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CONTENTS

ENGLISH ANCESTRY OF JONATHAN FAIRBANKS OF DEDHAM, MASS.—Clarence Almon Torrey 65
NOMENCLATURE.—G. Andrews Moriarty 72
ENGLISH CLUES: BOOTH, HARVEY, BEARDSLEY, STRATFORD, CONN.—Donald Lines Jacobus 77
SILENCE4 FRENCH, HER HUSBANDS (HOUSE AND JENNY) AND CHILDREN.—Mrs.John E. Barclay 80
PARENTAGE OF ANDREW HALLETT OF YARMOUTH, MASS.—John G. Hunt 84
CHARLES CHAPIN OF SALISBURY, CONN.—J. A. Spencer 85
RATLIFFE AND MARSHALL, GREENWICH, CONN.—Edythe Wilson Thoesen 86
ABIGAIL BROWN, PROBABLE WIFE OF RICHARD CURTICE OF HEBRON, CONN.—Claude W.Barlow 87
ENGLISH ORIGIN OF RANDALL HOLT AND EDWARD NORMANSELL....OVERSEAS ORIGIN OF VIRGINIA FAMILIES.—Cameron Allen 89
THE DOUWE AND AALTJE FONDA MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN, ALBANY, N.Y.—Paul W. Prindle 95
MORGAN DATA, MONTVILLE, NEW FAIRFIELD. AND KENT, CONN.—Marion Page Bunge 101
ENOCHSONS ON DELAWARE.—George E.McCracken 104
WHO WANTS WHAT AND WHERE 111
ANCESTOR TABLES
CV. Mrs. William A. Day 112
THE ONTARIO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY 113
ROYAL ANCESTRY OF JOSEPH BOWLES, WELLS, MAINE.—Walter Lee Sheppard 114
RECENT BOOKS 116
JOHN LEWIS OF NEW LONDON, CONN.: JOSEPH LEWIS OF SIMSBURY, CONN.—Donald Lines Jacobus 123

THE DOUWE AND AALTJE FONDA MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN

By Paul W. Prindle, B.S., Darien, Conn.

Jan Douwese Fonda and his wife Maritie Loockermans had a son, Douwe Fonda, baptized 28 Sept. 1701 at the Dutch Reformed Church, Albany, N.Y. (Holland Society Year Book, 1905: 23 - unless specifically stated otherwise, all parenthetical reference notations herein are to registers of that church as recorded in such yearbooks). On 24 July 1709, Isaac Douwese Fonda and his wife Alida Lansing bp. a son, Douwe Fonda (1905: 54). These first cousins, Douwe Janse Fonda and Douwe Isaacse Fonda, lived in the same town at the same time, were married in the same church to girls of the same given name, and baptized their thirteen children in that same church. Moreover, since patronymics were not shown in these particular marriage or baptism records (except for a completely useless initial in one instance, noted infra) the identity of the Douwe Fondas in the records has remained obscure, as exemplified by the caveat contained in the following quotation from page 49 of Prof. Jonathan Pearson's Contributions for the Genealogies of the First Settlers of the Ancient County of Albany (1872):

> Fonda, Douw Isaacse, m. Aaltje Ouderkerk, dau. of Isaac O. and Mayke Van Nes, March 2, 1727.....Ch: Isaac, bp. Jan. 17, 1728; Maria, bp. Jan. 4, 1830 (sic); Jan, bp. Jan. 10, 1731; Alida, bp. Oct. 7, 1733; Maria, bp. Aug. 13 (sic - either this, or the like record noted infra, should be August 18th), 1735; Mayke, bp. Oct. 21, 1737; Mayke, bp. Jan. 14, 1739; Isaac, bp. Apr. 15, 1744.
>
> Fonda, Douw, m. A. Van Nes, Oct. 29, 1732. Ch: Abraham, bp. March 25 (sic - should be 23), 1733; Maria, bp. Aug. 13, 1735; Hendrikje, bp. March 1, 1738; Jacob, bp. March 29, 1741; Rebecca, bp. Apr. 15, 1744.
>
> (It is not easy to distinguish the children belonging to the above two Douw Fondas, by the church register. The above distribution is the best that could be made by the compiler.)

This contributor believes that Prof. Pearson not only gave the wrong wives to the two Douwe Fondas, but correctly assigned to the two fathers only seven of the thirteen children.

Two well established Dutch customs are helpful in solving these problems. First, witnesses at baptisms were frequently the grandparents, uncles or aunts of the infants. Second, baptisms generally occurred in a matter of days or weeks after birth - not after an extended period. Relying on these generalities, this contributor presents solutions as follows:

Marriage Records

2 March 1727 - Douwe Fonda and Aaltie Ouderkerk (1906: 2).

She was bp. 6 Feb. 1704 (1905: 31), daughter of Isaac Ouderkerk and his wife Mayke Van Ness.

29 Oct. 1732 - D. Fonda and A. V. Nes (1906: 4).

As shown in the baptism records, their given names were Douwe and Aaltje. She has been said to have been the one of that name bp. 6 Jan. 1697 (1904: 73), dau. of Cornelis Janse Van Ness and his wife Marietje Gerritse Van den Bergh. If so, she was Douwe's senior by 12 years, and since she would have been more than 47 years old at the birth of their last child, this contributor questions such identification.

Baptism Records

17 Jan. 1728 Isaac, of Douwe and Aaltie Fonda; sp., Joh. Ouderkerk, Rebecca Maassen (1906: 29).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk. The witnesses were the maternal uncle, Johannes Ouderkerk, bp. 5 Apr. 1697 (1904: 74), and the paternal aunt, Rebecca Fonda Maassen. She was bp. 16 May 1696 (1904: 71) and m. 4 Sept. 1718 (1905: 13) Johannes Maazen Bloemendaal, son of Maes Cornelissen Bloemendall and his wife Jacomyntie Gardenier. The son, in the bp. records of his 6 ch. (1905: 84, 91, 97, 104; 1906: 20, 31) used only the patronymic "Jan Maassen", omitting the surname "Bloemendaal", a frequently observed Dutch custom.

The child was named in honor of his maternal grandfather, Isaac Ouderkerk.

Incidentally, Douwe Isaacse Fonda also had a sister, Rebecca Fonda, but she was not bp. until 21 Feb. 1714 (1905: 68) and would have been too young to witness in 1728; she m. 11 Aug. 1734, Lucas Van Hooghkerk (1906: 5).

4 Jan. 1730 Maria, of Douw and Aaltie Fonda; sp., Jan and Maria Fonda (1906: 36).

Parents now identified as Dowe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk, for the witnesses were the paternal grandparents, Jan Douwese Fonda and Maritje Loockermans (dau. of Pieter Pieterse Loockermans and his wife Maritje Lambertse) who were m. 5 Dec. 1694 (1904: 27).

The infant was named after her paternal grandmother, her paternal aunt Maria Fonda, bp. 7 Jan. 1700 (1904: 82), or her maternal aunt Marytie Ouderkerk, bp. 27 Sept. 1713 (1905: 66).

10 Jan. 1731 Jan, of Douwe and Aaltie Fonda; sp., Pieter Fonda, Maria Viele (1906: 40).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk, for the witnesses were the paternal uncle, Pieter Fonda (Douwe Isaacse Fonda had no brother Pieter), bp. 7 Nov. 1697 (1904: 76), and an unidentified Marie Viele. Pieter had on 7 Mar. 1724 m. Maria Beekman (1905: 17), dau. of Johannes Martense Beekman and his second wife, Eva Vinhagel, so Maria Viele was not Pieter's wife, unless by a second marriage.

The babe was named in honor of his paternal grandfather, Jan Douwese Fonda.

NOTE: It is obvious, since Douwe Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness were not married until 29 Oct. 1732, that she could not have been the mother of any of the infants whose baptism records are shown above. The details are provided for the purpose of proving that it was Douwe Janse Fonda, not Douwe Isaacse Fonda, who m. Aaltje Ouderkerk in 1727, leaving Aaltje Van Ness as the bride of Douwe Isaacse Fonda.

23 Mar. 1733 Abraham, of Douwe and A. Fonda; sp., Johs. and Anna Ouderkerk (1906: 49).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk. Not only was the baptism too soon after the 29 Oct. 1732 marriage of Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness, but the witnesses may be identified as Aaltje Ouderkerk's brother Johannes (supra) and (probably) their sister "Annatje", bp. 9 Jan. 1709 (1905: 51).

The child was named in honor of his paternal uncle, Abraham Fonda, bp. 18 Jan. 1708 (1905: 47).

7 Oct. 1733 Alida, of D.and A. Fonda; sp., (illegible) and Alida Fonda (1906: 51).

Parents now identified as Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness, for Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk had bp. a son less than seven months prior. The named witness, Alida Fonda, was no doubt the paternal grandmother, Alida Lansing (dau. of Hendrick Lansing and Elizabeth Casperse Halenbeck), who m. Isaac Douwese Fonda 3 Dec. 1708 (1905: 8).

The infant was named after this paternal grandmother.

13 Aug. 1735 Maria, of Douwe and Aaltje Fonda; sp., Harme and Elizabeth Van Vegten (1906: 58).

Parents now identified as Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness, since Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk are known to have bp. a dau. of the same name just five days later (infra).

The babe received the name of her paternal aunt, Maria Fonda, Douwe Isaack's younger sister, bp. 4 June 1721 (1905: 91).

18 Aug. 1735 Maria, of D. and A. Fonda; sp., Johs. and C. Fonda (1906: 59).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk, for the babe had a paternal uncle Johannes Fonda, bp. 7 Nov. 1703 (1905: 30) and a paternal aunt, Catharina Fonda, bp. 23 Jan. 1706 (1905: 39).

The child was given the name of her sister, bp. 4 Jan. 1730 (supra), who appears to have died young.

21 Oct. 1737 Mayke, of Douwe and Aaltie Fonda; sp., Corn. Ouderkerk, Geert. Fonda (1906: 69).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk, for the infant had a maternal uncle, Cornelis, bp. 22 Sept. 1706 (1905: 41) and a paternal aunt, Geertruy Fonda, bp. 21 Feb. 1714 (1905: 68).

Named in honor of the maternal grandmother, Mayke (Van Ness) Ouderkerk.

1 Mar. 1738 Hendrikje, of Douwe (I. or J.) and Aaltje Fonda; sp., Hendrick and Cathalyna Van Buren (1906: 71).

Parents now identified as Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness, for Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk are shown supra to have baptized a daughter named Mayke less than five months prior to the date of this baptism.

This record is the only one of the thirteen giving a patronymic clue, for the names of the parents are recorded as Douwe J. and Aaltje Fonda, according to the H.S.Y.B. compilation. In the longhand of the period, however, the capital letters I and J were frequently written exactly alike, so the single initial could represent either Isaacse or Janse, and is therefore not considered significant.

The child was presumably given the feminine equivalent of the name of her paternal uncle, Hendrik Fonda, bp. 15 July 1716 (1905: 74).

14 Jan. 1739 Mayke, of Douwe and Aaltje Fonda; sp., Abraham and Elbertje Fonda (1906: 76).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk. The witnesses were the paternal uncle, Abraham Fonda (supra) and his first wife, Elbertje Van Alen (dau. of Stephanus Van Alen and his wife Maria Cornelisse Mulder), whom he had m. at Kinderhook 9 Nov. 1733.

The babe was named after her sister bp. 21 Oct. 1737 (supra), who must have died young.

29 Mar. 1741 Jacob, of Douwe and Aaltje Fonda; sp., Cornelis and Catharine Ouderkerk (1906: 88).

Parents now identified as Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk. The witnesses were the maternal uncle Cornelis Ouderkerk (supra) and (his wife?).

The infant was given the name of his maternal uncle, Jacob Ouderkerk, bp. 3 Apr. 1720 (1905: 87).

15 Apr. 1744 Isaac, of Douwe and Aaltje Fonda; sp., Wouter and Elizabeth Knickerbacker (1906: 102).

Parents now identified as Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness. The witnesses were the paternal aunt, Elizabeth Fonda, bp. 1 July 1711 (Baptisms, Dutch Church, N.Y.: 353) and her husband, Wouter Knickerbacker (son of Johannes Harmense Knickerbacker and his wife Anna Quackenbos), who were m. 9 Jan. 1735 (1906: 5).

The child was named in honor of his paternal grandfather, Isaac Douwese Fonda.

15 Apr. 1744 Rebecca, of Douwe and Aaltje Fonda; sp., Joh. Maarzen, Maria Maarzen (1906: 102).

Despite the superficial appearance of this being a baptism of a twin, this contributor is confident that the parents were Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk. The witnesses were Johannes Maassen, bp. 1 Mar. 1721 (1905: 91) and Maria Maassen, bp. 16 Aug. 1724 (1905: 104), children of the paternal aunt, Rebecca Fonda Maasen (supra), after whom the babe was named.

The handwritten transcript of the church register reflects these two 15 Apr. 1744 baptisms as two separate entries, as shown herein. In preparing copy for printing the Year Book, however the compiler apparently assumed, from the identical names of parents, that the two infants were twins, and unfortunately recorded the baptisms as one entry.

A. Mark Fonda 4/11/04 based on "The Douwe and Aaltje Fonda Marriages and Families", The American Genealogist, New Haven, CT, Vol. 37:95,136 (April, July 1961).

Postscript:

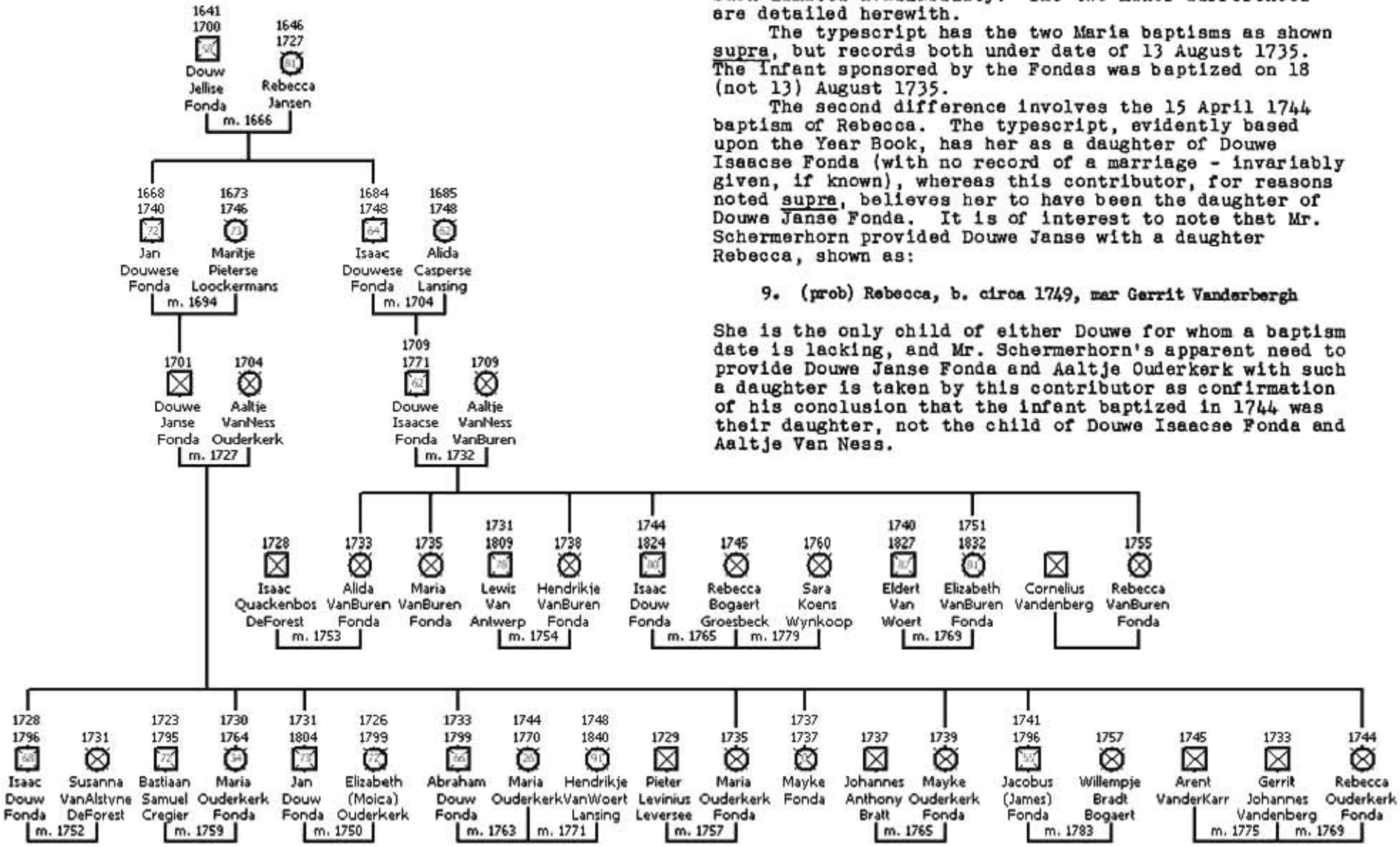
Following the completion of this study the contributor's attention was called to a typescript entitled Fonda Family, compiled by Richard Schermerhorn, Jr. and presented by him in 1945 to The Holland Society of New York. Comparison of the Douwe Fonda records revealed that Mr. Schermerhorn and this contributor agreed in all but two minor respects. Nevertheless, it was decided to publish this present article since the typescript is of such limited availability. The two minor differences are detailed herewith.

The typescript has the two Maria baptisms as shown supra, but records both under date of 13 August 1735. The infant sponsored by the Fondas was baptized on 18 (not 13) August 1735.

The second difference involves the 15 April 1744 baptism of Rebecca. The typescript, evidently based upon the Year Book, has her as a daughter of Douwe Isaacse Fonda (with no record of a marriage - invariably given, if known), whereas this contributor, for reasons noted supra, believes her to have been the daughter of Douwe Janse Fonda. It is of interest to note that Mr. Schermerhorn provided Douwe Janse with a daughter Rebecca, shown as:

9. (prob) Rebecca, b. circa 1749, mar Gerrit Vanderbergh

She is the only child of either Douwe for whom a baptism date is lacking, and Mr. Schermerhorn's apparent need to provide Douwe Janse Fonda and Aaltje Ouderkerk with such a daughter is taken by this contributor as confirmation of his conclusion that the infant baptized in 1744 was their daughter, not the child of Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness.



The American Genealogist

Whole No. 147 July 1961 Vol. 37 No. 3

CONTENTS

PITFALLS OF DUTCH GIVEN NAMES.—
Neil B. Reynolds 129
EARLY SOUTHERN STENTS.—
Mrs. Warren Holmes Thorp 131
A DOUWE AND AALTJE FONDA EPILOGUE.—
Paul W. Prindle 136
ORIGIN OF STEERE, WICKENDEN AND BALCOMBE FAMILIES OF PROVIDENCE.—John G. Hunt 139
FAMILY OF SAMUEL3 BARTLETT OF DUXBURY, MASS.—Rachel E. Barclay 141
ENGLISH ORIGIN OF BYGOD EGGLESTON.—
John G. Hunt 151
VYALL-SANDERSON-SUNDERLAND, BOSTON, MASS.—
Frederick W. Wead 153
BANCROFTS IN THE CONNECTICUT VALLEY.—
George E. McCracken 154
BENJAMIN4 DAVIS, FALMOUTH, MASS.—
Maclean W. McLean 161
JOSEPH3 CHILD, WATERTOWN, MASS.—
Maclean W. McLean 164
TEMPLE-HUMES CORRECTION.—
Mrs. Benjamin F. Salzer 168
ANCESTOR TABLES
CVI. Mrs. Benjamin F. Salzer 169
CVII. Mrs. John J. Kiepura 170
RECENT BOOKS 173
GENEALOGICAL TEXTBOOKS AND PERIODICALS 176
EVALUATION OF GENEALOGICAL WRITERS
VIII. Oscar Jewell Harvey 180
WHO WANTS WHAT AND WHERE 138, 182
THOMAS HARRIS OF KILLINGWORTH, CONN.—
Walter Lee Sheppard 183
ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO AUSTIN'S GENEALOGICAL DICTIONARY OF R. I.—
G. Andrews Moriarty 185
NOTES AND ERRATA (Smith-Potter; Green; Hutchins; Smith-Wiggins-Creed) 185
SARAH WIFE OF EBENEZER4 HARRIS, PLAINFIELD, CONN.—David & Edythe Haskell 187
INSCRIPTIONS, BENTON, YATES CO., N.Y.—
Mrs. Fenton E. Bootes 190
STEVENS PROBATE, DANBURY, CONN.—
Donald Lines Jacobus 191

A DOUWE AND AALTJE FONDA EPILOGUE

By Paul W. Prindle, B.S., Darien, Conn.

In his "The Douwe and Aaltje Fonda Marriages and Children", appearing in the April issue (supra, 37: 95-100), this contributor referred to the Fonda Family typescript compiled by Richard Schermerhorn, Jr. That compilation shows Douwe Isaacse Fonda to have married twice: first to Aaltje Van Ness in 1732, with children baptized through 1744, and second (no date shown) to Aaltje Van Buren, whose two children were baptized in 1751 and 1755. Since inclusion of the alleged second marriage and these two later baptisms would seem to muddy up already turbid waters, this compiler made no reference to them in his prior article, deeming such data to have been extraneous to the problem under consideration - the identification of the Douwe Fonda who married Aaltje Ouderkerk in 1727 and of the Douwe Fonda who married Aaltje Van Ness in 1732, and the allocation to these two couples of the thirteen children baptized prior to 1745 and listed in Prof. Jonathan Pearson's Contributions for the Genealogies of the First Settlers of the Ancient County of Albany: 49.

This contributor's investigation of the Douwe and Aaltje Fonda problems originated in his attempt to assist Mrs. Ethel C. Ree of Santa Paula, California, a descendant of Hendrikje Fonda, baptized in 1738 and identified in the prior article as a daughter of Douwe Isaacse Fonda and Aaltje Van Ness. Upon reading the article Mrs. Ree questioned the identification, for a tradition persists in her family that the mother of Hendrikje Fonda was a Van Buren, not a Van Ness. Since the Van Buren sponsors at the baptism of Hendrikje support such a tradition, an investigation of the matter was started.

The two later baptisms referred to supra are found in the registers of the Dutch Reformed Church at Albany, N. Y. as reproduced in the Holland Society Year Books (unless stated otherwise, all parenthetical references herein are to such yearbooks):

> 13 Jan. 1750/1 Elizabeth, of Douwe I. Funda and Aaltje Van Buuren; sp., Abram and Maria Funda (1907: 21).
>
> 14 Dec. 1755 Rebecca, of Douwe I. Funda and Aaltje Van Buren; sp., Lucas Hoogkerk, Annatje Knickerbacker (1907:48).

That Douwe I. Funda, the father of these two infants, was Douwe Isaacse Fonda is proven by the identities of the sponsors. Abram Funda was Douwe Isaacse

Fonda's brother Abraham, bp. 10 Aug. 1718 (1905: 81); and Maria Funda was Maria Van Schoonhoven, who had married Abraham on 8 Sept. 1743 (1906: 13). Lucas Hoogkerk was Lucas Van Hooghkerk, who on 11 Aug. 1734 had married (1906: 5) Douwe Isaacse Fonda's sister Rebecca Fonda, bp. 21 Feb. 1714 (1905: 68); and Annatje Knickerbacker was Anna Knickerbacker, bp. 9 Nov. 1735 (1906: 60), eldest child of Douwe Isaacse Fonda's sister Elizabeth Fonda, bp. 1 July 1711 (Baptisms, Dutch Church, N.Y.:353), who had married Wouter Knickerbacker on 9 Jan. 1735 (1906: 5).

The sponsors at the 1 March 1738 baptism of Hendrikje, daughter of Douwe I. and Altje Fonda, were shown in the prior article as Hendrick and Cathalyna Van Buren, but were not therein identified since their relationship was not material to the determination of Hendrikje's father. These sponsors were Hendrik Van Buren, bp. 1 March 1713 (1905: 64), who was unmarried at the time since his marriage to Gurtruy Whitbeck did not take place until 3 Nov. 1738 (1906: 8); and his younger sister Catalyna Van Buren, bp. 11 Dec. 1717 (1905: 79). Hendrik and Catalyna were children of Cornelis Hendrickse Van Buren, who m. 26 Dec.1702(1905: 3) Hendrikje Van Ness, bp. 2 Nov. 1684 (1904:35), sister of the Mayke Van Ness who married Isaac Ouderkerk, and daughter of Jan Cornelisse and Aaltje Van Ness.

The only other sponsors at the baptisms of children of Douwe Isaacse Fonda and not identified in the prior article (again, because such identification was not required) were the Harme and Elizabeth VanVegten who witnessed the 13 Aug. 1735 baptism of Maria (1906: 58). These were Harmen VanVechten, bp. 16 Feb.1704 (1905:31) and his wife Elizabeth VanBuren (The VanVechten Genealogy: 128, by James B. VanVechten), she bp. 23 Apr. 1704 (1905: 32) as Lysbeth, daughter of Cornelis Hendrickse Van Buren and his wife Hendrikje Van Ness.

Among the seven brothers and sisters of the Hendrick, Catalyna and Elizabeth Van Buren sponsors mentioned supra was Aaltje Van Buren, bp. 25 Apr. 1709 (1905: 53). In view of the identification of the sponsors at the 1735 baptism as Aaltje Van Buren's sister Elizabeth and her husband, and of the sponsors at the 1738 baptism as Aaltje Van Buren's brother Hendrik and sister Catalyna, the babe being named after Aaltje's mother, Hendrikje (VanNess) VanBuren, and the fact that the wife of Douwe Isaacse Fonda was named in the register in 1751 and 1755 as Aaltje Van Buren, prove without possibility of doubt that the wife of Douwe Isaacse Fonda, at least for the period 1734 through 1755, was Aaltje Van Buren, not Aaltje Van Ness, as thought heretofore.

As noted in the prior article, Douwe Isaacse Fonda's bride of the 29 Oct. 1732 marriage was shown in the church register as "A. V. Nes" (1906: 4). In the 1733 baptism she was identified merely as "A.", but in the 1735 and all subsequent baptisms the wife of Douwe Isaacse Fonda is called "Aaltje". We now know this Aaltje to have been a Van Buren. It seems improbable that the "A. V. Nes" of the marriage and the "A." of the 1733 baptism was an Aaltje Van Ness, for as noted in the prior article there was no girl of that name and of right age available to marry Douwe. Nor does this contributor believe the bride to have been some other Van Ness girl whose given name began with the letter "A". Because of the even spacing of the marriage date (29 Oct. 1732), the first baptism (7 Oct. 1733) and the second baptism (13 Aug. 1735), and because the church records for this family are evidently complete, this contributor believes that Douwe did not marry Aaltje Van Buren in the period October 1733 to December 1734, but that the A. V. Nes of the 1732 marriage was in reality Aaltje Van Buren. It may well be that the dominie, who doubtless knew Aaltje's mother was born a Van Ness, had her in mind when he entered "A. V. Nes" in the church register. Such lapses have been known to occur in too many instances, considering the frustrating problems they present to future genealogical searchers.

In the prior article not a single determination of the children of Douwe Isaacse Fonda was based upon the identity of their mother. This new development will therefore not disturb the conclusions there reached regarding which of the two Douwe Fondas married Aaltje Ouderkerk, nor the allocation of the children to their respective fathers.