



THE HORSTMAN FAMILY

A FAMILYSEARCH in HAHLEN, GERMANY

by Jan Horstman

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HOW IT ALL STARTED

In 1993 I took a first step to chart the Horstman family. In an earlier stage all relevant documents were collected, sometimes just in time, before they were thrown away. In this way a fairly complete archive was realized, which contained marriage certificates, old pictures, school diplomas, death tidings etc.

Happily I was able to ask my father Krijn Cornelis Horstman (* 23 December 1909) who were the persons figuring on the various photographs, otherwise they would have been worthless. Thus, for example, there is a picture of a savage-looking man, who according to my father had been a seaman.

A first step in 1993 consisted of writing a series of letters to Horstmans mentioned in the telephone directories of The Hague and Rotterdam, as well as in the Rotary members list. As an attachment to that letter a family tree was included that reached back to about 1850, mentioning the then oldest known greatgreatgrandfather Johann Heinrich Christian who was said to be born in Sachsen and who came to Holland as a grass-mower. In reply I received the nicest reactions: people wrote to me that my letter had been *the* subject of conversation on birthday gatherings. We also received people at home and extensive letters with data that were, however, often not relevant.

Although these reactions were without exception very positive, no further traces to the origin of our family were found. It also became clear that in general people have little or no awareness of time in history.

At the time my position as managing director of a foundation left me hardly any time to pursue the search and consequently the results were left until the year 2000, when I became 60 years and was able to retire on a pre-pension scheme.

One of my intentions was to take on again the "family search".

USED METHODS

In the field of genealogy I was a total ignorant. The then available data I had entered in a computer spreadsheet, which in the start allowed a clear survey, although soon showed its limitations. My nephew Jan Lagendijk at Flushing (Vlissingen), who was already an expert in these matters and especially studied the Lagendijk family (my mother), gave me his findings and indicated that, when purchasing professional software for genealogy, interchangeability with other software was the thing look for.

From the Dutch Society for Genealogy I bought GensData for Windows version 5.0, computer software that proved to function satisfactorily. Using this software and entering the data on hand it soon became clear that many ideas and notions in this field were new and still without meaning to me.

Happily the people that I approached were all prepared and enthusiastic to help me further on the path of genealogy.

The methods used were:

- searching civil archives
- Internet as a source
- church books
- churches and the churchyard
- façades on houses and farms
- finding and studying literature

These methods will be discussed below more extensively:

COMMUNITY OR CIVIL ARCHIVES

Visiting civil archives was a first step to acquire more information and for that purpose the archives of the town of Oegstgeest were a logical choice since my grandfather was born there. When I inquired on the phone for the opening hours, I was connected to their archivist, mrs. drs. De Glopper, who, when she heard I had to come from Zeeland, kindly offered to investigate already some records. When she called back she produced valuable information, which proved that my original Dutch ancestor was born about 1823 in Hahlen, Prussia.

However not one encyclopaedia or atlas gave a clue of the whereabouts of that place! These archives of the town of Oegstgeest in Holland are located in a large vault in the basement of the town hall. When one is led inside, a heavy door closes behind you. I visited this place on the 15th march 2001. It was soon clear to me that not only birth and marriage records were interesting but the "bevolkingsregister" (or civil records) were even more instructive as they produced also the address of the family's dwelling and the respective relationships between persons in a said household on that address. It also gives professions, religion etc.

Below is an example of an extract from the Rotterdam civil administration:

<i>Date listing</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Christian name</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Date of birth</i>	<i>Place of birth</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Profession</i>
8-12-1899	Horstman	Christiaan	m	28-4-1879	Oegstgeest	Head	M	NH	Florist
	Hardinxveld	Cornelia Wietske	v	19-5-1889	Rotterdam	wife	M	NH	
	Horstman	Christiaan	m	23-12-1909	Rotterdam	son	O	NH	Officeclerk
	Horstman	Krijn Cornelis	m	23-12-1909	Rotterdam	son	O	NH	Officeclerk
	Horstman	Cornelia	v	4-9-1911	Rotterdam	daughter	O	Rem.	
	Horstman	Wilh. Wietske	v	23-8-1913	Rotterdam	daughter	O	Rem.	
	Horstman	Eduard	m	17-9-1916	Rotterdam	son	O	Rem.	

A picture of this family is in the heading of this report. On a stool at the right my father Krijn Cornelis is seated, an identical twin to his brother Christiaan (left). In between her parents is daughter Cornelia and in a traditional pose on a bear's skin is youngest son Eduard. Daughter Wilhelmina Wietske is not on the picture, the child died after only 10 months. The family lived subsequently at: Bloemstraat 24, Goudsche straat 44, Zwaanshals 239a, Quintstraat 11d and Eben Haëzerstraat 126b at Rotterdam.

Handicapping is the fact that due to a Dutch law concerning privacy matters nothing that is more recent than 50 years is made available to the public. For that reason the investigated records were in general not newer than 1938.

As mentioned earlier, a marriage record of 1848 at Oegstgeest showed that my Dutch "ancestor" was born at Hahlen in 1823 and that his parents were Johann Heinrich Christian Horstmann and Anne Louise Dorothee Volkmann. The attachments to this record would certainly be especially interesting since they would have consisted of a written consent to the marriage from his father and a document from the Prussian authorities (a birth certificate?). Mrs. De Glopper told me that all original attachments were kept at the Rijksarchief (State Archive) at The Hague.

On enquiring there it came out that these documents burned during World War II when Allied Forces bombed parts of The Hague. The reason for this was that the Germans were launching V-I and V-II guided missiles targeted for London from bases there!

Some time later I discovered that this great-great-grandfather married a second time, to be precise in 1875. To this marriage certificate the same documents would have been attached, so there would be another chance... Alas, these burned also in the same bombardment.

After Oegstgeest I visited the city archives of Rotterdam, Delft and Leiden. Although the method of entering the contents of archives vary from town to town, it must be allowed that generally speaking they are perfectly accessible. Everywhere there are microfilm readers, photocopying machines and in Leiden even a number of computers is at the disposal of the searchers.

From the professions laid down one can deduce that the population has in general improved on education and social status. In the beginning of the 19th century the population was mainly simply or not at all educated (farmers, labourers, servant maids etc.). A very small part consisted of middle and higher class (craftsmen, teachers, doctors etc.). Generation by generation the middle classes have developed by better education and professions develop like office clerks, engineers, managers, contractors.

THE INTERNET

Thus I came to a second important source for genealogical investigations and that is the internet. Simply typing the name Horstman as an address or in a search engine resulted in several contacts, of which I mention mr. Michael Speh, who excelled with an extensive family tree on his website. When contacted via e-mail one of his first questions was after our religion. This is, in Dutch ears, a rather unusual inquiry. It proved to be very functional however. In earlier history many branches of families adhered to the protestant conviction (in Germany Evangelic Lutheran), whereas others remained Roman Catholic. As such the simple information on one's religion can determine whether one is at least possibly related to the same family branch. As a matter of fact the Horstmann family of mr. Speh originated from Rheine. He and mr. Nils Kanning at Petershagen put me on the trail to the best sources on the internet. The site of "FamilySearch.org" of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (the "Mormons") proved to be the most relevant and extensive. Of course everybody will have heard the story that those Mormons keep the records of "everyone" in their computers, and now it proved to be true. My Dutch ancestor was there also! Their archives are based on the old church books. Also the afore mentioned town of Delft makes these genealogical data accessible on their website (<http://www.archief.delft.nl>).

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Individual Record FamilySearch™ International Genealogical Index v4.02

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☐ **JOHANN HEINRICH CHRISTIAN HORSTMANN**

Sex: M

Event(s):

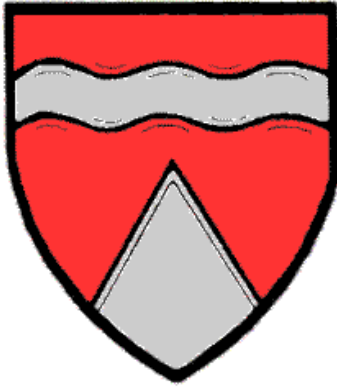
Christening: 21 Dec 1823
Evangelisch, Hahlen, Westfalen, Preussen

Parents:

Father: JOHANN HEINRICH CHRISTIAN HORSTMANN
Mother: ANNE DOROTHEE LUISE VOLKMANN

Source Information:

Batch number:	Dates	Source Call No.	Type	Printout Call No.	Type
C962932	1820-1849	0470426	Film	NONE	
Sheet:					



Via the website of the Latter-day Saints I looked for many Individual Records and printed them. After having constructed a number of theories I didn't get any further. It is true that I found the website of the village of Hahlen, but no more was to be found than the village news and the village arms, *pictured here*. The community, so it came out, was annexed by the town of Minden, situated in the Northern part of Germany between the Teutoburger Forest and the Harz, on the edge of the Weserbergland. Furthermore it could be seen from the telephone directory that the region was virtually a cradle of Horstmanns. On the map, extracted from the website of Minden, one can see that Hahlen now only figures as a suburban town quarter, though of rural character.



It also became clear that the region is very attractive for tourists: not only Minden is worthwhile visiting, but the same goes for nearby Rinteln and Hameln, town of the Pied Piper, which is in the same region.

Minden has a very informative website as has Hameln, both places evoke historical interest. Near Rinteln there is a campsite on a lakeshore with a small beach.

At that moment my wife and I decided to plan a short stay there to (partly) spend time to the family search.



THE CHURCH BOOKS

So I came to a third source that is indispensable, mainly for data before the Napoleonic era: the church books. I learned that the civil administration (towns, rural communities etc.) was only set up during the 19th century and that before that time churches normally recorded all these data. In the case of our family these records were the church books of Hahlen and Hartum, which are partly recorded on microfilm. These microfilms are kept in the Evangelical Church Bureau at Bielefeld and I went there for that purpose.

In a phone call I made an appointment to study these microfilm archives at the Church Bureau, especially to have a look in the church book of Hahlen. The original church books of the region are kept in vaults I presume, but are accessible via these microfilms. Having paid a fee of 5 Deutschemark I was admitted.

Since only the church books from 1801 onwards were filmed, it narrowed my search to my "ancestor" born in 1823 and his father, also a Johann Heinrich Christian Horstmann, born June 17th, 1801. The handwriting of the ministers (Pfarrer) varied widely in legibility, also due to the gothic lettering used. In earlier German language, the "Plattdeutsch" term for marrying is "Trauen" like the pronouncing in Dutch. It touched me that on christening occasions also the names of witnesses were recorded, through which close friends and favourite relatives of the happy parents were revealed.

About 1800 and earlier customs and morals proved to be rather enlightened just as they are nowadays, in Holland at least. This is in contradiction to the strict morals of the Victorian period in the second half of the 19th century, in the first half of the 20th century up to the fifties even. From the church books one can easily see, that it was not uncommon to marry only after a pregnancy showed! People didn't seem to worry about these things. Also extra-marital births or cases of an "unknown" father occurred quite often (annotation "uneheliches Kind")

Until halfway the 20th century families had many children, also in the Netherlands, where even in the fifties in the province of Brabant families with 14 to 17 children were no exception. My own grandfather and -mother Lagendijk had 9 children! One of the underlying reasons for this would of course be the significant postnatal death rate. That is one thing genealogy makes clear.

Nearly every family was confronted with one or more children dying after birth or within a few years. It often occurred then that a next child received the same names as an earlier deceased brother or sister. They were most often named after their parents, grandparents or other esteemed relatives. In our own family the names Johann Heinrich Christian (or some of these) recur rather constantly.

During Napoleonic occupation many girl's names have French origins, like Anne Dorothee Louise.

THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCHYARD



At first sight this might probably not seem appropriate to visit and look for relevant data. But how often have we not walked over gravestones in the floor of ancient churches? On these gravestones naturally lots of data, like names and corresponding dates of birth and decease are engraved, therefore are interesting in our quest for the past.

Once arrived at Hahlen our first visit was to the church, that we supposed to be there. We used a map derived from the internet. We discovered however a most charming little chapel located on a slight elevation in the centre of a rural village. At first we didn't notice the modest chapel through the many trees, but a small sign reading "Kapellenweg" (Chapel Road) led us through an overgrown footpath and after some steps up to the chapel. All doors were locked.

According to inscriptions the chapel originated from 1503 and next to the main entrance two gravestones were leaning against the wall. One of them was hardly legible, but somehow one could discern the name "Horstmann" followed by the word "ge- or verstorben" (deceased).



Americans and English could achieve wonders here with their skills in "rubbing". As might be known, this is the art of making inscriptions legible by fixing a wide sheet of paper over the gravestone and rubbing over it with crayon or charcoal. We have all done that as kids in a smaller scale on coins.



Since all doors were locked my wife took a picture of the interior through one of the stained glass windows. We imagined how our ancestor was baptised there in the presence of his proud parents....

Around the elevation of the chapel a few farms were located, the "Dorfschenke" (village café) and the ancient "Dorfschule" (village school).



A few hundred yards from there, across the busy Königstrasse (King Street), the cemetery lay hidden behind trees. We decided to have a look there, assuming one would always find something. There we came into contact with the caretaker mr.

Bernd Wiesenborn who even produced an ancient-looking register, in which starting from about 1890, all data of the deceased and buried were listed minutely.

Furthermore another booklet with ancient data was kept in an old and battered cookytin. It is extraordinary that such old information is still kept in such an obvious way!

Mr. Wiesenborn indicated to us where the family grave of our branch of the Horstmanns was located. To our regret there was no gravestone, whereas most family graves indeed had one. We saw various stones of Horstmanns, even some of Petersen families (the name of my wife).



For more information the caretaker directed us to mr. Eberhard Brandhorst, who lived at the Molkereiweg. According to him this person was an authority on historical matters. When we called at the indicated address, nobody was at home.

After this we wanted to have a look at the church of Hartum, a village only 2 miles along the road. This is less than an hour's walk, a distance easily covered in the past. Close enough also to get to know the girls of the nearby village. We also got to know someone interesting there....

FAÇADES OF HOUSES AND FARMS

In the region in Germany that we visited, an old tradition is still visible, namely one whereby on the façade names and dates are carved of the people who commissioned this house or farm and who dwelled in it. These data are most often carved in elegant lettering in the oak wood in the main façade. Also very often a text with a religious and moral intent is added. To prove that this did not only occur in Germany we just have to look at the glasses in the town hall of Kapelle, where the following text can be seen: "There is a measure in all things".

On farms these carvings were very often part of the main entrance to the "deel", where the farmers entered with their carts.

Quite near the chapel of Hahlen the Hahnenfeldstrasse winded its way. When passing we noticed to our pleasant surprise an engraved text above the entrance of a farm. This text read:

JOHANN HENRICH CHRISTIAN HORSTMAN UND ANNA DORTEA ELISABETH BOHNEN	
DIE HABEN DIESES HAUS LASSEN BAUEN DURCH DEN MEISTER JH. WILHELM WEDEKING	
DEN 27TEN	APRIL
ANNO	1799
NRO	46



(Johann Henrich Christian Horstman and Anna Dorteia Elisabeth Bohnen had this house built by master JH. Wilhelm Wedeking the 27th of April, 1799)

You can find this couple in the familytree enclosed in this report.

More than often we noticed texts that were meant to evoke introspection and reflection. It is clearly that religion formed an important part in a person's life. Below is a picture giving an example of such texts, on the Frederking farmhouse.



PERSONAL CONTACTS

In addition to earlier mentioned people I was so fortunate to meet Mr. Heinrich von Behren. That happened like this: At the website of the Latter-day Saints I had seen that many a Horstmann also originated in Hartum, a few miles further on. So after we had visited Hahlen, my wife and I decided to have a short look at Hartum as well. When we rounded the Lutheran church there and felt at doors to see whether they were open, we were noticed by a person who was tending his garden a few steps away. He asked us what we were looking for, could he help us? This happened to be Mr. Von Behren, who turned out to be very knowledgeable on the matter of history of this region and its families in particular. He has contributed enormously to my knowledge and to the results presented here and would give me such valuable information. Having learned the purpose of our visit to this region, he invited us inside.

Now I learned from close how these villages developed, he told us of the regional history and how in the 19th century the migration to Holland became significant. The main cause for this was the extreme poverty in Niedersachsen, whereas The Netherlands were relatively wealthy as a result of the profitable exploitation of their colonies. This yearly migration to Holland was seasonal and could amount to 30.000 workers per year! This episode is known as the "Hollandgängerei" (Hollandgoing). My Dutch ancestor took part in this migration but he stayed!

Mr. Von Behren also told me how the different branches in families could be discerned one from another. For that purpose branches of families had nicknames, which they kept for generations. So our branch enjoyed the nicknames of "Schniets" and later on "Viets". This use was demonstrated adequately when we talked to a farmer's wife in Hahlen. She pointed to us a house in the Hahnenfeldstrasse where lived a young Wilhelm Horstmann "Viets".

LITERATURE



When starting, many books on the subject were not in my possession. The literature was collected during my investigations. I was very surprised to find that so much had been written on the regional history. It is clear that this love for recording originates from strong bonds with the places of birth of people, something that can be noted especially in the country. Zeeland too is a fine example of this notion. A list of relevant literature follows at the end of this report.

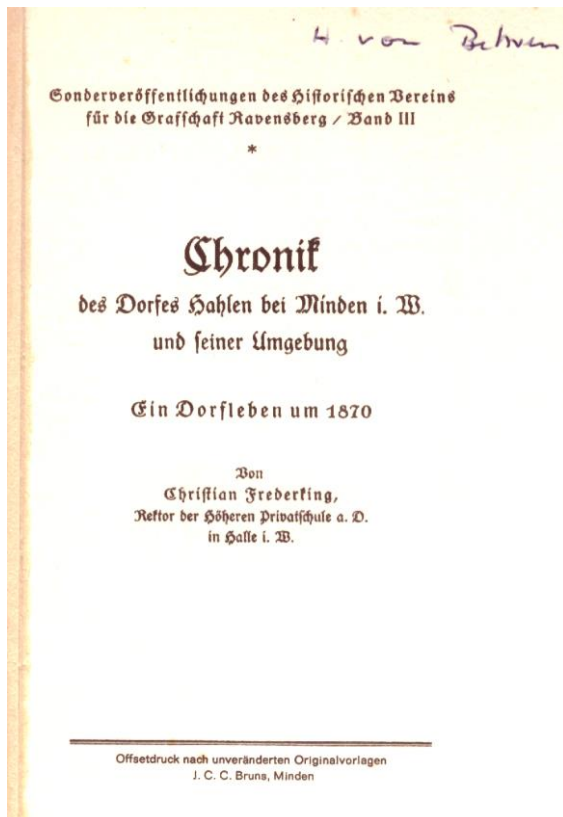
At Mr. Von Behren's place we were able to look into the so-called "Sippenbücher", books relating data on the families of the region. These consisted of 3 parts, all edited by Heinz Riechmann and published by the Minden town archivist Mr. Eberhard Brandhorst, the same as I mentioned earlier!

The titles are explicit:

“The Families of the Church Communities of Hartum 1661 – 1760”, followed by part 2 for the period 1761 – 1825 and part 3 for the period 1826 – 1875. They contain the families of Hartum, Hahlen, Holzhausen and Nordhemmern (Minden 1981 and 1984).

These valuable handbooks cover the contents of the church books reaching back to 1661. Earlier sources are not available. On enquiring it came out that mr. Brandhorst still possessed a few more copies of these books, which I then could procure via the kind cooperation of mr. Von Behren.

Also I was happy to acquire from him a very attractive account of a boy’s life around 1870 (Minden, about 1930):



It is striking here that the author Christian Frederking, born 1860, describes as an example the descent of his family. From this account one can see bonds with the Horstman family. I quote and translate a fragment of page 89:

“As example of a family tree one can describe here the families of the Culs farm No. 23 at Hahlen, without side-branches. The Hartum church book starts in the year 1661 and is kept by reverend Johan Daniel Weddige, whose son Peter Daniel calls himself Weddigen. At this time Henrich Horstmann Culs, confirmed at the age of 13 in 1662, therefore born in 1649 and his wife Anneke Schonebohm, born 1650, are in possession of the Culs farm. Then follow son-in-law Cordt Meyer Culs and his wife Horstmann Culs. Since they have no offspring, the farm is transferred to a relative of mrs. Anneke, Anne Ilsche Röthemeier 1697 – 1772). Early 1716 Johan Daniel Frederking (1691 – 1762), the god-child of reverend Weddige, is married to Ann Ilsche Röthemeier from Hahlen.....” etc.

From this one can conclude that just by mere accident the Frederking family comes into possession of the Culs farm.

To acquire further information of the region and its population in earlier times the following literature may be of use:

- Jos Kaldenbach: “Hollandgänger aus dem Norddeutschen Raum“ (Hollandgoers from North German Regions) – Minden Historical Society,
- Wilhelm Brandhorst: “Heuerlinge und Heuerlingshäuser in Hartum“ (Farmworkers and their Dwellings in Hartum) – Minden Historical Society,
- Hormann: “Die Siedlungsentwicklung im Mindener Nordbördegebiet“ (Settlement in North Minden area) – Minden Historical Society
- Eberhard Brandhorst u.A.: „700 Jahre Hahlen“ (700 years Hahlen) – Minden-Hahlen 1996 – Gemeinschaft Hahler Vereine
- Heinz Wahler und Eberhard Brandhorst: „Hahlen – Lebendiger Ort mit alter Geschichte“ (Vivid place with ancient History) – Minden 1990

- Eberhard Brandhorst und Reiner Tesche: „100 Jahre Pfarrkirche Hartum“ (100 Years Parochial Church Hartum) – Hartum 1992 - Ev.-luth. Kirchengemeinde.

THE FAMILYTREES

On this website two family trees are given. One shows the family tree of German origin, from about 1630 onwards, up to our Dutch “ancestor” and Hollandgoer (born 1823). Most children that died earlier than the age of 14 were left out. The second family tree gives the Dutch family branch from the settling at Oegstgeest (around 1840) up to the present day.

Both trees give only names and dates of birth/christening and decease. Further data like e.g. addresses where one dwelled and marriage information can be found on the personal records in my archive. Above-mentioned literature can also be found there.

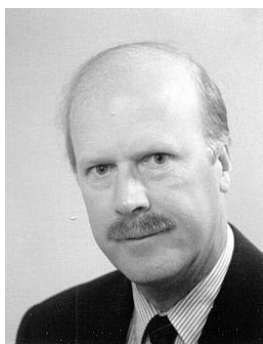
CONCLUSION

In writing this report I have envisioned especially to lay down some history for generations to come, who will possibly be interested in their roots. For that purpose it is necessary to record this information and to distribute it as widely as possible. I hope then that on a given moment a descendant will take up the thread and contribute further.

I thank mr. Heinrich von Behren for his valuable attribution to my story, for his willingness to share his knowledge and for all information he kindly gave me. I am also grateful to Mr. Brandhorst, who sent me several books and studies later on.

Looking back at this moment I feel that I keep pleasant memories of Hahlen and Hartum and of the people we met there. It was striking that my wife Loes became very enthusiastic during our stay, more and more she became a stimulus to establish personal contacts.

Kapelle, 3rd revised version: February 5th, 2019.



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(born April 9, 1940)*

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