

~ ~ ~ *A Van Tuyl Chronicle* ~ ~ ~

*650 Years in the History
of a
Dutch-American Family*

Written by:

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Based on the Historical Researches of:

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Dedication

*To the memory of my Father,
Bob Van Tuyl
Who taught me that a
Thing Worth Doing is Worth Doing Well
-Rory L. Van Tuyl*

And to:

*My Wife
Famke Groenendijk-Oyevaar
Who patiently endured the years of effort
Spent in the writing of this book
-Jan N.A. Groenendijk*

Table of Contents

Prologue - Incident at the Hellow Tavern Page 1

A Tragic Event Splits the Family van Tuyl

Chapter 1 - Life Along the Waal Page 6

How People Developed Towns and Villages along the River Waal. Origin of the *Van Tuyl* Family Name.

Chapter 2 - Fourteenth Century Nobility Page 20

Heer Ghijsbrecht van Tuyl, Knight: First Known Ancestor of the Family van Tuyl, Lower Nobility of Gelre.

Chapter 3 - Turbulent Times 1400 ~ 1550 Page 36

Van Tuyls in Service to the Duke of Gelre.
The Family Settles in *Est*, Later Moves to *Brakel*.

Chapter 4 - War and Prosperity 1550 ~ 1620 Page 54

The *Eighty Years War* and the *Reformation* Transform the Van Tuyls.
Jan Sandersz van Tuyl Brings the Family to Gameren and to the Protestant Religion.

Chapter 5 - Decline and Tragedy 1620 ~ 1670 Page 68

The Family Suffers Disaster and Economic Decline.
A Tragic Incident Drives Jan Otten van Tuyl to America.

Chapter 6 - Fugitive Immigrants 1663 ~ 1700 Page 86

Jan Otten and Geertruyd van Tuyl Settle in New York City.

Chapter 7- Pirates and Privateers 1695 ~ 1705 Page 104

Otto and Aert Van Tuyl Sail as Pirates to Madagascar.
Otto Returns to Command a Privateer, is Shipwrecked in New York Bay.

Chapter 8 - Farmers, Soldiers, and Boatmen 1700 - 1770 Page 138

The Van Tuyls Settle on Staten Island. Otto Van Tuyl Establishes a Staten Island Ferry. Dennis Van Tuyl Killed in Ferry Accident.

Chapter 9 - Patriots and Loyalists 1765 ~ 1783 Page 158

Van Tuyls on Both Sides of the *American Revolution*.

Chapter 10 - The Family Recovers 1672-1796 Page 182

The Van Tuyls of Gameraen Recover from Ruin, Become Leading Citizens. They Suffer Conquest and Floods.

Chapter 11 - New York Merchants 1789-1879 Page 200

Andrew Van Tuyl of New York City Prospers, But is Later Bankrupted. His Family Carries on in 19th Century New York.

Chapter 12 - Moving West 1799-1828 Page 214

Van Tuyls Pioneer Seneca County, New York After the Revolution.

Chapter 13 - Years of Transformation 1795-1840 Page 228

French Conquest Transforms Gameraen. The Village suffers Flood and Religious Upheaval.

Chapter 14 - West to Ohio 1820 - 1860 Page 244

Van Tuyls are Early Settlers in Miami County, Ohio. Henry and David Van Tuyl Practice Medicine in Dayton.

Chapter 15 - The Cavalryman 1861 ~ 1865 Page 270

Erastus J. Van Tuyl, Union Cavalry Officer, Fights for the Northern Cause.

Chapter 16 - Hard Times on the River 1840 ~ 1914 Page 292

The Van Tuyl Farmers of Gameraen Suffer Hard Times. Some Turn to Brickmaking or Basketmaking.

Chapter 17 - Tales of the Times 1865 ~ 1913 Page 312

Van Tuyls Settle Kansas, Texas, and Missouri After the *Civil War*. Some Form Strong Families: Others Divorce. Grandpa Henry is Swept Away in a Flood.

Chapter 18 - Oklahoma Oil 1912 ~ 1941 Page 334

Ardo Van Tuyl Leaves His Missouri Log Cabin for the Oklahoma Oil fields.
He Prospers During the 1920s, Goes Broke Twice in the *Great Depression*..

Chapter 19 - The Age of Air Power 1941 ~ 1985 Page 356

Bob Van Tuyl Designs Aircraft During WWII.
He Designs Missiles and Builds His Dream House During the 1950s,
Endures Vietnam Unrest and Unemployment During the 1960s.

Chapter 20 - War Comes to Gameren...Again 1930 ~ 1945 Page 376

Germans Occupy Gameren. Soldiers Destroy
Church and Windmill. Allies Bomb the Village.

Chapter 21 - Flowers, Potatoes, and Books 1945 ~ 1995 Page 394

Gameren is Transformed following WWII.
Van Tuyls Adopt Greenhouse Horticulture.
Some Emigrate, Others Pioneer New Businesses.

Chapter 22 - Cousins on Two Continents 1990s Page 412

After 360 Years, Dutch and American
Van Tuyls Re-establish Contact.
We Meet Some of Them.

Appendices :

Appendix 1 - **Nederlandse Samenvatting** Page 433
[Dutch-Language Summary of *A Van Tuyl Chronicle*]

Appendix 2 - **Van Tuyl Properties** Page 451
Along the Burgersteeg of Gameren

Appendix 3 - **Governing Gameren** Page 455
In Feudal Times And After the Protestant Reformation

Appendix 4 - **The Early Van Tuyls of Gelre** Page 459
Timeline and Descendancy Chart

Appendix 5 - **Bibliography** Page 461

Genealogies *Page 473*

Dutch Genealogy *Page 475*

The Early Van Tuyls 14th - 17th Centuries
Dutch and Canadian Van Tuyls 17th - 20th Centuries

American Genealogy *Page 581*

American Descendants of Jan Otten and Geertruyd Van Tuyl
17th - 20th Centuries

Indexes

Genealogy Index *Page 645*

For Dutch and American Genealogies

Historical Names and Events Index *Page 693*

From the Book Section of *A Van Tuyl Chronicle*

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Rory L. Van Tuyl
Jan N.A. Groenendijk

Preface~

Welcome to *A Van Tuyl Chronicle*. We invite you to join us on a voyage through history - 650 years of history - told through the documented experiences of real people. When archaeologists excavate an ancient site, they often dig through the various layers according to a predetermined plan, hoping to reconstruct a picture of the ancient society which built the place and made it their home through the centuries. *A Van Tuyl Chronicle* is a similar endeavor. Our excavation plan was this: we followed some of the documented descendants of *Heer Ghijsbrecht van Tuyl*, a 14th century knight of Gelre, through some 20 generations of descendancy. In the 17th century, we came to a fork in the road - one leading to the modern Netherlands, the other to the United States of America. We followed both branches of this road into the late 20th century, using as our signposts the clues left behind by Ghijsbrecht's descendants named *Van Tuyl*. Of course, this meant we followed the male line of descent, since that was, and still is, the European naming convention. But we met along the way some very remarkable women - such as Geertruyd van 's Gravenweert [as she called herself], the mother of America's Van Tuyls. We also took a few side trips when there was something interesting to be found, such as a certain escapade on the island of Madagascar. Ghijsbrecht's total number of descendants in the world far, far exceeds the sum total of his Van Tuyl descendants, of course. Of these people - numbering in the millions - we know nothing directly - we don't even know the names of most of them. But we hope that the life experiences their cousins, the male-descended line of a particular Knight of Gelre, can shed some light on the way they, and indeed all their contemporaries, lived during the second half of the first millennium of the Common Era.

Source material for this book is carefully documented in footnotes, and we invite future researchers to examine these hundreds of documents and publications to revise and correct our interpretations, if need be. *A Van Tuyl Chronicle* is a work of historical reconstruction, and as such is subject to errors. We hope these errors are few. But please be assured that nothing in this work is fiction - or fictionalized. The actual lives of these ordinary people were interesting enough: there was no need for imagination. If you are reading this book in the 21st Century - and we hope you will be - please note that the chapters dealing with the 20th century - chapters within the memory of the authors and their parents - include personal glimpses of life as we knew it to be. So often, history stereotypes a period, simplifying it to the point where it becomes a cartoon of itself. The experiences of ordinary people - such as the Van Tuyls of this book - are somehow forgotten. We hope that *A Van Tuyl Chronicle* will play some small part in preserving for you the story of how people actually lived, worked, and struggled. Happy Reading!

