

the Timen Stiddem Society

NEWSLETTER



The family history newsletter for the descendants of the immigrant from Sweden in the seventeenth century to New Sweden (Wilmington), Delaware, encompassing the surnames: Stidham, Steadham, Stedham, Stidam and Steddom among many others.

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Our Other New Sweden Forefathers



A detail from Frans Hogenberg Copperplate of Stockholm from *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, about 1570, 88 years before this issue's New Sweden forefather was born to an upper class family of this city.

Part
III

Charles Springer
and His Family

Our *Other* New Sweden Forefathers, Part III: Charles Springer and His Family

By Dr. Peter S. Craig



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The dedication of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church in 1699 was a milestone in the remarkable success story for one of its members, Charles Christopherson Springer, who came from Sweden some 22 years after the Dutch seizure of New Sweden. It was he who wrote the 1693 letter asking for new Swedish ministers on the Delaware. It was he who lent his tireless assistance to pastor Eric Björk in the negotiations necessary to accomplish their goal of constructing the new church. And it was he who Björk singled out as the most important reason for the success of this venture.

Unlike his countrymen in America, Charles Springer came from an upper class household. His father was Christopher Springer, who died in Stockholm in 1669 after 40 years of government service. His mother was Beata Salina, Christopher Springer's third wife, who survived her husband for

almost 25 years, serving as royal housekeeper for the dowager queen Hedwig Eleonora, widow of King Charles X.

Charles Springer was born in Stockholm in 1658 and seemed destined to follow in his parent's footsteps as a leader in Swedish society. He was sent as a young man to study in Riga, Latvia (then a province of Sweden). Following this he was sent to London to study English and mathematics. About to return home, Charles Springer, then 21, was kidnapped and carried aboard an English vessel bound for Virginia, where in his own words, "I was sold like a farm animal" and held in "very slavery" for five years. Upon his release as a supposed "indentured servant," he walked 400 miles to the Delaware, where he had heard other Swedes lived.

His initial residence, from 1684 to 1690, was in an area known as "New Stockholm," located on the north side of Raccoon Creek in

New Sweden forefathers united by marriage to the Stidham* family

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The 1693 Census of the Swedes on the Delaware

Each "Part" runs in nine successive issues of the newsletter. Volumes and Numbers are from the *Swedish Colonial News*.



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Gloucester County. On 27 December 1685 he married Maria Hendricksdotter, daughter of Hendrick Jacobsson and his wife Gertrude. Around 1690, Charles Springer and his family moved to Oak Hill, located on the east side of Red Clay Creek in New Castle County. This was his home until his death in 1738.

As one of the few Swedes able to read and write the English language, Charles Springer was frequently called upon to draft wills, deeds and other legal documents for his Swedish compatriots. (The courts wouldn't accept such documents in a foreign language.) His reputation was such that he served as a justice on the New Castle court for 35 years (1703-1738) in addition to his manifold duties for Holy Trinity Church as warden, vestryman and trustee. Earlier, prior to the arrival of Björk in 1697, Springer also had

served as reader at the Swedes' church at Crane Hook.

Charles Springer's last official act was to travel to Gloucester County to prove in court on 24 May 1738 a deed he had witnessed on 9 May 1685, conveying land in "New Stockholm" to Mårten Mårtensson, Sr., and John Archer, two Swedes of Ammansland in Ridley Township. While crossing the Delaware on his return trip, 26 May 1738, Charles Springer died of a stroke. He was then eighty



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Engraving of Stockholm from *Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna*, about 1690, during the time Charles Springer, a native of this city, was living at Raccoon Creek in Gloucester County, N.J.

It was Springer who lent his tireless assistance to pastor Eric Björk in the negotiations necessary to accomplish their goal of constructing the new church [Old Swedes]. And it was he who Björk singled out as the most important reason for the success of this venture.

New Castle County Courthouse (Del.) as seen today, where Springer's reputation was such that he served as a justice on the court for 35 years (1703-1738).



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years old. He was buried in the church that he loved.

Maria Hendricksdotter, the first wife of Charles Springer, had been buried at Holy Trinity Church on 15 March 1727. Three months later Springer married Annika, daughter of Johan and Brita Gustafsson and widow of both Matthias Mårtensson and Jonas Walraven.

Charles Springer had eleven known children, all born by his first wife, Maria Hendricksdotter:

1. **Anna Elisabeth Springer**, born c. 1687, married c. 1706 **Samuel Hall**, an Englishman who died as a weaver in Kennet, Chester

County in 1738. His will named his wife Elisabeth, eight daughters (Mary, Sarah, Phoebe, Elisabeth, Hannah, Dinah, Susanna and Margaret) and four sons (George, Samuel, James and Charles).

2. **Rebecca Springer**, born c. 1689, married c. 1708 **Jacob Stille**, Swedish, son of Anders Stille. She died in Christiana Hundred after 1764, and had ten children (Jonathan, Andrew, Maria, Peter, Susanna, Elisabeth, Margareta, Rebecca, John and Lydia).

3. **Maria Springer**, born c. 1691, married on 31 July 1716 **William Cleney**, probably of French origins. She died in Christiana Hundred by 1736 after having nine children (Rebecca, William, Charles, Jane, Maria, Hannah, Jane, Samuel and Sarah).

4. **Charles Springer, Jr.**, born in 1693, married in 1722 **Margareta Robinson**, daughter of Edward Robinson and Anna Walraven. He died in Christiana Hundred and was buried 26 Aug. 1759. They had twelve children (Maria, John, Anna, Charles, Catharina, Edward, Jacob, Gabriel, Margareta, Rachel, Rebecca and Elisabeth).

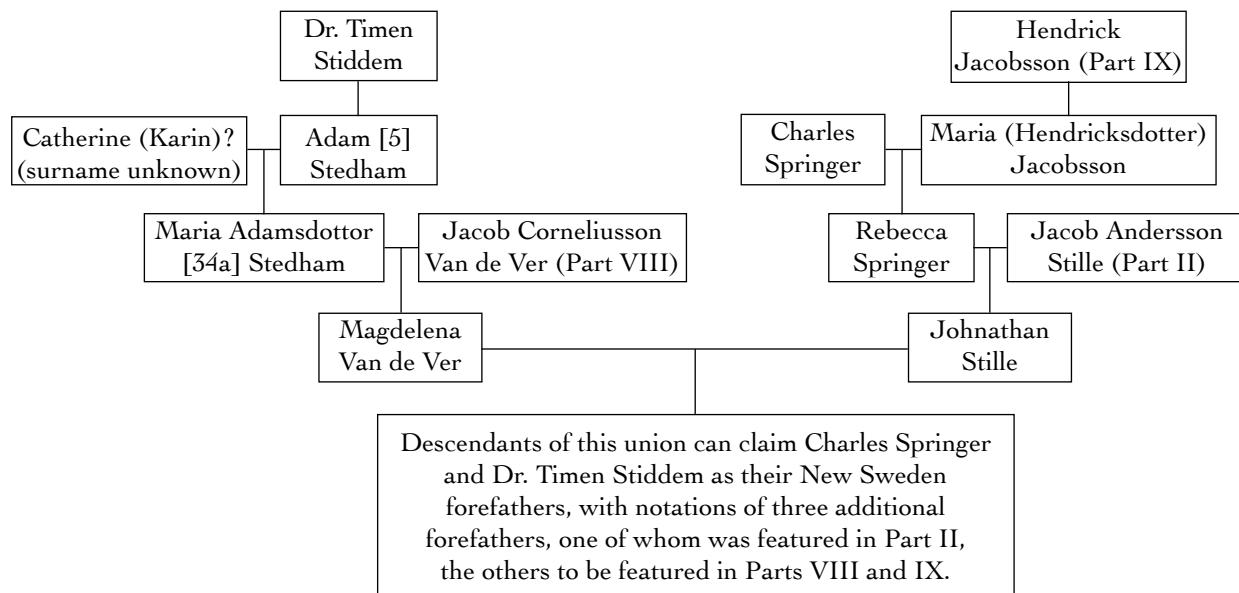
5. **Christopher Springer**, born 12 May 1696, married in 1722 his first cousin **Catherine**

**Locke Avenue Bridge,
Locke Avenue
(County Route 671)
Spanning Raccoon
Creek, Swedesboro,
Gloucester County,
New Jersey (1968).**



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Pedigree chart linking these New Sweden families



Hendrickson, daughter of John Hendricksson and Brita Mattson. Christopher died in Christiana Hundred and was buried 31 July 1755. They had nine children (Charles, John, Brita, Peter, Susannah, Solomon, Abraham, Joseph and Catharina).

6. John Springer, born blind c. 1698, married [1] his first cousin **Maria Hendrickson**, daughter of John Hendricksson, in 1727, [2] Mary Dempsey, English, 31 August 1736. He died in Christiana Hundred in June 1772. By his first wife, he had four children (Charles, William, Mary and Joseph). By his second wife, six more (Elisabeth, Rebecca, Israel, John, Margaret and Andrew).

7. Anders Springer, born c. 1700, died unmarried in January 1731.

8. Jacob Springer, born in 1703, married c. 1732 **Mary Bishop**, English, daughter of Nicholas and Dorcas Bishop. He died in Christiana Hundred and was buried 18 December 1763. They had eleven children (Dorcas, Charles, Susanna, Maria, Rebecca, Nicholas, Anna, Elisabeth, Jacob, John and Thomas).

9. Israel Springer, born c. 1705, died unmarried in January 1731.

10. Magdalena Springer, born c. 1707, married [1] **Jesper Robinson**, 11 November 1725; [2] **Paul Paulson**, 19 November 1728; [3] **Morton Justis**, 5 December 1747. All three were Swedish. She had ten children (Jesper Robinson, Dorothea, Maria, Rebecca, Paul, Charles, Peter, John and Anna Paulson and Helena Justis).

11. Joseph Springer, born in 1709, married in 1731 **Annika Justis**, Swedish, daughter of Måns Justis and Catharina Walraven. He died in Christiana Hundred in 1799. They had twelve children (Charles, Anders, Beata, Maria, Joseph, Catharina, Sarah, Rebecca, Anna, Rachel, Eleanor and Hannah).



The Swedish Colonial Society is pleased to announce that additional certificates can be attained for those Forefather Members who can prove lineage from more than one Forefather. To start the process, contact the SCS Registrar at Registrar@ColonialSwedes.net.