

## “VOYAGES”



*Family history as it is, the farther one goes back, the less accurate and questionable facts get. Records of the early 1600's are nearly non-existent and are rife with inconsistencies and repeated dates and events when taken as a whole, leave much to speculation. Most records are dependant on those of a Church, births, baptisms, marriages and deaths. Very little at all actually speak of an individuals actual life, what he did for a living, in many instances, where he or she lived and the daily rigors of life in the 15 and 1600's.*

*In our own family history, most of what we know begins with a birth date for Hendrick Janzen (Jansen) Spier; that of between 1609 in*

*Above, 1620 the "Brownists" boarding the Mayflower in Amsterdam's harbor. Originally, these English followers of a Calvinist type of fellowship were forced out of their native Britain and sought refuge for twenty years in the Dutch Republic on the continent. From 1600 to 1620 they sought a new beginning where they could practice their worship in their own way. That promised land became America and by 1620, they had secured enough funds to charter a ship called the "Mayflower". Aboard also were Dutch people that hoped to settle a colony as New Netherland. In 1609, the English explorer, Henry Hudson, sailing for the Dutch, had found a great harbor at the mouth of a wide river estuary, in what appeared a "peaceable land". The Mayflower's crew and colonists aboard hoped to follow Hudson's route across the open sea and locate themselves there to form their own promised land colony.*

*Storms and fighting against the powerful current of the Gulf Stream which was unknown at that time, their arduous voyage found them instead making landfall several hundred miles farther north along the coast. Mistaking Cape Cod to be the entrance to Hudson's great harbor, they landed on a site, history has recorded as "Plymouth Rock" and in time, these hearty souls founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Their promised land revealed itself at times in harsh ways, the land, the cold winters, wild Indians, and beasts of the forest made for a difficult beginning. In 1621, the New Netherland Company\* had established its colony on Nut Island, near Manhattan, and Dutch New Amsterdam was born. The Dutch West India Company was the outgrowth of the former\*. By 1628, Dutch employed ships were making voyages to the New Netherland Colony on a regular basis and the village quickly grew into a trading center. By 1646, a ship arrived in the harbor carrying one Andrian Vander Donk, an up and coming lawyer for the VOC, and a fellow traveler, Hendrick Jansen Spier, a German who's ancestors had farmed in Lower Saxony, east of the Weiser River. The rest is the story in this "Spier Family Narrative"...*



*some accounts- up to 1619, a span of ten years. A location that he was from a place called ARCHWORDEN which is a small village or enclave about halfway between Bremen and it's port city Bremershaven. In the second voyage accounts that are available, that of 1660-1661, it was reported then he was from a small village called Wagenigen" a "dorp" in German about ten miles from the banks of the Rhine. Wagenigen today still exists and is a sizable city in Germany.*

*More importantly however Hendrick's assumed birthplace- that of Archworden which is very near the east banks of the Weiser River. Very little is known of what this village was in 1619, but the name suggests a "religious" connotation.. "Arch" in German tends to refer to "over" or perhaps a high position, a high position perhaps of the Church. Early-on there were names of Church officials referred to as an "Archwarden" which could have been something akin to a Bishop or other clerical position. It has been inferred that the village there may have been the site of a Monastery of some sort, and the "Archwarden (archworden;spelling) " was the cleric in charge or appointed to it. This of course is all conjecture, as no evidence yet found suggests this to be true. The Archwarden of Bremen was one such title referred to in an early record. Bremen, itself at that time was a "Bishopric", an area under influence of the Church.*

*The "Church" itself, historically usually refers to the "Church of Rome" and the Bishop of Rome was the Pope. Here again, it gets "cloudy" as to what was the actual story. Hendrick was raised a Lutheran, itself a religion that was first espoused by Martin Luther, its namesake (1483-1546). Luther was a German Augustian priest. Reading the history of the Lutheran movement is an intricate and dynamic story that is much too involved to go into here. Suffice it to say that perhaps Hendricks's parents also were followers of the Lutheran persuasion, we just don't know. Once again though, we must observe*

*Historical fact of those times. The Reformation took place under Martin Luther's presence, the "Peasant War" of 1525-1526 occurred in the German Palatinate region where as many as 10,000 peasants were killed in a single battle. Conflict between the Catholic Church of Rome, headed by the Pope and these upstart Lutherans continued with persecutions, be-headings, war and strife. It probably touched every family and every village, some perhaps with the most devastating results. Our family ancestors are thought to have come from the area of Lower Saxony where yet today, two small villages remain; Oberspier and Niederspier. Through results as yet unknown, Hendricks's family found themselves in this little town or "dorp" of Archworden, just east of the Weiser River. Just what their position was- also unknown, were they farmers, tradesmen or vassals of the Lutheran Church*



*which at that time, some seventy-three years after Martin Luther's death had gained significant ground since its "early heretic days".*

*In 1646, Hendrick (using the birth year of 1619) would have been twenty-seven years old. Perhaps an aspiring apprentice to a tradesman in Amsterdam where he had finally moved to after leaving strife-torn Germania for a new beginning in the Dutch Republic. Itself just two years away from ending the eighty-year War (1648) that proclaimed the low countries as an Independent sovereign nation. In 1609 also, the Dutch East India Company had set its course of mercantile dominance of trade in the far east, Sumatra, India, and the Spice Islands there. By 1621, a new Company was created; the Dutch West India Company and the "New Netherland Company" established a colony on Manhattan Island in America and later at Fort Orange; later-day Albany. Later, the New Netherland Company was folded into the larger of the two as the Dutch West India Company.*



*Hendrick, it's believed, gained passage on an America-bound vessel, with his apprenticeship and a six year "indenture ship" to pay for the voyage. In a sense he worked for the Dutch West India Company then as a tradesman apprentice to the Manhattan colony. He set sail on the same ship that carried noted Dutch lawyer Adrian Vander Donck and other notable people of the day.*

*In 1647 Prince Williem II became Stadholder of the Dutch Republic and that same year, Petrus Stuyvesant became Director-general of New Netherland and the Dutch Caribbean possessions. Ex-governor Kieft was recalled to Holland to report to the Dutch West India office but his ship, the Princess Amalia was lost in Bristol Bay, England along with himself, the*

*Dominee Evarodus Bogardus and eighty-two others. Nine hundred beaver pelts and hundreds of other North American furs and a cargo of dye-wood from the Caribbean possessions became the "booty" of Welsh fishermen for months afterward. But Hendricks Spier and his other fellow passengers arrived at the anchorage just off Manhattan Island, and there, he began his new life in the Dutch colony. In 1648, the Peace of Westphalia was signed, concluding the eighty-year war with Spain and the thirty-year war with France. The turmoil that Governor Kieft had started with the Indian populations bordering the Dutch fort at New Amsterdam smoldered during the next years.*



*By 1652, Hendrick had finished his six-year indenture ship and at age 33 was at last free to follow his own road; so to speak. We don't know when Hendricks and Magdalena Hans became acquainted. Perhaps they had travelled together from Holland on the voyage, perhaps she had arrived later, but in 1652 we do have the record of their marriage in the Dutch church in New Amsterdam. September 14<sup>th</sup> 1652 New Amsterdam Dutch Reformed Church records.*

*Hendrick, a devout Lutheran, and as Lutherism was banned to be practiced in the Dutch colony, most likely this was a "touchy subject". It may have been the only time he set foot in a Dutch reformed church. Magdalene on the other hand was a Dutch Reformed member and followed that church. A union perhaps of unlikely circumstances, yet it prevailed in a marriage that lasted for twenty six years and produced nine children.*

*The year 1655 was a bloody one for the New Amsterdam colony. In September of that year, a marauding force of Indians came down the Noordt River, taking advantage of Governor Stuyvesant's absence in his expedition against the Swedes along the Delaware. They landed at the foot of Manhattan and ran amok through the orderly Dutch streets of the colony. Hendricks was one that fortunately got his young family into the relative safety of the Fort's earthen breastworks. The rampaging natives, bent on destroying as much they could set fire to houses and wharfs and then let their fury on the outlying farms. Governor Stuyvesant's farm was burned and Lawyer Vander Donck was killed defending his farm that lay outside the wall of the colony. The savages melted away into the forest but an uneasy circumstance pervaded New Amsterdam until Stuyvesant returned with his soldiers.*

*Hendrick took his family and escaped the colony's main settlement, making their way to Second River, on the west shore of the Passaic River, where there was a tiny enclave of Dutch pioneer families. His young son, Jan, not quite two years old (b.1653) first born daughter, Tryntje, barely a year old and infant second daughter Seytie, born that July of 1655.*

*The return of Governor Stuyvesant from the Delaware, found his town in somewhat of a shambles. Already, repairs were underway to the homes that the savages had torched, and some fresh graves in the burying ground attested to the aftermath of an attack by, some say as many as six hundred Indians. The war-party may yet be in the area, and perhaps planning further attacks, but the Fort was reinforced now. The "General" as Peter Stuyvesant was called by the inhabitants of New Amsterdam saw to it, that punitive measures were levied on any concentration of Indians within a day's walk from the town wall. It became an unhealthy practice for natives to trade now with the Dutch*



*after the attack. The force of Indians had not come from any one tribe, rather it had been a combined effort of many camps. It had been precipitated by several instances, some refer to it as "The Peach War" because a Dutch farmer was said to have killed an Indian woman he found stealing peaches from his orchard. But the over-riding idea was that the Swedes, had been trading with the natives for over a decade and their alliance with them caused the natives to launch their attack in retaliation for Stuyvesant's punitive expedition against the Delaware forts.*

*Whether Hendrick removed his family from New Amsterdam before "The General" returned isn't known, perhaps the uneasiness of the time and the uncertainties of further Indian attacks was reason for it. These are the daily day to day facts that aren't known three-hundred and fifty-four years later.*

*At Second River, on the West shore of the Passaic' (Pissack) River, a small frontier settlement already was in evidence. There's no record of Hendrick owning land there in 1655, at least what is recorded. It's my contention that the rigors of that trip may have been too much for their daughter; Tryntje and she died there in 1656. A third daughter; Tryntie, was born to them in 1657; either at Second River or upon their return to New Amsterdam and by 1659, they were once again living at their rebuilt house on the Heere Gracht Street, engaged the trade of carpentry, millwork, or metal-smiting, we aren't exactly sure which. Like all Dutch colonists of the day, they were also farmers. Magdalena's family originally came from Zwolle, in Holland. Hendrick and Magdalena had built a profitable business and were most likely some of the more prominent town leaders. In March of 1660, there is a Court record of some action that sets that date; and the next date we have record of is when they set sail from Holland again on December 23<sup>d</sup> 1660 to return to New Amsterdam.*

*This is a period of some ten months, during which they procured passage from New Amsterdam to Holland- a voyage on the northern route, using the Gulf Stream and the easterly winds of from eight to ten weeks. Deciding on a voyage that would take the better part of two months at sea on a rolling and pitching ship, with three small children in tow would have been a difficult thought process. The Esopus Indian war that started in 1658 may also have been a factor involved in such a decision. Wishing to escape the prospect of yet another devastating Indian attack on the Colony could have been an influence. During that period, the native populations which surrounded the Dutch outnumbered them a thousand-fold and with the indigenious*



populations influenced by the Swedes to the Southwest and the English neighborhoods to the Northeast, the Dutch, although having a strong and formidable Navy, were not at all that well organized as an Army. They were principally a colony of farmers and merchantmen, and the Manhattan colony itself until the mid-1650's was basically a "company property" of the Dutch West India Company. New Netherland as the Dutch possessions were called finally became a "Province" with "National recognition" as the others of the nation of Holland.

By 1659, Magdalene had received word, she was needed back in the old country, and for whatever that reason was- again, is unknown, it's been said to perhaps "settle an estate" With the Indian menace here and the pressing matters in Holland that needed attending to, the family decided on the hazardous passage across the Atlantic. In an age when there was no means of forecasting what the weather would be like on such a trip, trust was put in the Captain and condition of the vessel, and God almighty to protect them on their journey. Perhaps at no other time in history was confidence in one's religious beliefs more of a comfort.

They set sail from New Amsterdam sometime it's supposed about April 1<sup>st</sup> of 1660 and if correct in assuming the length of time it would have been to cross the ocean, they would have seen the coast of England perhaps by the first week of June. A hazardous part of the trip would have been sailing close-by the Irish coast, and English privateers, then entering the fickle English Channel and finally spotting Texel Island, to the North of the mouth of the Amstel river. Beyond Amsterdam, the vast expanse of the inland body of water called the "IJ" was held back by the city dam. But their small family was reduced by one on the trip, their third daughter Tryntie, died on the passage, possibly soon after the sailing.



Their stay in Holland and settling whatever affairs were necessary was apparently accomplished that summer and Autumn of 1660. During that time, it might be reasonable to assume,

Hendrick may have returned to visit his own relatives at Wageningen or perhaps elsewhere. We have no reports or records to surmise what the reason for such a trip were but for 1660, it was quite a feat to do. News of the day was dependant on the arrival of ships from America. It was learned that the Indian menace had been dealt with and the New Netherland colony was



*prospering, despite a growing antagonism from the English neighborhoods which now laid claim to more than half of Long Island, and the English monarch in fact decreeing that “all of North America’ belonged to the English crown. The French, also with their colonies along the St. Lawrence were becoming a force to be considered as they always were, and their Indian allies, the Iroquois Confederation and the Hurons from the far west of the lakes.*

*All those factors must have been considered, and also the plausibility of remaining in Europe and taking up their old family ties, but Hendrick, being a stout Lutheran probably set on his course of returning to New Netherland, and with Magdalena’s matters concluded they made plans for the return to America. Today, we can look at all the foibles of History and what happened in those years on a grand scale, but perhaps what is more lost sight of is the idea that there was a better common life in America than the old set European ways. They probably thought of their sturdy little house on the Heere Gracht Street, with the canal out front, emptying out into the great Bay where trading ships anchored exchanging the commerce of a new continent. The lazy spinning arms of the colony’s windmills grinding the rough corn into the flour that Magdalena baked into loaves of bread and sat on their window sill.*



*Arriving back in Amsterdam, they had booked passage on an armed merchant ship bound for the Americas. Voyages in those days almost always was in the company of other ships and travelling to potential hostile parts of the world. Their accompanying vessels included a Dutch warship and company of Dutch marines bound for the possessions of South America. The Dutch, at the time were the most feared of Naval forces, England had not as yet gained her prominence as “Master of the Seas” as that country would by the mid 1700’s. The Spanish were always an unknown factor to deal with, and the French were of less concern on the open ocean.*

*The ship “fitted out” as they say in nautical terms, provisions taken aboard for the long looping journey to the Azores and then across the open dark expanse between Africa and South America. It would take from twelve to fifteen weeks before the high inland peaks of Venezuela would be spotted.*



*A very real possibility of encountering pirates, or be “becalmed” devoid of wind to fill the sails was a reality. Storms in the mid-latitudes, coming off the African continent could be expected, but sailing in late December, through January, were known by earlier navigators to be a more advantageous time to attempt a crossing of the expanse, Columbus had called the “Ocean-Sea”.*

*They watched as the City slowly drifted away behind them and realized it would be the last of their old homeland they would see, the stormy Channel lay ahead and the blue green sea beyond.*

*On December 23<sup>d</sup> 1660, the ship Troute, pulled away from the quay at Amsterdam, and set out past the Texel, presumably with other vessels as a convoy. Onboard were Hendrick, his wife Magdalena, young son Jan and daughter Seytie headed back to America and what they now knew was their “home”. They were no longer displaced Europeans it seems, despite the hardships of life in America, it was where they would set their course in life for themselves and their generations to follow.*

*The heavily defended Dutch merchantmen ships made the Azores, and then set out across the dark ocean for South America. The Southern route was that which sailing ships of the day took heading west, much as Christopher Columbus had done one hundred and sixty-eight years earlier. The Dutch colony at Venezuela was their landing point, cargo from Europe was unloaded and provisions for the continuing trip was taken on. Curacao and ports in Central America may have been reached.*

*The Spanish still controlled the Caribbean, and although Holland and Spain were not officially at war- there were always hostilities involved or implied. Such was the nature of the times. Old enemies died hard. Skirting the Spanish held dominions on Cuba and Haiti, their convoy proceeded up the east coast of North America. Sailing along the outer banks of the Carolinas’ and giving stormy Cape Hatteras a wide berth out to sea where the Gulf Stream followed the Continental shelf, they again tacked westward and hugged the coast. In May, they arrived in the great Bay of the Noordt river, and the two windmills ashore at the Manhattan colony were a welcome sight...home again at last!*

*Arriving back in New Amsterdam, and apparently with some money from whatever their business had been in the old country, whether that was indeed the settlement of an estate as has been postulated, or some other reason- within the space of a year, Hendrick was able to purchase 50 morgen, slightly more than that in acreage of a farm at a place called Makinqua Harness, near Communipaw, and Indian village on the west shore of the Noordt River, near present day Caven Point and Liberty State Park. This was one-half of the land*



*that had been purchased in the 1640's by another Dutchman. This was what could be called the "homestead farm" of the Spier family when they made the move from New Amsterdam.*

*Later- Hendrick purchased more land, adding to this and as his sons came of age, they too became prosperous in farming and other trade and developed their own farms, so that some 500 acres were at one time a part of this homestead farm. Hendrick had become influential and important enough to be referred to as a "planter", a name associated with well-to-do land holders. Some of the "homestead farm" remained in the family name until 1768; just over a hundred years.*

*Magdalena, Hendrick's widow upon his death by 1676(?) inherited the homestead farm as her dowery. In English naming, she was probably known as "Helena" as some records indicate. Her youngest son, Hans was only a year or two old at the time of his father's death and it's unlikely he would even remember him at such a young age. Within a short time, Helena married a second time at 49 yrs; to Harmen Eduarsz in May of 1679, who had been their neighbor and a close friend of Hendrick. They were married in Bergen but may have to lived at Minkiqua Harness which was probably a small enclave that also included the Eduarsz farm as well. This union resulted in no children and Harmen died less than two years after the marriage. Harmen had been married previously and had children of that marriage so it's likely his farm holdings went to those off-spring. Widowed a second time, Helena, remained on the family homestead farm.*

*By 1680, widowed a second time and now fifty years of age, Helena was a grandmother as well to her oldest sons and daughters children and had become the family Matriarch. I would like to believe that Grandmother Helena (Magdalena) was much revered by the family and perhaps the center of attention at family gatherings. She also had been an instrumental figure perhaps in establishing a Dutch Reformed Church house of worship at Second River. Her first husband Hendrick had been a devout and probably somewhat irascible individual, as he refused steadfastly to attend any of the Dutch Reformed services on the Sabbath day. He was raised and grew up a stout Lutheran, as most of the early German families were from his homeland in Lower Saxony. Before the English take-over in 1664 it is said he would row a small boat across the Noordt River to New Amsterdam's side where others of the Lutheran faith would meet in any convient location, be it a barn, a celler, or a hay loft or the back of someone's store on the Heere Gracht. And sometimes, being found out, they would land themselves at the gaol (jail) or before the town mayor. Lutheranism was prohibited to be openly worshiped*



*in Dutch New Amsterdam and it wasn't until the English occupation that it became a tolerant religion.*



*Dutch Reformed Church Belleville*

*In 1697, Jan, eldest son provided an acre of his farm land so that the Dutch Reformed Church of Second River could be established and the Spier memorial window, honoring grandmother Helena was crafted.*

*Helena, not letting any grass grow wildly, married a third time on December 10<sup>th</sup> 1681, the marriage banns being announced on November 13<sup>th</sup> 1681. Her youngest son Hans would have been just five years of age and having not known his actual father, Jan Artsen VanderBilt became the only paternal factor he would know. They were married at the Flatbush Reformed*

*Church in New York. (New Amsterdam had finally succumbed to English rule by 1674 and renamed New York, in honor of the English Duke)*

*VanderBilt hailed from Friesland in the Netherlands and was the immigrant ancestor of the VanderBilt family in America. Now in her early fifties, Helena and Jan Artsen issued a child of their own, Jan Jansen Jr. who became a step-brother to Helena's other children. VanderBilt had likewise been married twice before earlier, his first and second wives had died young. He apparently lived in what became known as Brooklyndt (Brooklyn) and it's supposed that's where they resided also after marrying.*

*New Amsterdam's old streets by then were no longer the squalid and crowded pathways of the old fortress and the Dutch town lay-out- it was by the 1680's and early 1690's growing rapidly, now that the English were in firm control. Trade and mercantile businesses flourished and it was very quickly becoming a center of commerce that would grow and continue to modern times. The old fort's earth walls were crumbling and the great green squares that the Dutch loved so well were being built on with more streets, houses and places of business. The old Dutch ways in the City were fading rapidly, it was becoming a metropolitan atmosphere and Helena was probably just as well at ease there as she had been at Minkaqua Harness on the west shore of the Noordt River. \**

*On April 16<sup>th</sup> 1694 with permission from her husband, Jan Artsen VanderBilt, Helena sold the farm at Minkingqua Harness to one Garret Ivers Garretson, an ancestor of that prolific early family. Her youngest son Hans at the time would have been 19 years old and at an age to be out on his own, and Jan Hendricks Spier, her oldest would have been 41 years of age and already had his own prosperous farm. Why the homestead farm did not get handed*



down to the sons is unknown. The land at that location was mostly salt marsh and muddy estuaries of what became later upper Newark Bay and the Freshkills. Even today the terrain, although difficult to imagine what it looked like in 1694 is a flat plain, east of Communipaw (Jersey City). Today, cut by the New Jersey Turnpike and littered with the flotsam of two more centuries of old wharf and land filled sites. In the day, the west shores of the Noordt River were quickly becoming a village of sturdy built Dutch farm houses, and even a few windmills. The waters edge were punctuated with wood fishing piers and small docks. A pastoral scene, hardly anything like greets the modern day visitors to Liberty State Park that now owns most of the land there. Caven point was a stubby reed lined protrusion at the waters edge, a habitat for muskrats and a hunting ground for herons and ducks.

The Indian name of Minkiqua (several spellings), its meaning unknown probably had a bearing on the estuaries and watercourses found there. Communipau' was an Indian town at the time of the first Dutch settlers, its ancient true look, forever lost in the jumble of streets and buildings and trash-filled small parks within Jersey City today. The soil, was most likely damp and clay-like, perhaps not the best for crops, and perhaps that's the reason the younger generation didn't have a use for it. There was much better land to the west around Second River, Pavonia, Bergen and northward toward a Dutch settlement that was beginning to be called Slooterdam, that today is the city of Paterson.



At the age of 67; on June 12<sup>th</sup> 1697, grandmother Magdalena/ Helena passed on. The Dutch girl\* from Zwolle in Northeastern Netherlands having voyaged across the stormy

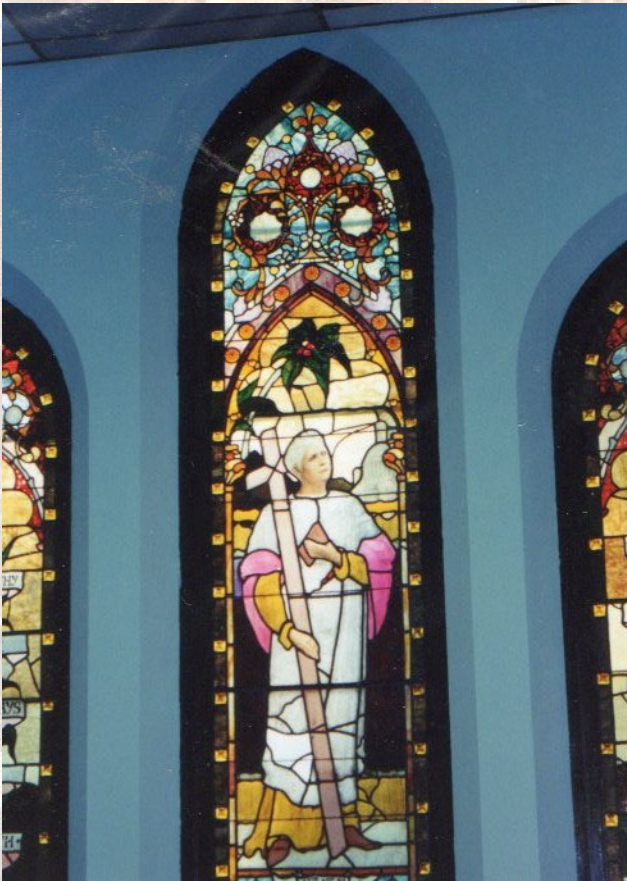
Atlantic, landed at Manhattan's colony; married

\*Above "Dutch Girl" by Vermeer

Hendrick Spier from Archeworden, Germany had led quite a life. She had managed to survive the hardships of a pioneer life, sicknesses, the untimely death of four of her children, raised her other sons and daughters; braved Indian attacks on the colony; fled with her brood of kids to the outpost at Second River then returned top New Amsterdam. Had made a perilous return trip to the old country and a 4<sup>th</sup> crossing of the Atlantic back to Manhattan's colony. Helped operate her husbands small business on the Heere Gracht- then with still young family in tow, moved across to what then was "the frontier" at Communipau'. Widowed twice and having yet a 10<sup>th</sup> child with her third marriage- she had left a legacy for her growing family. Helping to establish the Dutch Reformed Church of Belleville\* (Second River) her



*image is immortalized in that old church in the Spier memorial stained glass window.*



The Spier family memorial stained glass window in the Second River Dutch Reform church at Belleville NJ commemorates Magdalena, Helena Van Zwolle Spier who more than anyone else helped establish the house of worship by 1697.



## NOTES

\*1 JAN- first born son October 1653 was born in New Amsterdam  
His sister TRYNTJE was born in July 1654 but died about 1656. Daughter SEYTJE was born in April (other accounts says July) of 1655 and would have been an infant in arms at the time of the Indian attack in September of that year. 3<sup>rd</sup> daughter TRYNTIE born in 1657\* (This is uncertain where she was born, if at Second River or in New Amsterdam.) and died in 1660\* (The family had set sail back to Holland it is supposed no later than April of that year, to allow the time needed for the crossing of the Atlantic; 6 to 10 weeks.



therefore it may be surmised she died on the passage to Europe) for when they returned to America from Holland in December (Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> 1660) there were only two children on that voyage-Jan and Seytje.

The other children were born:

HANS in 1663; after the family had built up their farm near Communipaw (Jersey City) he lived until 1726.

WILLEMJTE was born in 1665 to ?

CATHYNTJE was born in 1667 to ?

ABRAHAM was born June 1671 and lived to only 8 years old to 1679

BARENT HENDRICKSE was born either in 1673 or 1675 and died May 8<sup>th</sup> 1742  
9 children total

\*2 We know, Hendrick & Magdaleena set sail from New Amsterdam for Holland, but we don't know the exact date of this. It is supposed their departure may have been around April 1<sup>st</sup> of that year (1660) It was the story line that this daughter (TRYNTIE) died on the voyage from Manhattan Colony to Holland- this would have been sometime between that April and June 1660.

An earlier entry dated 1659 in an obscure record indicated that that year had been when the family set sail back to the Netherlands but a contradictory entry for February 1660 in another record indicated that Magdalena Spier's name was noted for some sort of legal argument in a court in the Manhattan colony- a dispute over some money owed by another for "carpentry work" done by her husband. \*This indicates an obvious discrepancy for that period of time and shows that the family could not possibly have set sail on the 1659 date from the Manhattan colony back to the olde country. It may also indicate that Magdalena (Helena) was acting as sort of a business manager for her husbands trade he was engaged in. The sailing date of April is a purely speculative one by this writer as no other evidence is available to offer a more accurate one. This of course would be decided by maritime sailing conditions at the time, the most advantageous weather patterns, etc for such a long journey.

A voyage to Europe then would have taken from six to ten weeks, weather and hardships depending, using the "northern route" being pushed by the Gulf Stream. They would have arrived it's guessed sometime in the first part of June which would have afforded them a seven month stay in their old homelands.

They returned to America; setting sail from Holland on Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> 1660 and would have landed at the Manhattan Colony sometime in May the following year 1661. The voyage back across the "Ocean Sea" as Columbus had called it would have been the more treacherous "Southern route". Leaving the relative safety of Dutch waters, their route would have been against the current through the English Channel and out into the open Ocean. There, they would have cruised Southwesterly not far from the coast of Brittany and the Cherbourg Peninsula. Farther South, they would sail off the Spanish coast and Portugal; dangerous waters. The Azores would have provided respite from the voyage and a supply of fresh water and the needs of continuing on their journey. The swells of the South Atlantic were ahead and possible storms in those latitudes. The dark and emptiness of that region yet today are at times fore-bidding even for modern vessels. The Sargasso Sea near mid-ocean, long a terror for ships being becalmed for weeks on end without so much as a breeze to fill their sails. If they safety got through that, their continuing trip would finally land them on the Venezuelan coast at one of the Dutch colonies. The slave trade was already in existence then, adding no doubt to the brutality of the day that was



more or less taken for granted as a way of life. Perhaps several ports of call along the coast added to the length of the sailing, and then finally skirting the Florida Straits and Spanish privateers, pirates and unfriendly others. Succeeding in navigating those hazards, the final leg of their journey would have been sailing up the coast of North America, again giving the English colonies in the Virginias a wide berth. By 1661, the Dutch had annexed the former

\*3 Swedish possessions along the Delaware, there may have even been a Port of call there before continuing, once again northward along the Barnegat Bay, then that great arm of land called Sandy Hook, and with a half day's sail, the great harbor before New Amsterdam.

\*4 It is said in one record of sailings that Hendrick, his wife and TWO children were on that return voyage, and that Hendrick was "from Waginengen" not far from the banks of the Rhine. Was that where they had been living for those seven months? Would that have been Hendrick's home after his supposed move from Archworden near the Weiser River country? What is the sequence of those events, times, places, and the meaning of it? At this time, it only makes a good story of fiction - for there seems to be no records to document it. We do know that when the family re-emigrated back to America, they were not coming as first colonists with any sort of indentured service to give- but more importantly, they were returning as higher-class citizens to their home in New Amsterdam. Whatever the circumstances, their trip back to Holland and or Germany was for causes of great importance- as written, to possibly settle an estate, perhaps receive some settlement of family business or other unknown factors. For when Hendrick and Magdalena did return to their home in New Amsterdam, within a year's time, they had the means to purchase 50 morgen of land at Mackinqua (Communipaw), one-half of an existing farm that had been established since the 1640's. And shortly after that, additional acreage was purchased, increasing the size of their holdings considerably- also the Spier name is mentioned as one of fourteen patentee's for some 10,000 acres of land. Therefore, it can be assumed that the reasons for the return trip to Holland in 1660 netted them some substantial monies to do this.

This also may hint at a fact that, Hendrick or Magdalena's (we don't know which) family in the old country were people of some means and importance. Hendrick was referred to as in the scant records as "being a farmer"; but apparently a successful farmer at that, or his wife's family. The few dates and times we know of and the results of their later purchase of substantial land in and around Communipaw and then at Second River, indicate more than just a humble existance in a frontier "hovel" of a home. These early Dutch/German families of means built sturdy red stone homes, solid construction, with barns and outbuildings for livestock and the storage of the produce of their land. They may have fancied themselves as "farmers" but their actual station was more as later-day Southern "planters" of the Carolina's and Georgia.

They most likely had many tenant farmers working for them. The importance of the family through the 1700's and indeed after the Revolutionary War, suggests them to have been very successful land owners as the Spier name appears on many early land grants and deeds from Communipaw to Slooterdam (modern day Paterson) So, perhaps, the origins of the family in Europe may not have been as such humble itinerant "workers of the soil" as first perceived... it's a story as yet unknown and untold.



\*5 Third daughter SEYTJE was born in July 1655 and her marriage date was 1683 . She would therefore have been born before the Indian attack took place in September of that same year, she would have been an infant of 3 months old in her mother's arms. Brother Jan would have been a toddler at two years of age, and daughter Tryntje hardly one year old. It would have been, therefore the two children along on the return voyage from Holland to the Manhattan colony were Jan and sister Seytje, as Tryntji had already demised earlier as they left New Amsterdam.

\*6 The date which second daughter passed away; that of 1660 would have been when the family was living again in New Amsterdam on the Heere Gracht street, or as has been alluded to, shortly after their ship set sail from Manhattan for Holland. Second son Hans was born in 1663 after the family had settled their farm near Communipaw and Mingack Harness, and the remaining children followed after that.

\*7 Those first few years indeed saw many changes in the family life of this Spier family. In the short space of eight years, they had had four children, two of who died; one perhaps on their voyage back to Holland. They had weathered a murderous Indian attack on their community and somehow Hendrick was able to get his wife and three small children to safety. They had built a good living for themselves despite these handicaps at New Amsterdam, journeyed back to Holland to visit with the old family and take care of important business- then set sail again, back across the wild Atlantic Ocean to South America and finally back to their home in New Amsterdam. Shortly after returning home, they had sold their house on the Heere Gracht Straet and established a farm near Communipaw on the frontier and later at Second River. Their second son born in 1663, then in succession; daughters Willemjite 1665; Cathryntje 1667; a son Abraham 1671 and a ninth child; Barent in 1673

Hendrick helped establish the first recognized Lutheran Church in New Amsterdam after the English takeover, and Magdalena and her sons established the Dutch Reformed Church at Second River (later in 1783 called Belleville) As a story, it has all the qualities of many of those first pioneering families that settled a wild country called America.

*\*Photo* The HALF MOON; a full scale replica of Henry Hudsons ship made visits to New York Harbor during the Centennial celebrations



*\*8; Belleville, New Jersey was incorporated in 1797. It got it's name from the French name meaning "Beautiful village". When it was established as a Dutch outpost in the mid 1600's it was called "Second River" after the river it touched on. The Noordt or North River; was the name the early Dutch gave to the Hudson, even though at the time it already was being referred by the name of the English navigator who discovered it's estuary bay in 1609. Even earlier though, the Italian explorer Verrazano had touched on it's shores, and Amerigo Vespucci, who unwittingly had his own name forever identified by an entire new nation.*

*The Noordt or Hudson river also often referred by the Dutch as the "First River" who liked to be very orderly in their ways, named the Passaic' which is an Indian name, the Second River; and the Hackensack, another native Indian name was the "third river" Other Dutch hold-overs are the*



*“Kill van Kull” that body of water separating Staten Island from Jersey City and on Manhattan island is “The East river” because quite simply it was east of the colony of New Amsterdam, the name stuck. Brooklendt (Brooklyn) the Bronchs (Bronx); Youngers (Yonkers) ; Harrlem (named so after the similar in Holland), and Statnt Eyelent’ (Staten Island). So why perhaps by 1797 was a Dutch settlement known as Second River named for a French town when so much of olde New York retained their Dutch names? Perhaps a hundred years of history already by that point had finally thrown off the “old Dutch ways” and the truly Americanized habit of calling places whatever sounded fanciful held sway. In any event, the name of “Second River” today can only be found in history books or to describe the “Battle of Second River” a Revolutionary war skirmish that took place as Washington’s Army re-deployed across the Jersey’s.*

*Language was also a changing part that the passing of time re-structured. The original Dutch pioneers mostly spoke a dialect known as “high-Deutch” (Dutch) but later arrivals from western Netherlands spoke in “Low Dutch”, so much so in fact that one could not be understood by the other. Likewise there were dialects of “high-German” and “low-German” such was that which was spoken by people from the northern or southern Rhine river country. A dialect which our ancestor Hendrick may have used was that of the east-Weiser river country of Saxony- itself divided by upper and lower Saxony. After Helena’s time, the “olde Dutch” was slowly being Anglicized due to the English presence, but Dutch was still the spoken language in the Second River-Slooterdam neighborhoods. By the time of the Revolutionary War period 1774-1783, the old Dutch was very nearly extinct except for local names and customs. English was predominant, and even the old Dutch-German-French family names had given way to Anglicized alternates- thus “Spier- became Speer or Spear”- Bosch became Bush; Garretsen- became Garrison, and Demaraet’ became Demarest... etc.*

*\*9 Magdalena (Helena) Hans Van Zwolle:*

*The best that can be determined by Grandmother Helena’s name is that the town (van) she was from; Zwolle, in Overjessel Province. The town of Zwolle situated at the confluence of three rivers; the Ijssel, the Vechte and the Zwarte (Black) water. It was established on an incline between the rivers around 800 A.D. by Frisian merchants The walled town was constructed on the “Suolle” which is a term that defines linguistically as a “hill” or swelling. (to swell) this hill was a “hill fort” for protection. The Ijssel river opened to the sea through the expanse of the IJ or inland lake. It acquired “City Rights” in 1230, and in 1294 it became a town in the Hanseatic League which was formed as a Trading and Commercial partnership but grew very powerful. In 1324 and again in 1361, noblemen set fire to the town and in the later fire only nine buildings survived the flames.*

*The people who made up the Hanseatic League of towns and cities were called the Hausa. This was not a physic logical name but rather a demographic one, much like people living in States like New York are called “New Yorkers” or California- called “Californians”. There-fore it could be presumed that Grandmother Helena’s name comes from her location she was from and the demographic group of people there. Magdalena Hans - for Hansa people- from; van- the town of Zwolle. At this juncture of time I’m afraid that’s the best there is to go on until some more definitive source of information appears. I wouldn’t like to call it a “dead-end” because obviously there’s more to Helena’s early life story and her family roots than is known. Her family may have been in the Trade economy that was the principal lifestyle of people of Zwolle and with its avenue open to the sea, may also have been in fishing. They may have been merchants of some sort and so may have had a great deal of influence in that line of business which could have attested much later in Helena’s returning to the Netherlands from America to settle her family’s estate as has been theorized.*

*“The pursuit of History is a fascinating voyage in itself!”*

*Mark Twain*



