

EARLY WEBBINK HISTORY

by

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In the beginning of the 12th Century from east or west Friesland came the first free "vresen" [at that time most peasants were bonded to the land; but vresen from Friesland were free]. The reason why they came to Twenthe was there were no dikes in Friesland; therefore, it would always flood and they were tired of it. In the woods and swamp of Twenthe they built their houses. The biggest colony was established in Almerlervene. Now Almerlervene is called Vriezenveen and lies to the north of Almelo. Here they would build the first houses ever on the land and this land of peat moor and forest was drained and cleared for harvesting food. Peat moor turned into peat and they were able to sell it.

From these people came the Webbinks. The name Webbink comes from the old vresen Christian name Webbe or Webbo. The female name is Webbigje (Webkje). This name came from Wilbertus which means he who is glanst (meaning glamour, splendor, shines, brilliant, glory) in combat (Hij die glanst in de strijd). The origin of the suffix "ink" is a Saxon word that was used a lot so it was added to their name--it means the "yard" or "farmland"; it is the ground around the farm. So the yard belonging to Webbe was known as Webberink or Webbink. But first it was Webben, perhaps at the time when they were farm laborers, and then, after they acquired enough land for a farm, was promoted to Webbink. In 1691 is the first time one finds Webben in the books of the Reformed Church of Borne--the baptismal registrations of a child of Jannes Webben and later of a child of Abram Webben. They showed both brothers living in Zenderen. Later, in the explanation with another baptism of a son of Jannes, it is identified more specifically that they lived in Bornesvelt, near Zenderen. Before 1691 there were no registrations except for nobility.

In 1790 we find in the registrations of the Church of Almelo the names of the male members called for military service. There is mentioned Jan Webben in 27 Jan. 1768. And also in Borne, Aaltje Webben married in 1780 with Wolter ter Haar. Aaltje was probably born around 1757. Her father was probably born in 1730. It is possible Jan and Aaltje were brother and sister of Abram and Jannes. After 1783 we find the name Jannes Webben as Jannes Webbink or Johannes Webbink. He was married about 1778 to Janna Hinnevelt from Zenderen. They had ten children. They were living in Zenderen until 1800. Then they moved to Vriezenveen and Albert was born there. From the five sons came all the Vriezenveense Webbinks. The Webbinks had arrived in Zenderen before 1691. When they started selling peat, they stored some in Zenderen. There might have been some Webbinks in Vriezenveen and that could be the reason Jannes later went back. After 1783 Abram was also called Abraham. In about 1780 he married Aaltje Storksels from Zenderen. They had two children, Hendrina and Gerrit. Aaltje probably died in 1787 and Abram married Geesken Handebrink from Zenderen. Now three children more--Aaltjen, Hendrik Jan and Gerrit Jan. Geesken died and Abram married Janna Pieperiet. From this marriage were three sons--Grades, Gerrit and Jan.

In 1824 Gerrit (from Pieperiet) married Janna Lamaker. From this marriage was born--Hendrina, Albertus (who came to America) and Gerrit Jan. Hendrina married Gerrit Jan

Elbert. A document was found in Delden about a Jan Webbink called "Meske Jans" (Jan the Knife) believed to be Jan, the brother of Albertus. At the end of the 1800's poor people had often only one cow. In the morning Meske Jan gathered all the cows and took them to the village meadow to graze. One morning as he was moving the cattle through the village street one of the cows dirtied the street. The burgomaster called to him, "Hello Webbink, it is not allowed to dirty the street," to which Webbink answered, "I can hardly hold my cap for it." Then he went on his way moving his cattle. The story closed with a local workman cleaning the street. It is not known why Jan was called Meske Jan.



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In the 1947 census for Holland there were 290 Webbinks, distributed among cities in Holland as follows:

Enschede 9, Almelo 52, Borne 2, Delden 1, Denekamp 5, Deventer 3, Den Ham 22, Hardenberg 2, Hellendoorn 20, Hengelo 26, Losse 1, Oldenzaal 3, Ootmarsum 1, Rssen 2, Tubbergen 24, Vriezenveen 92, Wierden 15, Zwolle 8, Zwolle Kerspel 2. 1 Webbing in Enschede, 1 Webben in Deventer.

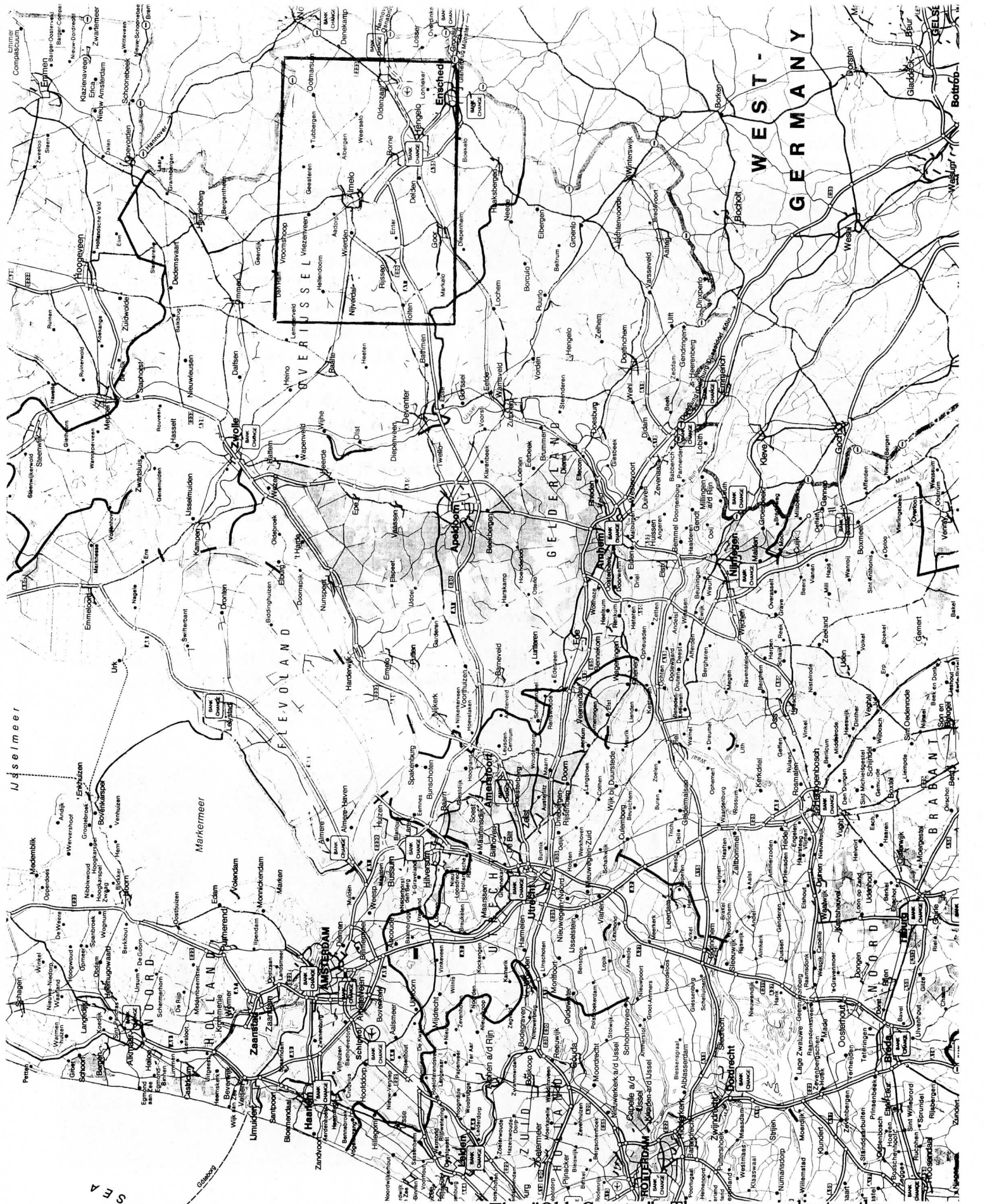
Below:

Steps to City Hall in Delden, where the Mayor told Gerrit (Jan the Knife) Webbink to clean up his act.

1991

Above:
Interior of the Reformed Church in Borne that the Webbinks attended. Old paintings were uncovered under the ceiling during a restoration.
1974





The "Old Country". The square indicates the area where the Webbinks originated. The circle marks the area where Johan Webbink lives.