

## MABIE FAMILY UPDATE

BY STEPHEN W. MABIE\*

Two articles on the origin of the Mabie family have appeared previously in this journal: Catherine T. R. Mathews, "The Founders of the Beck and Mabie Families in America," and Sarah Adelaide Mabie, "Mabie Family."<sup>[1]</sup>

Both present the correct names and baptism dates for the six children of Dutch immigrant Pieter Casparszen van Naerden and his wife, Aechtje Jans van Norden:<sup>[2]</sup>

1. Marrantien, baptized 12 September 1652
2. Jan, baptized 4 October 1654
3. Engeltje, baptized 6 September 1656
4. Metje, baptized 14 April 1658
5. Caspar, baptized 15 February 1660
6. Tryntie, baptized 17 December 1662

These two articles nevertheless contain remarkably dissimilar information regarding son Jan, leading to confusion among researchers for the next 80 years. In the original article, Ms. Mathews identifies Jan, the son of Pieter Casparszen, as the Jan Mabee of Ft. Orange and Schenectady, who married Anna Borsboom "about 1684" and died at Schenectady, 8 April 1725. In stark contrast, Ms. Mabie, relying on notes compiled by Edward C. Marshall, identifies Pieter Casparszen's son Jan as the founder of the Hackensack, New Jersey, Van Norden family. She states that Jan married Elizabeth Rees and used the surname Van Naerden, "spelled in the English fashion Van Norden." Ms. Mabie also observes that "this branch of the family furnishes a good example (when compared with other branches) of a state of affairs often found amongst Dutch settlers, that is of having two branches of the same family making use of different and distinct family surnames."

The ensuing confusion is evident in both published and unpublished works. Theodore Langdon Van Norden's *The Van Norden Family: Three Hundred Years in America, 1623-1923* and the typescript of respected Mabie-family researcher Royal A. Mabee both correspond with Mabie's account, while the typescript of Grenville C. MacKenzie agrees with Mathews.<sup>[3]</sup> In *6000 New York Ancestors: A Compendium of Mabie Research*, R. Robert Mutrie

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<sup>1</sup> RECORD 37 (1907):97-103, and 52 (1921):251-55.

<sup>2</sup> *Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York*, Collections of The NYG&B Society, vol. 2 (1901), pp. 32, 38, 43, 48, 55, 67.

<sup>3</sup> Theodore L. Van Norden, *The Van Norden Family* (South Salem, N.Y., c.1923), p. 14; Royal A. Mabee, "The French Huguenot Family of Seigneur Pierre Mabile de Nevi" (Abington, Mass., n.d.; microfilm, "Genealogy of the Mabee Family," at New Brunswick Museum, St. John [not Fredericton], N.B., Canada [original MS. at NYG&B Library, catalogued as "Mabile Family"]), n.p., no. 1-4V-2; Grenville C. MacKenzie, "Families of the Colonial Manor of Philipsburg" (n.d., at Westchester Co. Historical Society, Elmsford, N.Y.), pp. 451-55.

agrees generally with the Matthews article, but in an apparent effort to reconcile the two accounts, he adds that Jan married “secondly at Schenectady after 1704, Elizabeth van de Lipstradt.”<sup>[4]</sup> (Elizabeth Rees [above], daughter of Andries Rees who is referred to as “derlipstradt” in the record of Elizabeth’s baptism, at New Amsterdam, 25 October 1654.)<sup>[5]</sup> As records make clear, however, there were two separate, contemporaneous families, one identified by Mathews and the other by Mabie: those, respectively, of Jan Mabee and Anna Borsboom of Schenectady, where Jan was buried,<sup>[6]</sup> and of Jan Van Orden and Elizabeth Rees of Hackensack, where Elizabeth was buried.<sup>[7]</sup> But which of these Jans was the son of Pieter Casparszen and Aechtje Jans?

By a stroke of good luck, this matter can now be resolved. In 1706, Jan Mabee of Schenectady purchased a house and farm from Daniel Janse Van Antwerpen. The Mabee Farm, as it is now known (believed to be the oldest house in the Mohawk Valley), remained in the possession of Jan’s descendants until 1993, when George Franchere donated it to the Schenectady County Historical Society (SCHS). Incredibly, several ancient documents dating back to the time of its purchase were found in the house. Among these documents, all of which are now in the possession of the SCHS, are three letters and part of a fourth which, taken together, provide the adult identity of Pieter Casparszen and Aechtje Jans’s son Jan.<sup>[8]</sup>

The earliest letter, dated 13 May 1706 and signed by Myndert Steen, is addressed to “Brother Jan Meebie,” thanking him for a recently received barrel of beer and promising to help with an unidentified problem. A second letter to Jan, dated 23 July 1707 and signed by “Your sister, Engeltje Steens,” chides him for certain family problems, encouraging a return to righteousness.

As both the Mathews and Mabie articles point out, Engeltje, daughter of Pieter Casparszen and Aechtje Jans, married Jan Jansen Mol:

den 12 Sept. 1675, Jan Janszen Moll, j. m. Van Amsterd., en Engeltje Pieters, j. d. Van N. Yorke, beyde woonende tot N. Yorke. 20 Nov. in de Esopus.<sup>[9]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> R. Robert Mutrie, *6000 New York Ancestors: A Compendium of Mabie Research* (Toronto, 1986), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York*, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Ian Meebie was originally buried in the graveyard of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady. In 1879, his grave and tombstone were moved, along with many others, to that city’s Vale Cemetery, where they remain.

<sup>7</sup> Ethel K. Kolenut, “The Mabie Virus,” *The Archivist* (Genealogical Society of Bergen Co., N.J.) 24 (1997):8-9, citing New York Lutheran burial records (“Lysbeth” Van Orden d. 15 Xbr [Dec.] 1735, in 82d yr.). For further information on both the family of Jan Van Orden and the Van Norden family, see *ibid.* For a more complete account of the family of Jan Mabee, see Stephen W. Mabie, “The Family of Jan Pieterse Mabee of Schenectady,” *New Netherland Connections* 5 (2000):71-73.

<sup>8</sup> These letters, all of which are written in Old Dutch, were translated independently by John Van Schaick of Schenectady and by Sonya Horn of Clearwater, Florida, for Jack Maybee, president of the Maybee Society, who in turn made copies of the letters and translations available to the author.

<sup>9</sup> *Marriages from 1639 to 1801 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New Amsterdam - New York*, Collections of The NYG&B Society, vol. 1 (1890), reprinted as vol. 9 (1940), p. 41.

Neither article, however, mentions that after her husband's death, Engeltje Mol married second, Myndert Steen:

Personen met Licentie

den 8 Oct. 1704, Myndersz Steen and Engeltje Moll, den 10 Oct.<sup>[10]</sup>

The third letter of interest, dated 13 October 1706, is addressed to "Jan Pittersse Mebie, who is at Schanecgetade" and was written by Willem Tietsoort. Willem, who refers to Jan as "very devoted brother," had been a landholder in Schenectady at the time of the burning of that town in February 1689/90, after which he had left the area. In 1706, Willem was attempting to regain title to his land on the Normanskill; however, his papers had been destroyed with the town, and he was seeking Jan's assistance in identifying the "names of the savages" who had granted him the land.

Prior to marrying Pieter Casparszen, Aechtje Jans had been the wife of Abraham Willemszen van Amsterdam:

den 27 April 1647, Abraham Willemszen, j. m. Van Amsterd, en Aechtje Jans, j. d. Van Norden.<sup>[11]</sup>

Willem Abrahamse Tietsoort was the eldest child of this marriage and thus the half-brother of the children of Pieter Casparszen.

2 August 1648: Willem, parents: Abraham Willemszen; witnesses: Jan Willemszen Van Amsterd., Jan Dirckszen Van Amsterdam, Grietie Hermans, and Mary Geeraer.<sup>[12]</sup>

The final relevant document is a partial letter with neither date nor signature remaining. It is written by a woman to her "beloved brother" and discusses the death of her husband on 25 January 1708/9. As both Mathews and Mabie correctly state, Metje (Martha), the daughter of Pieter Casparszen and Aechtje Jans, married Jan Pierrot.<sup>[13]</sup> While there is no independent record of the exact date of Pierrot's death, his will was written on 7 December 1708 and proved 15 August 1709.<sup>[14]</sup> It is thus evident that the letter is to Jan Mabee from his sister Metje.

Thus we have four ancient letters, each from a known child (or spouse thereof) of Aechtje Jans, to brother (or brother-in-law) Jan, and found almost 300 years later in the former home of Jan Mabee of Schenectady. Taken together, they provide convincing evidence that this was the man who had been baptized at New Amsterdam on 4 October 1654, the son of Pieter Casparszen van Naerden and Aechtje Jans van Norden.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York*, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> For evidence of this couple's marriage (no record of the event is found), see *Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York*, pp. 148, 159, 189, 197, and Alfred V. Wittmeyer, ed., *Registers of the Births, Marriages, and Deaths, of the 'Eglise Françoise à la Nouvelle York,' from 1688 to 1804*, Collections of the Huguenot Society of America, vol. 1 (New York, 1886), pp. 20, 44, 56.

<sup>14</sup> Original New York Will no. 165, FHL microfilm 501142, "John Peroa."