

the Timen Stiddem Society

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NEWSLETTER

THE FAMILY HISTORY NEWSLETTER FOR THE DESCENDANTS OF THIS IMMIGRANT FROM SWEDEN IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TO NEW SWEDEN (WILMINGTON), DELAWARE, ENCOMPASSING THE SURNAMES: STIDHAM, STIDAM, STIDOM, STEDHAM, STEADHAM, AND STEDDOM, AMONG OTHERS.

Dutchman or Duetschman?

In Gothenburg, Sweden, Luloff Stidden was known as the Dutchman. But did he descend from a noble German family bearing a coat of arms?

by Richard L. Steadham



Luloff Stidden's surname was also spelled "Stitten" in the early Christine Church records in Gothenburg, Sweden, 1624-1725 (Ref: *The Descendants of Dr. Timothy Stidham, Vol. 1*, by Jack Stidham, p. 1-5). With this in mind, I did a search on the Internet for "Stitten," and low and behold, one of the sites that came up listed a noble German family by that name found in the book, *General-Index to the Siebmacher's coat of arms books, 1605-1957 (GISW)*, by Hanns Jager-Sunstenau (ISBN #: 3-201-00009-4). On the right is this family's coat of arms from that book. A brief genealogy is also given, plus a description of the coat of arms, all written in German.

I then made contact with the Main State Archives at **Schwerin**, Germany (Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin) and requested copies of the two documents concerning this family on file there. [Note: all place names in **bold face with underline** are located in the map on page 7.] I received seven pages written in old German script from them. Unable to read German of (Continued on page 4)



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any variety, I turned to Gordon Hartig Translation Services in Westford, Massachusetts, and had all these documents translated into English. The description of the Stitten family from the Jager-Sunstenau book read as follows:

Stitten

Old family of Holstenian descent, counted among the noble families of the **Lübeck** societal circle. Coming to Silesia in 1592 was Hartwig von St. [von means from; St. is an abbreviation of Stitten for this entry] who entered into the service of the margrave Joachim Friedrich von Brandenburg – postulate administrator for the Hochstift of Magdeburg and, later, Kurfurst of Brandenburg – and who was chosen as a right-hand man and advisor in 1607 by this fellow's son, the margrave Johann Georg, when he was taking over the Duchy of Jagerndorf. In 1609 Hartwig von St. became provincial governor of the Principality of Jagerndorf, and in this same principality he acquired the estates of Pommerswitz, Rosnitz, Wiendorf, and Steuberwitz – all of which are in the District of Leobschutz. He was married to Magdalena von Asshelm, but he left behind no children when he died in 1621 in **Frankfurt** a . O. [on the Oder River, which now is on the border of Poland].

The table of descendants for the family is that which appears below:

(1) Hartwig von St. and Klindtroden; spouse Weilia von Kirchringen; (2) Hartwig von St. at **Krempelsdorf** and Hannsfeld; spouse Athalia von Grawert (heiress at Krempelsdorf); (3) Hartwig von St. at Krempelsdorf and Hannsfeld (died 1577 at Hannsfeld of the plague with 7 children); spouse Margaretha, daughter of Sebastian Ehrsam, was first counsel to and chancellor of the **Bremen** archbishopric, last position syndic in Lubeck; (4) Hartwig von St. (born 1563 on the 7th of July, died in 1621 on the 22nd of December), only son of the above-named; princely privy councilor and provincial governor for the Principality of **Jagerndorf**; married in 1610 Magdalena von Asshelm and Goldschmieden.

Coat of arms: divided; up front in gold and situated on the division a crowned black ox head; behind in red a golden diagonal chevron. Jewel: red wing with the golden diagonal

chevron. Cover: red-gold. (In this way the coat of arms in the the A.S. (?) and in the church at Pommerswitz.) A family history book sketch: Antonius a Stiten (circa 1570) shows the same thing as below. In the divided shield in front in silver the half-crowned black ox head along the divide, with black horn and stuck-out red tongue; behind in red a silver diagonal chevron. Jewel: on red-silver hump red wing with the silver diagonal chevron. Cover: red-silver.

The first document in old German script from the Main State Archives at Schwerin reads:

644 von Stiten (v. P):

Their coat of arms was divided long-ways to the right was situated a half black ox head in the golden, and to the left a golden diagonal chevron, in the right field. Above the helmet the cover of which gold and red, was a red eagle wing, and on the same the diagonal chevron in the field.

There is mention of this family as early as the year 1154 in the old **Ratzeburg** tithing register, in which there are 4 villages that list the name von Stiten, which were situated in the church parish of Begenthorp, and which had various owners of the same name.

Other than these, there are also 3 other Stitens present here in **Mecklenberg**, one in the Office of Sternberg and the others in the Office of Mecklenburg, from whence this family likely took and retained its name.

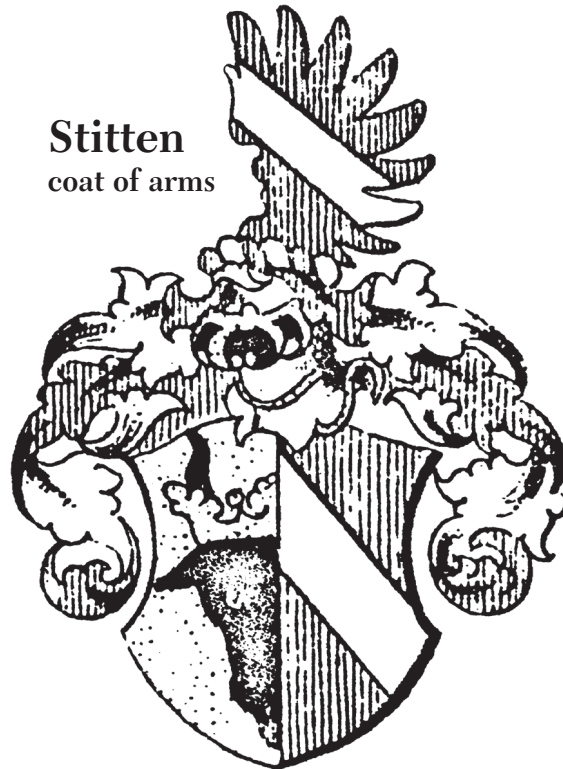
Afterwards this family moved to Lubeck, and there enjoyed important positions in the area of counsel; right

away Franz von Stiten was town councilman there, and in the year 1573 was delegate of said city and it is attributed to him that he helped with misunderstandings in **Rostock**.

This family died out at the end of the 17th century with Hartwig von Stiten, whose tombstone inscription can be seen in a Lubeck church, where it is remarked that he was descended from the Mecklenburg nobility; op cit., page 257.

The second document in old German script from the Main State Archives at Schwerin reads:

Legitimization Letter from Mr. Joh. Alberto on account



Stitten
coat of arms

of honorably received good ancestry, Hartwig van Stitten, received 1610.

We, Johann Albrecht, of God's grace, Duke of Mecklenburg, etc., do hereby announce in all the land with this open letter to all those who shall see it or hear it read to them, that there appeared before us, the honorable and beloved man advancing in rank Harthwigh von Stitten, legal heir at Pommerswitz in Silesia, privy councilor for the electorate and principality of **Brandenburg** and appointed provincial governor for the principality of Jagerndorf in Upper Silesia, and with him he also had the coat of arms of our likewise beloved younger Hartwigen von Stitten, heir of Krepelstorff and Schonenbuchen, and also on the maternal side Hierony and Luneburgen at Woysling and all other Luneburgen on the Bichorff, his cousins and uncles, with the announcement that he is of legitimate age-old noble lineage, and this then transmitted from and with our credible knowledge, as well as of his beloved ancestors, hereditary reigning princes, who would be in need of dividing up the subordinate property Pittendf among them in grace. If also on their account the above-noted, his next cousins and blood relative, had brought along, his native ancestral knowledge while awaiting execution on our part. After we have deemed such attempt as proper, we graciously therein consenting, and if one wishes to find with certainty here, through what condition the von Stittens are known by our national commission, so they have indeed left behind oral records that their ancestors sprouted from our principality of Mecklenburg and have also resided in same three hundred and more years ago. As they also have an estate Stitten bearing their name, the house along with villages large and small, Stitten and undifferentiable places situated here in the land, and today are present above one another with held nobility, also above that from unimaginable years. Above other residence-entitled nobility and ranking assigned for and have been, and yet are in the age-old order of the Eirwelb brothers at Lubeck. Upon this the above-named von Stittens turned and Luneburgs, for us satisfactorily, the first mentioned Hartwig von Stizen, their hereditary blood relative, cousins and uncles to be, and embodied ancestors of them from cousins and maternal relative to, he also from the same race or family, his rightful good ancestry and honorable birth sufficiently proven, indeed would be from such race or family, the Eckwarden, in East Frisia, Erhamen and Grossfeld in Franconia. Within fifty years died out, and entirely gone under. For that reason such as this has taken place, and above-named measures have been taken and have compiled and entered above information in this document and have legitimized

same under our princely seal and have made this known and imparted it. Happened and given at our House Vordebusch in the month of March in the year of our Lord sixteen hundred and ten.

In addition to these three documents from the Main State Archives at Schwerin, mention of individuals bearing the Stiten surname (and in one case, a village by that name) was found on the following German web sites (all translated into English through the "Google" translating option available on most web browsers.) Keep in mind that sentence structure in the German language is different than in the English. Therefore, when reading the following passages from these sites, they will sound a bit odd in their grammar. To help locate the individuals concerned, they will be *boldface italic*.

- "*Stiten von: Elisabeth*; p: ca. 1570; d: n. 1617; m (M II): Lübeck 1600 Friedrich Dr.jur. Plönnies 1; *Georg*, 1590 Ratsverwandter in Lübeck, Mengstr.10, 1580 Zirkelbruder, Vorsteher der Mar.kirche; p: 1528; d: 01.04.1612; m: Mechthild (Metteke) Wibbeking 2; *Hartwich*, Zirkelbruder zu Lübeck; d: v. 1560; m: Lübeck 1518 Adelheid (Taleke) Crawert 1; *Hartwich*, 1489 Ratsherr, 1502 Bürgermstr. in Lübeck, Mengstr.2; d: Lübeck03.04.1511; m (M II): n. 1492 Cäcilie Kerkring 2; *Heinrich*, 1447 Ratsherr, '66 Bürgermeister in Lübeck, '57/58 Amtmann in Bergedorf; d: Lübeck09.05.1484; m (M I, F II): Margaretha Brekewoldt 2, vw. v.d. Howe; *Hermann*; p: ca. 1370; d: Lübeck 1432; m (M I): Magdalena NN; *Conrad*, 1380 auf Schönböken, 1388 in Lübeck, Fleischhauerstraße; p: Wismar ca. 1350; m: v. 1370 Taleke Schonenberg." From the web site, *Ancestor list Dr. H. Brandt* <http://www.brandt-krieger-r.de/Ahnen_S.htm>.

- "[the Prussian cities at Hamburg]: like probably also Hamburg, a letter of the German buyer to Bruegge together with copies of the letters of different gentlemen received; afterwards the old person opened advice to Luebeck by Jordan Pleskow and *Klaus van Stiten* to the German buyer that he him against the inhabitants of Luebeck awarded sum of 4000 Marks of loetigen gold demand, and the buyer attained a delay with large trouble by 31 May..." From the web site, *Meeting to brown mountain, 23. April 1411 - HR 1,6, P. 8* <http://www.phil.uni-erlangen.de/~p1ges/quellen/hr1_6/hr_1_6_S_8.html>.

- "Pope Gregor (the 11.) determined in a document

executed in Avignon that after dying the ‘rector’ **Johann v. Stiten** the Zitower Pfarrstelle is to be lent at Herrman Campz.” From the web site, *Time board for the history of the village Zittow part 1* <<http://www.zittow.de/1/Geschichte/geschichte.html>>.

- “Knight Heinrich v. Rambow confirms sales of the village **Stiten**.” From the web site, *Rambow Page* <<http://www.rambow.de/quellen.html>>. (Editor’s note, this village is known today as “**Groß Stieten**” or “Gross Stieten” and is located in the German State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.)

- “Directly at the village also the Arfrader yard lies. It is probably the same yard, which was sold to 1450 by the executors of the Luebecker of citizen **Jacob of Stiten** [untranslated: **Jacob von Stiten**] for 115 Marks to the citizen Gereke Plote, its tenants 1424 a Todschlagsuehne before the Luebecker mayor locked. **Of Stiten** acquired the yard later back and kept it then over 200 years possession.” From the web site, *History Arfrades* <<http://www.arfrade.de/history.htm>>.

- “Trenthorst: So-called Lueb property in the office district small nature mountain... Historical: The property was formerly a village, which 1529 of the king Friedrich I. its secretary Heinrich trained leaned and from this immediately thereafter to the Luebeck citizen Go for 2000? one sold; whereupon **v. Stiten** possessed it...” From the web site, *Topography of small nature mountain and environment* <http://www.peter-doerling.de/Geneal/Wes enb_topo.htm>.

Dutch or German?

I began this article by posing the question as to whether or not Luloff Stidden (Stitten) was a Dutchman or Duetschman. Although these documents and web sites in and of themselves don’t answer that question, I believe they provide fertile ground for more research in these areas of Germany where better evidence may *someday* be found. Swedish records clearly say that Luloff *was* a Dutchman, so we have to assume he at least arrived in Sweden from the Netherlands (or Denmark, see below) with other Dutchmen at the request of King Gustavus II Adolphus as the first wave of engineers and city planners to help build and administer the new city of **Gothenburg**. He was the city’s first sheriff from January 28 to May 31, 1622 (Ref: *The History of Gothenburg, the Foundation and the First Hundred Years*, by Helge

Almquist, 1929, p. 93), as well as its “caretaker” (or guardian) in 1624 and was paid 180 daler silver currant for this position (Almquist, p. 98). He later held the office of “building contractor” until his death in 1639 (Almquist, pp. 95 & 96). The Swedish King chose this location for a city partly to provide a center of resistance and protection against the nearby raiding Danes. There were over 500 Dutch settlers in the first year, with lesser numbers of immigrants from Germany and Britain. The Town Council in 1624 consisted of four Swedes, three Germans, three Dutch, and two Scots (Ref: The website, *The History of the English Church in Gothenburg* <<http://educate.lib.chalmers.se/St.Andrews/subdocs/history.html>>.

There’s evidence that Luloff was for a time living in Copenhagen, Denmark, as a “Lijloff Stijdenn from Copenhagen” appeared before the court in Lodose (predecessor of Gothenburg) over a charter dispute involving a ship from Copenhagen (Ref: Stidham, p. 5-2). It’s because of this *one* reference, *plus* the close proximity of **Hammel**, Denmark, to Gothenburg, Sweden, we believe Timen Stiddem was probably born in *that* village of Hammel as opposed to the other places bearing that name in Germany. Could there be other Hammels though with a legitimate claim as to Timen’s birthplace?

In the northwestern German State of Niedersachsen, two other small villages with the name **Hammel** exist. The location of one is interesting because of its close proximity to the eastern border of the Netherlands. If Timen was *not* born in Hammel, Denmark, this one would be my guess as his most likely birthplace. For the record, there’s a third **Hammel** in the southern German State of Bayern, near the city of Munich.

What About DNA Evidence?

As we learned from the results in our Stidham* Family DNA Study, our genetic fingerprint (or haplotype in scientific terms) matches closely with results of participants found in a number of other DNA studies. Family Tree DNA (FTDNA), the company through which we had our DNA samples tested, keeps our results on file, along with those of all the other studies going through them, and provides us with information on participants in those studies who match us, or very nearly do.

When we first received our results we were surprised to learn that our Y-chromosome matched several men of Jewish origin. In order to confirm this finding, Family Tree DNA suggested we have my personal DNA sample more thoroughly analyzed in order to confirm my “deep ancestry” by studying other markers on the Y-chromosome. This

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was done and the results showed my (our) haplogroup is called “YAP+”. The genetics lab at the University of Arizona where our DNA was analyzed said that one quarter of all Jewish men fall into this same category. However, at this time there is no evidence to prove our paternal descent is from a man in the remote past who *himself* was Jewish. In other words, our common male ancestor with these Jewish men could have lived *before* the Jews emerged as a people over 4,000 years ago. Neolithic farmers migrated from the Middle East into Europe about 10,000 years ago after the receding ice sheets from the last ice age. Nevertheless, the places of known origin (and their numbers) in Europe of those closely matching our Y-chromosome pattern currently in the FTDNA database come from: Belarus–7, England–12, France–1, Germany–9, Latvia–1, Lithuania–2, The Netherlands–1, Poland–5, Romania–3, Russia–9, Scotland–3, Ukraine–4, and Wales–1. I’ll present more “fun facts” about DNA and relationships in the next issue.

Other Questions

We might take a moment at this point and ask a couple of important questions in order to draw some conclusions based on this information.

- Is the surname **Stidden** derived from the surname **Stitten** or (von) **Stiten**?

There are no place names in Europe named Stidden or Stitten as stated above. The words themselves, as spelled, are not found in either the Dutch or German languages. Luloff was from the Netherlands, but surnames were not required there before 1811, at which time the French Emperor Napoleon then imposed them on everyone. However, the nobility, as well as families in the upper strata of society, did carry surnames in Luloff’s time, inferring that he *was* from one of these two groups. The origin of Dutch surnames by the way could have been from a person’s quality, as in Groot (big) or Dik (fat); their occupation, as in Schoemaker (shoemaker); geographic place name, as in Van Buren (from Buren); or patronymic as in, Klaassen (son of Klaas).

Conclusion: **Stidden** *must have* evolved from a place name such as **Stitten** or **Stetin** somewhere in Germany, as there is no such place name in the Netherlands.

- The Hartwig von Stitten line died out with Hartwig #4 in 1621, so how could we be related to him?

It’s true that we would not be *directly* related to this line, but the first document in old German script says there is mention of several von Stiten families as early as the year 1154 in the Ratzeburg tithing register, Begenthorp parish. Three other Stitens were present in Mecklenburg.

Conclusion: one of these von Stitens might very well be our earliest Stidham* ancestor.

To Sum It All Up

Germany—not the Netherlands—seems like the *most likely* place of origin for our family, whose earliest recorded members bore a reasonable spelling relationship—though remote—to our current version. The surname *appears* to have begun as **von Stiten** as early as the 1100s and was most likely derived from the village called **Stiten** (today known as **Groß Stieten**). These conclusions are based on the information known to us today, and is of course, open to different interpretation by others. It is presented here solely on the authority of the editor and leaves it up to others to decide its validity.



(Editor’s Desk continues from page 3)

ture with the shipwrecked *Kattan* and the Spanish pirates off of Puerto Rico. She also relayed two instances when he practiced medicine in the colony. The bulk of her talk was on botany and medicinal plants though, which included a colorful display of various local plants which were used by those in Dr. Stiddem’s time.

But, I’m getting ahead of myself. The morning session began with a scholar of history from Uppsala University in Sweden, Stellan Dahlgren, whose presentation was entitled, “Swedish Colonial Goals, Experiences, and Disappointments.” Professor Dahlgren and his colleague Hans Norman, who began the afternoon session, are authors of the book, *The Rise and Fall of New Sweden* (see box next page). After Professor Dahlgren, Peter O. Wacker, a professor of geography from Rutgers University gave a talk entitled, “Early Fennoscandian Influences on the North American Cultural Landscape.” Following Professor Norman’s after-lunch talk entitled, “The People of Swedish Origin in the Delaware Valley Region: Numbers, Ethnicity, and Cultural Identity, 1638-1790,” Susan E. Klepp, Professor of History from Temple University gave a presentation entitled, “Town and Country, Births and Deaths: The Changing Lives of Swedes in the Delaware Valley, 1690-1828.” Dr. Peter Stebbins Craig, Historian of the Swedish Colonial Society, ended the afternoon session with some final comments and clarifications.

I’m not aware of the focus of next year’s subject matter concerning the New Sweden colony, but I’m certain the American Swedish Historical Museum will strive to make it as informative as this year’s conference. If you can make it,