

## **Descendants of Cornelis Aertsen Van Schaick, Vol. III**

### ***THE SEARCH FOR THE ANCESTRY OF CORNELIS AERTSEN***

*by John H. van Schaick*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In preparing his first volume of the DESCENDANTS OF CORNELIS AERTSEN VAN SCHAICK for publication in 1982, the compiler presented the then prevalent theory of Cornelis Aertsen's origins writing: "Cornelis was born about 1610 in Westbroek, Province of Utrecht, the Netherlands (Holland)"; he also provided information on that village, a few miles north of Utrecht. Several years later there came to his notice information about the marriage and origins of Cornelis Aertsen which cast serious doubt on the Westbroek theory and led to a thorough search for Cornelis Aertsen's ancestry, in which search this writer took part.

The search continues since a positive result has yet to be achieved, although the results are encouraging and the probable end is believed to be in sight. This report first states what is definitely known about Cornelis Aertsen's origins. It then describes the various Van Schayck family groupings in the vicinity of Utrecht. Next it outlines the process of elimination which narrowed the search to a single candidate for father of Cornelis Aertsen. Finally it describes the milieu and family into which that candidate and our ancestor fit.

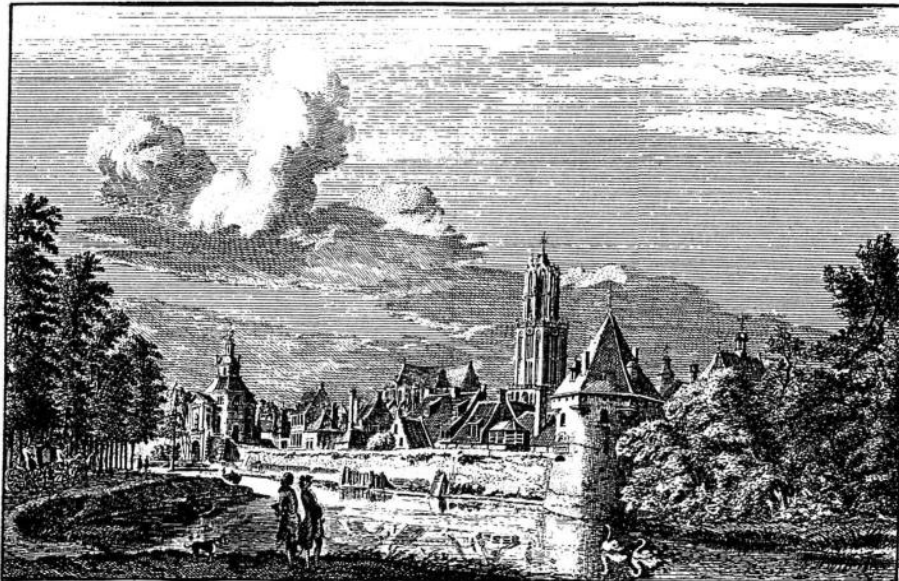
This search would not have progressed beyond the first question marks except for the kind and able assistance of Willem A. Wijburg of Utrecht who made possible much of the writer's initial screening of ancestral candidates. Cornelis van Schaik, also of Utrecht, gave great help in both the initial and later phases of the inquiry. Finally the Reverend Marcel Kemp of den Haag, the premier authority on the major farming families of the Krommerijn-Lek triangle region in the centuries before 1700, provided massive data on the New Netherland settlers who originated in that region and on the presumed Van Schayck family of Cornelis Aertsen, long-time tenants of Houten's Overdam farmstead.



Area in the Province of Utrecht, the Netherlands, where Cornelis Aertsen Van Schaick was born and married

#### KNOWN FACTS ABOUT CORNELIS AERTSEN

In preparing a brief biography of Cornelis Aertsen in 1984, nowhere did the writer find him named "Van Schayck" in any record made during his lifetime. Only after his death, which occurred in about 1669, did his children begin to use the name Van Schayck. One presumes that Van Schayck, a fairly common name in the area about Utrecht, was his own family's name.



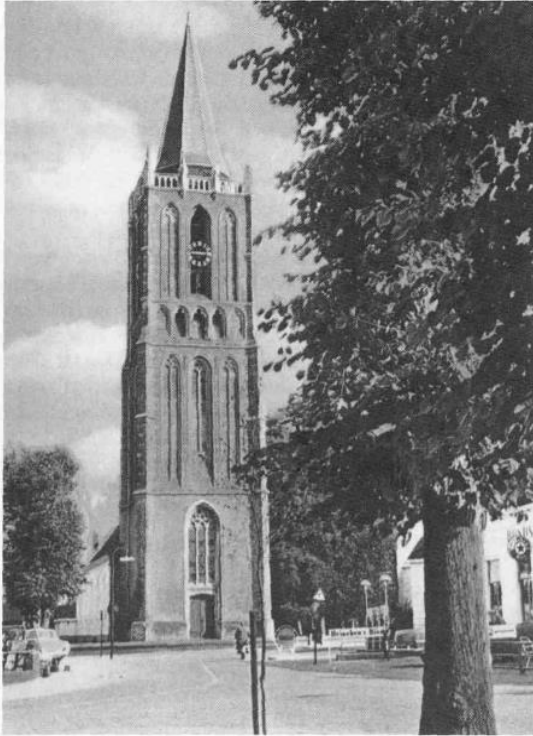
*The Wittevrouwen gate of Utrecht as seen across the moat, at left, with the Dom Tower looming in the background, center.*

Cornelis' patronymic provides a second major clue to his parentage. It takes several forms each spelled variously: generally Arissen before 1850, usually Aertsen after 1650, and occasionally Aertsen. Since Aert is usually a short form of Arnout or Arnoldus, that usage was probably due to error by the recording scribe.

Arie and Aert are short forms of Adriaen, but Cornelis was never known as Adriaensen, although his first son, baptized Arie, began calling himself Adriaen in about 1665. When Arie was baptized on July 9, 1642, Cornelis, the father, was recorded as Aertsen. All in all, we must conclude that Cornelis' father was probably named Aert and was usually called Arie.

The possibilities remain that the father's name was Adriaen and that he was not a Van Schayck. Cornelis' children might have adopted the Van Schayck name from the mother's family. Nevertheless, in our search, while recognizing alternatives, we set out to find an Aert (or Adriaen) van Schayck who could have been or was the father.

Our earliest record of Cornelis Arissen dates from New Amsterdam on January 31, 1640, when at the age of 30 he was joined by three other men in testifying about the good conduct of Huyck Aertsen (van Rossum) in a local tavern. The next record dates from June 16, 1640, when Cornelis Arissen from Houten, about 30, and his fiancée Belitje Heynricxdr from Arnhem, 28, contracted with Kiliaen van Rensselaer for four years work in Rensselaerswyck. The next record is the marriage register of the Reformed church in Sloterdijk outside Amsterdam showing that on July 1, 1640, "Cornelis Aarendtsz van Woerden ende Belitje Hendricx van Arnhem" were married.



*The Reformed Church at Houten as it appears today*

These three records tell us much. Since terms of service were normally for four years, Cornelis had probably been in New Netherland since 1636, the traditional year of his arrival there. He apparently returned to Amsterdam to marry. He'd been born between mid-1609 and January 31, 1611, and had been baptized Reformed at Woerden, a town twelve miles west of Utrecht. His hometown was apparently Houten, five miles southeast of Utrecht. Later in buying and selling a house on Manhattan, Cornelis was "from Utrecht", the city from which Huyck van Rossum came. Also while Cornelis' signature was ordinarily a handmark ✚, in his contract with Rensselaer he signed "Cornelis Arijaensen", while Belitje signed with an "X".

In New Netherland the couple settled across the Hudson from New Amsterdam in Pavonia. Their four children were baptized: Hendrickje in 1641, Arie in 1642; Hendrick in 1646; and Lysbeth in 1651. Baptismal witnesses included: Tryntje Simons (de Witt); Huyck Aertsen; the wife of Oloff Stephensen from Wyckbij-Duurstede; Evert Corneliszen van der Wel; and two step-daughters of the minister Everardus Bogardus from Woerden.

In 1649 with Egbert Wouterszen from Ysselsteyn, Cornelis Aertsen was named by Jan Jansen Damen to administer his estate. Cornelis' family had close ties with the families of Andries Hoppe (whose wife Geertje was Belitje's sister), Jan Aertsen van der Bilt (whose wife was Annetje Hendricks from Norway), and Peter Cornelissen van Steenwyck (who married Hendrickje Aerts in 1670). While

Cornelis left his heirs about 65 acres of Manhattan farming land upon his death in 1669, most of his farming had been on leased lands, on Peter Stuyvesant's farm in the 1650's and on the Jan Jansen Damen farm in the 1660's.

### THE FAMILY NAME "VAN SCHAYCK"

Most Americans researching a line of Van Schaycks in Utrecht province have presumed the name derived from a single Adam-like ancestor who built an original country seat from which the name derived. Louis P. de Boer made that presumption in a 1916 paper "The Van Schayck Family in the Netherlands..." asserting that "Schayck" was a contraction of Schadewyck from the given name "Schade" plus the suffix "wyck", a manor or farmstead; de Boer dated an original Schadewyck to before 1000 AD and placed it near Vianen, a city a few miles south of Utrecht on the river Lek. This was not far from the geographic center of the various localities which bear some variation of the name.

Marcel (M.S.F.) Kemp, on the other hand, in his "Verslag van het Onderzoek naar de Herkomst en Afkomst van Cornelis Aertsz..." (a 1991 manuscript in the possession of the writer and compiler) agrees with de Boer's derivation of Schadewyck and Schayck, but he gives Schadewyck a more recent origin. Kemp holds that the given name "Schade" appears first in the Utrecht archives in a document dated 1227 in which a Wilhelmus Scadhe is named as a minister to the Bishop of Utrecht. A century later the name was so common that Kemp can cite a number of persons in the early 1300's with the name Schade in just the vicinity of the old castle of Goye; hence Kemp believes that several men gave their name of "Schade" separately to several "Schadewycks" and that several families of Van Schaycks arose in separate localities. This may well be correct and it explains the numerous "Schadewycks", "Schadics", and "Schaiks" in Utrecht and three bordering provinces.



Utrecht's Dom Tower seen across the Old Canal

The earliest record Kemp cites of "Schadewyck" as a family name is a reference to a Ghiselbertus de Scadwijc who on March 17, 1236, took a long-term lease on church lands lying between the villages of Odijk and Werkhoven. In the 16th century this land was known as "de hofstede Scadewijck" and was in possession of a Van Schayck family. The earliest records of people of the name in the city of Utrecht which I found was a reference to Hermannis de Schadewyc and his son Henricus dated 1278 in Booth's genealogy of "Van Schayck".

By 1600 several families of Van Schaycks in the region of Utrecht are discriminated by Kemp one from another by the first names which they customarily favored, by their coats of arms, and by social context. Two main groups lived south and east of Utrecht in the vicinity of Houten, one using the name Daem (Adam), the other the names Gysbert and Jan. A third group using abbey lands at Zeist and de Bilt northeast of Utrecht favored the given names Hubert, Gosen, and Gysbert, while yet another group living near Achtienhoven and Westbroek north of Utrecht favored the given names Gosen and Gerrit. It was from this group that Gosen Gerritsz van Schayck, the settler in Rensselaerswyck in 1637, descended and within which his ancestry has been traced by John R. Delafield to about the year 1520.

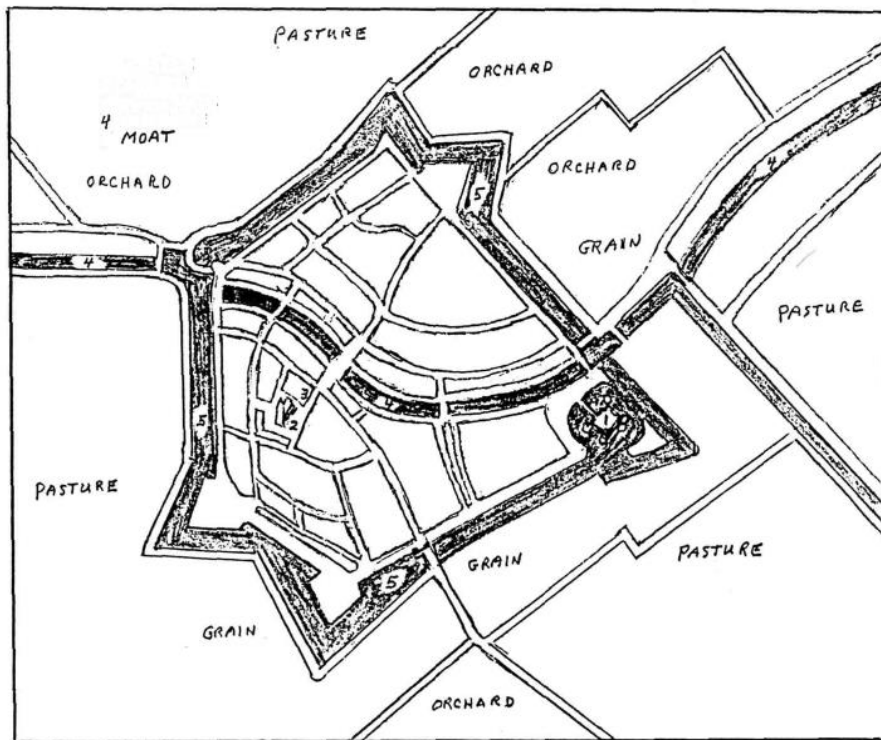
Altogether in the Krommerijn (Crooked Rhine) region east of Utrecht (which excludes any Van Schaycks living about Achtienhoven) there lived in 1600 more than twenty major farmers of the name Van Schayck, whom Kemp has shown to be in possession of more than 1100 morgen of land, almost five percent of all the land in a region of 23,000 morgen. Since there are no records of the occupants of some of the 23,000 morgen, farmers calling themselves Van Schayck clearly held over five percent of the available land.

Not all Van Schaycks, however, got their name regularly from the male line. The family of Splinter Alphertsz van Rossum began calling themselves "Van Schayck" after Splinter's death in about 1625: see "Van Schaik (Vreeswijk)" by Cornells van Schaik in *DE NEDERLANDSCHE LEEUW*, June-July 1991. According to Kemp, the children of Gerrit, son of Henrick Willemsz of Bunnik simply adopted the name Van Schayck after 1650, and these were not rare occurrences. The process also worked in reverse: in about 1500 Willem van Schayck van Oistrum Snoyens of Houten became the progenitor of a Van Oostrum family which thereafter discarded the Van Schayck name (see M.S.F. Kemp, "Van Oostrum te Houten", *JAARBOEK C.B.G.*, 1987).

When a child was baptized with the full name of a maternal grandfather, he could obtain a family name from the mother's line. This, Kemp says, occurred in several old families in the area: Van Oestrums and Van Rossums, as well as Van Schaycks. He cites a Schayck Gysbertsz farming at Jutfaas in the middle 1500's,

who was also called Gysbert Gysbertsz van Schayck and who apparently got his name from a Gysbert van Schayck. About the same time in the family of Geryt Jansz Overdam on the Overdam farmstead outside Houten, Geryt's eldest son Willem became known as Schayck Gerritsz Overdam and as Willem Gerritsz van Schayck. His descendants all used Van Schayck as their family name.

The work of Marcel Kemp in researching the old farming families of the Krommerijn region depends heavily on the records of hereditary leases of lands owned by the nobles and various churchly orders; the records and minutes of the feudal and provincial courts; and the record books of notaries. Baptismal and marriage records of the village churches are spotty or non-existent until about 1625 or later. Thus tracing the family of someone like Cornelis Aertsen, born about 1610, is difficult unless a will or some other document is uncovered which lists family members. The family lines of artisans and laborers who held no land to record the changes of generations become virtually impossible to connect up.



*Woerden at about the time of Cornelis Aertsen's birth*

- 1 CASTLE
- 2 CHURCH
- 3 TOWN HALL
- 4 OLD RHINE
- 5 MOAT

## THE WALLED TOWN OF WOERDEN

In 1987 the writer visited Woerden where Cornelis Aertsen said he'd been baptized. The baptismal records there date only from 1626. Located on the Old Rhine ten miles west of Utrecht just across the border in South Holland, Woerden has been a townsite for over 3,000 years. The Romans located a frontier detachment there.

In 1372 Woerden obtained rights of self-government. The townsfolk then built bastioned walls of brick surrounded by a moat to protect the five-sided town. The defenses were strengthened in 1410 by Duke Jan of Bavaria who built a castle on the southeast bastion; this castle guarded a bridge into the town from the east, located where the Rhine flowed into the town. A bridge to the south and one on the northwest side where the Rhine exited the town were guarded by fortified gates. Within the walls five bridges crossed the Rhine, connecting the two halves of the town.

The town walls were levelled two centuries ago, but the moat, following the outlines of the bastions, still surrounds the old town. This branch of the Rhine, then and now little more than a sluggish canal, no longer flows openly through the town and a business street (Rijn Straat) follows its former course.



*Woerden's Town Hall in foreground and Peter's Church  
(copyrighted by Nico Plomb, but not by the Visitor's Service)*



Near the center of town stands the 14th Century Petruskerk. In 1572, fifty years after Woerden's Jan de Bakker was martyred, the town and the church became Lutheran. Then in 1593, it adopted the Reformed faith. In Petruskerk, Cornelis Aertsen would have been baptized.

Woerden was then a local center of trade. The population, estimated at 1,500 in 1514, grew to about 3,200 in 1629 when 528 houses were counted. Another 500 inhabitants lived outside the walls, mostly to the west, where roof tile and brick makers had their kilns; peat supplied fuel for the kilns and for a peat trade, but by 1610 the nearest peat was used up and the bogs drained.

Around the town lay poldered farm land; on the higher lands grain, vegetables, and orchards grew; on the low lying lands cattle, draft stock and other farm animals grazed. Today Woerden rivals Gouda as a cheese manufacturing and marketing center. Its annual market fair celebrated its 500th anniversary in 1910.

Close by Petruskerk to its rear stands the Stadhuis or Town Hall built in 1501 and expanded to the rear and upward in about 1610. Still used as the Town Hall until 1889, the building now is the municipal museum. The church with its tower, the Stadhuis, one residence, the castle, and the moat date from before 1610. The orphanage is gone which in 1616 took in nine-year-old Evert Bogaert, born in Woerden in 1607, who was destined as Everardus Bogardus to become the pastor at new Amsterdam in 1633, to wed the celebrated Anneke Jans, to baptize the first three of Aertsen's children, and until 1647 to minister to his family. Although born in Woerden, Cornelis Aertsen probably didn't live there long. In 1640 he said he lived in Houten and in 1645 in New Amsterdam he was identified as from Utrecht. Consequently, it is likely he was reared and had family connections in those localities.



*Old Town Hall in Woerden - now a museum*

## UTRECHT AND HOUTEN

Like Woerden, Utrecht was a townsite long before Roman times, but by 1610 it had a dozen times the population of Woerden. Located where the Crooked Rhine (Krommerijn) from Wyck-by-Duurstede to the southeast split into the Old Rhine flowing west through Woerden and the river Vecht north to the sea, it was chosen by Bishop Willibrord, apostle to the heathen, as his seat and the center of civil government.

Utrecht was well located for commerce. As a river boat and market town, it flourished. In the 1600's it had long been walled and moated; twelve bastions

guarded the brick walls and eight main gates gave entry. It was a city of churches; Domkerk (the cathedral), started in 1254 with its 367 foot tower completed in 1382 was flanked west by Jacobikerk, north by Janskerk, and east by Pieterskerk (1048). A church to the south, planned to complete a cross, was never built, perhaps because it wasn't needed. Mariakerk (1090), Catherijnekerk (now the RC cathedral), Geertekerkerk, Nicolaikerk, and Buurkerk served the south end of the city. The Dom Tower, then as now, dominated the skyline from every direction.

The Crooked Rhine flowed around the town in a moat and through the town by way of two canals. Wagon roads ran from gates west to Woerden; north to Maarsen, Martensdijk and Westbroek; east to de Bilt, Bunnik, Soest and Odijk; south to Ysselstein, Jutfaas and Vianen; and southeast to Houten and Schalckwyck. See the accompanying map.

In and around Utrecht, there was much to see; river and canal boats loading and unloading, sails furled; windmills pumping water and grinding grain; heavy carts drawn by yoked oxen or paired horses; merchants and tradesmen at work; bakers, brewers, boat builders, and brickmakers; candle, cabinet and coffin makers; costers and coornkopers; cloth weavers and fullers; blacksmiths, coppersmiths, tinsmiths, gold and silversmiths and a dozen other crafts; carpenters, bricklayers, groiners and joiners, roof tilers and thatchers, stone carvers and stone masons; painters and makers of religious art; and soldiers, many of them English, Scottish and German mercenaries.

The twelve-year truce with Spain had expired in 1621. The defense lines ran from northeast of Utrecht around it to the south and west. From 1621 to 1648, military action east and south generally favored Dutch arms and important territories were added to the nation, while overseas the East and West India Companies assembled a Dutch empire.

Area east and south of Utrecht could be flooded for defense and in 1638 an accidental break in the Lek dikes resulted in heavy flooding and provided work for many laborers. Several farming villages, built on higher ground, then were isolated by water. Less than two miles east of Houten stood the Overdam farmstead, the place of origin of one family of Van Schaycks, and a mile farther, just southwest of Odijk, stood the Schadewyck farmstead, dating back at least to 1236.

Houten in the 1600's was dominated by a brick church standing at one side of the central plaza from which six or seven roads led. The village of about 800 was unwalled and from its edge the cultivated fields stretched into the distance marked by scattered farmsteads. Houten was a market center and besides its minister it housed shopkeepers and tradesmen; millers, bakers, and tailors; cobblers and wooden shoemakers; bricklayers, carpenters, thatchers, cartwrights and blacksmiths. There must also have been tapsters providing places to gather, gossip, and plan. A village market was held each Saturday in the central plaza.

Today besides the church and central plaza, there are few remains of the 17th Century village. Outside the old dorp and surrounding it stands a modern suburb of over 60,000 who live in townhouses and commute daily by train, bus, and auto.

Cornelis Aertsen was in New Amsterdam on January 30, 1640. He probably left on de Engel Gabriel in March arriving in Holland in May. One reason for his trip was marriage, perhaps arranged by letter and probably long planned. Cornelis' visit in Houten with relatives could not have been more than a few weeks, but despite the brief stay, one may speculate that longtime Houten acquaintances heading for Rensselaerswyck talked Cornelis into contracting to go there with them.

Roelof and Crijn Cornelisz, whom Kemp names as sons of Cornelis Martensz and Adriana Ros Jansdr from Houten, had gone to Rensselaerswyck in 1637 and Crijn had returned after two years. Now he was going back and several residents of Houten were going with him; Nijs Jacobsz, a lad of 19; Jan Reyersz, the son of a poor laborer; and a family group consisting of Cornelis Crijnen, 50, Jan Crijnen, and Jan Cornelis (Crijnen), a father with his brother and son. At least a business relationship had existed between Crijn Adriaensz, the presumed father of Cornelis and Jan Crijnen, and Jan Willemsz van Schayck, the younger, who was probably Cornelis Aertsen's grandfather.

They sailed on the Waterhondt in July, but while Cornelis Aertsen and Belitje Hendricks had contracted to work in Rensselaerswyck, their names were never entered in the colony's account books. Their contract was probably bought out because they next appeared as residents of Pavonia west of New Amsterdam across the river, apparently living on the farmstead at Ahasimus occupied by descendants of Cornelis van Voorst from Utrecht.

#### AERT JANSZ VAN SCHAYCK, FATHER OF CORNELIS AERTSEN

In November of 1987 the writer spent three weeks in the Utrecht archives seeking Adriaen and Aert van Schaycks of the right age to have fathered Cornelis Aertsen of Woerden, Houten, and Utrecht. This search continued over the next two years aided by Willem A. Wijburg of Utrecht, who combed his research notes for references which might apply. From the Utrecht marriage registers and the files of the notaries over a dozen names of Adriaen and Aert van Schaycks turned up which were worthy of consideration.

Each name was checked and all but three were eliminated conclusively from consideration. Two of the three remaining showed no connection with Houten. The one left was Aert Jansz van Schayck whose parents Jan Willemsz van Schayck, churchwarden of Houten in 1617, and his wife, Anna Aert Heynricksdr, made their

will on January 26, 1621 before notary Willem van Galen. At that time their oldest son Aert was "out of the country". Since the couple had married in about 1586, Aert, the eldest, would have been about 23 when Cornelis Aertsen was born, the right age.

Then in 1991 the Reverend Marcel Kemp offered to search his 150,000 data cards for evidence that Aert Jan Willemsz van Schayck was the father of our ancestor and we asked him to do so. In seeking the ancestry of Cornelis Aertsen of New Netherland, Kemp was investigating the only AERT van Schayck with close connections to Houten of the right age in 1610 to be the father. When Kemp sought data on this Aert van Schayck, however, he found data to be extremely scant.

The Jan Willemsz van Schayck will in 1621 named five sons and four daughters. The fourth son, Henrick, became a baker in Utrecht where he died childless in about 1681. In a will made in 1678 Henrick mentioned several living nephews and nieces, among whom was his brother's daughter Aertge AERTSDR. This is important because otherwise we might think that Aert had died childless in some foreign land. Now we know that Aert Jansz van Schayck had somewhere begotten a daughter.

From other records we find that Aertgen Aertsdr married for the FIRST time on May 2, 1663 to Henrick Gysbertsz van Bell, a widower; both were living outside the Wittevrouwenpoort of Utrecht, which is on the road to de Bilt. The wedding was performed before the civil authorities which means at least one of the couple was probably a Roman Catholic. Henrick Gysbertsz had been living in Abstede, just east of Utrecht, on May 2, 1642, when he'd married his first wife.

In 1685 Aertgen was buried "gratis" in the Buurkerk (in poverty). She was survived by her husband and an underage daughter. If the child was born in 1665 when Aertgen was as old as 45, she might have been born as early as 1620. Aertgen, therefore, had to be AT THE VERY LEAST 10 years younger than Cornelis Aertsen; she was most likely much younger, and a half-sister, born perhaps in about 1630 or 1640.

Within weeks of making his will in 1621 Jan Willemsz van Schayck died. His widow remarried before March 6, 1624, to Thomas Jan Philipsz of Odijk. In 1629 his grandnephew Philip Jansz Wantanaer and Aert Jansz van Schayck made inquiry in the Tollesteeg Court, in that area of Utrecht toward Houten and Jutfaas, about the age of horses they had bought from Adriaen Jansz van Oestrum of Bunnik (January 10, 1629 GAU Court Tbllesteeg II 3492-3 f 55). Kemp warns that this may have been the Aert Jansz van Schayck of Jutfaas who married in Utrecht in 1629, but the relationship of this Aert Jansz' partner to Aerts' stepfather suggests that this is a trace left by Aert Jansz van Schayck of Houten.

Moreover, Aert Jansz van Schayck of Houten as a horse dealer in 1629 fits well with Huyck Aertsen van Rossum's partnership in 1633 with Jan Jansz van

Cothen; the two were described then as coachmen with two wagons and horses contracted to the military service, which partnership lasted at least to the end of 1635. Furthermore, at about this time Huyck Aertsen's aunt Jannechgen Fredericksdr lived outside the Tollesteeg gate of Utrecht; as the widow of Covert Ockersz she made her will from there on January 13, 1631.

Huyck Aertsen's grandfather (Frederick Andriesz) and Aert Jansz van Schayck's grandmother (Henrickgen Andriesdr) were brother and sister, so Huyck Aertsen of New Netherland was a cousin of Aert Jansz van Schayck; recall that the earliest known record of Cornelis Aertsen dates from January 1640, in New Amsterdam when Cornelis "Arissen" took the lead in testifying about Huyck's good behavior in a tavern. (It is tempting to think Cornelis Arissen may have been one of the Company's soldiers just then ending a four-year enlistment; two of the three other men joining Cornelis Arissen in his testimony, Philip Geraerdy and Rogier Jorissen, were soldiers). In 1642 Huyck acted as a witness at the baptism of Cornelis Aertsen's first son Arie, a role for a relative much like a godparent.

Kemp identifies the characteristic handmark used by Cornelis Aertsen in signing documents as one used by at least ten people in the area around Houten in the early 1600's including the mark used by Huyck Aertsen's father Aert Frederick Andriesz. This mark was also used in 1630 by Anthonis Cornelisz of Loerik near Houten whom Kemp identifies as a possible cousin of Cornelis Aertsen, and by Gysbert Nysz, an uncle of Nys Jacobsz who probably traveled to New Netherland on the *Waterhondt* in 1640 with Cornelis Arissen.

Another known relative of Aert Jansz van Schayck was an early settler in New Amsterdam. The instructions dated April 22, 1625, from the West India Company's directors to Director General Willem Verhulst mention a head farmer named Mattheus de Reus (Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624-1626, D7: p. 94). Gerrit Mattheusz de Reus was operating one of the Company's farms on Manhattan in 1631, probably having succeeded his father. According to Kemp, he visited Utrecht in 1632 sailing in July on the *Soutberch* for service in Rensselaerswyck, where he died before mid-1639. Jan alias Frederick van Schayck, married to Geertruyt de Reus, was a brother of Aert Jansz's father and a great uncle of Gerrit de Reus. Whether Gerrit met with Cornelis Aertsen and Huyck Aertsen in 1632 or later in New Amsterdam is not known, but Gerrit de Reus in 1632 and Jan Jansz Damen of Bunnick in 1638 each interested others in venturing abroad.

Assuming that Jan Jansz Damen in New Amsterdam perhaps named Cornelis Aertsen as an administrator of his estate because of family relationship, Kemp looked into Damens' origins. Anna Aert Heynricksdr was Aert Jansz van Schayck's mother. In 1587 a Jan Damen in Utrecht had married Heyndrickge Aert Heynricksdr, perhaps a sister, but this couple had only a single son named

Cornelis. Thus they were not the parents of Jan Jansz Damen whose father was Jan Cornelisz Damen of Bunnik, dead by 1627 when Jan Jansz Damen, only 20, acknowledged receiving a payment from the administrators of his estate.

Jan Jansz Damen and Cornelis Aertsen may have been related on Jan's mother's side as Kemp suggests, but the Jan Damen who married Heynrickge Aert Heyndricksdr and named his only son Cornelis may have been a second Jan Cornelisz Damen, brother of Jan Jansz Damens' like-named father. Jan Jansz Damen himself had two brothers named Cornelis, both named in Jan Jansz Damen's will, and Aert Jansz van Schayck's father Jan Willemsz had two brothers each also named Jan Willemsz, as we shall see. The practice in this region of namesaking like-named relatives with two or more children creates problems for genealogists. If the two Jan Damens were brothers, as seems possible, then Jan Jansz Damen was a cousin by marriage of Aert Jansz van Schayck of Houten.

The known relationship of Huyck Aertsen van Rossum and Gerrit de Reus and probable relationship of Jan Jansz Damen to Aert Jansz van Schayck, along with the associations of these with Cornelis Aertsen in New Netherland constitute a major link of circumstantial evidence tying Cornelis Aertsen to Aert Jansz van Schayck. Weaker links have connected lines in many genealogies, but work continues to seek even firmer and more positive evidence.

## THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS MILIEU

The great farmers of the Crooked Rhine region held their leases of land from generation to generation, the family farmstead passing from eldest son to eldest son. Inevitably there was partition of lands among family members but appropriate marriages mitigated the partitions, enhanced family wealth, and increased land holdings. The wealthy purchased leases from the less fortunate who were forced into towns and cities. Warfare and religious strife strained economic and social ties and altered land tenures and social position.

The de Reus family lost heavily in the civil warfare before the turn of the century. The family of Aert Jansz van Schayck suffered financial reverses and lost their lease on the Overdam farmstead in about 1600 after 180 years of occupancy.

With few exceptions the great farmers of the region clung to the old religion. Family members becoming Protestant found themselves at disadvantage, sometimes cut off from family benefits and forced to seek fortunes elsewhere. Thus while most farming families of the region were Catholic, most settlers to New Netherland were Protestant, many from families suffering financial reverses. Many settlers used no family name calling themselves only by patronymics and home towns.

Cornelis Aertsen was Protestant. He married Reformed in Sloterdijk and with his wife was active in the church at New Amsterdam. On the other hand, the Reformed church was the only church. Witnesses at Aertsen baptisms included a church deacon's wife and two stepdaughters of the minister, Everardus Bogardus from Woerden. Belitje served as witness at numerous baptisms. As a lifelong Protestant, Cornelis had probably been baptized Reformed by his father at Woerden.

In contrast, all four of Aert Jansz van Schayck's brothers and two sisters remained Catholic, or married Catholics, as Kemp shows from the records of their marriages; only Geertruyt and Anichgen married Reformed. Anthonis Jansz, however, was buried Reformed in the Buurkerk in 1660, as were Hendrick Jansz in 1681, and Aertgen Aertsdr in 1685. The Buurkerk stands not far from the Tollesteeg gate on the road to Houten. There Willem and Gysbert Jansz van Schayck leased land in 1638 and near there Henrickgen Jansdr, wife of Ryck Stael, still lived in 1642 at Heemstede.

If religious differences in the mid-1600's in this family seem milder than in some families, the differences may have been sharp when Aert was coming of age. Kemp cites one clearcut case of a brother disinheriting his siblings for religious reasons and he suggests that religion may be why Aert left the family circle at Houten and why Cornelis Aertsen never used the family name Van Schayck.

Religion may have cost some farmers renewals of their leases on lands taken over by the Reformed church, but other factors were at work. For whatever reasons, by 1700 all the descendants of Aert Jansz van Schayck's father (most of whom had remained Catholic) had left farming for other pursuits, and some, including the Protestant Annichgen and Aert's daughter Aertgen, had died in poverty.

All in all, the case Marcel Kemp makes for Aert Jansz van Schayck of Houten as the father of Cornelis Aertsen of New Netherland, while not conclusive is convincing. With most other possibilities ruled out, Aert Jansz van Schayck fits the picture well. Direct evidence shows he married and had at least one child and that religious differences may have caused him to leave the family circle. Circumstantial evidence shows that Protestant relatives of Aert Jansz van Schayck associates closely with Cornelis Aertsen in Manhattan. Finally, the evidence that Aert Jansz had issue much younger than Cornelis Aertsen, suggests new ways of explaining Cornelis Aertsen's family connections with Jan Aertsen van der Bilt and Hendrickje Aerts Breyandt, a problem which American genealogists have pondered for many years.

Work continues to confirm the descent of Cornelis Aertsen from Aert Jansz van Schayck though the chance remains that some other Aert or Adriaen with a Van Schayck mother or grandfather was Cornelis' father. Nevertheless, the writer



and the compiler consider this line of descent sufficiently likely that we proceed to describe the family of Aert Jansz van Schayck and the Overdam farmstead which that family occupied for 180 years.

## THE ANCESTRY OF AERT JANSZ VAN SCHAYCK OF HOUTEN

The father of Aert Jansz van Schayck and the presumed grandfather of Cornelis Aertsen was one of four sons of Willem Gerritsz van Schayck: Eelgis Willemsz and three sons named Jan Willemsz, each presumably the namesake of a different Jan in the family. Jan den Ouder occupied the Overdam farmstead until after 1600 and Jan alias Frederick married Geertruyt de Reus.

Jan de Jonge, born about 1560, was the father of Aert and his eight siblings: Willem and Gijsbert who farmed; Henrick and Anthonis who became prosperous townsmen in Utrecht; Geertruyt who married Reformed and died before 1621 leaving one daughter who married a soldier; Annichgen who didn't marry until 1640 but then married Reformed to a tailor and died childless and in poverty; and Henrickgen and Marrichgen who married Catholic, Marrichgen to a grain dealer, later a soldier.

Willem, the father of Eelgis and the three Jans, was shown in the Oudschildgeld register for 1536 as the farmer on the Overdam farmstead outside of the village of Houten. This farm, about 47 morgen in extent, was the property of the Chapter of Oudmunster at Utrecht. In various records Willem Gerritsz van Schayck was called:

1554 February 1, Schayck Gerritsz Overdam, churchwarden at Houten (Archief kapittel van de Dom 3959)

1559 March 7, Scaeyck Gerritsz, alderman of Houten and het Goy (Archief Ridderlijke Duitse Orde 1143)

1559 December 18, Willem Gerritsz van Overdam leased with his wife Heynrickgen the property of Overdam at Houten from the Chapter of Oudmunster (Archief kapittel van Oudmunster 1360)

1570 September 15, Willem Gerritsz van Schayck renewed the contract (ibid.)

1566 Willem Gerritsz alias Schayck van Overdam, one of the churchwardens at Houten (Rijks Archief Utrecht 2079)

Willem Gerritsz was the son and successor at Overdam of Geryt Jansz (van) Overdam and his wife Gysbertge who was probably the daughter of a Willem van Schayck and so is accountable for a new line of Van Schaycks. Similarly in 1536 a Schayck Gysbertsz was a farmer at Jutfaas and from him too stemmed a family of

Van Schaycks. Since the property of Overdam was church property from the 14th century and since the records of the Chapter of Oudmunster were well kept and were preserved, the line of succession of the Overdam generations (later Van Schayck) can be traced back in time to:

- I. Herman Egbertsz, born ca 1330, died before August 10, 1392, when widow and children rented land in Houten.
- II. Egbert Hermansz, born ca 1360. In 1386 owner of the Haencoern property at Houten; sheriff of Vuilkoop in 1426 in which capacity he used his five-lily shield seal; with his son rented the farmstead Overdam plus farmland called Hyndesprong in 1428 again using the seal; in 1435 made a declaration with 30 others as to the division of property near Vreeswijk when he was young left by his relative Gheryt van der Wierse, "knape".
- III. Herman Egbertsz, renter of Overdam property after 1428; still recorded in het Goy in 1463 and 1468; perhaps married a Reymborch.
- IV. Geryt Herman Egbertsz in 1463 leased 4 morgen of land in Vuilkoop from the Abbey of St. Paul of Utrecht which he conveyed in 1478; he was recorded in 1476 as the renter of Overdam; married Alverade Claesdr Hoevenaer; nine children survived him in 1506.
- V. Jan Geryt Hermansz Overdam, the Elder, in 1510/11 occupied about 65 morgen of land in het Goy and Houten and another 9 ½ near Schonouwen; married before March 6, 1494, to Hildegont Gerytsdr de Keyser. Four sons are known. He was dead before 1517 when his sons Geryt and Bernt Overdam were charged with houserent.
- VI. Geryt Jansz Overdam paid houserent in 1517 and 1525 in Houten; before 1522 he married Gysbertgen, probably daughter of a Willem van Schayck. He was dead before 1536 when his son Willem Gerritsz van Schayck was mentioned as an Overdam.
- VII. Willem Gerritsz van Schayck, described previously.
- VIII. Jan Willemsz van Schayck, de Jonge, as described.
- IX. Aert Jansz van Schayck, out of the country in January 1621; presumed father of Cornelis Aertsen and father of Aertgen Aertsdr.
- X. Cornelis Aertsz of Woerden, Houten, Utrecht, Pavonia, & Manhattan; father of Hendrickje, Arie, Hendrick, and Lysbet, baptized Reformed in New Amsterdam, who were later "Van Schayck".

## THE OVERDAM FARMSTEAD AT HOUTEN

The Overdam "boerderij" or farmstead outside of Houten was occupied for seven generations by a tenant farming family which came to be known as Overdam and which gave that name to another farmstead near Bunnik. The last two

generations of that family on the Overdam farmstead adopted the name Van Schayck.

An archeological dig made at Overdam in 1978 and 1979 affirmed that the farm was built in about 1350, probably by its owner Willem Overdam. The period was a troubled one and Overdam was built for defense by the occupant's family and farm laborers. A moat was dug and the dirt used to raise the farmstead. A bridge crossing the moat was guarded by a gatehouse. Buildings included a dwelling house, a bakehouse, a livestock barn, and two hayricks. A drawing made in about 1626 when the farm was occupied by a family of Van Zylls shows it much as it stood through seven generations of Overdam/Van Schayck tenancy.

Willem Overdam, "knape", sold his farm in 1357 to one Rumer Uten Goye, married to Fyje van Veen, two of whose children took their mother's family name. Rumer died about 1397 and in 1400 Gherijd van Veen Rumerszoon conveyed Overdam to Hendrik van Rijsenburg. In 1412 the property passed to the Carthusian Cloister who in 1418 conveyed it to the Chapter of Oudmunster in Utrecht which held the property to the end of the 18th Century.

The gatehouse was pulled down in 1901 and the livestock barn and hayricks were demolished before 1970. The last farming operations were removed to a new location in 1978 and after 600 years agricultural use of Overdam ceased. The dwelling house and bakehouse were then rebuilt for strictly residential use, preserving their outward appearances.

A description of Overdam and the findings of the archeologists (mostly pottery shards from two main periods) may be found in the June 1984 issue of TUSSEN RUN EN LEK, "Graven Naar de Historic van Overdam (Digging into the History of Overdam)" by L. de Keyser and A. van Schip.

## OTHER AMERICAN VAN SCHAYCK FAMILIES

The best known of the early settlers in New Netherland who founded Van Schayck families was Gosen Gerritsz from Westbroek who arrived in 1637. After six years in Rensselaer's colony, Gosen visited home and then returned to Fort Orange area where he began use of the family name Van Schayck. John R. Delafield researched his family in Westbroek in the 1930's and his ancestry appeared in 1939 in Delafield's "Armory of American Families of Dutch Descent". Gosen's family and that of Cornelis Aert Jansz Van Schayck are separate and distinct.

Another "Van Schayck" in Beverwyck in about 1660 was known as Claes Bever or claes Laurensz, later Van Schayck. On October 28, 1660 Marten Cornelissen from Ysselsteyn testified that he had known Claes Bever many years before in his youth having been raised with him in the same neighborhood at

Houten, swearing to this and other matters before notary D. V. Schelluyne. This family settled in the Kinderhook area of New York.

From the foregoing it appears that the family name common to the descendants of Claes Bever, Cornelis Aertsen, and Gosen Gerritsz stems from distinct and separate lines, and it is clear that any blood relationship which may exist among the members of these three American Van Schayck families does not derive from their common family name but from other relationships.