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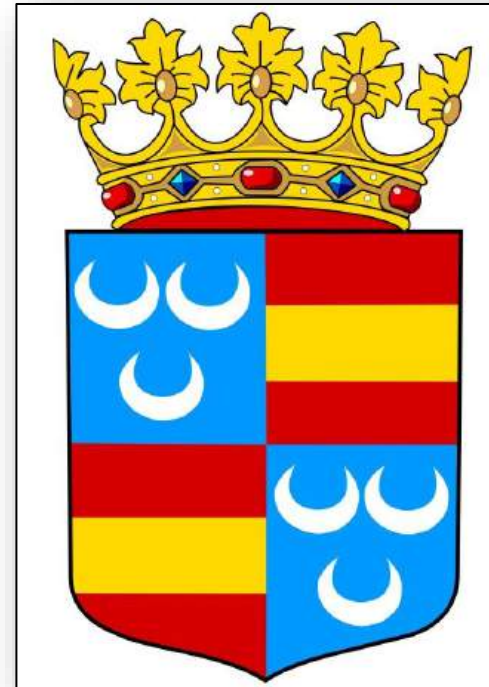
## *The Wassenaar Family*

Wassenaar is the name of a noble Dutch family and one of the few original noble names that has not died out over the centuries. Its original forms, Van Wassenaar and Wasjenaar, first appear in Dutch history in the year 1200. The name comes from the image on a family coat of arms. It's a crescent moon called "wassende" in Dutch. According to historical records, its inspiration was an Arab battle flag brought back from the Crusades. The family gave their name to the municipality of Wassenaar, Zuid Holland, which today is an affluent suburb of The Hague.

Until 1814, the Wassenaar family included numerous counts and barons within the family tree. That year, William of Orange became king of the Netherlands. With his coronation, a new law of nobility permitted only the royal family to claim noble status. That wiped out most of the noble titles in the Netherlands and the power that went with them.

For more than 600 years before, however, the Wassenaar family grew wealthy. They acquired land and power throughout the Netherlands and in other European countries. In England, Wassenaars are found within the Plantagenet bloodline of English kings from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Within a few years after William of Orange's coronation, the Wassenaars, along with most other Dutch royalty, no longer exercised much political power. Their influence and wealth begin to fade rapidly.

By that time, the Wassenaar name and family had spread far and wide across the Netherlands as the family oversaw its vast holdings and business interests. That's probably why this story begins, not in the village of Wassenaar but in the Dutch province of Friesland instead. It's a place that's mostly agricultural and has nearly one-fifth of Holland's iconic windmills.



The Wassenaar Family Coat of Arms

Left behind after the elimination of their royal titles, the Wassenaars, while not destitute, begin living a more common life. At the time Willem Gerbens Wassenaar gave birth to his son Poppe Wassenaar in April 1847, the family in Friesland had become farmers and common laborers. Poppe was my great-grandfather, and his home was Sint Anna Parochie, a tiny village built on land reclaimed by the Dutch from the Middelsee in 1505. Near it were the villages of Sint Jacobie Parochie, and Vrouwen Parochie. The names basically translate into St. Ann's Parish, St. Jacob's Parish, and Women's or Mother's Parish. The three village names date from the time before the Protestant

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Reformation, when the area was predominantly Catholic. The three villages constituted the municipality of Het Bildt.

We don't know much about Poppe's life in Friesland in the middle 1800s, but knowing something about Dutch culture at the time, it's easy to guess what his youth was like. Strictly observant of their religious beliefs, Poppe's parents probably sent him to one of the church affiliated schools. His parents would have taken them regularly to the Dutch Reformed Church, and Sundays were most likely reserved as a day of rest. This isn't just wild speculation, since it's reported that Poppe brought these very same values and practices with him when he later came to an America.

As an adult, the records show that Poppe was employed in two different occupations. His military records show that, at the time of his registration, he worked as a "boereknecht" or farmhand. Later marriage and birth records show him as a "werkman" or workman. The language of Friesland is different from the rest of the Netherlands, and municipal records sometimes use different terms to describe occupations. In this case, Poppe's job as a workman was essentially the same as the term laborer in the rest of the country

Registration for military service in the Netherlands was compulsory for all young men in Poppe's day, and his registration record tells us quite a bit more about him. Poppe was short compared to many Frisian men. His record shows that he was only 5 foot 5 inches tall. He had a high forehead, blue-gray eyes, and blond hair. Poppe registered for military service on March 18, 1867 and began serving in the "Landmacht" or the Dutch Army in the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment on May 4, 1867. His service obligation was satisfied on May 3, 1872.

Either before or during his military service, Poppe met a Dutch girl named Pietje Meijer. Pietje was born in the neighboring village of St. Jacobie Parochie on August 20, 1848. Poppe and Pietje grew up within walking distance of each other, and it's not unreasonable to assume that they may have known each other as children. The two were married on November 3, 1870 while Poppe was still in the Army. Their first three children were born while Poppe was still serving.

There probably was not much excitement in Het Bildt for those two young people. As a matter of fact, the single claim to fame for Sint Anna Parochie is that Rembrandt was married in the parish church there in 1634. It seems to have been pretty quiet ever since. The total population of this place today is only around 10,000. The industrious Dutch in the 1800s apparently didn't need much to stay entertained. They just worked and raise their families. Poppe and Pietje married and got down to the business of having children.

Actually, that's backwards. It seems that they started having children first and then got down to the business of getting married. This wasn't an unusual occurrence in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe where marriage was often a private rather than public matter. Getting parental permission to marry was more important than a church ceremony, which was considered a formality. In the villages of St. Anna and St. Jacobie, however, the parish minister must have had a stricter standard than most.

Poppe and Pietje's first child Frans showed up on September 6, 1870 — two months before the wedding. Frans' birth record carries a notation by the parish minister that "*child cannot be recognized by the church and his parents until they are properly married*". Clearly the minister felt that the nine months between their dalliance and Frans' birth gave the couple plenty of time to get to the church. Frans' municipal birth record indicates that Poppe was not around for the birth. The record indicates that the birth took place in the home of Pietje's father Frans Meijer, and it was Frans Meijer that reported the birth to the local registrar of records for Het Bildt.

After the completion of his military service, Poppe was a common laborer, but it looks like Pietje did her share of labor too. That's because over the next 15 years, seven more children followed in rapid succession. In all, they had two girls and eight boys. After Frans, Willem was born in 1871, Cornelis in 1872, Johanna in 1873, Tiete in 1875, Gerben in 1877, Tjitske (my grandmother) in 1878, a second Cornelis in 1880, Taeke in 1882, and Sytze in 1886. The first Cornelis died at the age of seven. At the time, the infant mortality rate in the

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Netherlands was around 25%. With only one death among their 10 children the Wassenaar family fared better than most.

Raising this many children in the Netherlands in the late 1800s was most likely a challenge. The industrial revolution had started in the US and in England in 1750. In 1870 it was just getting underway in Holland, and this late start put the country at an economic disadvantage compared to the rest of the world. Friesland, which had long focused on dairy farming and wheat production, was tardy in adopting the mechanization required to maintain efficiency and control production expense. As a result, the province was not cost competitive with highly mechanized wheat and dairy operations in other countries. This contributed to a second agricultural crisis that caused many people in the Netherlands to seek greener pastures.

However, a military conflict known as the Aceh Wars (see page 14) was probably a more important catalyst in the Wassenaar's migration. As already mentioned, military service was compulsory for all young men in the Netherlands at this time and, in 1895, when Poppe's fourth son Tiete became old enough to show up on the government's radar, family notes say that he took off for America. Tiete did register for the service, and the record shows that he was to report for duty on December 12, 1894. He apparently never did. It's quite a leap to go from the oldest noble name in Holland to the first Wassenaar draft dodger in America. But facts are facts, and that's how the Wassenaar journey began.

It's uncertain what Tiete did for the roughly eight-month period between his service date and his departure from the Netherlands. Somehow, he stayed off the official radar and avoided his service obligation. The civil registration records for Het Bildt show that he departed for America on July 25, 1895.

On August 12, 1895, Tiete disembarked the S.S. Maasdam II in New York Harbor. He passed through immigration at the first Ellis Island depot. His immigration papers are quite specific in stating his destination as Whitensville, Massachusetts. Interestingly, records for the time show that there was another Peter Wassenaar already living in

Whitensville, and that he'd been in America for a few years. He worked at the Whitensville Machine Works—a large textile mill in the village. Peter Wassenaar had also been born in Het Bildt, and it's likely that Peter and Tiete knew each other and were likely related. Peter had probably written Tiete and told him about work opportunities. A Wassenaar family history says that Tiete worked in the area's coal mines and iron foundries after he arrived.

Tiete was a slick character. Just three months after his arrival in America, he applied for citizenship with the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. At the time, the United States mandated that an applicant for citizenship had to have been in the country for five years before they could qualify for naturalization. In the oath that Tiete took, he renounced allegiance to Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands and stated to the Court that he had been in the United States since 1889. He also lied about his age and his birthday.

Tiete brought two witnesses with him to his court appearance—a man named Robert Hamilton and another named B. L. M. Smith. Census records for the time indicate that Hamilton was a mold maker in a foundry and Smith was a machinist. Both witnesses signed an oath swearing that they had known Tiete for four years during which time he had been continuously living in Northbridge, Massachusetts. Why did Tiete falsify his application? Perhaps he was concerned that if he was discovered to be a Dutch draft dodger, he might be immediately deported. It's also possible, given his two witnesses' complicity, that he had found employment at a local foundry and being a citizen was a condition of employment there.

Whatever the reasons, Tiete stayed in touch with his family back in the Netherlands and was influential in encouraging the rest of his family to join him in Massachusetts. On February 19, 1896, Willem, his sister Tjitske (my grandmother), his sister Johanna and her husband Willem Kooistra departed the Netherlands for America. On March 16, 1896, the group disembarked the S.S. Veendam I and passed through Ellis Island. Gerben arrived on the S.S. Werkendam on December 12, 1896. He, too, went to Whitensville.

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Massachusetts was quite a change from Het Bildt and probably very foreign for these new arrivals from a small village in Friesland. Gerben and Willem went to work in the coal and iron operations, and my grandmother Tjitske worked as a maid and housekeeper. This was a job that she'd had in the Netherlands. Until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a maid's position was considered a symbol of status and social hierarchy. Not long after Tjitske's arrival, Tiete left the family behind and went west to Iowa.

The siblings kept in touch with Tiete by mail, and learned that numerous Dutch immigrants had settled in northwest Iowa. Eventually, they departed Massachusetts and went there, too.

Poppe and Pietje arrived aboard the S.S. Rotterdam III on February 27, 1898. With them were their small children Cornelis, Taeke, and Sytze. The manifest shows their destination as Orange City, Iowa. Initially they settled near Hull, Iowa. Only their eldest son Frans remained in the Netherlands.

Frans, his wife Antje, and their three-year-old son Poppe finally came to America on the S.S. Rijndam, which arrived on March 23, 1902. Traveling with them was Antje's 17-year-old sister Arendje who would later change her name to Alice and marry Frans' brother Gerben. The party listed their destination as Rock Valley, Iowa and the home of Poppe Wassenaar.

It must not have taken them long to realize that most Dutch immigrants picked up a name that was easier to pronounce than the ones they been given in Friesland. Tiete changed his name to Peter, Gerben became Gerrit, Willem made the short jump to William, Tjitske became Tillie, Taeke became Jake, Sytze became Sam, Cornelis became Cornelius, Frans became Frank, and Johanna kept her name as it was. Poppe also changed his name to Peter and Pietje adopted the name Nelly. Her original name was used on her tombstone. The Wassenaars were now all in America.

A few years after settling near Hull, Peter and Nellie moved to a farm between Inwood, Iowa and Fairview, South Dakota. Ever the drifter,

Peter, Jr. discovered plentiful, cheap land even farther west in South Dakota, and he urged his family to join him there. In 1912, Peter, Sr. and his sons William, Cornelius, Jake, and Sam purchased 480 acres of land in Lake County, South Dakota, just 5 miles south of the tiny town of Winfred and about 65 miles northwest of Sioux Falls.

If you have ever been to Winfred, you'll know that there isn't much there today. It's an unincorporated community with a population of about 175. To be honest, there probably wasn't much there back then either. As a town, it is so nondescript that it's nearly impossible to even find much information on its history. Today, the road into Winfred is paved until it reaches the edge of town where the town streets turn to gravel. And the county isn't called Lake County without good reason. The area is dotted with boulders, lakes, and numerous low-lying swampy areas. It can only be imagined what the area was like before the tiling and drainage improvements of the past 100 years.

There was a good reason why the land was so cheap. There was an equally good reason why the Wassenaars were probably comfortable with farming it. In many ways, it reminded them of their land in the Netherlands. It was similar to the land that the Frisian people had reclaimed from the sea for hundreds of years. There were probably no better settlers to help tame this land than the Wassenaars.

Peter and the family farmed there for the next 10 years. Sometime during this period Nellie became an invalid and required close daily care. Their daughter, Johanna Kooistra, sent her daughter Nellie to be her grandmother's caregiver. Each day Nellie carried her grandmother from her bed to her chair, helped her to the dinner table, took care of bathing her, and put her back in bed. Grandmother Nellie died in her home on November 3, 1922, at the age of 74. It was Peter and Nellie's 52<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary. Nellie (Pietje) is buried in the Wassenaar family plot at the Winfred Community Cemetery.

Peter continued farming for another two years, and when he reached the age of 78, he deeded the land to his sons Cornelius and Jake. He moved to Spencer, South Dakota, and lived for a time with his



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daughter Johanna. A few years later he moved back to the Sioux County farm of his daughter, my grandmother Tillie. Peter died in their home on January 2, 1932 at the age of 85. After 34 years in the US, Peter had not become a citizen and still could not speak English. His funeral was held in my grandparent's home, and his body was returned to Winfred where he is buried next to Pietje.

### About the children

After settling in Sioux County with his wife Antje (Annie), Frank farmed for several years in Garfield Township. He and Antje had one child. Antje died in 1920, and Frank remarried, but the family notes do not mention the name of his second wife. The couple moved to Minnesota where his second wife died several years later. After her death, Frank moved back to Rock Valley. He died in a nursing home on September 1, 1956 at the age of 86. His body was returned to Minnesota. He is buried in Eastside Cemetery in Steen, Minnesota.



Frank Wassenaar's headstone

William, who came to America with my grandmother, worked the farm with Poppe in Winfred, South Dakota. He never got married. In 1920, he was picking corn in a wagon that was too full. He slipped and struck the hub of the wagon wheel as he fell backwards. The resulting spinal injury paralyzed him from the neck down. He pleaded to be released from McKenna Hospital in Sioux Falls, and after his discharge, he was cared for by his sister Johanna. He lived only three weeks after leaving the hospital and died in December 1920. He was 49 years old. He is buried in the Wassenaar family plot in the Winfred Community Cemetery.

Johanna and her husband William Kooistra farmed near Spencer, South Dakota. They raised five children, endured the Dust Bowl years, the black blizzards, and the hordes of grasshoppers that devoured their crops. When the Great Depression arrived, they lost their farm to foreclosure. The Social Security act of 1935 excluded farmers, but with the help of the South Dakota Old Age Assistance Program, William and Johanna were able to retire to Canova, South Dakota in 1937 on an allotment of \$22.50 per month. William died in 1946. Johanna died on November 28, 1954 at the age of 81 after spending seven and one-half bedridden years in a convalescent hospital. William and Johanna are buried in the Wassenaar family plot of the Winfred Community Cemetery.

Peter, Jr. was a drifter for most of his life. About the time his siblings showed up in northwest Iowa, he left for South Dakota. He married a lady named Lela Morris with whom he had six children. Around 1920, the family moved to California where Lela died. Peter moved back to South Dakota and, in July 1921, remarried to a lady named Ada Gibbs. At some time after marrying Ada, the family moved back to California where Ada died in May 1941. Peter once again remarried to a lady named Mary Kramer. He worked as a farm laborer near Sacramento. It's mentioned in family notes that Peter came back only once to visit his parents. In later years Peter was rumored to have lost his sight. He died in Santa Rosa, California on February 2, 1960 at the age of 84. He is buried in Two Rock Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Sonoma County, California.

Gerrit married Alice, his brother Frank's sister-in-law, in 1905. They had five children. The couple moved to Hills, Minnesota, where they farmed for the rest of their lives. Gerrit died on January 25, 1958 at the age of 80. Alice died ten years later. Gerrit and Alice are buried in Eastside Cemetery at Steen, Minnesota.



Gerrit and Alice Wassenaar's headstone

Tillie Wassenaar married my grandfather William Vermulm in the 1898. Between 1900 and 1919, they had ten children. The oldest was named Robert. He died in 1906 at the age of six from what is thought to be kidney disease. Their youngest son Jacob was my father. The family farmed in three different locations around the Rock Valley area.

William died in 1944 while my father was in India during World War II. Tillie lived another 13 years. In the spring of 1957, we had just moved to a farm southwest of Rock Valley. I was still not old enough for school, so I was excited when Grandma came to visit for the day.

We finished lunch, and while she cleaned up in the kitchen, my mother went to help my father up into the attic of the house so he could climb out on the roof to make some repairs. My mother told me to go out on the lawn so I could watch my dad on the roof. I ran down the stairs, and as I came into the kitchen on my way out the door, I found my grandmother lying on the kitchen floor. It was March 11, and Grandma was dead from a heart attack at 78.

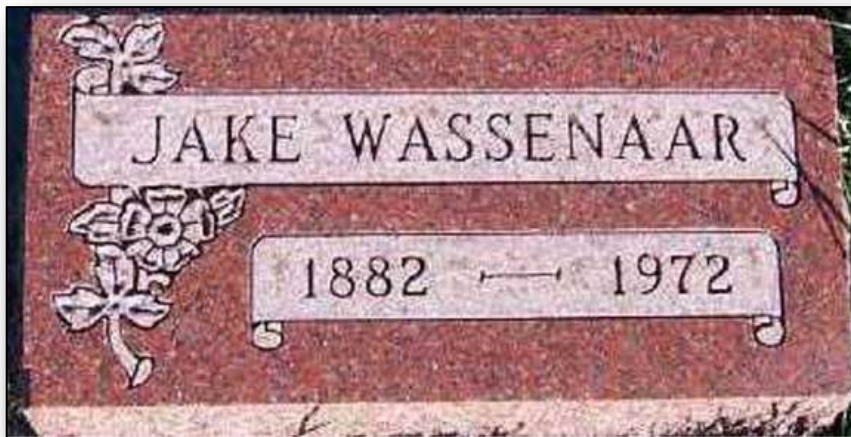


The grave of William and Tillie Vermulm

Cornelius regularly read a Dutch language newspaper that his father received from Holland. One day he answered a "lonely-hearts" ad from a young Dutch girl named Elizabeth Kraaj who wanted to come to America. After corresponding for some time, he sent for Elizabeth, and when she arrived, they were married. They farmed with Peter, Sr. They raised one son and one daughter. Cornelius died in 1935 at the age of 55. He is buried in the Wassenaar family plot at the Winfred Community Cemetery.



Jake farmed with his father in both Iowa and South Dakota. He also read the Dutch newspaper with his father and his brother. He answered a lonely-hearts ad, too, but his experience wasn't as pleasant. The lady was named Ethel Walker, and the marriage was a disaster. Family notes say she spent so much that she drove Jake to the point of losing all his land and equipment. They divorced in 1925 after only two years of marriage. Jake left the farm and eventually returned to Rock Valley where he worked as a carpenter. He was helping my father on his farm when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor igniting World War II. Later in life, Jacob lived in a tiny house in Rock Valley where he died at the age of 90 on September 2, 1972. He is buried at Valley View Cemetery in Rock Valley.



Jake Wassenaar's headstone

Sam also farmed with his father near Winfred; taking a break to serve in World War I. He also read the Dutch newspaper, but it appears Sam didn't learn too much from his brother Jake's experience with the lonely-hearts column. He answered an ad, and in 1914, married a young lady named Gerlie Vande Sande. The marriage plummeted quickly. The young lady apparently was seriously mentally disturbed, and at one point, nearly killed Sam. He somehow ended the relationship and went back to live with Peter and Nellie. But he still had not learned his lesson. He answered another ad from young lady in Holland who wanted to come to America to get married and work as a housekeeper.

This time, though, he didn't tell his family anything about it since they had given him so much grief over the first ad. One day, a messenger came from the Winfred train station with the message that there was a Dutch family on the train platform looking for a Sytze Wassenaar. Sam's brother Jake went to see who it was. He was surprised to find a widow named Bertha Vander Mey with her three young children.

Bertha announced that she was there to marry Sam and take over housekeeping for the family. Jake delivered Bertha and her children to the farm just in time for dinner. The family was shocked. They already had a housekeeper since granddaughter Nellie had been caring for her grandmother. None of this bothered Bertha who explained that she was the new housekeeper and the granddaughter would be her personal maid. Granddaughter Nellie, of course, became angry and quit. She left and returned to Spencer, South Dakota within days.

Bertha, who didn't anticipate invalid care as part of the job description, apparently caused so much stress in the home that the elder Nellie died just two weeks later. Nevertheless, Sam married Bertha. Peter, Sr. apparently couldn't stand having her and the kids in the house, so he built a completely new house for them on Sam's part of the farm. Sam and Bertha stayed on the Winfred farm for a while, but it was not destined to be a long-term arrangement. It was said that, in time, they ran up a number of debts for Peter, lost everything they owned, and finally moved to Waukesha, Wisconsin. Apparently neither of them ever learned to manage their money — although it's said that Bertha always had the nicest home furnishings and tableware. In later years, they moved back to Rock Valley.

As a child, I can remember Uncle Sam and Aunt Bertha. They lived in a tiny house just west of the Rock Valley city park. He worked for a distribution firm called the Thornburg Company, and he transported merchandise for them from the train station to their office just off Main Street. He had a big wooden pushcart with long handles and two huge wagon wheels. He could be seen most days making the two-block trip to the train station and back. Sam's appearance around town was memorable to most folks because he was very tall and very thin.

I've learned since that his exceptional height was a characteristic common to many men of Frisian descent. In fact, Dante Alighieri referred to this Frisian characteristic in his 1300's poem *The Divine Comedy*. Sam died on September 15, 1972 at the age of 86. Bertha preceded him in 1970. They are buried in Valley View Cemetery in Rock Valley, Iowa.



Sam and Bertha Wasseenaar's headstone

Like so many Dutch immigrants who came to America in the late 1800s, the Wasseenaars were simple people with simple aspirations. They sought out farmland where they could create a better life for their families. It's possible that Poppe and Pietje did better than their children, who were forced to contend with the crushing economic problems of the Great Depression and the challenge of the Dust Bowl years that followed.



The Wasseenaar family plot in the Winfred Community Cemetery. Poppe and Pietje's headstones are in the foreground. The stones for their sons William and Cornelius and their daughter Johanna and husband William Kooistra are adjacent to the larger Wasseenaar plot marker.





A pastel drawing of Friesland's landscape in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The province has nearly one fifth of the country's iconic windmills. As shown in the drawing, many structures were built on raised mounds of soil called "terps." This ensured they would stay above changing water levels.

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## *The Descendants of Gerben Minnes Wassenaar*

**Generation #1** – Gerben Minnes Wassenaar – b. 1784, d. 21 Sep 1847  
& Spouse Aaltje Willems – b. ??, d. ??, m. ?? had at least one child named

**Generation #2** – Willem Gerbens Wassenaar – b. Sep 1817, d. ??  
& Spouse Johanna Poppes van der Meulen – b. Sep 1819, d. ??, m. 25 Apr 1844 had at least one child named

**Generation #3** – Poppe (Peter) Willems Wassenaar – b. 19 Apr 1847, d. 2 Jan 1932  
& Spouse Pietje (Nellie) Meijers – b. 20 Aug 1848, d. 21 Nov 1922 had one child named–

**Generation #4** – Tjitske (Tillie) Wassenaar – b. 11 Sep 1878, d. 11 Mar 1957  
& Spouse Willem Leendert Vermulm – b. 11 Oct 1872, d. 24 June 1944 had a child named

**Generation #5** – Jake Ver Mulm – b. 16 Feb 1919, d. 29 Oct 2002  
& Spouse Dorothy Van Roekel – b. 24 Jul 1918, d. 19 Aug 2020, m. 19 Feb 1941 had a child named

**Generation #6** – Dennis Eugene Ver Mulm – b. 6 Jul 1952  
& Spouse Martha Leu Scott – b. 14 Apr 1952, m. 15 May 1976 and had children named

**Generation #7** – Scott Evan Ver Mulm – b. 10 Feb 1982  
& Spouse Kasey Baker – b. 27 Feb 1979, m. 9 Oct 2010

**Generation #7** – Molly Erin Ver Mulm – b. 7 Nov 1986

Poppe and Pietje Wassenaar were both natives of Friesland Province in the Netherlands. Friesland is unique within the Dutch nation in that its language, West Frisian, or Frysk, is distinct from other Dutch dialects. Traveling through the Frisian countryside, one notices the village names on road signs are in both Dutch and Frysk.

Poppe was born in the village of St. Anna Parochie and Pietje in the Village of St. Jacobie Parochie—the two villages are only about a mile apart, and the entire area abuts the North Sea. It is a land of dikes, cows, hay, and terps. The area is composed completely of land reclaimed by the Dutch from the Middlesee in the 1500s.

Poppe was serving his required military service when he and Pietje married in 1870. Growing up as closely as they did, it's very likely that they may have known each other since childhood. Their first child Frans was born two months before their wedding. From 1870 to 1886, Pietje bore ten children. One of the children died around the age of seven.

Poppe and Pietje emigrated to America in February 1898.



Immigrants in line at the Barge Office in 1898



S.S. Rotterdam III – Holland America Lines  
This is the ship that carried Poppe and Pietje to America



## POPPE (PETER) WASSENAAR - Family Group Sheet

### Poppe (Peter) Willems Wassenaar

Birth: 19 Apr 1847 in St. Anna Parochie, Friesland  
 Death: 2 Jan 1932 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa  
 Parents: Willem Gerbens Wassenaar & Johanna Poppes  
 van der Meulen



### Pietje (Nellie) Meijers

Birth: 20 Aug 1848 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland  
 Death: 21 Nov 1922 in Winfred, Lake, South Dakota  
 Parents: Frans Olferts Meijers & Tjitske Jaspers Keizer



*Marriage: November 3, 1870 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Het Bildt, Friesland, Netherlands*

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
Frans Poppes Wassenaar	M	6 Sep 1870 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Antje Sanders	23 May 1895 in Het Bildt	1 Sep 1956 in Rock Valley, Iowa
Willem Poppes Wassenaar	M	6 Aug 1871 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland			9 Dec 1920 in Spencer, South Dakota
Cornelis Poppes Wassenaar	M	8 Jul 1872 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland			4 Apr 1879 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland
Johanna Poppes Wassenaar	F	25 Aug 1873 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Willem Kooistra	20 Feb 1896	28 Nov 1954 in Canova, South Dakota
Tiete Poppes Wassenaar	M	17 Aug 1875 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Lela Morris, Ada Gibbs, Mary Kramer	Unknown, 9 Jul 1921, Unknown	2 Feb 1960 Santa Rosa, California
Gerben Poppes Wassenaar	M	14 Sep 1877 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Alice Sanders	1905	25 Jan 1958 in Steen, Minnesota
<b>Tjitske (Tillie) Poppes Wassenaar</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>11 Sep 1878 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland</b>	<b>Willem Leendert Vermulst</b>	<b>5 Nov 1898 in Rock Valley, IA</b>	<b>11 Mar 1957 in Rock Valley, Iowa</b>
Cornelis Poppes Wassenaar	M	10 Dec 1880 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Elizabeth Kraaj	3-Feb-14	1935 in Winfred, South Dakota
Tacke Poppes Wassenaar	M	15 Sept 1882 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Ethel Walker	11-Apr-24	2 Sep 1971 in Rock Valley, Iowa
Sytze Poppes Wassenaar	M	23 Sep 1886 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland	Bertha Vander Mey	25 Feb 1903 in Rock Valley, IA	15 Sep 1972 in Rock Valley, Iowa

1876.

In het jaar Een duizend acht hondert zeventienvierzig, den zestiensten  
dag der maand April is voor ons opzettelijke  
Klaas Hinzen Ambtenaar van den Burger-  
lijken Stand der provincie het Súd  
Provincie Vriesland, gecompareerd:  
Willem Giebels Hageenaar oud een en dertig  
jaren, van beroep meekman wonende te Sint Anna  
Parochie Welke ons verklaarde dat op den negentiensten  
dezer maand des namiddags  
ten zeven ure te zijn huis aldaar een kind van het  
manneljk geslacht is geboren uit hene Willema  
zijne echtgenote Johanna Poppe van  
de Wadden zintw bedij staer om  
achtig

aan welk kind hij verklaarde de voornaam te geven van Poppe

De gemelde verklaring is geschied in tegenwoordigheid van Jeppe  
Sybes de Jong oud negenenveertig  
jaren, van beroep schiedmaeker wonende te Sint Anna  
en Pieter Sybes Jaarsma  
oud achttien jaren, van beroep meekman  
wonende te Sint Anna

Welke deze Acte, nadat dezelve was voorgelezen, nevens ons hebben  
ontekend, metgevoerd de zestien en  
zeven getuigen, die beide verklaarden hun  
naam niet te kunnen bekennen, uit hoofde  
de naal ongecomptheit.

J. A. de Jong Handteekening

Poppe's birth record showing he was born at home at 7 pm

65. Sint

N: 129

In den jare Een duizend acht hondert achteventig, den zestiensten  
dag der maand Augustus is voor ons opzettelijke  
Abraham Hinzen Ambtenaar van den Burger-  
lijken Stand der provincie het Súd  
Provincie Vriesland, gecompareerd: Frans Elberts  
Meijer — — — — — oud vijf  
jaren, arbeider wonende te Sint Anna  
Parochie Welke ons verklaarde dat op den twintigsten  
dezer maand des voormiddags  
ten tien ure te zijn huis aldaar een kind van het  
manneljk geslacht is geboren uit hene Willema  
zijne echtgenote Pietje van  
de Wadden zintw bedij staer om  
achtig

aan welk kind hij verklaarde de voornaam te geven van Pietje

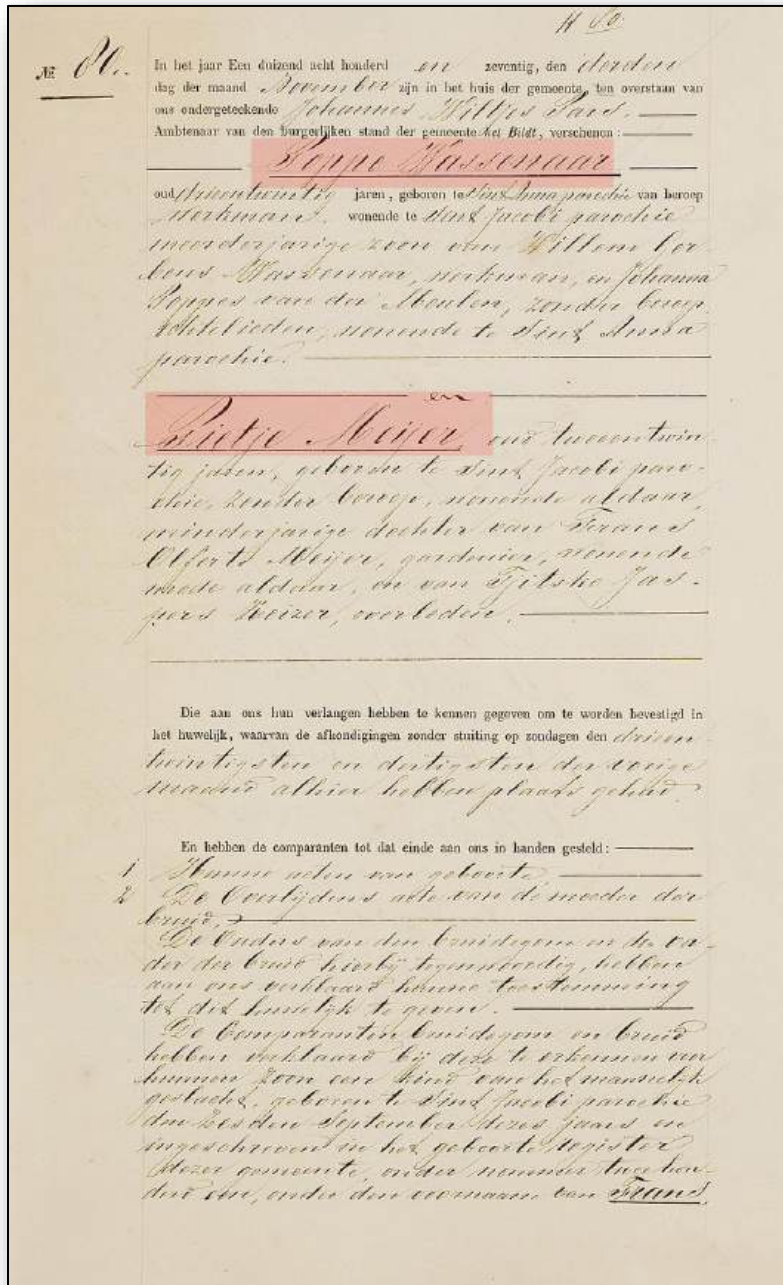
De gemelde verklaring is geschied in tegenwoordigheid van Pieter  
Abraham Hinzen oud vijf  
jaren, van beroep arbeider wonende te Sint Anna  
en Frans Elberts Meijer  
oud vijf jaren, van beroep arbeider  
wonende te Sint Anna

Waaraan wij deze Acte hebben opgemaakt, welke, nadat dezelve was voorgelezen,  
door ons den zestiensten en zeven getuigen, die beide verklaarden hun  
naam niet te kunnen bekennen, uit hoofde de naal ongecomptheit.

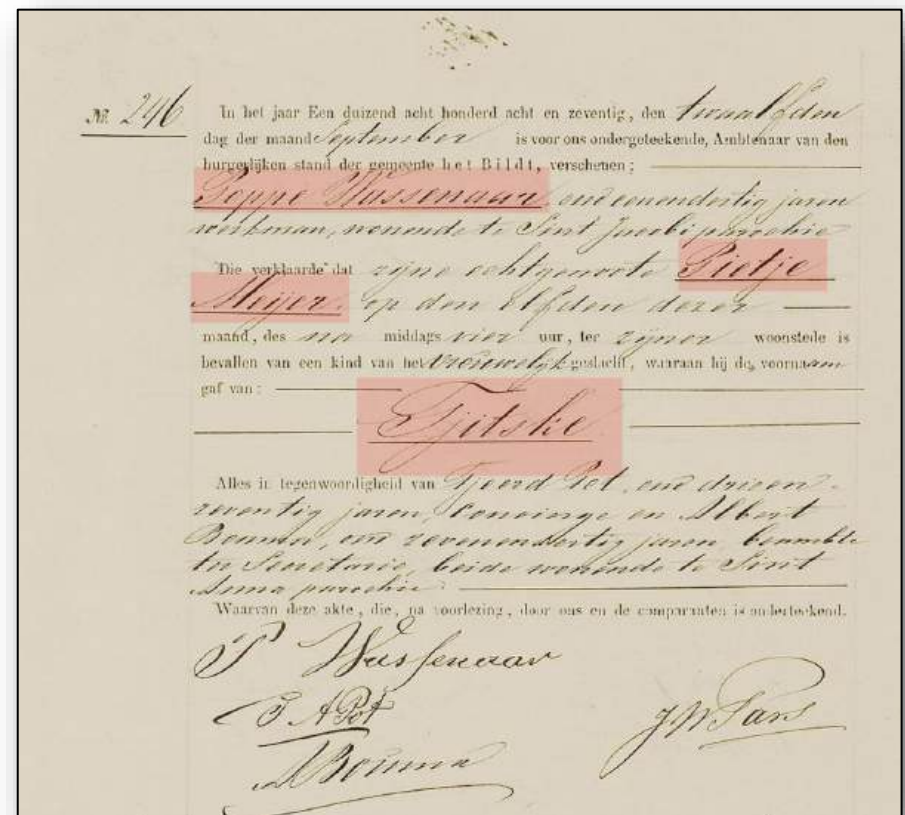
J. A. de Jong Handteekening Meijer

Pietje's birth record showing she was born at home at 10 am





Poppe and Pietje's Wedding record



Tjitske's birth record showing she was born at home at 4 pm

Roughly translated it reads,

"In the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight, on the twelfth day of the month of September, before me, the undersigned officer of the civil registration of the Municipality of Het Bildt, appears Poppe Wassenaar, a workman and resident of Sint Jacobie Parochie. He declares that to his spouse Pietje Meijer, on the eleventh day of the month, at four hours past mid-day, in his own habitation was born a child of the Dutch Kingdom for whom he gave the first name of Tjitske. Everything in the presence of God and these witnesses. With this act, this document, after which being read by those appearing is undersigned."





1269

[MINOR.]

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

WORCESTER, SS.

To the Honorable the Justices of the SUPERIOR COURT,  
holden at Worcester, within and for the County of Worcester.

RESPECTFULLY represents Peter Wassener

Twenty two years of age, and by occupation a Laborer an alien, that he is  
that he resides at number Parish Farm  
on Whitonsville street,  
Northbridge in the County of Worcester,  
that he was born at Netherland  
in the County of Netherland  
in February on or about the 17th day of 1873  
is now about 22 years of age; that he arrived at New York City  
in the State of New York in the United States of America,  
on or about the First day of November  
in the year one thousand eight hundred and 89  
that it is his *bona fide* intention to become a Citizen of the United States of America, and to renounce  
forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State, and Sovereignty, and particularly to  
Wilhelmina Queen of the Netherlands

Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, whose subject he has heretofore been;  
that such has been his *bona fide* intention for two years last past, and that he was a minor at the time he  
arrived in the United States, and resided therein three years next preceding his arrival at the age of twenty-  
one years. And that he has resided in the United States five years last past.

And said petitioner further represents that he has ever since said arrival continued to reside within the  
jurisdiction of said United States, to wit: at Whitonsville in  
Northbridge

And said petitioner further represents that for one year immediately last past he has resided in the  
State of Massachusetts, that he has never borne any hereditary title, or been of any of the orders of Nobil-  
ity; that he is ready to renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to every foreign Prince, Potentate,  
State, or Sovereignty, and particularly to the said Victoria, Queen Wilhelmina

as aforesaid, whose subject he has heretofore been: that he is attached to the principles of the Constitution  
of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

WORCESTER, SS. SUPERIOR COURT.

We Robert Hamilton  
and B. L. M. Smith

severally depose and say that we are respectively citizens of the United States, and that we at the time  
of filing the preceding petition resided as set forth in the said petition, and that we have known the  
foregoing petitioner for 4 years last past, during which time he  
has resided in Northbridge

and has conducted himself  
and behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United  
States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same; that we verily believe that he was a  
minor at the time he arrived in the United States, that he resided therein three years next preceding his  
arrival at the age of twenty-one years, and that for two years last past it has been his *bona fide* intention to  
become a citizen of the United States.

Robert Hamilton  
B. L. M. Smith

WORCESTER, SS. Sworn to in said Court November 16th 1895

Attest: William Act. Clerk.

I Peter Wassener  
do solemnly swear, that I do absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to every  
foreign Prince, Potentate, State, or Sovereignty, particularly to  
Wilhelmina, Queen of the Netherlands  
Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,  
whose subject I have heretofore been; and that I will support the Constitution of the United States of  
America. So help me God.

Peter Wassener

WORCESTER, SS. Superior Court,  
November 16th 1895 Sworn and admitted a citizen.

William Act. Clerk.

Tiete's citizenship oath was taken on November 16, 1895—just three months after his arrival. In it, he lies about his age, his birthdate, and his arrival date in America. His witnesses, Hamilton and Smith, also lied about having known him for four years and about his having resided in Massachusetts for that same period.





Shown at upper left is an older photo of St. Jacobie Parochie. It shows the Reformed Church (De Groate Kerk) at the community's center. The church was built in 1843, and the municipal records show that Poppe and Pietje were officially married here in 1870.

Shown at the upper right is the same church in its present-day form. Not much appears different on the outside. However, the church is no longer used for worship services. It is now the property of the Alde Fryske Cherken Foundation, and it functions as an event and cultural center for Het Bildt municipality, and it's available for rental for a variety of activities.

Shown to the left is a photo of the main street in St. Jacobie Parochie as it appears today. The village is extremely neat and tidy with well-maintained homes and a few businesses.





At right – Poppe and Pietje Wassenaar

Below – A GoogleEarth view of the villages of St. Anna Parochie and St. Jacobie Parochie. The villages are two miles apart—roughly the same distance they are separated from the North Sea. The entire coastline in this part of Friesland is protected by a dike over 20 feet high. There is an old saying that, “God made the Earth, but the Dutch made Holland.” That is particularly true in the area of Het Bildt municipality, which is made up almost entirely of land reclaimed from the Middlezee. Dairy farming along with cattle, wheat, hay, and sugar beets are major agricultural products.

