ancestry to be discussed in the Appendix was not mentioned in the Riker and Evjen accounts.

The principal challenges of the traditional ancestry are:

7. *Dutch Explorers, Traders and Settlers in the Delaware Valley, 1609-1664*, by C.E. Weslager and A.R. Dunlap. Philadelphia 1961.
2. "Who Survived the Indian Massacre at Swandael?", *de Halve Maen*, by C.E. Weslager. October 1965.
3. "The Wiltsie Family," by George Olin Zubrisky, *The Dutch Settlers Society of Albany, Yearbook—1970-1972*. Albany 1972.