

RENÉ LIEVENS, FROM NEVELE ON AMERICA'S BIGGEST MEMORIAL

door André Bollaert

Translator: Rosa Bollaert Schelfaut (Moline)

In honor of the millions of immigrants in search of the "American Dream", the United States Government decided a few years ago at Ellis Island to build a memorial for them.

Ellis Island is an island in the bay for the port of New York. It was most important for the arrival of immigrants who wanted to make a new country.

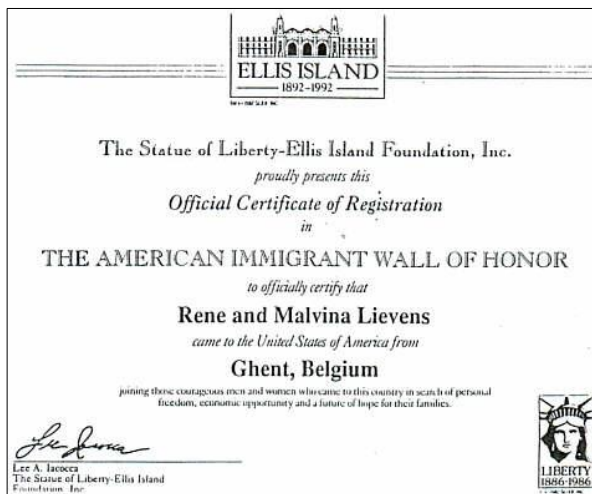
Between 1892 through 1952, 12 million passed through. Forty percent of Americans (of more than 100 million people) has an ancestor that came inland through Ellis Island.

The restoration of the main building on the Island cost more than \$ 165 million. It is now the biggest and most expensive restoration project of this kind in American history. It opened to the public September 10, 1990.

For the cost of recording this great project, the "American Immigrant Wall of Honor" was put up. This wall holds the names of 420.000 immigrants including the ancestors of President John F. Kennedy, Neil Diamonds, Gregory Peck, Barbara Streisand, Telly Savalas, etc.

For the amount of \$ 100 for the upkeep of Ellis Island, an immigrant could have the name of his ancestor be imprinted forever.

Thanks to their daughter, Yvonne, René Lievens[1] and his wife, Malvina De Volder have their names on America's greatest memorial. Also mentioned on the memorial is the fact Yvonne Lievens as just 18 months old when she and her parents immigrated to America.



Proof of Registration of the "American Immigrant Wall of Honor" with the names of René and Malvina Lievens

Little-quarter status of René Lievens

1. Lievens René

°Nevele 26.01.1877 - +Moline (USA) 11.03.1927

2. Lievens August

°Nevele 15.04.1841 - + Hansbeke 10.01.1905

x Nevele 10.05.1871

3. Van Haesebroeck Ursula

°Nevele 22.12.1842 - +Hansbeke 30.05.1921

4. Lievens Jan-Baptist

°Hansbeke 26.09.1807 - +Nevele 18.01.1852

x Nevele 29.07.1840

5. Van Nevel Rosalia

°Meigem 16.03.1806 - +Poesele 18.01.1888

6. Van Haesebroeck Carolus

°Nevele 24.03.1805 - +Nevele 27.11.1847

x Nevele 03.07.1839

7. Martens Carolina

°Bellem 02.06.1811 - +Nevele 22.11.1847

8. Lievens Gerard

°Hansbeke 20.12.1819 - +Hansbeke 14.01.1819

x Hansbeke 07.01.1796

9. Devos Isabelle

°1772 - +Hansbeke 11.02.1829

10. Van Nevel Livinus

Van Nevel Livinus

°Merendree 01.06.1767 - +Nevele 15.11.1819

x Meigem 20.04.1800

11. De Witte Regina

°Nevele 15.12.1776 - +Nevele 05.06.1835

12. Van Haesebroeck Augustinus

°Drongen 29.10.1766 - +Nevele 29.11.1821

x ?

13. Tuytschaever Regina

°Nevele 28.02.1779 - +Nevele 01.10.1861

14. Martens Joannes Franciscus

°Bellem 19.11.1761 - +Bellem 08.09.1826

x Bellem 01.08.1809

15. Wille Rosa

°Bellem 16.05.1781 - +? na 1839

16. Lievens, Gerard

17. Donne, Isabelle

18. Devos Mauritius

19. Van Zeveren, Catharina

20. Van Nevel Pieter

21. Claeys Joanne

22. De Witte Cirprianus
23. Quickenborne Judoca

24. Haesenbroeck Jan
25. Bus Jacoba

26. Tuytschaever Joannes
27. De Dapper Magdalena

28. Martens Jan
29. De Rycke Anne

30. Wille Jan-Francies
31. De Baets Maria-Jacoba

1.

René Lievens was born January 26, 1877 in Bosstraat 27 in Nevele, born the son of August, a laborer, and Ursula Van Haesebroeck. As a young man, he made his living as a laborer and transporter. He was a transporter when he got married October 12, 1907 in Ghent to Molarina Maria De Volder. The newlyweds moved into a home on the Noordkaai 26 where their first child, Camillus, was born Januari 21, 1908. Camillus died Januari 13, 1909 in Wondelgem. On August 18, 1909, Yvonne Rachel was born. At that time, René was a driver for a coal merchant and his wife worked in a match factory.

On July 19, 1910 he left the family in Ghent and moved to Aalter in the parental home of Malvina De Volder on Biezenstraat. Four days later, René was written off of the population register of Aalter as "left to America". From Antwerp, he left on the passenger ship Campanice to New York, arriving there the 4th or 5th of August.

A year later, after finding work at Iowa Malleable Iron Co, a foundry in Fairfield, Iowa, his wife and 18-month old daughter joined him. Another year later, a son was born, Leon Arthur (*6.13.1912) and 2 years later, a second daughter was born (*5.27.1914)

On June 22, 1923, a daughter Margaret, was born while the family lived in Warden, Montana at the foot of the Rocky Mountains where he had a farm.

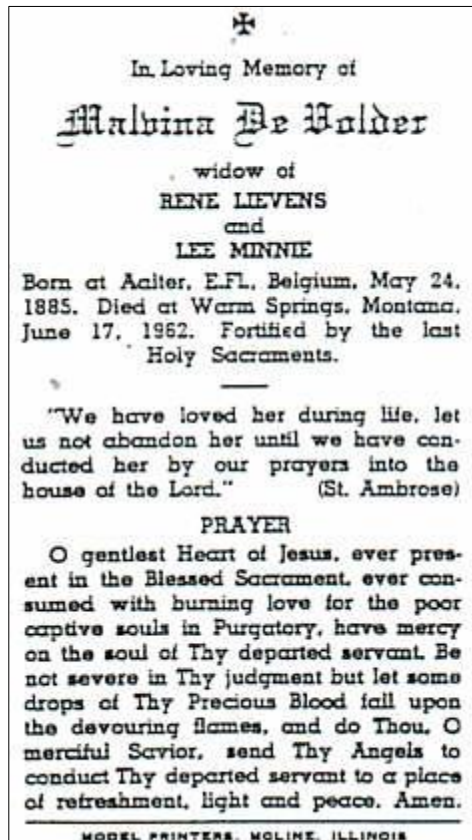
During the last years of his life, René worked in East Moline, Illinois at the Malleable Iron Works. He died March 11, 1927 in Moline, Illinois of a lung infection.



Malvina De Volder was the daughter of Joannes Francies, cattle salesman and saloon keeper (*Poeke 9.27.1841 and +Aalter 10.5.1888) and Marie-Stephanie De Wulf (*Poeke 5.30.1850 and +Aalter 1.20.1929) housekeeper. Jan-Francies De Volder was the son of Jan-Baptist (*Poeke 12.16.1805), farmer, and Catharina Madou (*Dentergem 1805). She had lived at the

Beekwijk in Poeke.

Marie Stephanie De Wulf was the daughter of Francies (°Ruisselede 1800 and +Poeke 3.14.1864) a saloon keeper and Francisca Faelens (°Lotenhulle 1812 and +Poeke 11.28.1847) who was a spinner. After the death of his wife, Francies De Wulf remarried a 22-year-old, Sophie Van Steenkiste (°Zeveren). They lived in Poeke in the Beekwijk and were neighbors of the De Volder family.



In 1881 Jan Francies De Volder and his wife left their birthplace and moved to Aalter in Biezemstraat 55. The family then had 2 children, Octavius (°Poeke 8.29.1879 and +Fairfield (USA) 9.11.1957) and Augusta Rosalia (°Poeke 11.14.1880). In Aalter, they had six more children: Leo (°Aalter 12.2.1881 and +Aalter 4.25.1888), Felix (°Aalter 11.29.1882 and +South

Bend, USA, 9.20.1968), Triphon-Adolf (°Aalter 11.16.1883 and +Moline USA 8.25.1947), Malvina, Elodia (°Aalter 5.19.1888 and +Warm Springs USA 6.17.1962) and Leo-Arthur (°Aalter 4.13.1889 and +Moline USA 5.21.1953).

Marie Stephanie De Volder remarried after the death of Jan Francies De Volder and met Karel-Lodewijk Van Laecke (°Aalter 9.4.1851 and +Aalter 2.1.1929), widower of Maria-Catharina Claeys.

Five members of the De Volder family immigrated to the US where they started their families. Thriphon De volder worked for a time in Montigny-sur-Sambre and Felix stayed until May 1905 in Charleroi before he went to the new world.

Malvina De Volder was listed in the population register and birth register in Aalter and the wedding register of Ghent as Molarina Maria. Before her marriage to René Lievens, she was registered in Ghent, Bagattenstraat 155. After the death of René Lievens, she remarried Lee Minnie (°2.21.1878 and +3.16.1962). She died 6.17.1962 at Warm Springs, Montana only three months after her second had died.

Yvonne R. Lievens married Adolph Cabor (°Moline 10.28.1909 and +Moline 8.24.1966). He was the son of Edmond (°Maldegem 9.15.1870 and +Moline 10.24.1904) and Antoinette M. Cox (°Lille, France on 4.1.1880 and +Moline 9.4.1959). Yvonne worked 27 years in an industrial laundry and her husband Adolph was an electrician in Moline and Rock Island.

Leon Arthur Lievens fought as a soldier between 1942 and 1945 in North Africa and southern Italy. After the war, he moved in with his oldest sister and her husband. He worked as a truck driver at International Harvester Farmall in Rock Island.

Edna Lievens was a packer at Ryans Chip Factory in Billings, Montana. Her husband was a farmer. Both are deceased. They had four children: William, Elsie, Marjorie and Robert.

Margaret Lievens married Henry Ostrand, a metal worker at the International Harvester Farmall in Rock Island, Illinois. She worked as a telephone operator at the Illinois Bell Telephone Co., Rock Island. The couple has one son, Paul.

August Lievens was born April 15, 1841 in Nevele on Bosstraat as the oldest son of Jan-Baptist and Rosalie Van Nevele. On May 10, 1871, he married Ursula Van Haesebroeck in Nevele (the same day, his younger brother Bernard married Theresia Slock).

Ursula Van Haesebroeck also was born in Nevele on Kaermhoek street December 22, 1842. She was the daughter of Carolus-Ludovicus and Carolina Martens.

In the 1881-1900 Nevele population register, the family was registered on Bosstraat 27. He did odd jobs, and she did housework. The family had Helena-Augusta (°10.20.1875) and René (°1.20.1877). The two oldest children died before their first birthday: Jan-Francies (°5.9.1872 and +6.11.1872) and Elisa-Augusta (°9.20.1872 and +6.26.1874).

On May 8, 1899 the family moved to Hansbeke where August died January 10, 1905. His occupation was a field worker. René Lievens, who then lived in Poesele, reported the death at the city hall.

Ursula Van Haesebroek died May 30, 1921 at a Convent in Hansbeke. Helena-Augusta Lievens married Guillaume Veys (°Brussels 8.16.1880 and +Ghent 1.8.1943). She died in Ghent April 18, 1960.

Jan Baptist Lievens was born September 26, 1807, the son of Gerard "cultivateur dans cette commune" and Isabeau De Vos "fileuse". He married Marie Van Kerrebroeck who died October 29, 1839 in Nevele. Nine months later on July 29, 1840, he remarried Rosalia Van Nevel. He was known as a weaver and she a maid. First they lived on Bosstraat and after that they moved to Biebuyckstraat n° 29.

Rosalia Van Nevel was born in Meigem March 16, 1806. She was the daughter of Livinus and Regina De Witte.

The Nevele population register of 1846 (as follows) gives us the following composition of the family. Following are the names, occupation, birthplace and age at that time.

1. Lievens, Jan-Baptist	Fieldworker	Hansbeke	40 years
2. Van Nevel, Rosalie	Fieldworker	Meigem	40 years
3. Lievens, Augustus	No profession	Nevele	5 years
4. Lievens, Jan-Francies	No profession	Nevele	3 years
5. Lievens, Bernard	No profession	Nevele	2 years
6. Lievens, Rosalia	No profession	Nevele	Born 5.4.1847
7. Lievens, Amelia	No profession	Nevele	Born 10.4.1848
8. Lievens, Petrus	No profession	Nevele	Born 3.2.1851

Jan Baptist Lievens died January 18, 1852 at his house on Biebuyckstraat. He was then 44 years old. Rosalie Van Nevel and her children moved at the end of May of the same year. In the population register of 1856, we found her back in a house in the same town, houwe number 84. She was a spinner. Two children were still living at home, Bernard (13 years old) and Amelia (7 years old). Rosalie Van Nevel died in Poesele in the Old Kerkstraat n° 2 in the home of her youngest son Petrus Lievens.

6-7

Carolus-Ludovicus Van Haesebroeck was born in Nevele on the third Germinal of the 13th year of the French Republic (3.24.1805), the son of Augustin, weaver, and Reine Thuytschaever. He married Adelaide Desmet. She died January 7, 1838 in Drongen. After that, he moved to Meigem where he stayed a weaver.

On July 3, 1839, he remarried a 28-years-old maid, Carolina Martens, in Nevele. She lived in Nevele but was born in Bellem June 2, 1811, the daughter of Joannes Franciscus Martens and Rosa Wille.

In 1846, the family lived on Kaermhoek n° 18 in Nevele. The family was listed that year in the population register as follows:

1. Van Haesebroeck, Karel	Peddler	Nevele	40 years
2. Martens, Caroline	Spinner	Bellem	36 years
3. Van Haesebroeck, Eduard	No profession	Vosselare	10 years
4. Van Haesebroeck, Rosalie	No profession	Nevele	6 years
5. Van Haesebroeck, Clemence	No profession	Nevele	5 years
6. Van Haesebroeck, Ursula	No profession	Nevele	3 years
7. Van Haesebroeck, Emelia	No profession	Nevele	3 days

8. Tuytschaever, Regina (widow) Spinner Nevele 60 years

Carolina Martens died November 22, 1847 and Karel Van Haesebroeck died five days later. Both are presumed to be potato plague victims which killed many people in the west. In 1847, in Nevele itself, there were 172 deaths reported and 112 in 1846 and 127 in 1848.

8-9

Gerard Lievens was born December 20, 1757 in Hansbeke, the son of Gerard and Isabelle Donne who had married December 2, 1752.

On January 7, 1796, he married Isabelle Devos in his birth town. She was the daughter of Mauritius and Catharina Van Zeveren and was born around 1772. The place and date could not be found.

He died January 14, 1819 in Hansbeke in the Carmenhoek. In his death report, he was listed as a laborer.

She died February 11, 1829, at the age of 57. She died in her home on the district Reybroeck. Her death report shows she was a spinner.

10-11

Lieven Van Nevel was born June 1, 1767 in Merendree the son of Petrus and Joanna Claeys.

On April 20, 1800, he married Regina De Witte in Meigem where they both lived, according to their marriage report.

Regina De Witte was the daughter of Ciprianus and Judoca Quickenborne. She was born in Nevele, December 15, 1776 and there she was a spinner in her home on Vierboomstraat on June 5, 1835.

Lieven Van Nevel died almost 16 years earlier on June 15, 1819. Both lived at the time on Kerrebroek street.

12-13

Augustinus Van Haesebroeck was born October 29, 1766 in Drongen, the son of Joannes and Jacoba Busch, and died in Nevele, Veldeken street, on November 29, 1821.

He married Regina Tuytschaever, who was born in Nevele, on February 28, 1779. The place and date of their marriage was not found. After the death of her husband, Regina Tuytschaever moved to Meigem.

When her son, Carolus Ludovicus, married, she was known as a spinner. She died October 1, 1861 in Nevele at Hospital Louise (a nursinghome). Joannes Haesebroeck (or Van Haesebroeck) was the son of Petrus, also of Drongen. He married Jacoba Bus (or Busch), daughter of Basinus and Clara De Vos of Baarle. Basinus Bus was 44 years old when on May 2, 1741, he drowned in the river Leie.

14-15

Joannes Franciscus Martens was born November 19, 1761 in Bellem, the son of Joannes and Anna De Rycke. He married Jeanne Gijzebrecht. She died March 9, 1809 in Bellem. Only five months later, on August 1, 1809, he remarried an almost 25 years younger seamstress named Rosa Wille. His parents Jan (+Bellem 2.22.1769) and Anna De Rycke (+Bellem 2.24.1791) were already dead.

Rosa Wille was born in Bellem May 16, 1781, the daughter of Joannes Francies and Marie Jacoba De Baets of Poesele. When she married, her father was already deceased (+Hansbeke 4.11.1799). Her mother Jacqueline De Baets made her living at that time as a seamstress. Jan Francies Martens died at 12:00 A.M. on September 8, 1826 in his home, street D n°6, Vaart Zuid, in Bellem. His death certificate said he was a laborer. When Rosa Wille died, we could not find it. In 1839, when she was present at the wedding of her daughter, Carolina, she was 60 years old and was a spinner in her household.

Counsel Offices

Population registers: Aalter, Hansbeke, Nevele, Poeke.

Registers of marriage: Bellem, Hansbeke, Meigem, Nevele, Poesele.

Parochial registers: Baarle, Bellem, Drongen, Hansbeke, Merendree, Nevele.

Thanks to:

Mrs. Yvonne Cabor, Rock Island, Illinois USA

Mrs Mildred Kale, Rock Island, Illinois USA

Lee A. Iacocca, President of "The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.", New York City, New York, USA

The city personnel of Aalter, Deinze and Nevele for their help and involvement for the information of this article.

[1] R. Lievens is a nephew of René Lievens (*Nevele November 17, 1883 - †Moline November 2, 1978). He immigrated to the USA in 1907. See also A. BOLLAERT, Left Poesele to go to the USA between 1890 and 1930, in Land van Nevele, jg. XV (1984), 1, pages 11-21.