

News from Nan

VAN RAAPHORST FAMILY PAGE



Christiaan F van Raaphorst family in Canada, about 1913

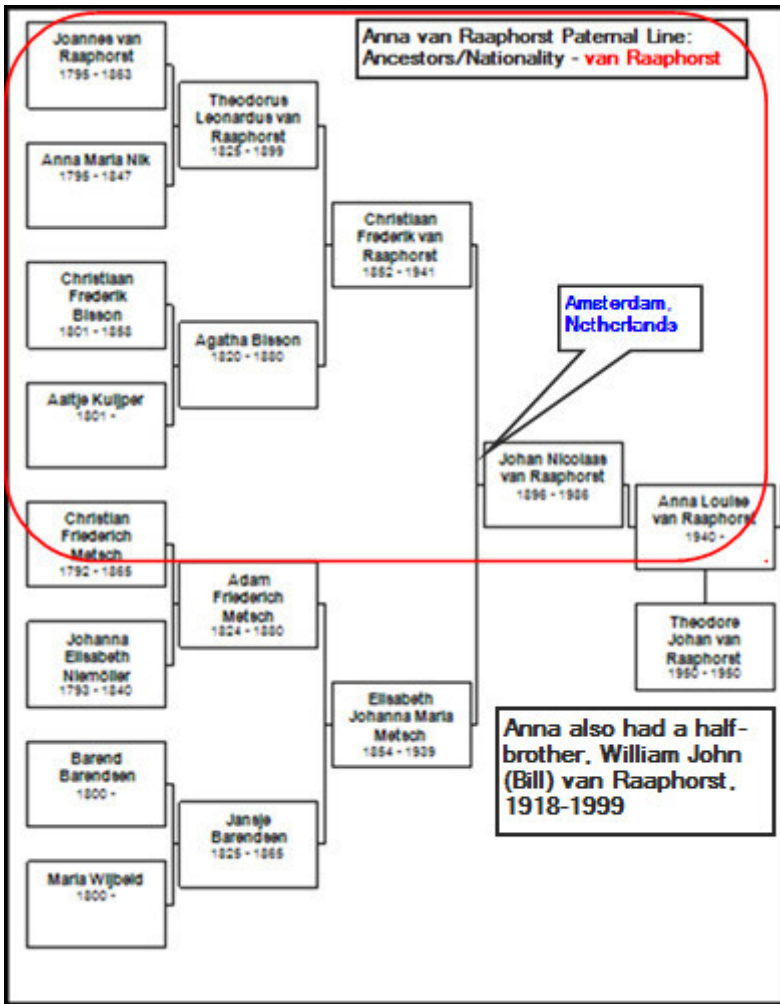
December 2020 updates

I have recently confirmed that my grandfather's younger brother, Antonius Theodorus van Raaphorst, died 27 Jun 1878, in Bukit Lawang, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Antonius served in the army from 1871 until he was sent to what was then called the Dutch East Indies to fight in the Aceh War (1873-1904).

Over the past several months I have discovered two distant van Raaphorst cousins (both 4th cousins, 1x removed), one living in the Netherlands and one in Australia. Our nearest common ancestor is Leendert van Raaphorst (1756-1819). He was born in Lisse and died in Haarlem.

About the van Raaphorst family

The van Raaphorsts (now more often spelled Van Raaphorst) are Anna's father's paternal ancestors. Most of the known Old World van Raaphorsts were born in the province of either North Holland (in or near Amsterdam) or South Holland (in or near Rotterdam).



Anna's paternal line: van Raaphorst

Many of the van Raaphorsts first lived in South Holland (in or around Sassenheim) and then moved north to Haarlem and Amsterdam.



Sassenheim, Netherlands



Amsterdam, Netherlands

Both of Anna's grandparents (Christiaan Frederik van Raaphorst and Elisabeth Johanna Maria Metsch) and all of their children were born in Amsterdam.



Chris van Raaphorst's birth certificate

The children were all born in the family home at 17 van Oldenbarneveldt Street in the Westerpark/Jordaan neighborhood of Amsterdam.



17 van Oldenbarneveldtstraat, Amsterdam

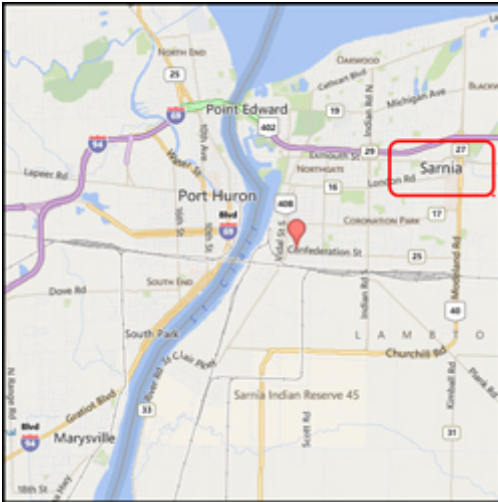


*Elisabeth and Chris van Raaphorst,
about 1910*

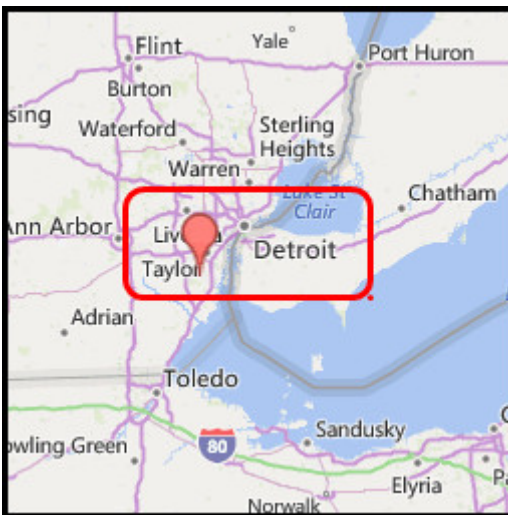


Willem, Hendricus, and Johan van Raaphorst, about 1900

Chris, Elisabeth, and all of their existing descendants and their families immigrated to the New World over a period of about 15 years, beginning in 1905 with oldest son Christiaan Gottfried. The earlier immigrants first went to Sarnia, Ontario, Canada, and the later ones went directly to Detroit or Port Huron, Michigan.



Sarnia, Ontario



Detroit, Michigan

Anna's father, Johan (John), her uncle Hendricus (Harry), and her grandparents arrived in New York on their way to Sarnia on June 22, 1910. At the time he migrated, John was only 13, but he immediately went to work to help support the family.



Johan (John) van Raaphorst, age about 12

During their first years in the New World, many family members (including John) traveled back to Holland to visit friends and relatives.

John married his first wife, Johanna (also a Dutch immigrant), in 1917. John and Jo had one son, William (Bill).



John and Jo van Raaphorst, about 1917

Jo died in 1937, and John remarried (to Nettie (Nan) Riedel) in 1939. John and Nan had one daughter, Anna, and a stillborn son, Theodore (Teddy).



Nan and John van Raaphorst, about 1963

Ancestor surnames

- Arkshoek
- Biesenaar
- Bisson
- Ebbing
- Fluitier
- Hinkes
- Kuijper (Kuyper)
- Nik
- Rutgers
- Soetermeer
- van Beijeren (van Beieren)
- van der Schilde
- van Noortveen
- van Raaphorst (Van Raaphorst)
- van Tongeren
- Vergunst

Unanswered questions about the van Raaphorsts: Answered!

Theodorus Leonardus van Raaphorst (1825-1907)

The most mysterious of my van Raaphorst ancestors used to be my great-grandfather, Theodorus Leonardus (TL). In about 1867 he and his wife, Agatha, separated, and he moved away and left her still living in Amsterdam with their two living children, Christiaan and Antonius. The family story was that he had no contact with them for the next 30 years until he suddenly reappeared (perhaps around 1897) and asked son Chris and his family to take him in. They did for a while, but apparently the arrangements didn't work out, and he moved away again.

During the time between TL's original "disappearance" (1867) and Agatha's death (1880) they were apparently not divorced: her death record lists him as her husband.

However, after she died, TL remarried twice:

- In 1880 he married Aartje Anna Gerdina van Krugten; she died in 1897 in the Hague, where they were living. (Was her death what prompted TL to re-contact his family in Amsterdam?)
- In 1899 he married Jannetje Maria van der Reijden. (born 1840).

TL died in the Hague in 1907; Jannetje died in the Hague in 1922.

In his early adult years, TL was a blacksmith; many of the years during which he was estranged from his first family he worked as a machinist on ships in and around the Maas River. TL's older brother, Johan George, was also a machinist, but working on the Dutch railway. (It's interesting to me that many of TL's descendants also worked as "machine experts" of one sort or another.)

Antonius Leonardus van Raaphorst (1855-1878)

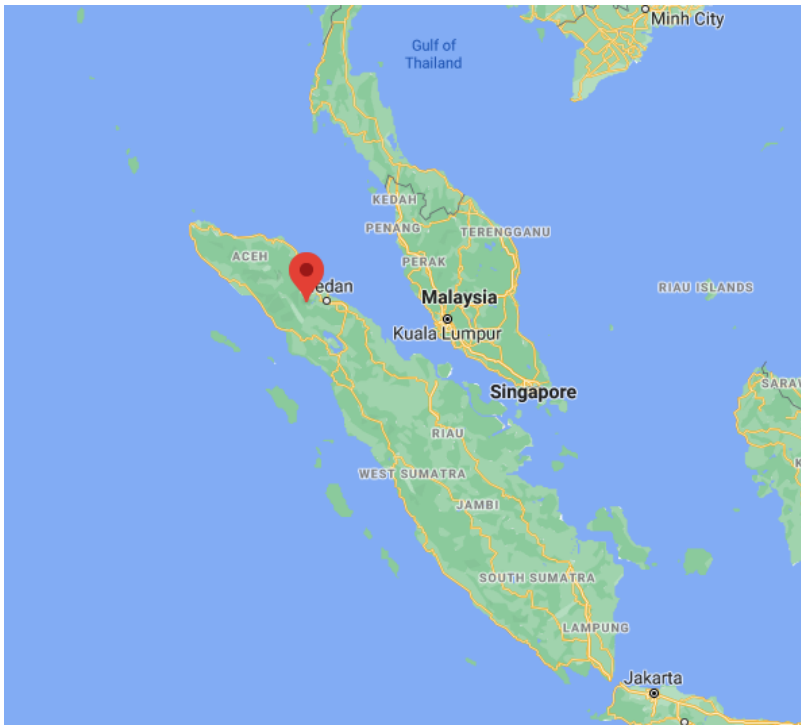
TL's second son, Antonius Leonardus, was also a mystery until recently. I always heard it as a "rumor" that he went to what is now modern-day Indonesia (at the time, it was the Dutch East Indies) and "probably died there, but, in any case, was never heard from again."

Now that I know the true story I have trouble believing that his only surviving sibling, my grandfather Chris, and their father, TL, would not have been notified of his death, but I guess it's possible.

First of all, Antonius never married, and as far as anybody knows, never had any children.

In 1871, at the age of about 16, Antonius joined the Dutch army. He went through basic training at the Oranje-Nassau Kazerne [barracks] in or near Amsterdam. He was sent to the Dutch East Indies as a drummer in the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army [Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger, KNIL] during the Aceh War (1873-1904).

Antonius died on June 27, 1878, in Bukit Lawang, North Sumatra.



Location of Bukit Lawang, North Sumatra, Indonesia