

Origins

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of The Archives

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1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
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(616) 526-6313

Origins is designed to publicize and advance the objectives of The Archives. These goals include the gathering, organization, and study of historical materials produced by the day-to-day activities of the Christian Reformed Church, its institutions, communities, and people.

Richard H. Harms
Editor

Hendrina Van Spronsen
Circulation Manager

Conrad J. Bult
Book Reviewer

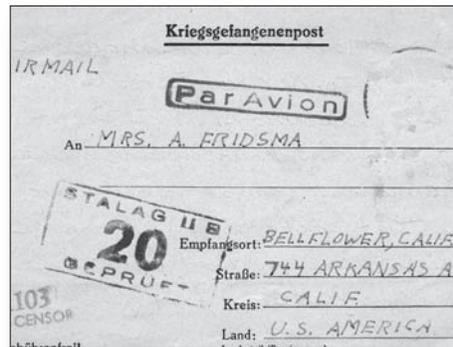
Tracey L. Gebbia
Designer

H.J. Brinks
Harry Boonstra
Janet Sheeres
Associate Editors

James C. Schaap
Robert P. Swierenga
Contributing Editors

HeuleGordon Inc.
Printer

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POW telegram



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Time to Renew Your Subscription

As is our practice, to save the cost of a separate notification of renewal mailing, we use this column to notify you that this is the time to renew your subscription. A renewal envelope for this is included with this issue. Subscriptions remain \$10 (US) per year. Gifts above \$10 are acknowledged as charitable gifts to *Origins* and we are grateful for your generosity. ♣

This Issue

We present two diaries in this issue. One was kept by Pfc. Jacob Fridsma while he was a prisoner of war during the last months of 1944 and early months of 1945. Because of the original diary's length, this is an edited version; in the near future we plan to provide

the entire diary via our website. Moving a bit back in time, the second is the 1921 diary Jacob Van Hinte kept during his tour of the United States in preparation of his pioneering studies on the Dutch-American experience. Next, Peter Ester, who edited the diary, provides background on Van Hinte and the place of his work in Dutch-American scholarship. Moving still further back in time, Robert Yonker provides his discoveries about a relative who was part of a little-known WW I Allied military expedition on Russian soil. And, Dr. Robert Swierenga presents the results of his research on the unique experience of Dutch immigrants in Wisconsin compared to their kin in West Michigan or Iowa. ♣

Available On-Line

Early membership information from Pillar Church, Holland, Michigan, is now available on-line thanks to the work of volunteer Willene De Groot, student assistant Cyndi Feenstra, and

Richard H. Harms. In 1847 the first Dutch immigrants arrived in West Michigan and one of their earliest efforts was the formation of a church, which in 1850 joined the Reformed Church in America as First Church. A division within the congregation in 1882 saw the majority of members, who retained ownership of the building, leave the Reformed Church in America and several years later join the Christian Reformed Church in North America. At this point the congregation changed its name to Ninth Street Church, reflecting its location in Holland. The information available via http://www.calvin.edu/hh/family_history_resources/Pillar_church.htm was extracted from the church's original handwritten records. ♣

News from the Archives

A large collection, the research and reference papers of Dr. Quentin Schultze on Christianity and the mass media, and Christians and information technology, was organized and

opened for research. We also received and organized the papers of William Van Regenmorter, a prominent West Michigan politician, who specialized in the rights of crime victims. This spring and summer also saw an influx of denominational records and as a result of this we organized those that came from the former Paw Paw, Michigan, Christian Reformed Church; the denominational campus ministry program; the Campus Ministry program at the University of Western Ontario (London); and the former University Church in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. We processed two smaller collections, the records of the Fremont, Michigan (Calvin College) Alumni Guild and the papers of Leo Peters, an active critic of the college and its faculty during the 1980s and 1990s. The Peters material came from his estate and includes correspondence as well as copies of advertisements he purchased in the *Grand Rapids Press*. We also completed processing a large amount of audio material sent to the archives

because the campus Fine Arts Center was being vacated for remodeling. Most of these recordings are of musical and visual arts performances by college faculty and students. Our volunteers continue the translation from Dutch into English of the additional minutes from Pillar CRC, Holland, Michigan, and Holland, Michigan's Central Avenue CRC minutes. Indexing of *The Banner* vital records continues. Paul Bremer continues his work in organizing the papers of H. Evan Runner, as does the indexing and organization of our genealogical material. ♣

Publications

The history of the CRC mission effort in China, 1920-1950, by Dr. Kurt Sell-es, is being prepared for publication. At this point we do not have a more exact publication date than spring 2010. It will be produced through the offices of the Historical Series of the RCA. Based on comments from editorial readers, Janet Sheeres is making

changes to the translated and extensively annotated minutes of the CRC synodical meetings (then called classical or general assembly meetings), 1857–1880.

Staff

Richard Harms is the curator of the Archives; Hendrina Van Spronsen is the office coordinator; Wendy Blankespoor is librarian and cataloging archivist; Melanie Vander Wal is departmental assistant; Dr. Robert Bolt is field agent and assistant archivist. Our student assistant is Dana Verhulst. Our volunteers include Willene De Groot, Ed Gerritsen, Fred Greidanus, Ralph Haan, Dr. Henry Ippel, Helen Meulink, Rev. Gerrit W. Sheeres, and Janet S. Sheeres. ♣



Richard H. Harms

Diary of POW Jacob Fridsma in Germany

23 September 1944 to 22 April 1945



Jacob Fridsma prior to leaving Camp Shelby for Europe as a member of the glider infantry. He was part of Operation Market Garden which included plans to land 14,589 troops by glider and 20,011 by parachute as part of an effort to secure a series of bridges for an invasion of Germany. Image courtesy of the family.

After his youth in New Jersey and military service during World War II, Jacob Fridsma (1921-1963) worked as a letter carrier in the Bellflower, California, area. He was married to Ruth Ligtenberg; they had three daughters.

Information provided by the family (editor):

Jacob Fridsma was the first son and the third child born to Meindert (died 1 March 1933 from pneumonia) and Anna (nee Van Dyke) on 4 November 1921 in Passaic, New Jersey. He received his basic training north of Biloxi, Mississippi. On 23 September 1944, a C47, with two gliders in tow, was shot down over Holland, one of these gliders, the one in which Fridsma was flying, landed in a field between Arnhem and Nijmegen, during the ill-fated Allied attack on Arnhem, and was taken prisoner.

The prisoners were sent to Stalag II B; Fridsma later went by boxcar to Dunrose Farm in Stolp, Poland. He worked there until February of 1945 when,

with the Russians advancing into East Germany, he and his fellow prisoners were marched across northern Germany. They walked approximately 434 miles in 49 days.

Upon Jacob's release, he returned to the United States. His mother having moved in the summer of 1944, Fridsma joined his family in their new home in Bellflower. One week after his discharge he became a letter carrier, and on 4 November 1946 he married Ruth Ligtenberg. They had three daughters, Anne Marie, Joyce, and Laura Sue. While on a family vacation in Dubuque, Iowa, he drowned in a motel swimming pool on 10 July 1963.

Captured in Holland on 23 Sept. at approx. 4:45 p.m. Slept in civilian home. On 24th slept in a barn. Early in the morning rode by truck for about an hour to a school house. Stayed about 2 hours. Marched about 10 kilometers to Culemborg—a Netherlands Red Cross Hospital. Searched there, fed and slept. Joined up with more GIs and British boys. Marched 7 hours through Doorn and several other towns to Amersfoort. Fed there and about 9 at night a group

of about 600 GI and British were loaded into box cars. Stayed here 2 days and nights. Then 5 days and nights traveled slowly through Allied pocket in Holland to Limburg, Germany [north and east of Frankfurt]. Very weak and dizzy from lack of food and exercise. Deloused here, searched, and no chow. On 5 Oct. left for Frankfurt for interrogation. Locked up in solitary confinement for 5 days 8-12 Oct. Left for Luftwaffe camp—shower and good chow. On the 13th was

shipped back to Limburg with first issue of Red Cross clothing and toilet articles. Red Cross parcel—1 box per man.¹ Searched again at Limburg and no chow. Jerry's [a term for German soldiers] excuse being "the kitchen is locked." So we dived into our boxes. Slept on the concrete floor. Stayed here until 14 Nov. Had many air raids and little chow. Kitchen had Red Cross parcels cooked in with meals. Sanitary conditions bad, much mud outside, and crowded barracks.

14–20 November

We traveled 95 kilometers in box cars from Limburg to Hammerstein and Stalag IIB.² 45 (sic) men in a box car, quite crowded and cold. Very little chow and water. Fed one meal by German Red Cross in Berlin and another [on] the 19th. Good hot soup. Three days without water. When received soup first time 9:30 at night one GI cried to get two bowls of soup and Jerry blew his top. Also that night an engine ran into stationary cars and smashed two cars. About 6 taken to hospital. 15 more men loaded into our car making 65 in each. Couldn't sleep, cold, boys nerves shot, several heated arguments. Had fever 1½ days; possibly from lack of food. At IIB had GI clothes taken away by Jerry and issued too big and too small clothes of different colors—received some GI clothes later. Had 2 [Red Cross] parcels here—½ parcel per man. Good library but very little chow. Attended church here twice Sunday in a nice chapel. Made me feel very good and received a blessing from it.

27 November, Monday

Traveled 110 kilometers from Stalag IIB to Kommando at Stolp³ near Baltic Sea. Made it in about 4 hours in box cars hooked onto a regular passenger train to make good time.

28 November, Tuesday

Arrived at the city of Stolp about 3:00 p.m. to work on the farm. We were met by a farmer who had a couple of wagons filled with straw and towed by a tractor which was powered by steam. The ride to the farm was an hour long and we froze. It sure was cold with a strong wind blowing. The farm is quite big. We sleep in a special barracks surrounded by barbed wire.

1 December, Friday

It looks like we are going to have plenty potatoes and not much bread. All these potatoes contain a lot of water and some of us have to get up 4 times every night. On top of that our room is locked every night and we have just one bucket to relieve ourselves in. It runs over every night and you can imagine the smell. Also several fellows are suffering from the GIs.⁴ I suppose that is caused by us eating the same

thing all the time. More than ever I am looking for the time of liberation. I pray God several times a day for you and for the day of peace.⁵ The Lord grant it may be soon.

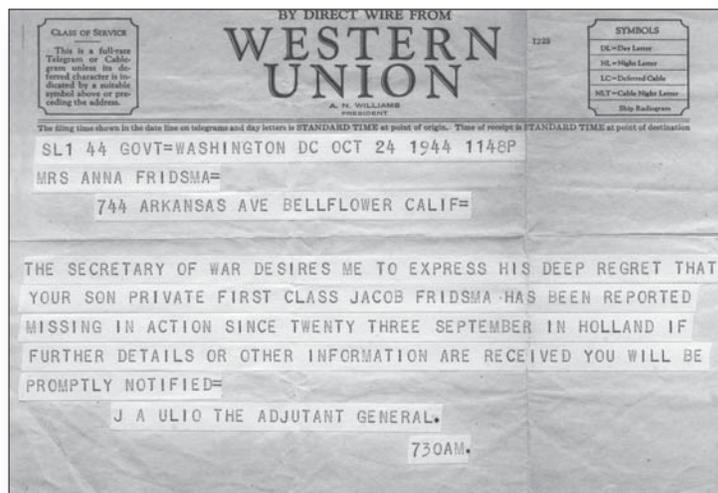
5 December, Tuesday

I had a different job today, pitching hay in a loft and also feeding hay into a chopping machine. The machine eats a lot of hay and I have to work quite fast but it is not tiresome work. I and an old man worked together. I have quite a bit of trouble understanding him and sometime he gets angry when I don't know what he is talking about. I pick up a few new words every day. There are quite a few old men (45-65 years old) working on this farm; only a few young kids and about a dozen women. On Sundays a large group of Russians work in our place. There are many horses, cows, pigs, chickens, ducks, pigeons, sheep, dogs, cats, and oxen roaming around; and here we get about 2 lbs. of horse meat daily for 42 men. I sure would like to get hold of a chicken or duck. If we don't get more meat, I'm afraid this winter our bodies will not be able to resist the cold too much.

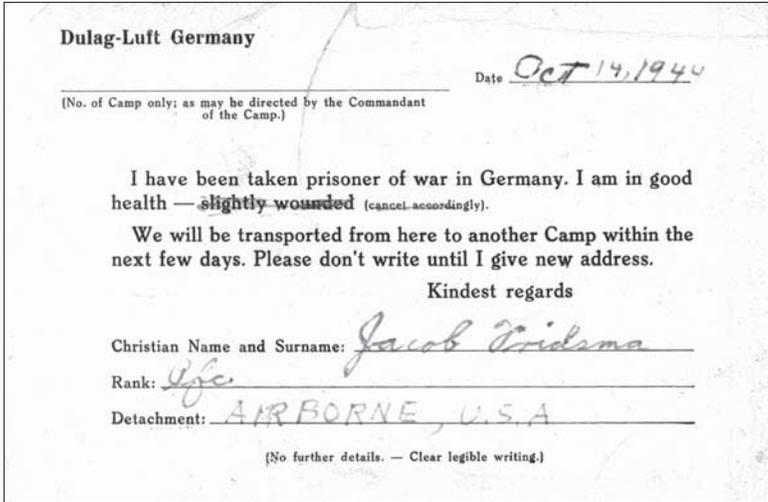
We see these old men eat pork chops and spare ribs at noon time and we're eating cold spuds and dry bread. I haven't had a good piece of meat since I've been in England.

6 December, Wednesday

Today another rainy day and still no Red Cross parcels. Three new men came in today making us a total of 45 men. One of these men is a recognized non-commissioned and he does not have to work because he will be our confidence man.⁶ His duty is to act between us and



The Allied operation began 17 September and ended in failure on 25 September. The glider Fridsma was in was shot down on 23 September; his family received word that he was missing in action a month later. Image courtesy of the family.



The prepared postcard POWs were given by the German government to notify family of being captured. Fridsma wrote his on 14 October 1944 but his mother did not receive it until three months later on 17 January 1945. Image courtesy of the family.

Jerry, e.g. see our rations come in, we do not get mistreated, we have enough clothes, our parcels come in, etc. I had a new job this morning: leading a horse on top of a beet top pile so that it got trampled down tight. I never walked in so many circles before.

7 December, Thursday

A little while ago we had five dip-pers of good soup and boy! Did my stomach tighten up! I guess it still is shrunk up. In about an hour (at 7 p.m.) we will get hot boiled spuds, which will be for breakfast and dinner tomorrow. Our confidence man is trying to get transportation to town in order to get our Red Cross parcels, but Jerry is being obstinate and is making excuses and trying to put us off until next Wednesday. If that is the case, we are ready to go on strike. Those parcels belong to us and Jerry is supposed to furnish transportation so we can get them. Today I worked on my old job—loading beets. It was quite cold in the field today and I had cold feet all morning. I managed to keep warm this afternoon. The “werkmeister” was

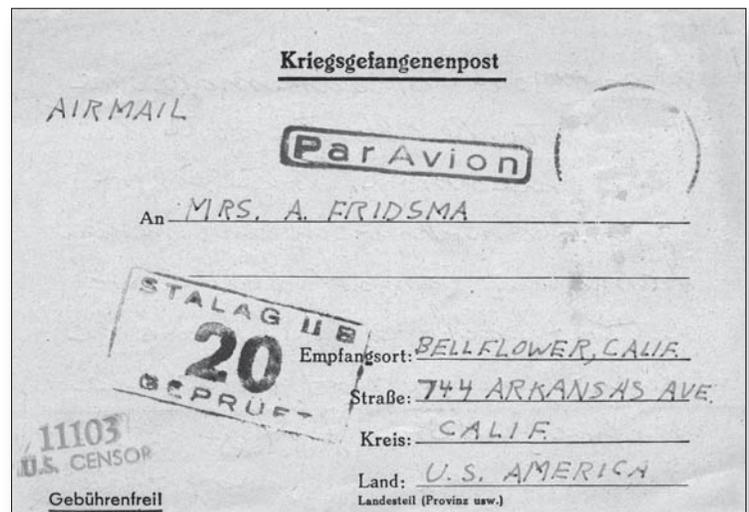
much about the war now as I used to back in the Stalag where all you do is lay around and think. But I do not forget to pray to God twice daily for the end of this conflict and for you folks at home.

10 December, Sunday

Today for the first time the sky was absolutely clear. The sun rose about 9:00 and now at 2:30 p.m. it is below the tree tops, but it has been cold, beautiful day. I wrote a few cards home today and hope they get to their destination soon. We cleaned up the place today—swept and scrubbed. The Jerrys around here do a lot of stealing from each other. The other

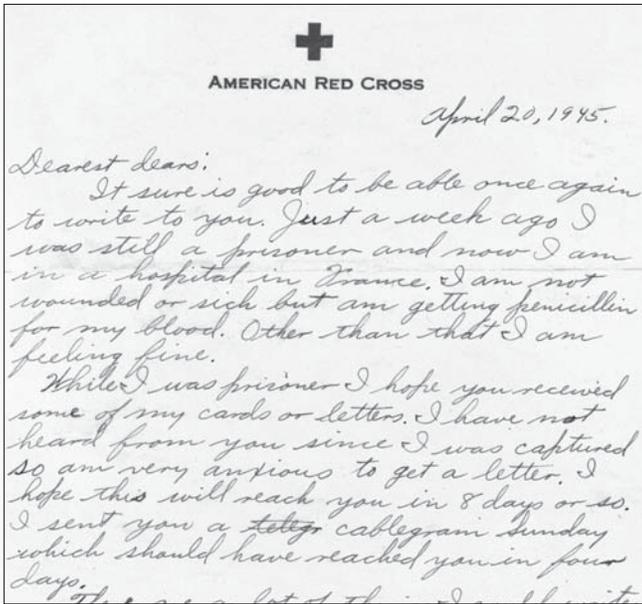
jumping all over us this afternoon trying to make us hurry up but nothing will make a GI rush if he doesn't want to. We don't rush as long as we are working for Jerry. I don't think

night I went to get coal and upon arriving, three women took off like ruptured ducks. When finding out we came for coal also, then they came back and finished loading their containers. But I feel fine and much better than I did in Stalag IIB or Limburg—getting plenty of exercise and fresh air and more chow. When our stomachs swell up like tonight, we feel full but are still hungry. I'll have my own church service tonight with myself. Read my Bible, hum a few songs, and utter a prayer for you, the boys fighting, the preaching of the word today, etc. Our confidence man, who has been a prisoner for almost a year, was telling us that all the roads, bridges, and forests are patrolled 24 hours a day by civilians who are on the look-out for prisoners of war, possible invasion by air, etc. So it is practically impossible to escape from the “Fatherland.” He has known fellows who tried but couldn't make it. We are close to the Baltic Sea and the Allies may



During his imprisonment, Fridsma was able to send five letters home on the stationery provided by the German government. The contents of the letter were censored by both the German and American governments so the information he could send was very limited. Image courtesy of the family.

make an invasion from this side of Germany. Then it will be completely surrounded.



One of the first things he did after being returned to Allied control was to send a letter home on stationery provided by the Red Cross. In his letter Fridsma notes that he had received no mail at all while a prisoner of war. Image courtesy of the family.

13 December, Wednesday

Yesterday being parcel day, everyone received cigarettes and they are used in playing poker.⁷ So last night a game was going until 2:00 a.m. this morning. Some boys sold and traded all their items from their parcels for cigarettes and they lost it all. How glad I am that I don't gamble or smoke!! I woke up at 2:00 this morning and half the boys were still up, so I got up too and made myself something to eat then went back to bed an hour later.

16 December, Saturday

It is now midnight and I just woke up from sleeping since about 4:00 this afternoon. My stomach was sick since I worked in the horse stable throwing out manure. However, I still ate some soup but an hour later threw it all up. Now I just woke up. This morning I worked on my same job and changed this afternoon. We had a little snow during the night and it was dark all day. There are quite a few French boys here and some of them have

been here for 5 years—since Dunkirk. Boy, that's a long time to be in captivity. Some boys made snow creams today. A ½ can of milk is made and some flavoring like pineapple jam is added. While stirring vigorously, add snow until the solution is thick and foamy. It is supposed to be very good.

19 December, Tuesday

I just made myself some snow cream and it sure was good even though I didn't have any jam to put in it. I had the same job as yesterday and I

worked by myself most of the day. Some of the boys saw a wild boar in the fields today with 2 young. One of these days the Jerrys are going on a boar hunt and they will use us as bush-brushers. That'll be something different for a change. Last night we could see flashes of exploding bombs in the city of Danzig. The Yanks are still at it! We could also see tracers of anti-aircraft guns. I finished reading the book *Sincerity* by Gooding. It was quite interesting. One of the few English books.

24 December, Sunday

The day before Christmas dawned cloudy. Got up at 6:15 and at 6:30 I went for a shower, which felt very good. Soon as I got back I cut some firewood for our room and the kitchen. For dinner we had our regular soup-potatoes and horse meat. Right now we're waiting for the guard so we can get Christmas parcels. Downstairs they have their room decorated and a small tree set up. Our room upstairs is also fixed up a bit—mostly red, white

and blue crepe paper put up in the window and across the room on the central light. It looks very good. The guard just came over and wanted a detail to go over to the "snops verbrech"⁸ to move some stuff. I don't have to go because this morning for about an hour I helped load a couple dozen drums of "snops" on a wagon. Here's a list of the items in our Christmas parcel:

- 1 oz. Pekoe tea
- 8 oz. pure honey
- 4 pieces gum
- 4 oz. Libby sausage
- 12 bouillon cubes
- 1 package figs and dates
- 1 can plum jam
- 1 lb. plum pudding
- 2 fruit bars
- 12 oz. turkey
- 12 oz. hard candy
- 3 oz. deviled ham
- 3 packs cigarettes
- 7 oz. mixed nuts
- 1 pipe
- 4 oz. American cheese
- 1 Prince Albert
- 8 ¾ oz. cherries
- 3 ¾ oz. butter
- 2 large pictures
- 1 wash cloth
- 1 small game—checkers, chess, roulette
- 1 deck cards

25 December, Monday, CHRISTMAS

Christmas day here in Germany is dark and not too cold. We slept until seven-thirty and then I had breakfast of coffee, deviled ham and bread. Right after breakfast I went over to the barn for water and washed my laundry. For my Christmas dinner I had a 12 oz. can of turkey, which was delicious, bread and butter, and for dessert I ate my plum pudding (very good—1 lb.) and a can of cherries. That sure was a scrumptious meal; the best I've had in captivity. I sent 2 cards home



An approximate map of the nearly 440-mile trek in forty-nine days of the group of POWs that included Fridsma during the last weeks of the war in Europe. Due to the lack of basic sanitary facilities during this march, when he was returned to Allied control he was covered with more than fifty boils.

today, 1 to Van Trueren, 1 to Sena, and 1 to Tootsie.⁹ I am now reading the book *How Green Was My Valley*.

26 December, Tuesday

This is the last day we have off and I am glad we got 3 days. The first thing I did this morning was get H₂O, then cut wood for an hour or so. We had bull beef as an added attraction to the soup this noon and all afternoon I read. I think I will hit the hay early tonight. It will be hard to get back in the groove again on the morrow. Looking back on that Red Cross parcel I think it was the best that could be made up for Christmas. I sure am thankful for it.

A Prisoner's Prayer

O God our Creator and Protector, we know that Thou art near us and we adore Thee and give ourselves to Thee body and soul and with complete submission to Thy will. Thou hast saved us from death which has overtaken many of our companions and has permitted that we be prisoners. We will bear patiently and hopefully for the love of Thee will lessen all the difficulties of our state. Bless us and all our companions here. Grant us to live in peace comforting and consoling one another with fraternal love and char-

ity. Bless our families who are far away, our friends, and all we love; our country and our comrades in arms. Give us peace and protect us from melancholy and despair. And above all keep us from offending Thee. My God we thank Thee for all Thy blessings and we will try and serve Thee as St. Paul has told us, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in

tribulation, instant in prayer." Amen.

27 December, Wednesday

Last night 3 of the boys took off "over the hill." They took all their clothing and food with them. Today we saw a reconnaissance (Piper cub) plane cruising around and looking for any trace of the boys. I hope they make it to neutral country.

28 December, Thursday

We had a bit of retaliation from Jerry today for the 3 boys who took off. Right after coming in for lunch four of us in our room heard an officer "blowing his top" downstairs and then a terrific slam of the door. Then he came to our room. Calling attention, we all jumped up. He looked around and went out, slamming the door behind him. Two minutes later he came back and we all jumped to attention. One boy didn't jump fast enough, so the officer made him sit down and stand up fast about four times. He hollered something and then slammed the door again. Ten minutes later he came in again with a box and made us turn in all the smokes we had. So now those boys don't have any cigarettes and they're "sweating

out" when they will get them back. He reached for his gun several times when talking to the sergeant.

5 January, Friday

Our confidence man didn't go to town today but will go tomorrow, we hope. There are about six men in our Kommando who have carbuncles all over them. I hope I don't get them. The weather was warm today—nice working weather. Our sergeant received 3 letters today; the latest one dated November 12. I sure am longing to hear from you, to see how you all are doing.

7 January, Sunday

I am drinking a good cup of tea as I am writing this. The tea is from the Christmas parcel. Having this beverage reminds me very much of Sunday afternoon at home. If only I had a big piece of homemade chocolate cake!! Got up at 5:45 and had barley for cereal at breakfast. At 6:30 went for a shower, chopped some wood for an hour or so, cleaned up, and then I read my Text for awhile. Mashed spuds and goulash for dinner and plenty of them. Tonight we are (our room) going to have some brown peas which the fellows found in the threshing barn, for supper. Sundays always make me lonesome for home and to go to church but I will have to have patience until we are liberated.

21 January, Sunday

Some of the French boys were in this morning and said a civilian newspaper stated that the Russians were driving with a force of 155 divisions and that Jerry is "zerreeking" on both fronts.¹⁰ Maybe we won't be here too long yet.

22 January, Monday

One of the boys went to town to the doctor today and he heard that all garrison soldiers in Stolp were on a 30-minute alert. That's for an air-

borne invasion. Quite a few military convoys went through this vicinity today coming from the direction of Danzig. Cars and trucks were towing each other. They were either saving gas or they ran out.

23 January, Tuesday

Today about a dozen men from the farm left for the army, we are told. They are quite old at that. I don't feel well tonight and believe I have a bit of fever. The boil on my rear-end pains terrifically—maybe that's what's causing the fever.

30 January, Tuesday

A bunch of the boys had to shovel snow off the highway today so the convoys could go through. Boy! What scenes the boys were telling about! Horses hoofs split and bleeding, civilian faces black, blue, and frozen. Most of the soldiers were non-commissioned—leaving the privates behind again. There were many civilians shoveling also—kids 10 years old and many old people. Most of the Jerry vehicles are Ford V-8s. I don't know why these people don't give up the war. They would save themselves a lot of misery. Yanks and Russians are now racing for Berlin. Russians are now 113 kilometers from Berlin.

31 January, Wednesday

Weather is a lot warmer today; cloudy. Tonight it began to snow again. Probably in for another foot or two. Today about 1,500 French, "Limey,"¹¹ and Russian POWs came in by here and stopped for the night. They were walking for eight days. Taken out of a town while at the other end of town the Russians entered. They are on their way to the Stalag—110 kilometers from here. The cars and trucks are still going by. Several ambulances were seen and patients with fresh wounds. I wonder what they will

do with us. I'd hate to walk the country like the POWs we saw today, but I'd like the Russians to encircle us and then ship us to the coast and from there to the USA.

1 February, Thursday

Another four or five hundred stopped here for the night. Last night's gang pulled out at 10:00 this morning. Boy! When they found out there was spuds in the "snops" factory, French, "Limey's" and Russians all swarmed in the place. Some were boiling spuds in the furnace.

3 February, Saturday

Today was warm and everything is flooded from melting snow and mud galore. Another group of 800 POWs stopped here to spend the night. I found out today the old man I work with spent 6 years in Russia as a POW during the last war. He doesn't holler at us or work our heads off. I think I have to work tomorrow so that means up at 4:30. Every day now I hope more and more that Joe's boys get here so that we can be liberated.

9 February, Friday

Tonight most of the boys are catching lice on themselves. I have not found any yet. I doubt if we will get deloused. I got at least another half a dozen boils or sores. I'm in misery now.

12 February, Monday

I stayed in again today. My rear end is still sore and the boils (or whatever they are) are still running. Tomorrow we again will get deloused and have another shower. Probably will have to work Sunday if we don't tomorrow. We hear today from the French that Stalin said Berlin will fall by the 15th.¹² I sure hope he is right. To have the war over in three days would be wonderful. Convoys are still going by,

civilian and military. Also a lot of Russian prisoners.¹³ The boys saw that some of the civilian wagons are now being pulled by oxen. Running out of horses maybe.

14 February, Wednesday

We had sleet, rain, snow, and cloudy weather all day. There are a lot of officers around here lately and reports are that a command post is being set up. Probably defenses will then be set up here also. I talked with one of the officers in the factory this afternoon and he was very friendly. When he finished talking (he could speak a little bit of English) he slapped me on the shoulder and gave me a big smile. Lights go out at 8:30 every night now all over Germany. Convoys are still going by and we didn't have any news for several days. I hope those Russians keep going.

18 February, Sunday

This morning we received notice that we are going to move out to Stolp. Where we're going from there, time will tell. So now I'm packing my stuff and getting rid of all excess junk and clothing to the French.¹⁴

19 February, Monday

We left Dunrose farm at 7:30 this morning and arrived at Stolp at 9:30. It sure was a cold ride and very similar to the very first ride to the farm. We (about 300 GIs) are now on a big farm. It will be crowded if we all have to sleep in here.

21 February, Wednesday

This is the second day on the road and a hectic day it was. We walked about 30 kilometers to the farm where we were supposed to spend the night and we found it filled with Jerry soldiers; too bad. We walked another 10 kilometers and boy! Was I tired, and I don't mean maybe.

22 February, Thursday

Another day on the road—12 hours from dawn to dark. Had a little rain today. Dead tired. I hear we are headed for Stetin—145 kilometers to go. I hope the Russians overtake us. Boy! I'm very tired of this war and now we are on the road for weeks probably. Went through Koslin, quite big.

28 February, Wednesday

Weather is fair and very windy. Made about 30 kilometers. Quite tired after the days march. After being at the barns about 10 minutes the chef, inspector, officers, and guards all blew their tops at us because we went looking around

for water. These people are half crazy.

1 March, Thursday

So far we've walked about 175 kilometers. On marches I always think of the States and home. This passes the time very quickly. Received a bread ration this morning and butter (margarine). One-third loaf per man for two days; one lb. of butter for 24 men. Jerry feeds us very little.

4 March, Sunday

I saw the French doctor today about my boils and he said "hospital," and couldn't do a thing. Went through a town this morning and a

big church bell was ringing but no one was going to church.

7 March, Wednesday

Boil broke during the night and feels good this morning—hardly sore at all. Slept 12 hours last night with the aid of 2 aspirin tablets.

13 March, Tuesday

We're laying over here today. One of the guards said we have 200 kilometers to go. We are 220 kilometers from Hamburg and 180 kilometers from Berlin. We may stay in this area and go in circles. Looks to me like Jerry doesn't know what to do with us.

16 March, Friday

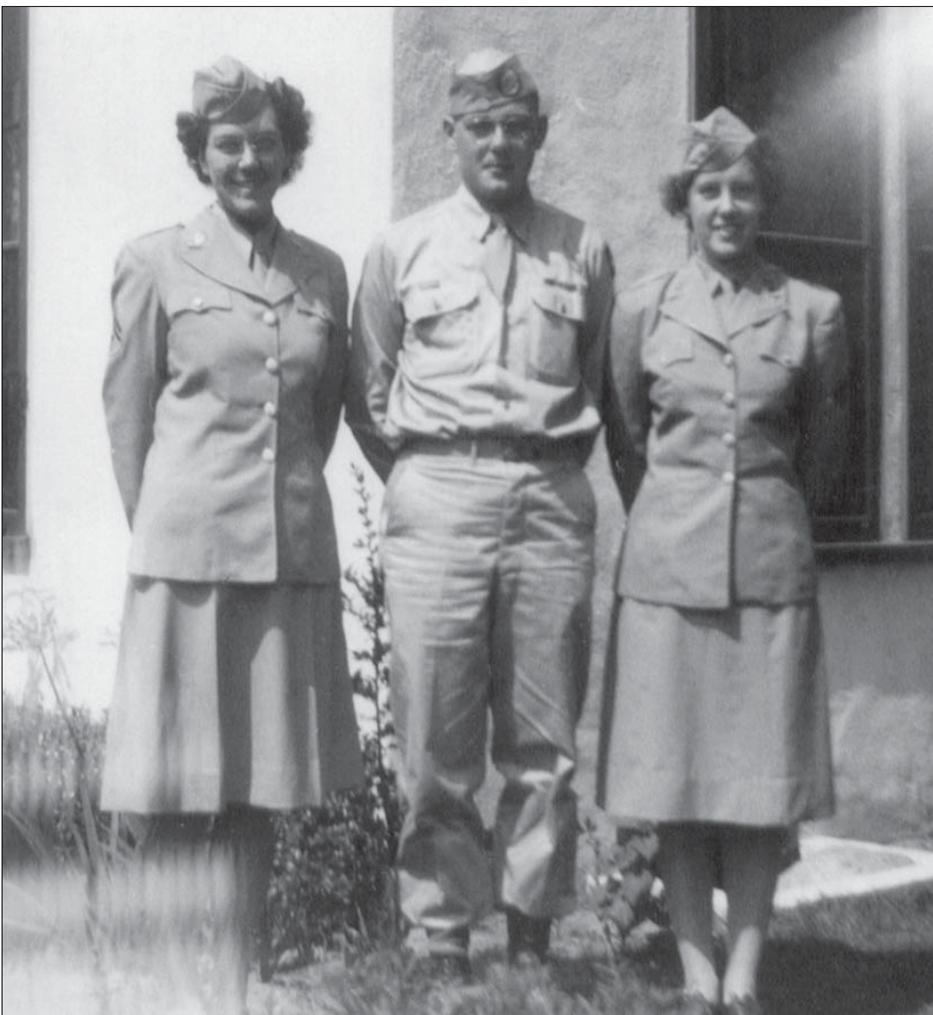
Last night my buddy traded off his wristwatch for 3 loaves of bread; so now all we need is a parcel and we could make some real good sandwiches. I was complaining yesterday about nothing to eat and now we have plenty of bread. Jerry isn't in any hurry to get us anywhere.

20 March, Tuesday

We cooked some spuds and carrots this morning and so had a good meal. There is a lot of trading going on here. The civilians want soap mostly. Last night several big waves of bombers passed over. The rumors are we have 80 kilometers to go before we reach the Stalag. Some think we will again be sent on kommando but I hope the war ends by then. I met a boy here from Grand Rapids and a member of the Oakdale Christian Reformed Church. He has been a prisoner for 1½ years.¹⁵

25 March, Sunday

Laying over today and it is a beautiful day. We received a good ration of meat this morning and I helped grind it up for 1½ hours. Bombers were over for about an hour today and the buildings shook when the



After his return to the United States, Fridsma with his sisters Effie (far left) and Hilda who were also in military service. Image courtesy of the family.

bombs hit. More and better raids on Deutschland. A beautiful day like this reminds me of home on Sunday and going to church. Had some pickled sardines this morning from my buddy and they were sure good. The soup this noon was excellent—spuds, meat, and barley (grits). The wagons have left for Domitz for parcels. I hope they get them.

28 March, Wednesday

Went through outskirts of a large city called Salzwedel. Its railroad station was bombed recently. My buddy Brown for the past week has had intestinal gripe—chills, GI's, cramps, fever. Yesterday I read a Jerry paper addressed to the US and English soldiers asking us to join them in their and our fight against Bolshevism.



After the war Fridsma and Ruth Ligtenberg dated about a year until they married 4 November 1946. Image courtesy of the family.

29 March, Thursday

This is a day of rest and it is raining. Buds are appearing everywhere and this rain will make them grow faster. A Jerry bivouac area was bombed near here last month and 300-500 were killed. Coming through this area we could see all the crater holes. The people here call us swine. Many of them are evacuees from Hamburg and Berlin. We heard last night that the Allies made another airborne landing behind the Rhine. I hope it is true and successful. I darned my socks this morning and hope they hold together till the end of this "hunger march."

6 April, Friday

We're laying over another day. Weather is dark and cloudy. Had to work 2 hours this morning covering up a lot of cans. Heard "Joe's redcaps"¹⁶ and GI's have contact below Berlin. Also Patton has met stiff resistance by S.S. troops. I'm tired of this life and sure hope and pray that this war will soon cease.

8 April, Sunday "With joy and gladness in my soul I hear a call to prayer. Let us go up to God's own house and bow before Him there." I sure do wish I could go to church but I still can worship in my heart, which I did. Weather is beautiful but cool. GI bombers went over again. Ate my bread ration for breakfast, soup for dinner (spuds, wheat, peas, horse), and will have another soup tonight.

12 April, Thursday

Everything was buzzing with excitement last night because this town suddenly received an order to evacuate immedi-

ately, which was done all through the night. Reports had it that the GI's were 30-40 kilometers from here. The Jerry captain in charge of us had a nervous breakdown and was very much concerned over our welfare . . .

13 April, Friday

(Continued from Thursday evening) Artillery stopped and tanks discontinued firing so we came out of the castle cellar to await GI orders for evacuation. Finally a private and a first lieutenant came up and boy! What a sight for sore eyes to see some of our own men again. We were taken into a factory and were told to spend the night there. Outside in the street the 5th Armored was lined up and we told them how happy we were to see them and also we received K-rations galore and other chow from them—including delicious snow white bread. Although the fighting stopped, the town had not officially surrendered. The tanks were able to get into town in 3 hours and 35 minutes but snipers were still around and a battalion of 16 year old S.S. troops would not surrender. We were then told that the tanks and artillery had to take it easy in firing because they were notified that 500 POW's were there. If we weren't, the town would have been leveled and taken in an hour. So we held them up several hours. Here again was an instance of God's divine care and keeping. About dark, we moved out of the factory to a field 800 yards outside of town. The 5th Armored backed out and for two hours the town was leveled. Fires and noise galore. How many of the civilians' lives had to be sacrificed because a few snipers and a battalion would not give up. . . . Where we're going I don't know but we're on our way out of Germany.

What a thrill! We're in another town now. Civilians were chased out again and we moved in. This sure is the life! Living in houses and cooking and sleeping in beds. Tonight for supper we killed a chicken and fried it, 3 eggs apiece, asparagus, applesauce, cherries and coffee. What a picnic and extreme change from yesterday, but I don't mind it in the least. I think tomorrow we move in to Hanover.

14 April, Saturday

Right now I'm in another situation! I still had the GI's so last night I went to the medics for some pills and showed the Doc my boils of which I still have a few. He immediately wrote out a slip for me to be evacuated to the hospital at Hanover. From here I will be moved

to a general hospital in France or England.

15 April, Sunday

How good I feel to be in Allied hands again, to have good chow, and to walk around without a Jerry telling me what I can and cannot do. I sure give the Lord all the thanks and praise for what wonderful blessings He has given. Last night the Red Cross girl came around and she is going to send a cablegram home that I am in GI hands. Boy, oh Boy! Talk about GI supplies and equipment! It sure is rolling through this country.

17 April, Tuesday

Well, this afternoon at 1405 (2:05 p.m.) we took off in a C-47¹⁷ for France, arriving there 1635. As usual, I got sick up in the air again. Tonight I will sleep on a bed with

2 clean white sheets and a pair of pajamas. This is a luxurious life. Chow is wonderful! I will be here only a day or so and will move to a general hospital in Paris, or in Nancy, or some other. Here Jerry POW's pull KP. You don't even have to carry your tray out when you're through eating. They are also working in the hospital and on the premises. This hospital is in Rheims.

22 April, Sunday

Wrote home today and to Til. Went to church this morning and was disappointed with the sermon. The Chaplain didn't preach the Word of God. I think I will stop writing in this book now that I am able to write home. If anything unusual happens which will not pass censorship it will be recorded herein.³

Endnotes

1. The Germans included the calories from the Red Cross parcels into the POW's minimum daily food allotment.
2. The camp dated to WWI and was located 1½ miles west of Hammerstein, now Czarne, Poland. The first US POWs arrived in August 1943 from North Africa. The camp was notorious as the worst in treatment of prisoners. The Stalag served as the headquarters for nine major kommando companies, so that a number of POWs credited to the camp, were housed elsewhere. "Stalag II B: The Final Report Unclassified, American Prisoners of War in Germany (1)," Prepared by Military Intelligence Service War Department, 1 November <http://darsrangers.tripod.com/id64.htm> (visited 2 March 2009, 10 a.m.) A kommando was a unit of forced workers, including civilians impressed from occupied countries, used by the German government.
3. Now Stupsk, Poland, about twelve miles from the Baltic Sea.
4. Slang for diarrhea; the terms can also stand for government issue material, or a member of the US armed forces.

5. Fridsma was the third of seven children (the oldest son) born to Meindert Fridsma and Anna Van Dyke. His siblings were Effie, Hilda, Matilda ("Til"), William, Jacoba ("Coby"), and Josephine ("Anna Mae"). Meindert Fridsma died in 1933.
6. The Germans used the term, *vertrauensmann* (a person who could be trusted) for a person elected by the prisoners to represent their interests to the Germans. This word was translated into English as a Man of Confidence (MOC); often the MOC was the ranking non-commissioned officer in a kommando. Fridsma consistently refers to the MOC as "confidence man."
7. Although the prisoners were paid with scrip that could purchase very little, cigarettes became their de facto legal tender.
8. Presumably Fridsma is spelling *schnapps fabriek* phonetically. This was an alcohol mill that produced a clear, colorless, 80-proof brandy with a light fruit flavor.
9. The Germans generally issued two postcards per month for mailing from

- the kommandos.
10. The exact meaning of "zerreeking" is unclear.
11. American slang for British.
12. Berlin surrendered two-and-one-half months later on 2 May 1945.
13. Russia was not a signatory to the Geneva Conventions, so the Germans treated Russian POWs much worse than POWs from other countries.
14. Prisoners from Stalag II B had been marched out in January and covered approximately 600 miles until being liberated by the 9th Armored Division on 13 April.
15. PFC William Vanden Berg (1918-2005) who had been the MOC in a farm kommando of 26 men. Vanden Berg was a paratrooper captured in September 1943 in Italy and also processed through Stalag IIB, and liberated in 12 April 1945.
16. Slang for Russian soldiers.
17. This was the military workhorse version of the DC-3 and, among other things, was used to tow gliders. As a glider infantryman, Fridsma was familiar with the plane.

Michigan's Polar Bears

Robert J. Yonker

From 4 September 1918 to 15 June 1919, approximately 5,500 US troops, about two-thirds from Michigan, fought on Russian soil in the region near Archangel as part of the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War. During the early months of 1919 these US soldiers began to ask why they were still fighting when the armistice had gone into effect the previous 11 November. Talk of mutiny, threats of courts-martial, and scattered actual mutinies followed until



Nicholas Jonker (1895-1918), from an undated newspaper clipping reporting he was missing in action. Image courtesy of the author.

the troops were withdrawn from Russia during the summer months. During the withdrawal the men decided to call themselves "Polar Bears" and were authorized to wear the Polar Bear insignia on their left sleeves.

The United States entered the war on 6 April 1917, declaring war on Germany and allying itself with Russia, France, and Great Britain. Germany, while stalemated on the Western Front, dealt severe blows to the Russian armies of Czar Nicholas II leading him to abdicate. The Alexander Kerensky government took over provisional control but civil war broke out with the Bolsheviks (later called Communists) led by Vladimir Lenin. The Bolsheviks gained control of the majority of Russia and made a separate peace with Germany on 3

March 1918 (eight months before the Allied armistice). In response the British government prevailed on Woodrow Wilson to send American troops to Archangel, Russia, ostensibly to get Russia back in the war and to keep supplies and ammunition from falling into German hands. In reality, the Americans began to aid the White Russians (non-Bolsheviks) in their civil war with the Bolsheviks.

With patriotic fervor running high, 1,241 Grand Rapids men immediately enlisted.¹ In addition eligible men, including four brothers, Dick (Dirk), Ora, Nicholas, and Cornelius Jonker Jr., living with their parents at 1855 Tamarack, on the northwest side of Grand Rapids, were required to register for military duty. Dick's draft registration indicates he was employed in domestic mission work for the Christian Reformed Church and a theological student at Calvin Seminary, Ora was a timekeeper for the Grand Rapids Railroad Company, Nicholas was a bookkeeper for Columbia Transfer Company, and Cornelius was a warehouse worker for American Seating Company. All four were single. Both Ora and Nicholas were called to serve a year later.² They, Ora born in 1894 and Nicholas born in 1895, were the tenth and eleventh of twelve children born to Cornelius and Tille (nee Tietje Blom) Jonker, immigrants from Broek op Langedijk, a small farming village in the province of North Holland, the Netherlands.³

The brothers reported to Camp Custer (later Fort Custer) just west of Battle Creek, Michigan, for induction

Robert Yonker graduated from Calvin College with a major in history. He is retired from a career in property and casualty insurance.



Cornelius and Tille (née Tietje Blom) Jonker, immigrants from Broek op Langedijk, and their eight surviving children. Image courtesy of the author.

on 24 June 1918. The new soldiers were put through the basic training and assigned to the 85th US Army Division then being organized for overseas combat. Pvt. Nicholas Jonker was assigned to Company C and Pvt. Ora Jonker to Company D, of the 339th Infantry Regiment. After completing only four weeks of training, overseas orders were issued that took these troops via the Michigan Central Railroad through Detroit, Michigan; Canada, with a stop at Niagara Falls; and to Camp Mills on Long Island to await a convoy overseas. The convoy of eleven ships left New York harbor on 21 July, avoided German submarine attacks with a zigzag course, and arrived at Liverpool, England, on 4 August. They stayed at “Camp Cowshot” (known as Camp Aldershot to the British) near Bisley, a village in Surrey in the south of England, for twenty days. During this time they had some additional training in gas attacks, bayonets, etc., and were issued Russian rifles.

They left England from Newcastle on three ships with an escort of

six destroyers. While en route five hundred of the 5,500 men became ill with Spanish flu; some died and were buried at sea before they got to Russia.⁴ This was first of many misfortunes to befall the American North Russia Expeditionary Force (ANREF), as it was officially called. They arrived at Archangel, Russia, on 4 September.⁵ After arriving, the doughboys officially suffered an additional 539 casualties (of which 232 were deaths).

The Americans were part of an international force consisting of British, French, and Canadian military units. A relatively small number of White Russian troops joined them in their fight against the Bolos, as the Bolsheviks were called. It was assumed by the military command that a large number of Russians would join the international force, but no such local support materialized. The British had overall command of the campaign, including the American forces. This was a very sore spot with the “Yanks.”

The American units moved south on five fronts following the Emtsa, Dvina, Vaga, and Onega rivers, and

the Archangel to Moscow railroad. Since Russian roads were, for the most part, not paved and were not suitable for motorized vehicle travel, these rivers and the railroad were their only lines of communication and transportation to the outlying posts far from the main base at Archangel. In a series of small engagements, by late October ANREF had moved about three hundred miles south from Archangel. They encountered hostile Russian civilians, terribly rainy weather, knee-deep mud, deep forests, snowstorms, and a growing number of Bolo military units. In the arctic winter daylight hours were short, allowing for offensive action for only four to four and a half hours a day. In addition, the very cold Russian winter was setting in. By the middle of November the Americans halted their drive and fortified defensive positions for the winter. Company C halted at a town called Ust Padenga, the southernmost of the five ANREF fronts.

The records of the Kent County WW I Veterans Census indicate that Nicholas Jonker had a week’s training at a Lewis machine gun school. This was a light-weight machine gun most commonly used by the British, and Jonker operated such a gun during the battle of Seltso in October. On 28 November (Thanksgiving Day) 1st Lt. Francis W. Cuff, of Company C, was ordered to take a patrol of sixty Americans and about forty Russians to Bresenik, the next town south, where there were an estimated 10,000 Bolsheviks, well-equipped with artillery and machine guns. They started early in the morning on 29 November and were ambushed when about half way to the village. The ambush spot proved to be the deepest penetration of ANREF forces into Russia.

Cuff ordered the main body of the patrol to retreat. He and about twenty others, including Jonker and his assistant, Pvt. Henry R. Weitzel, stayed

behind to cover the retreat. Thirteen of these men were either killed or taken prisoner. When last seen, Jonker was operating the Lewis gun, his helper was wounded and was putting a first-aid bandage on his arm. Capt. Fitzgerald of Company C later wrote to Ora Jonker, "Your brother died fighting at his post like a real man and by staying at his gun saved the lives of many of his comrades."⁶

The loss of 1st Lt. Cuff was especially hard for Company C. He had been a capable leader and was well-liked. Also killed was Pvt. Ray Clemens whose brother, Roy Clemens, was missing until 2 December when he and a Pvt. Greenlund returned to their base at Ust Padenga. They had outwitted the Bolos by hiding in the deep snow and moving constantly in temperatures of twenty below zero. They were very hungry and had frost-bitten fingers and feet, but were still



From left to right: brothers Cornelius, Dick, Nicholas, and Ora Jonker. Image courtesy of the author.

of his body and reserved one of their six plots in Blain Cemetery, Gaines Township (Cutlerville, Michigan) for his remains.

In 1926 the Daughters of the American Revolution tombstone transcription project listed the Jonker family burial plots in Blain Cemetery, Gaines



The area south of Archangel where the Allied soldiers fought during the winter of 1918-1919.

alive.⁷ Of those killed, only five bodies were recovered because the American search and rescue party was never able to get far enough south to reach the others. The parents of Nicholas Jonker hoped for the eventual return

Census. It notes that on 8 September the company started for the front in dirty coal barges. On the 13th they got off the scows and for twenty-two hours hiked fifty-two miles through knee-deep mud, carrying heavy packs.

On 21 September they fought their first battle, with the two machines issued to each company, no artillery, and Russian rifles. The battle lasted two days and the intervening night, when the enemy

with their six gunboats and several pieces of artillery withdrew from the town, although they had a numerical advantage of about three to one. Jonker noted:

I went on every combat patrol and took part in every fight our company was in and came through it all with only two slight scratches, both on the forehead above the right eye. In one battle at Vistavka, I was on a Colt machine gun for five days and nights without sleep and nothing to eat, with the thermometer registering between forty to fifty degrees below zero all the time. On May 29, 1919, I was sent to the hospital at Bresnika with an attack of appendicitis, but did not have an operation performed. I rejoined my company and left the front on the 6th of June. Our company, Co. D. 339th Infantry, was at the front ten months straight, without a rest of any sort. We left Egonimy Point on the 15th of June and landed at Brest, France on the 27th. We left Brest on the 1st of July and landed at Boston on the 12th. I went to Camp Custer and was discharged honorably on the 19th of July 1919, from Co. D. 339th Infantry.⁸

Township, and showed a tombstone there with the following inscription:

**NICHOLAS
JONKER
AUG 3, 1895
MISSING IN
ACTION
IN THE
WORLD WAR
NOV 29, 1918**

Ora Jonker's wartime experiences were also recorded by the Kent County WW I Veterans

After returning home, Polar Bear veterans lobbied state and federal officials to retrieve the bodies of 125 men known to have been left behind in Russia. Since the United States did not have diplomatic relations with

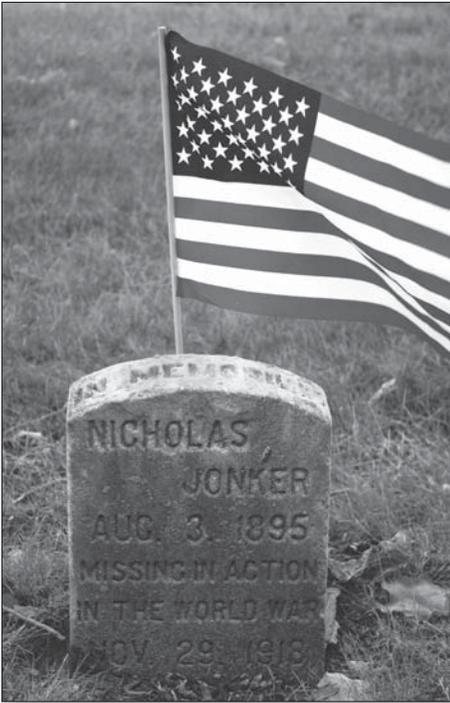
Origins

Allied troops with a Lewis machine gun that Nicholas Jonker had been trained to operate and which he was using when last seen by Allied troops. Image courtesy of the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department, Grand Rapids (Michigan) Public Library.



The troops called themselves Polar Bears because of the Arctic climate in which they fought. Image courtesy of the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department, Grand Rapids (Michigan) Public Library.





Jonker's memorial stone was placed in the family plot in Blain Cemetery, Cutlerville, Michigan, years before his body was returned from Russia. Image courtesy of the Richard H. Harms.

the Soviet Union, it took until the autumn of 1929 for the Veterans of Foreign Wars to obtain permission, organize, and conduct a recovery mission that was successful in finding, identifying, and bringing back the remains of eighty-six soldiers. The remains of fifty-six of these ANREF soldiers were then reburied in plots around sculptor Leon Hermant's Polar Bear Monument in White Chapel Cemetery, Troy, Michigan, but the body of Nicholas Jonker was not one of the eighty-six recovered.

During the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration, diplomatic relations were established with the Soviet Union on 16 November 1933. Thereupon the Soviet Union sent back twelve bodies of "Polar Bears." On 16 September 1934, *Scanstates*, out of Copenhagen, Denmark, arrived in New York with the twelve in Russian coffins. The American graves registration service took charge and

the coffins were then moved to the Brooklyn army base where a memorial service was held before each was sent with military honor guards to their former hometowns for burial. Pvt. Jonker finally had been brought home.⁹

A memorial service for him was held at the Zaagman Funeral Home in southeastern Grand Rapids on 22 September. Jonker's brother Dick, previously a minister in the Christian Reformed Church before joining the Protestant Reformed Churches, delivered the eulogy. Pallbearers were Polar Bear veterans. Ten cars and the hearse carried the mourners and remains the six miles south to Blain Cemetery, where his body was interred in the plot reserved for him and with his tombstone already in place.¹⁰ The Polar Bears fired their rifles in a traditional military salute.¹¹ After almost sixteen years Jonker's parents and loved ones finally had closure.³

Endnotes

1. *Grand Rapids Press*, 21 July 1917.
2. Kent County. Michigan Draft Registrations, Local and Family History Department, Grand Rapids (Michigan) Public Library.
3. Author's Jonker genealogy.
4. The 1918 flu pandemic (commonly referred to as the Spanish flu) was an influenza pandemic that spread to nearly every part of the world. It was caused by an unusually virulent and deadly influenza A virus strain of subtype H1N1.

The pandemic lasted from March 1918 to June 1920 and anywhere from 50 to 100 million people died worldwide. An estimated 500 million people, one-third of the world's population, became infected.

5. The diaries of Edwin L. Arkins of Company C 339th Infantry Regiment and Frank W. Douma of Company D 339th Infantry Regiment (Bentley Historical Library Collections, University of Michigan) were especially helpful with this information.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Kent County WW I Veterans Census provided by the Western Michigan Genealogical Society.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Grand Rapids Herald*, 17 September 1934.

10. Records of the Zaagman Funeral Home, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

11. Cornelius Jonker, son of Rev. Dick Jonker, was ten years old and remembered the firing of the Polar Bear rifles.

Jacob Van Hinte

Pioneer and Preeminent Scholar of Dutch American Studies

Peter Ester



Jacob Van Hinte, the first scholar in Dutch-American studies, later in life. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Person

The first scholar of the Dutch-American experience, Jacob Van Hinte (1889–1948), was born in the village of Muiden and grew up in the city of Alkmaar—both located in the Province of North Holland. He was the third of six children; his father was a baker. After studying both history and geography at the college level, he studied social geography at the University of Amsterdam.¹ For most of his professional life Van Hinte taught geography and history at the high school level, first in Leeuwarden (Instituut Poutsma), then Den Helder (Rijks HBS), and then for nearly thirty years at the Second Public Trade School [*Tweede Openbare Handelsschool*] in Amsterdam. He combined his full-time teaching position with writing a dissertation on Dutch emigration to America. In 1928 Van Hinte graduated *cum laude* from the University of Amsterdam with his dissertation, *Nederlanders in Amerika. Een studie over landverhuizers en volksplanters in de 19e en 20ste eeuw in de Vereenigde Staten van Amerika*. Prof. Sebald Rudolf Steinmetz, well-known social geographer in his time, was his promoter (doctoral supervisor).² The two-volume study (1,135 pages) was published by Noordhoff in Groningen.

Van Hinte was active in several professional organizations, including the Amsterdam Geographical Society and

the Association of Economic Geography. He was particularly committed to the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society (KNAG), which he joined in 1916 and became a board member in 1923 for the first time. During World War II he resigned from the society fearing unjustly that it would come under German influence.³ After the war he renewed his membership and gradually resumed his former responsibilities. Some years before the war, Van Hinte was nominated for the Steinmetz Chair in Geography at the University of Amsterdam, but the city appointed a National Socialist Party member instead.⁴ In 1946, he was elected chairman of the editorial committee of the Society's prestigious journal. Van Hinte was also greatly interested in Dutch overseas immigrant settlements in the East Indies, South Africa, and Australia. During the 1930s he made two intensive study trips to these regions. Van Hinte was also a member of the executive board of the Netherlands South African Society.

Van Hinte was quite keen on having his study on Dutch emigration to America translated into English and perhaps to add a third volume covering the emigration trends in the 1920s and 1930s. Well-known Michigan publisher William B. Eerdmans, who Van Hinte had met on the cross-Atlantic voyage and later in Grand Rapids

Peter Ester is a sociologist and professor at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, and adjunct professor at the Van Raalte Institute, Hope College. He has published extensively, including in Dutch-American immigration studies.



A view of the main post office in Amsterdam from the period just before Van Hinte made his trip through the United States. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

during his 1921 trip and with whom he had stayed in regular contact with over the years, was an enthusiastic supporter of the project.⁵ Eerdmans had purchased the Van Raalte estate, including the colony leader's library and personal papers, and was well aware of the fact that Van Raalte was Van Hinte's personal hero and prominently featured in his 1928 study. *Nederlanders in Amerika* was partly dedicated to Van Raalte.

Eerdmans proposed seeking a part-time faculty position at Hope College or to obtain for Van Hinte the recently established Dutch Chair at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (this initiative was partly funded by the Dutch Government).⁶ As Eerdmans wrote, "You would be the logical man to develop the history and the historical significance and everything that goes with it of the early Dutch settlements in Michigan and other states."⁷ Apparently, Eerdmans was successful in convincing the University of Michigan to place Van Hinte as the leading candidate on its list for the Dutch Chair and Van Hinte was eager to accept the invitation. Just a few months later, however, on

1 March 1948, Van Hinte died quite unexpectedly.⁸

Van Hinte was not married; he left no children. He rented from the same landlady for thirty years. He was very fond of his extended family and was an art lover. In its *In Memoriam* by the KNAG Editorial Committee, Van Hinte is portrayed as a "passionate Dutchman, with a great love for our country, our people, and our language, with a warm interest for our history and our fellow Dutchmen abroad. . . . Van Hinte was a striking personality indeed, with great integrity and consistency, outwardly sedate and controlled, but full of ardor, even fierceness, regarding the defense of matters close to his heart."⁹

The Study

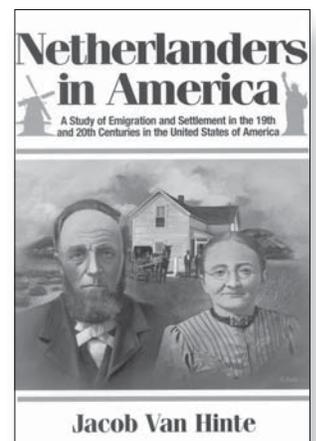
In the words of Robert Swierenga, himself a renowned specialist on Dutch-American immigration: "*Nederlanders in Amerika* is the only comprehensive history of Dutch settlement in America written by a Netherlander, from the perspective of a Netherlander, and intended for a Netherlandic readership This seminal work is the essential starting

point for all who desire to learn about and understand the Dutch experience in America."¹⁰ Albert Eekhof, church historian at Leiden University in the 1920s, applauded the book's thoroughness, versatility, impartiality, and topicality.¹¹ Hajo Brugmans, history professor at the University of Amsterdam, wrote in 1929 that it was a "standard work about the subject which will remain so for a long time."¹² And according to Hans Krabendam, author of a recent book on

Dutch emigration to America, "His voluminous dissertation *Nederlanders in Amerika* was the result of a thorough study and an intensive research stay by which he left a goldmine of

information to later historians."¹³ This intensive research came from a study trip by Van Hinte made to America in 1921. On this trip he kept a diary in which he described his observations and experiences. This unique and unpublished document is currently only available in Dutch. The diary was the basis for his book and details how he collected and organized the data.

Although the main emphasis in *Nederlanders in Amerika* is the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the first three chapters of the book's thirty-one chapters describe the first wave of Dutch colonists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Beginning with the foundation



The jacket of the English translation of Van Hinte's book published by Baker Book House in 1985, almost sixty years after the original Dutch version was published.

of New Netherland in the 1620s, Van Hinte explicates the importance of the Dutch influence in this early period of colonization, the role of the Dutch language, the role of the Reformed Church, and the impact of the Dutch on the making of America. The main focus of the book is, however, the causes and consequences of the second wave of Dutch emigration to America, *de Groot Trek*, starting in the mid-nineteenth century.

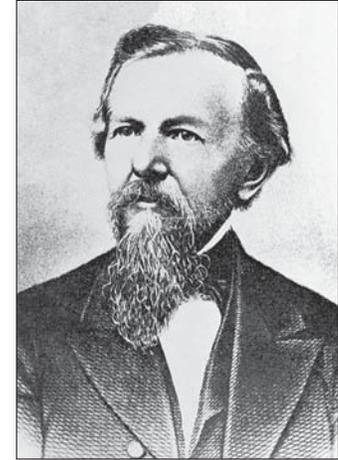
One of the great strengths of Van Hinte's scholarship is his ability to apply a multi-disciplinary approach in understanding migration phenomena. A broad spectrum of social, economic, cultural, demographic, historical, political, religious and of course geographic factors is included in his analysis of Dutch emigration and settlement in America. Van Hinte is not a scholar who marvels at grand deductive and speculative theories. He is at his best in rather down-to-earth straightforward empirical and quite specific descriptions of the main factors that affect migration patterns. As a social geographer he is opposed to physical-geographical determinism but very much in favor of an open "empathic" approach in which the human dimension is dominant. Undoubtedly, this eclectic and open approach was part of his academic training under Steinmetz, whose academic work was strongly empirical, inductive, factual, and quite aversive of abstract meta-theorizing.¹⁴ These scientific premises are clearly reflected in the methodology that underlies *Nederlanders in Amerika*. Van Hinte describes the multifold causes and consequences of Dutch immigration and settlement in America in great detail. He does so in very understandable language, void of conceptual elaborations or theoretical *tours de force*. The language itself is a bit high-flown, sometimes pathetic even, reflecting the scholarly style of his



Van Hinte admired the roles that both Van Raalte and Rev. Hendrik P. Scholte (pictured) played in the Dutch immigration to and settlement in West Michigan and Pella, Iowa, respectively. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

times. Van Hinte's methodology is quite diverse and based on a variety of sources: scholarly books, official documents, data from emigration and immigration officials, conferring with other migration experts, personal interviews with immigrants and immigrant leaders, library visits, literary sources, emigrant letters, emigration statistics, migration and settlement maps, and of course his study trip to America.

The methodology and open approach used by Van Hinte resulted in a systematic and well-organized book. His story starts with an account of the main social, economic, cultural, and religious causes of the emigration movement in the first half of the nineteenth century. Being Dutch Reformed himself—though not a strict Calvinistic believer—Van Hinte very well understood the theological dispute underlying the *Afscheiding* in the 1830s and the psychology that went with the emigration of its leaders Van Raalte and Scholte and their followers.¹⁵ Non-Seceder Dutch emigrant groups (Roman Catholics, Menno-



Van Hinte dedicated his book to the first Dutch immigrants to the United States, and particularly to Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, whose photo appears opposite the dedicatory page of the book. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

rites) are also included. As a geographer Van Hinte convincingly pictures the new environment of the settlers in America: differences in soil, climate, flora and fauna, and the contacts with American society. He describes the first two Dutch settlements, in Michigan (Van Raalte) and in Iowa (Scholte), in a detailed and vivid way with a keen eye for the challenges these first pioneers had to face, not only in terms of working the land and making a living, but also in terms of the administration of these colonies, leadership, religious life, the role of the church, education, transportation, and the role of the human factor in pioneer communities. Van Hinte also compares Van Raalte and Scholte in their roles as colony leaders. It is evident that his sympathy lies with Van Raalte, whose image is prominently featured in his book right after the title page. Scholte, as Swierenga states, "is given an extremely biased treatment"; he is called a "sphinx" and a "chameleon."¹⁶

Other early Dutch settlements in Wisconsin and Illinois are also

portrayed, though more briefly. The development of the first settlements is a key topic in *Nederlanders in Amerika*, particularly regarding material growth (e.g., agriculture, cattle raising, trade, industry, and transportation), cultural and religious changes (including disputes and splits), education and the advancement of the school system, political life (settlement politics and local administration, national party choice; the slavery issue, the Civil War), and the role of the Dutch press.

The second volume of Van Hinte's study details what he calls "daughter" and "granddaughter" Dutch settlements, the offspring of the pioneer colonies. Some were highly successful, others failed. The volume also contains descriptions of new colonies that were established independently of the early settlements. All in all, the volume contains an impressive number of descriptions, with encyclopedic

Montana, Virginia, Maryland, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, and North Carolina.¹⁷ In some cases his research zooms in on the Dutch presence within larger cities like New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Grand Rapids. The process of Americanization, which is the clear underlying theme, is not masked by the abundance of facts, details, and lengthy descriptions. In analyzing specific trends such as consumption patterns, housing styles, clothing, leisure activities, club life, music preferences, public holidays, religious life, and particularly the use of the Dutch language, Van Hinte concludes that Americanization was inescapable. This is especially true for the youngest generation: "Although it is evident from all the preceding that the process of Americanization is far advanced, in fact almost completed, it is naturally most strongly expressed by the younger generation and is

accompanied by an equally strong secularism."¹⁸

Van Hinte knew that the gradual loss of Dutch identity was inevitable, there was no route but Americanization, but as a proud and patriotic Dutchman he observed this process with mixed feelings. Van Hinte was a scholar, but also a passionate Netherlander. He does not attempt to hide this in his writ-

ing. Frequently, he speaks about "our brethren in America," "our clan," "our race," "our Dutch character," "the Dutch spirit," "an exceptional breed," etc. These are, admittedly descriptors

that disturb the modern reader. But as Krabbendam concludes, "Van Hinte wrote with revealing pride about the accomplishments of 'our Hollanders' in America. His thorough scientific approach did not disguise a personal identification with his 'clansmen.'"¹⁹

Nederlanders in Amerika is an unexcelled overview and detailed description of the experience of Dutch settlers and colonies. It is hard to imagine that one person could complete all of this given "the tremendous amount of material that Van Hinte processed, the balance he achieved between a scientific approach and a sense of humanity, and his amazing ability to capture the spirit of the times and the thinking of the immigrants, despite spending such a short time in the United States."²⁰ Almost sixty years after the original Dutch edition appeared, on the initiative of Robert Swierenga, the work finally was translated into English and published in 1985 as *Netherlands in America: A Study of Emigration and Settlement in the 19th and 20th Centuries in the United States of America* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House).

Van Hinte's 1921 research trip was crucial for gathering the necessary material for writing the book. "I was able to assemble a mass of information, priceless data were shared with me, and rare documents were liberally donated."²¹ The diary (*Naar Amerika*) that Van Hinte kept during his study visit provides firsthand insights in his observations, experiences, and views. A unique document that includes many of his thoughts that later were elaborated in *Nederlanders in Amerika*. An English translation of this important diary would be most welcome.

The diary shows a committed scientist who sympathizes with his study subject: the adventures of Dutch immigrants in American society, their struggles and triumphs.



Himself a church member, Van Hinte made it a point to attend worship services in immigrant communities. This is the interior of First Christian Reformed Church, Paterson, New Jersey. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

detail of Dutch settlements in Iowa, Virginia, Michigan, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, the Dakotas, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Washington, Oregon,

His scientific approach was not detached, but based on understanding and identification. Van Hinte cared for Dutch immigrant culture and his concern is authentic. He was not interested in abstract theorizing, in grand conceptual thinking; his method was based on *Verstehen*. His narrative approach was grounded in compassion and curiosity, using every source of information he has access to. He loves detail and elaboration. It has resulted in a very rich and affectionate book, a panoramic book that chronicles the common experiences of Dutch settlers in America. The diary reflects his way of working, thinking, and writing. It shows a man who is passionate, sometimes even overtly romantic, about his topic and who feels no need to hide this. Van Hinte strongly relates to the hardships and strains of immigrant life, the worries and anxieties, but also notes immigrant achievements and successes, their prosperous settlements and immigrant role models. Van Hinte is proud of Dutch culture, habits, and values as they somehow survive in American society. Nothing moves him more than a Dutch

immigrant who still speaks and feels Dutch, who celebrates Dutch culture, and who still identifies with the old country.

For the modern reader his Dutch pride goes rather far, sometimes beyond what is desirable in science. But we have to see Van Hinte and the scientific method and language in their times. This also applies to his social Darwinist view on immigration, in which the strongest immigrant groups survive in the American melting pot. Undoubtedly, *Netherlanders in America* is dated in many respects. It shows its historic “embeddedness” and determination in a double sense. The book was written by a scholar who applies the scientific methods, idiom, and perspectives of the early twentieth century. But it also reflects the (still) early stage of Americanization of Dutch immigrants. Both the scientific methodology and the process of Americanization accelerated in the past ninety years. *Netherlanders in America* is a story of Dutch settlement and enculturation that stops in the late 1920s. The story, of course, continues, and at a much faster pace. But in terms of its encompassing

and integral views and analysis it is a pioneering, essential, and obligatory work. It is the seminal work on Dutch emigration to America.

The diary presents an honest man who is opposed to maltreatment, cheating, overt materialism, and the pursuit of private gain over the common good. He is truly interested in what drives the immigrant, his mindset, his hopes, and his fears. He understands the often subtle differences between religious immigrant subcultures.

All in all, Van Hinte believes that the Dutch immigration project in America has been a successful one. The Dutch settlement is a blessing for both Dutch immigrants and American society. This belief is reinforced in the troubled times in which Van Hinte finalized his study: the turbulent post-World War I years in Europe; a period that was very unstable, even chaotic, both economically and politically. In this perspective it is significant that Van Hinte ends his *magnum opus* with a quote from the Dutch poet Adriaan Roland Holst, “Again, like once before, take up the lead and make us free, America.”⁹

Endnotes

1. In Dutch: “M. O. akte Geschiedenis”, respectively “M. O. akte Aardrijkskunde.”

2. The completion date was 13 July. His degree certificate is kept in the Historical Documentation Center for Dutch Protestantism, Free University, Amsterdam (Collection 283). Van Hinte was one of the first doctoral students of Steinmetz to earn the degree.

3. The Germans demanded that the designation “Royal” should be dropped from the KNAG.

4. Van Hinte was certainly qualified for a professorship but refused to lobby for his appointment at the City Council (E-mail correspondence with Hans Krabendam, 5 February 2009).

5. This part is based on Swierenga’s Introduction to *Netherlanders in America*,

xxxvii-xxxviii.

6. See *Netherlanders in America*, 1002 for Van Hinte’s views on the importance of chairs in Dutch language, art, and history at American universities and colleges.

7. *Ibid.*, Editor’s Introduction, xxxvii.

8. Van Hinte died of pancreatic cancer. He was buried on 1 March 1948 in the family plot at Muiden General Cemetery. It was a simple funeral, at his explicit wish, with just a few people present.

9. In his *In Memoriam* W. de Vries also wrote that Van Hinte was a “silent, modest worker, who had found full satisfaction in his studies, his work, his companionship with books . . . a sensitive intellectual. From the outside a quiet, collected and calm attitude toward life and, though inclined to introversion,

he showed a strong need for friendship, home life, and intellectual conversation” (*Geografisch Tijdschrift* 1, 1948, nr. 3). His former colleague, W. Telman, remembered Van Hinte thirty years later as “a vulnerable human being, totally unsuited as a fighter for his own rights” (*Tijdschrift Van Hou’ en Trouw* [H&T], 1 maart 1976). P. J. Riseeuw, author of the well-known novel *Landverhuizers*—inspired as he states by *Nederlanders in Amerika*—wrote in his *In Memoriam* that Van Hinte “in the last part of his life still intended to go to America and study the newly found documents about Van Raalte” (*Missionary Monthly*, Vol. 54, May 1949). This is most likely related to the purchase by Eerdmans of the Van Raalte estate and library (including his personal papers) and his invitation to Van Hinte to become curator.

10. Jacob Van Hinte, *Netherlanders in America: A Study of Emigration and Settlement in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in the United States of America* (in Dutch, 2 Vols. Groningen: Noordhof, 1928), Robert P. Swierenga, general editor, Adriaan de Wit, chief translator (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), Editor's Introduction, xxxi.

11. "Het Nederlandsche element in de bevolking van Amerika." *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 45 (1930) 429-432.

12. "Netherlanders in Amerika." *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 16 maart 1929. There was also some cautious criticism, e.g., by H. Brink in his review: "Sometimes the abundance dominates over the general picture," and he advises Van Hinte to write "a shorter adaptation . . . for a larger public." *Nederlandse landverhuizers naar Amerika, Maandschrift voor Nederland en Kolonien* 44 (1929) 241-261. (All translations in this paper are by the author.)

13. Hans Krabbendam, *Vrijheid in*

verschiet. Nederlandse emigratie naar Amerika 1840-1940 (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2006) 322.

14. See: S. R. Steinmetz, "Wat is sociographie?" *Mens en Maatschappij*, 1925; *Inleiding tot de sociologie* (Haarlem: Erven F. Bohn. Volksuniversiteitsbibliotheek, 1931).

15. As Swierenga states: "Besides being a proud Dutchman, Van Hinte was a proud Reformed Dutchman, although of liberal leanings" (*Netherlanders in America*, Editor's Introduction, xl). W. de Vries in his lengthy review of the 1928 dissertation states that although Van Hinte was well-informed about religious and church matters he did not share "the positive-Christian philosophy of life" ("niet de positief-Christelijke levensbeschouwing deellende"), W. de Vries, *Godsdienst als kolonisatiefactor. Stemmen des Tijds. Maandblad voor Christendom en Cultuur* 18 (1929) 24. Apparently he was a liberal in a double sense as he voted for the VVD, the Dutch liberal demo-

cratic party (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*) or People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (E-mail correspondence with Hans Krabbendam, 2 May 2009).

16. *Netherlanders in America*, Editor's Introduction, xl.

17. "Minutely scrutinized" as Bult writes in his review of the book, providing a "constant flow of geographic, sociological, and historic data", Conrad J. Bult, *Origins* (vol 3, no 2) 43.

18. *Netherlanders in America*, 981.

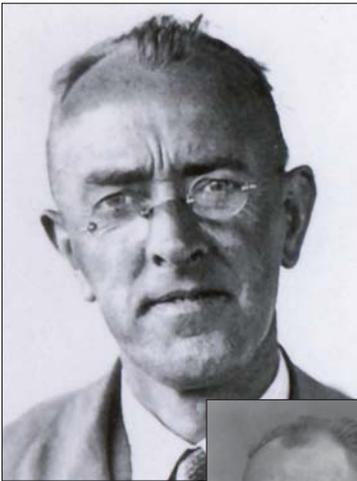
19. Krabbendam, *Vrijheid in verschiet*, 322.

20. *Netherlanders in America*, Editor's Introduction, xxxvi. Another strong feature of Van Hinte's scholarship was posing the right questions, e.g., in comparing settlements, migration patterns, leadership roles, or in comparing the Dutch in the old country and in America. See Editor's Introduction, xlii for an intriguing list.

21. *Ibid.*, author's preface, xlvii.

To America: *The Diary of Jacob Van Hinte: Pioneer of Dutch-American Studies*¹

Peter Ester



Inset: Van Hinte as he appeared about the time of his trip through Dutch communities in the United States. Image courtesy of the author.

Dutch social geographer Jacob Van Hinte wrote the first and still most inclusive overview of Dutch immigration and settlement in America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His monumental two-volume study, *Nederlanders in Amerika*, published in 1928, is a landmark study of the Dutch experience in the United States. It provides a detailed history of the slow but steady Americanization of Dutch immigrant pioneers and is still considered by many contemporary researchers as an indispensable source for understanding Dutch immigration and settlement in the United States.

Originally Van Hinte planned to stay a full year, but his employer (the city of Amsterdam) was unwilling to grant him a year's leave without pay. So he decided to limit his study journey to the summer vacation period. Van Hinte kept a diary, *Naar Amerika* [To America], which is still only available in Dutch.² The handwritten diary was transcribed sixty years later (in 1981) by Van Hinte's grandniece, Josephine Monique Van Hinte. This 40-page transcription is the basis of the present study.³ The diary reveals a dedicated, gifted, and perceptive scholar with a keen eye for both the positive and negative sides of American society and culture. His compassion for the welfare of the Dutch *landverhuizers* is genuine, as is his aversion to overt materialism and pursuit of gain among immigrants.

Van Hinte's trip to America lasted

fifty-two days, beginning 12 July 1921. The outward and return voyages were, respectively, ten and nine days, so that he spent thirty-three days traveling through America. Most of this time was spent in the Midwest. Even though *Nederlanders in Amerika* was a broad study, given his time constraints Van Hinte could only visit the larger Dutch immigrant communities.

The mainland journey, mostly by steam or electric railroads, took Van Hinte from Hoboken to Paterson, New Jersey (by streetcar and train), and a visit to Ellis Island. He then proceeded from New York City to Albany via the Hudson River on *SS Washington Irving*, and by train to Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, and Niagara Falls, New York, and then on to West Michigan. He spent six days in Grand Rapids, Michigan, then five days in Holland, during which time he made short visits to the Dutch communities of Zeeland, Graafschap, Borculo, and Hudsonville. After this he crossed Lake Michigan by steamer to Chicago, visiting the Dutch settlements in Roseland, South Holland, and Englewood. Next, he traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, then Pella, back to Des Moines, and from there on to the Dutch "daughter" settlement in Orange City where he stayed three days. He made short visits by car to Middleburg and Hull in Sioux County. Then by train, via Chicago and Pittsburgh, he traveled to Washington, DC. Finally, after some sightseeing in the nation's capital, he traveled by Pullman car to New York (via Baltimore)



SS Rotterdam of the Holland-America Line (the fourth ship with this name) in New York Harbor. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

for the return passage to the Netherlands. In total, the journey was well over 3,000 miles.

Crossing the Atlantic on SS Rotterdam IV⁴

Van Hinte opens his diary in an almost Oscar Handlin *Uprooted* way, “Emigrants! A word that already fascinated me when I was a boy and which I still feel carries such a deep connotation of the tragedy of life. Thus nothing has kept me as spellbound as my pursuit to investigate the lives of these people who attempted to forge for themselves a new existence and livelihood far away from their native soil.”⁵ At the same time, however, these grand sentiments are punctuated by Dutch common sense, as when he bridled at having to pay thirty Dutch guilders for a visa and twenty-five Dutch guilders for personal tax, in his view a substantial amount to visit the land of “freedom.”

At the Wilhelmina Pier of Rotterdam Harbor, from which the ship would depart, the sight of groups of *landverhuizers* struck him deeply. “Small groups of emigrants make me think of everything I have read about these economic exiles and fill me with compassion. How sad are the stares of some, how expressionless others look.

And then the resignation of some. After the luggage handling, the medical examination: one by one people are checked just like horses and cows,

turning their heads from left to right, lifting their eyelids. Human meat!”⁶ On board Van Hinte again meets Mr. and Mrs. William B. Eerdmans from Grand Rapids, “one of the most prominent Frisians there [Grand Rapids], who owns the largest bookstore in the United States.”⁷ Many nights were



William B. Eerdmans, book publisher and dealer, who became a good friend of Van Hinte and obtained an academic appointment for him at the University of Michigan. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

spent with the couple (he a Frisian, she a German), in conversation and playing dominos. Nice, sympathetic, quiet, and kind people, “who, though already American citizens for some

years, remain emigrants to me which has a peculiar appeal.”⁸

Van Hinte talks with many *landverhuizers*: Hungarians, Germans, Swiss, and of course Dutch (Frisian and Groninger) emigrants and Dutch-American citizens. During the Atlantic crossing, Van Hinte is a keen observer, both of people, landscapes, and the sea. “The most interesting remains the view of the third-class passengers. The multi-colored aprons and headscarves made for vivid pictures. But more important was the difference in expressions: an indifferent young Dutchman, a musically talented Pole, a pale Slavic woman sadly staring at the surroundings.”⁹

Inevitably seasickness struck: “It is again the third-class decks that give the strangest sight. Sick women everywhere.”¹⁰ Though there is not much to do on board there is no boredom. Meals, strolling, talking, and playing dominos were common activities. And as Van Hinte subtly adds: “much flirtation on board.”¹¹ After several days: “Many people get worn out of the voyage. They long for land. The mood gets more nervous: some think they already saw land, others already took care of their luggage.”¹²

Then on Friday, 22 July, land was sighted! “We relive the days of Columbus.”¹³ Steaming up the Hudson River revealed marvelous sights of New York City: skyscrapers, the Singer Building, the even higher Woolworth Building, fast ferry boats. He rented a \$2 room in Meyer’s Hotel in Hoboken and then took a quick late night stroll on Hoboken’s main street, Washington. “The number of shops that are still open is remarkable even though it was already 10:30 pm. The ice cream parlors still were crowded. Walking into one of them, I was struck by the number of women still present, sometimes even whole families. Like in a Dutch village, everyone sat outside. The number of

candy shops seems already astounding.”¹⁴

New York City and Paterson, New Jersey

On his first full day in America Van Hinte took an exploring walk in the Hudson Street area (near the Holland-America Line docks) and noticed lots of Dutch shops. He has several meetings with Rev. Tjeerd Jongbloed, responsible for assisting arriving Dutch immigrants, who provides him with a wealth of information for his project.¹⁵ Van Hinte goes to “Times Place” (Times Square), he sees “the enormous number of candy and ice



Rev. Tjeerd Jongbloed (1869-1926), a native of Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, was one of the first ministers Van Hinte heard preach after arriving on his study trip. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

cream shops, the easy shoe polish chairs, and above all the parlors where they not only polish your shoes but also clean your hat while having an ice [cream].”¹⁶ Van Hinte even went to a Ziegfeld Follies show in the Globe Theater on Broadway.¹⁷ He noticed the separate ladies’ lounges in the theatre as well as in restaurants, and on ferry boats, but also observed that “love thrives nowhere less abundantly than

in America, though more secretly.”¹⁸

On his first Sunday in America, Van Hinte attended First Reformed Church (RCA) in Paterson, New Jersey. He is touched by hearing a sermon in Dutch by Rev. Hessel Bouma, and especially the singing of hymns in Dutch by hundreds of churchgoers.¹⁹

This emotion is somewhat tempered by his observation that English and not Dutch is the main language of conversation after the service and Van Hinte is struck by “the number of non-Dutch (*on-hollandse*) faces.”²⁰ In the afternoon Van Hinte attended Second Christian Reformed Church (CRC) of Paterson, with about eight hundred other worshippers. After the “rather dogmatic” sermon by Rev. James J. Holwerda (on Romans 5:1) he again notes the emotion when the psalms were sung in Dutch.²¹ He met with several families, including the Poelstras, who still spoke Dutch and were proud of their heritage: “Forty years in America and still speaking Dutch so well . . . Bravo Poelstra!”²²

While in New York, Van Hinte met with various American and Dutch representatives, officials, and businessmen. He had special permission to visit Ellis Island—the main US immigration entry facility—which left him with a positive impression of how immigrants were processed. An Italian ship with some 950 immigrants had arrived earlier that day. At night Van Hinte digests his many impressions of the day, “Dark Italian women and superficial American Broadway girls. Marvelous buildings, somber deep streets, infernal noise by railway, elevated trolley, car, and subway. And



Van Hinte also took photos on his trip, a few of which were used to illustrate his book, including this image of a Dutch-American in front of his home in Midland Park, New Jersey (illustration III, *Nederlanders in Amerika*, 1928).

then peace: New York Bay, the beautiful broad water over which some big sea vessels sail seaward.”²³ He met with Fred W. Overkamp, editor since 1906 of *Het Oosten*, a Dutch, independent, ultra-orthodox newspaper. “Editorial office, printing office, packing service, all in one room. Extremely noisy and hot! No wonder that the *Oosten* articles are always somewhat stirring.”²⁴ Overkamp drew him a map of the Dutch settlements in America. Van Hinte also met Peter Hoekstra, a professor at Calvin College and author of a book on Holland-American trade relations.²⁵ He had an interesting meeting with Dr. Adriaan Jacob Barnouw who held the Queen Wilhelmina Chair in Dutch History, Language, and Arts at Columbia University.²⁶

Not all of Van Hinte’s research in New York went smoothly. He reported some bitter frustration with merchants attempting to take advantage of immigrants and a lack of cooperation from officials in this “ultra-materialistic” metropolis. It was on the first Thursday after arrival, “Black Thursday,” as he labels it rather dramatically: “Rarely has my patriotism suffered more than on this day and rarely did I see Holland from a more nasty side . . . Holland at its worst!”²⁷ He

was cheated by a Dutch barber who overcharged him (“the swindler”). The Dutch consulate-general and the Dutch Chamber of Commerce were unable to give him relevant information on Dutch immigration and “are barely aware of Dutch life and characteristics in the world’s largest city.”²⁸ To add to his frustration he was not allowed to have lunch in the Netherland Club on Gramercy Park because he was not a member.²⁹ He was not even permitted to have a look inside the building. But on this Black Thursday Van Hinte’s annoyance also changed to pity. “Poor dollar-driven people! Poor souls, those bankers and other businessmen, consul-general and chamber of commerce included: Dollars!”³⁰ Fortunately, the day ended well. Van Hinte met music teacher Gebhart from the Bronx, secretary of the *Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond* (General Dutch Alliance). The enthusiasm of this “simple patriot” was contagious, his love for the Netherlands genuine, and his insights in the uncertain existence of the immigrant very meaningful.

But he had to press on from New York City: first, to Grand Rapids, Michigan, a trip of three days, by boat and train.³¹ En route he made short visits to Albany and Rochester, and was greatly impressed by Niagara Falls, particularly when walking behind the falls through the Canadian tunnel.³²

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Not surprisingly, Van Hinte first visited the Eerdmans family and was invited to stay in their newly rented house.³³ He found American houses generally colorless and unpleasant from the outside but quite cozy (*gezellig*), comfortable, and peaceful inside; a sharp contrast with the hectic city life. “Americans may be busy during the day, after six o’clock they enjoy their free time more intensely than Europeans do.”³⁴ They had lunch in



Van Hinte was favorably impressed with the Pantlind Hotel (now part of the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel), particularly its cafeteria. Image courtesy of the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department, Grand Rapids (Michigan) Public Library.

the elegant Pantlind Hotel and Van Hinte was impressed by the cafeteria system.³⁵ On his first day in Grand Rapids he also visited Calvin College, which, due to the summer break, had empty classrooms that made a somewhat somber impression. “I would have loved to see the Dutch-American boys and especially the girls in action.”³⁶ The Public Museum was a disappointment, no memories of the old settlers, but the Ryerson (Public) Library was more interesting, particularly because of the Dutch and Frisian book collection.³⁷ Van Hinte visited Henry Beets, well-known church historian and director of missions of the CRC, who showed him his extensive library and who took him around in Grand Rapids.³⁸ He spent quite some

time at Dutch bookstores, met with Jacob Steketee, the Dutch Consul, and John Steketee, owner of a large department store; he also visited city hall and the chamber of commerce to collect data on Dutch immigration and settlement.

Holland, Michigan

After an earlier, brief visit during his Grand Rapids stay, Van Hinte revisited Holland and upon arrival by train was “immediately struck by the many American flags and especially the Dutch red-white-blue flag, evidently to welcome the Free Masons.”³⁹ Americans in funny costumes walked through the little town: big white painted plume, sword on their hip, cross on trousers, and three-cornered

hat: “Poor America. Where is your plainness?”⁴⁰ Seeking refuge from the “carnavalesque” behavior, he entered Brink’s bookstore where he met two important, locally well-known connoisseurs of Holland’s history, William O. Van Eyck (Holland postmaster) and Gerrit Van Schelven (justice of peace).⁴¹ “Both sympathetic and real Dutchmen, however different. Strange figures in Holland: a Democratic postmaster and a Republican justice of peace.”⁴² Being an immigrant and still able to speak Dutch was a combination that time and again impressed Van Hinte.

On Sunday he attended Hope Church—sitting in the Van Schelven pew—where he saw, “especially elegantly dressed women and girls. . . . A young man in a white robe takes his position at the organ, and then to my surprise suddenly about eight young men and eleven young women enter the church through two side doors while singing. I thought it was the city theater! The violin solo of Miss Ruth Keppel shifted my thoughts to the concert hall. A short pithy sermon by Dominie John Marinus Van der Meulen⁴³ from Louisville, Kentucky, gave the ‘Reformed’ stamp

to this gathering which was full of variation. Not in the least because of the response singing and the modern singing of the psalms.”⁴⁴ Van Hinte quite liked the younger crowd, “Easy, jovial young people and those were the descendants of those dour, rigid, ignorant little farmers. . . . Stronger than ever I felt that emigration to America has been a blessing to them!”⁴⁵ In the afternoon, he attended the Van Raalte Church, which Van Hinte stated the CRC “stole” from the RCA.⁴⁶ He found the church building and surroundings quite charming.⁴⁷ But it is interesting to see how Van Hinte phrases the differences between the “aristocratic” RCA Hope Church and the Van Raalte Church: “What plain people and plain faces! As if they arrived from the Netherlands the day before. What extremes, the churchgoers of this morning and this afternoon. This morning one did not see any buggies, there are several this afternoon. . . . It was Dutch all over here that one heard, also in contrast with this morning. . . . Just for a moment I strongly felt the sentiments of the Seceders. In church I was struck just like in other Christian Reformed churches by the many children. Complete

households!⁴⁸ . . . How long-winded the Psalms sounded compared to this morning’s hymns. And unintentionally I found myself thinking that the development of these people was equally slow or fast as their singing.”⁴⁹

Van Hinte’s visit to Holland was filled by meetings with the owner of the *Grondwet*, J. B. Mulder; Hope College president, Edward D. Dimnent; several professors from Hope College, including John. B. Nykerk, Evert J. Blekkink, and Albert Raap.⁵⁰ Nykerk showed him around Holland by car and together they visited the Van Raalte grave and those of many of his followers, the Van der Meulen memorial in Zeeland, the Van Raalte house (“in neglected condition”), and several parks.⁵¹ He was also interviewed by journalist and novelist Arnold Mulder of the *Holland Sentinel* regarding his study on Dutch immigration.⁵²

Holland has an unusually interesting visitor Wednesday in the person of Mr. J. Van Hinte of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, who is in America to gather material for a book about Hollanders in America. . . . His plan is to tell the story of how a group of Hollanders in the nineteenth century were transplanted into unfamiliar surroundings, how they reacted to the new environment and in the course of years adjusted themselves to new conditions, what they are doing today and how they are making a distinct contribution to the civilization and culture of America. Mr. Van Hinte hopes to show the intellectual and cultural advance that has been made by the Hollanders here as well as their material progress.⁵³

Interestingly, Van Hinte also met with Mrs. Christine Gilmore, Van Raalte’s daughter.⁵⁴ “A very nice old lady, who in a very amicable way provided me many details. She spoke with such admiration of her father. It was curious that although English was easiest for her to speak, she switched to Dutch when talking



While visiting Holland, Michigan, Van Hinte was impressed by the number of reminders the Dutch-Americans had of their native land in their new land. Image courtesy of the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department, Grand Rapids (Michigan) Public Library.



The architecture of Pillar Church also impressed Van Hinte, although the split between the RCA and CRC and the history of the building passing from the RCA to the CRC did not. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

about what her father had told her about the pioneer times.”⁵⁵ Later that day he also met with a granddaughter of Van Raalte, “A nice girl, in her car of course, with her hands on the wheel.”⁵⁶ In between Van Hinte had a most interesting conversation with former congressman, later US Ambassador to the Netherlands, Holland native Gerrit J. Diekema.⁵⁷ Van Hinte was impressed by the large collection of Dutch history books in the

Hope College library and the various commemorative plaques on campus: a donated sidewalk (“class of 1917”), a tree (“class of 1896”), a bench (“class of 1910”). Such class memorials were (and still are) uncommon in the Netherlands.

There was time to visit “prim and proper” Zeeland. He noticed much activity because it was one of the two evenings per week that the shops were open. He observed that people



One of the fine homes Van Hinte saw as he toured through West Michigan; this house was in Zeeland. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

still understood Dutch well, though young people mostly spoke in English. The short Zeeland visit ended with a meeting with 83-year-old Cornelis Van Loo, former Republican member of Michigan’s State House of Representatives. Traveling back to Holland he saw a lady—apparently a smoker—in the smoking section of the railcar, but who quickly moved to the non-smoking section on approaching the city. His Holland visit ended with a trip by car through “the colony,” through Graafschap, Borculo, and Hudsonville.⁵⁸

Later that night he embarked on an old steamer (*rader boot*) from Holland to Chicago across Lake Michigan.⁵⁹ “A beautiful evening. How picturesque the landscape was illuminated by the moonlight! I saw all of the Van Raalte history in front of me, very much alive. How many wanderers have already sailed these waters and what a future many of them looked forward to. If only these waters could speak! What tales of misery they could tell, but also what noble struggles they witnessed: these same waters were meant to make Holland grow and prosper.”⁶⁰

Chicago, Illinois

Van Hinte’s three-day visit to Chicago was packed with meetings; some planned, some unplanned; some formal, some informal; some successful, some less successful. His appointment with the Dutch Consul, John Venneman, had to be cancelled apparently because he was on vacation. Van Hinte met with G. Broes van Dordt, book importer, and with Mr. Dijkstra, the secretary of the Chicago City Club. After inquiring about geography books in a local bookstore, another customer asked him whether Van Hinte was Dutch. His somewhat regrettable positive answer (“was my English that bad?”) led to a conversation in the beautiful La Salle Hotel,

where his new acquaintance—Mr. Verhoef, Dutch-American accountant from Brooklyn—was staying. Back on the streets he was impressed by the noisy traffic and its heavy flow.⁶¹ Van Hinte also knew how to enjoy the pleasures of the city. The first evening was spent in the roof garden of the La Salle Hotel, “Cabaret, dance, music, a nicely served chocolate ice cream, coffee and cake . . . and I sensed a longing in myself for money, much money—and beautiful women.”⁶² Later, Van Hinte met with author and commentator Albert Oosterheerd (“a simple but pleasant man”) who took him by the Rock Island train to his home in Evergreen Park, where several Dutch gardeners lived.⁶³ Out of curiosity he checked the Chicago phone book and found about thirteen to fourteen columns of names beginning with *Van*.

Next was a visit to the Dutch Chicago neighborhood of Roseland.⁶⁴ “One hour by train. How ugly Chicago is: many open spots between houses. And how unkempt these houses look. Though Roseland is part of Chicago, there are large grassy plains and corn fields between the two.”⁶⁵ He got off at 111th Street and noticed many shops with Dutch names. His visit included a meeting with J. H. Hoekstra—Frisian poet and author writing under the pseudonym of Hans Hansen and sharp observer of Dutch *dominies* particularly when they exceeded their religious responsibilities.⁶⁶ Van Hinte was quite fond of Hoekstra and called him “my American friend.”⁶⁷ Hoekstra took him around by car and showed him South Holland (“well run by Peter de Jong . . . a quiet, pleasant little town”), Englewood, and several suburbs.⁶⁸ He furthermore met with Rev. Dr. John Van Lonkhuyzen, Dutch-born editor-in-chief of the Chicago-based Christian Reformed and Republican paper *Onze Toekomst* and pastor of



The Roseland section of Chicago, home to the Pullman Company, manufacturer of railroad cars, was another of the Dutch immigrant communities he visited. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

the First Christian Reformed Church of Chicago.⁶⁹ The evening was more mundane leisure, a vaudeville show in the State-Lake Theater.⁷⁰

On the next and final day in Chicago Van Hinte met with, among others, housepainter Cornelis Clausing, a Dutch immigrant from Alkmaar, who provided him with many details on the Roseland settlement. “This village totally lost its own, independent Dutch character over the years and was, in the end, completely absorbed by Chicago.”⁷¹ The rapid Americanization of this Dutch area was caused by the construction of the enormous Pullman Works employing some ten thousand workers. Much of the land for this was bought from Dutch settlers. Van Hinte had to move on again. A night train took him from Chicago to Des Moines, Iowa.

Pella, Iowa

After a Sunday stopover in Des Moines, Van Hinte visited Pella, Iowa (“a prosperous quiet little town”).⁷² He met with ex-farmer John Witsen-

burg, a relative of Van Hinte (his mother was a Witsenburg). His interview with Mr. Van Stigt, brother of writer Kommer Van Stigt, was much more informative and pleasant.⁷³ Mr. Dykhoff, editor of *Pella's Weekblad*, provided him with more details on the Dutch colony. Van Hinte was very positive about his meetings with Dr. Milton J. Hoffman, president of Central College.⁷⁴ Hoffman (“a most sympathetic fellow”) showed him around campus, drove him around Pella and the countryside, and shared his ideas about the future development of Central College. Of further interest was his visit to the Scholte house and the meeting with Scholte’s daughter. “The house looked like a little museum, not only Scholte’s books but also all kinds of memorabilia were shown: pipe, wooden shoes, writing materials, lamp, some boxes, and the Bilderdijk inheritance that was bought by Scholte, etc.”⁷⁵ Though the welcome by Scholte’s daughter was cordial, he later wrote in *Netherlanders in America*, “. . . the only person in

Pella I was not able to converse with in Dutch was a young [sic] woman who was a daughter of H. P. Scholte.”⁷⁶ Only Scholte’s youngest daughter, Johanna (1842–1928), was still living when Van Hinte visited, but she was in her eighties.

Hoffman introduced Van Hinte to Peter Gaass, “the most well-to-do Pella resident,” whose wealth was estimated at about \$300,000. “And though those Dutch-Americans are quite critical of Holland, they oh, oh, like to talk about that little Netherland. A good cigar and a cup of chocolate and it looked as if we were in the Netherlands. Just as in Holland, Michigan, the outside is American, but the inside is Dutch, and the best is Dutch!”⁷⁷

Back in Pella, he noticed a number of older local people sitting on benches in the city park, animatedly talking in Dutch. He approached them and what followed was an exciting conversation in Dutch with lots of questions. “Their interest in Holland was touching. Did I know so and so, did I meet a Stam in Amsterdam, etc. Did I know Harlingen and Nunspeet and Ede. And then happy smiles if I said to have been there by bike: the road from Marssum and Dronrijp to Harlingen . . . It sure was Holland, this park!”⁷⁸ A visit to Holland Home, for the elderly, made him realize that most pioneers were not very affluent. But he found them genuinely interested in the old fatherland. Obviously, Van Hinte liked Pella very much.⁷⁹

The immigration pattern became gradually clear. Though Van Hinte knew quite well that mastery of English and identification with the American way of life were a condition *sine qua non* for effective Americanization and acculturation, he was touched time and time again by meeting Dutch-Americans who still spoke Dutch and who felt attached to the Netherlands.⁸⁰

But the journey went on, next to



A tourist postcard from Pella, Iowa, about the time of Van Hinte’s trip. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

the daughter colony of Orange City, Iowa, some three hundred miles away; again by train and again with a stop-over in Des Moines.⁸¹

Orange City, Iowa

Shortly after his arrival Van Hinte interviewed Editor Hendrik Pieter Oggel.⁸² Orange City very much reminded him of Pella: “the park, the churches, the peace and quiet, the location between two rivers . . . the Dutch language, etc. The people are only somewhat stiffer, somewhat more reserved, a stronger resemblance to the old country.”⁸³ Oggel took him to the editorial office of his newspaper *De Volksvriend*.⁸⁴ Van Hinte described him as “a meek, bright looking older little fellow. Took my notebook. And then talking. Questions back and forth. The hours flew by.”⁸⁵

Mayor Gerrit Klay drove him around in his Marmon,⁸⁶ past beautiful Dutch farms and successful Dutch stock-breeders. One of them, Pieter Mouw, had a state-wide reputation, “What buildings! And what cattle: superb hogs (of 1,010 and 1,040 pounds), China Polled [hogs] and

Herefords [cattle]. An uncommonly beautiful sight.”⁸⁷ They drove north passing through small Dutch towns like Middleburg and Hull, into Lyon County. “A delightful morning. And what country! Beautiful! Very understandable that the Dutch feel at home here.”⁸⁸ He noticed that tractors were not used because they were regarded as being too expensive. Plowing was done by horses. Van Hinte liked the mayor. “Nice guy, out-and-out plain. And very calm, not yet this American humbug. Still a real Dutchman, though he arrived with his parents back in 1883.”⁸⁹ Van Hinte then used one of his very characteristic expressions to describe Klay, “A real Dutchman.”

Van Hinte had a long conversation with Hendrik Jan Van der Waa, originally from Hattem, Gelderland, who was on the exploration committee from Pella that scouted land in Northwest Iowa. The area around what is now Orange City was their ultimate choice. Van der Waa—a spry old man—recounted his life, his memories of Holland, life in Pella, his service in the Civil War, looking for land in

this part of Iowa, the development of Orange City, the hardships in the early years, the railroad construction, the founding of Reformed churches, colony administration and leadership. He also talked about the old country. Van Hinte notes, “How old Van der Waa would have loved to see the Netherlands one more time.”⁹⁰

One of the last things Van Hinte did in Orange City was to watch a neighborhood baseball game. He ended his visit to this Dutch settlement in style riding to the train station in Mayor Klay’s classy Marmon. Then it was time to take the train to Washington, DC—via Chicago and Pittsburgh—for leisure since the journey for study was almost over.

Washington, DC/New York City

Van Hinte loved Washington, DC.

“The first impression was marvelous: Union Station. I never saw a cleaner and more practical station.” He took a bus tour to see the “biggest buildings of the world,” “the finest statues of the world,” and “the broadest streets of the world.” As it was Sunday, the Capitol was closed, but the Library of

Congress was open. He walked along Pennsylvania Avenue, visited Arlington National Cemetery, and enjoyed the views of the Potomac. Planning to see Washington by night, he took a nap but did not awaken until eight the following morning.⁹¹

Van Hinte paid a visit to the Dutch embassy. “Real Dutch: wait for some time, and then wait for some more time.”⁹² The meeting with embassy representative de Vos van Steenwijk turned out to be a disappointment since he “knew nothing about immigration affairs.”⁹³ But he was more fortunate as a tourist. When noting he was Dutch, he was allowed to visit the Blue and other rooms in the White House, which normally required an introduction from a member of Congress.

Return voyage

The return on SS *Aquitania*, of the Cunard Line, was entirely different than the voyage from Europe. “What a totally different company on this return trip. What a contrast! Even the third-class passengers are well-dressed, traveling in prosperity. Not as

picturesque as the outward passage. America brought equality. Not the sense of romance I felt almost every moment on the voyage out. Many of them go to Europe for business or pleasure. Among the passengers many Jews and Italians who go to visit their relatives,” he observed.⁹⁴ *Aquitania* sailed to London, and from there it was to Harwich by train and next by boat to Hoek van Holland.

Van Hinte’s *Netherlanders in America* remains a momentous work in the history of Dutch immigration and settlement research. It is a study that in the words of Robert Swierenga “can never be superseded by subsequent writings. It is narrative history at its best—imaginative, interpretative, and always stimulating and thought provoking.”⁹⁵ Van Hinte’s diary presents a committed scholar who sympathizes with his subjects, their struggles, and triumphs. His approach was not detached, but based on understanding and identification. Van Hinte cared for Dutch immigrant culture and his concern was authentic. He loved detail and elaboration and produced a very rich and affectionate book. 3

Endnotes

1. I want to thank Earl Wm. Kennedy and Robert P. Swierenga of the Van Raalte Institute, Hope College; Michael Douma, Florida State University; Richard Harms, Heritage Hall Archives, Calvin College; and Hans Krabbendam, Roosevelt Study Center (Middelburg, Netherlands) for their very useful comments on an earlier draft. I thank Amelia Román, OSA, Utrecht University; and Nella Kennedy, Van Raalte Institute, Hope College, for checking the translations of the Van Hinte citations. I am presently working on an annotated translation of the Van Hinte diary (with Nella Kennedy). The Van Raalte Press will publish this translation in 2010.

2. Available at the library of the Free University, Amsterdam; and at Heritage Hall Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The original handwritten version of the diary is (or at least was)

in the possession of Van Hinte’s brother and sister.

3. Many thanks to Hans Seijlhouwer, archivist of the Historical Documentation Center for Dutch Protestantism, Free University, Amsterdam, for providing a copy of the manuscript to me and a digital copy of the Van Hinte picture.

4. <http://www.halpostcards.com/unofficial/rot4.html>

5. *Naar Amerika*, 1; Translation from Editor’s Introduction, xxxv. The translations that follow are all mine.

6. *Ibid.*, 1.

7. *Netherlanders in America*, 828. Van Hinte and Eerdmans had met in Nijmegen (the Netherlands) in 1920; in Part Two, Chapter 15, footnote 306, of *Netherlanders in America*, Van Hinte refers to an interview with Eerdmans in August 1920 in Nijmegen. Footnote 307 points

to a letter from Eerdmans to Van Hinte from Nijmegen, dated 11 September 1920; Chapter 16, footnote 77, refers to a letter from Eerdmans (again from Nijmegen), dated 24 September 1920. William B. Eerdmans (1880-1966) was the son of a Frisian textile manufacturer who emigrated to Grand Rapids in 1902. He was the founder of William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, a national and later international publisher of religious books. His motto was: “the finest in religious literature.” E-mail correspondence (29 January 2009) with William B. Eerdmans Jr., the current president of Eerdmans Publishing Company, confirmed that Eerdmans and Van Hinte were acquainted before the 1921 trip to America.

8. *Naar Amerika*, 3. Van Hinte is quite fond of the Mr. and Mrs. Eerdmans, she: “a pale, delicate face, nice

blue eyes, sometimes a little sad. She does not speak much but this does not matter, on the contrary, it is quite peaceful. He: a Frisian which one notices more by his psyche than his physique. He too wields quietness, and also great cordiality, which inspires confidence" (*Naar Amerika*, 3). Mrs. Eerdmans was from Bunde, a little German town in Ostfriesland close to the Dutch border (and not Düsseldorf as Van Hinte writes). After their marriage they spent their first year in the Netherlands (in Utrecht) and that was probably when they first met Van Hinte. Information provided by William B. Eerdmans Jr. (E-mail correspondence 13 February 2009).

9. *Ibid*, 3.
10. *Ibid*, 3.
11. *Ibid*, 4.
12. *Ibid*, 5.
13. *Ibid*, 5.
14. *Ibid*, 6.
15. Jongbloed (1869-1926) was born in Leeuwarden, Friesland, and received his training at the Theologische Universiteit Kampen. He was a CRC pastor in Hoboken, New Jersey, from 1919 until his death in 1926.
16. *Ibid*, 7.
17. See: <http://www.ibdb.com/production.php?id=12593>.
18. *Naar Amerika*, 7.
19. The sermon was on Luke 30:13; the singing included Psalm 57: 6 and 7, and Psalm 73: 12. Rev. Hessel Bouma (1884-1971), born in Harlingen, Friesland, served this church (previously known as *Eerste Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente van Paterson*) from 1919-1922. A year after Van Hinte visited, Bouma transferred to the CRC, becoming the first pastor of the Bethel CRC congregation in Paterson.
20. *Naar Amerika*, 7.
21. *Ibid*, 8.
22. *Ibid*.
23. *Ibid*, 9.
24. *Ibid*, 11.
25. Peter Hoekstra, *Thirty-Seven Years of Holland-American Relations, 1803 to 1840* (Grand Rapids, MI, and Paterson, NJ: Eerdmans-Sevensma Co., 1916).
26. See: Gerlof Homan, "Adriaan J. Barnouw; A Dutch Cultural Ambassador to the United States," *Origins* (vol 27, no 1) 11-18.
See also: [http://www.inghist.nl/Onder-](http://www.inghist.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn2/barnouw)

[zoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn2/barnouw](http://www.inghist.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn2/barnouw).

27. *Naar Amerika*, 38.
28. *Netherlanders in America*, 832.
29. The Netherland Club still exists, see: <http://www.netherlandclub.com>.
30. *Naar Amerika*, 39.
31. The railway trip from Buffalo, NY, to Grand Rapids, MI, cost \$17.35 plus \$4.50 for a sleeping berth.
32. Here he takes the Great Gorge Route Railroad trip (see: www.niagara2008.com/history15.html).
33. See *Netherlanders in America*, 827 for a picture by Van Hinte of the Eerdmans' house.
34. *Naar Amerika*, 14.
35. See: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/eridony/2471219548>. The Pantlind Hotel is now the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel.
36. *Naar Amerika*, 13.
37. See <http://www.grplfoundation.org> and *Netherlanders in America*, 1001-1102.
38. Beets (1869-1947), born in Koedyk (near Alkmaar), the Netherlands, was also editor-in-chief of *The Banner*, the official weekly publication of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
39. Van Hinte most probably stayed in the Macatawa Park Hotel.
See: <http://www.historiccottawabeach.com/page5.html>. Two pictures of the Holland Masonic Temple are included in: http://www.galenfrynsinger.com/michigan_holland.htm.
40. *Ibid*, 16. See *The Holland City News*, 4 August 1921, on this new \$150,000 Masonic Temple (No. 191) and the opening festivities.
41. Wm. O. Van Eyck (1869-1934) born near Holland, Michigan, was city clerk, postmaster, and supervisor of Ottawa County and son of pioneer immigrant H. Van Eyck. Author of *Landmarks of the Reformed Fathers or What Dr. Van Raalte's People Believed* (1922). Gerrit Van Schelven (1842-1927), born in the Netherlands, was editor of the *Holland City News*. "They were intimate friends . . . both were intensely interested in the history of the Dutch colony . . . the pair spent years accumulating data" (*Holland City News*, 25 January 1934).
42. *Naar Amerika*, 16.
43. John Marinus Van der Meulen (1870-1936), born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was president (1920-1930) of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He served as minister of Hope

Reformed Church from 1907-1909. Van der Meulen was the grandson of pioneer Cornelius Van der Meulen, who led the emigration movement from Zeeland to Michigan. *Netherlanders in America*, 877.

44. *To America*, 16. Van Hinte adds in a note (5): "Hope Church was the first English Reformed Church in Holland . . . Each member has his or her seat. This church is a piece of history."
45. *Ibid*, 17.
46. The "Van Raalte Church" was called the Ninth Street Christian Reformed Church in 1921. In 1984 it was officially designated the Pillar Church. In 1921 Rev. James M. Ghysels (1885-1966), born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was pastor of the Van Raalte church. The Sunday service that Van Hinte attended was led by "Candidate Essenberg in rather good Dutch." This was probably Benjamin Essenburg (1890-1976), born in Holland, Michigan, who was ordained in 1921.
47. *To America*, 17.
48. *Ibid*, 17.
49. *Ibid*, 17-18. For the history of the Van Raalte church see: Michael De Vries and Harry Boonstra, *Pillar Church in the Van Raalte Era* (Holland, Michigan: Pillar Christian Reformed Church, 2003).
50. Edward D. Dimment (1876-1959) was Hope's fifth president (1918-1931), and professor of Greek; Evert J. Blekkink (1858-1948) was professor of Systematic Theology at Western Theological Seminary; and Albert Raap (1870-1965) was professor of Dutch.
51. Van Raalte's grave is in Pilgrim Home Cemetery. For details on Van Raalte's house see: Elton J. Bruins, Karen G. Schakel, Sara Frederickson Simmons, and Marie N. Zingle, *Albertus and Christina. The Van Raalte Family, Home and Roots*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004, Chapter 2.
52. Arnold Mulder (1885-1959) became a well-known Dutch-American author of five novels among which was *The Dominie of Harlem* (1913). See Michael Douma, "Arnold Mulder as a Dutch-American Novelist," in Robert P. Swierenga, Jacob E. Nyenhuis and Nella Kennedy (Eds.), *Dutch-American Arts and Letters in Historical Perspective*. Holland, Michigan: Van Raalte Press, 2008.
53. *Holland Sentinel*, 4 August 1921.
54. Christina Van Raalte (1846-1933) was six months old when she emigrated

with her family to Michigan. She was married to William Brokaw Gilmore, an RCA pastor. After her husband's death she became principal and dean of women at Hope College. For further details see Elton J. Bruins, et al., *Albertus and Christina*, 147-156.

55. *Naar Amerika*, 20.

56. *Ibid*, 20. Van Hinte does not mention the name of the granddaughter. I consulted with Elton Bruins and Karen Schakel, co-authors of *Albertus and Christina*. They believe it could be Julia Van Raalte Reimold (1873-1952), the daughter of Ben Van Raalte and his wife Julia (E-mail correspondence 17 December 2008). See Elton J. Bruins, et al., *Albertus and Christina*, 116-118.

57. Diekema (1859-1930) graduated from Hope College, was a member (Republican) of the Michigan State House of Representatives, Mayor of Holland, Member of Congress, and appointed United States Minister to the Netherlands by President Hoover (in 1929). See for further details: William Schrier, *Gerrit J. Diekema, Orator; A Rhetorical Study of the Political and Occasional Addresses of Gerrit J. Diekema* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950); Charles Warren Vander Hill, *Gerrit J. Diekema* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970).

58. He also had a meeting with Rev. John Bovenkerk (1880-1951), of First Reformed Church in Muskegon, who was born (probably) in Weesp, the Netherlands.

59. Sharing a cabin with Rev. Burggraaff from Muskegon, "still a typical Dutchman" (*Naar Amerika*, 22). There were frequent steamer sailings each day between Holland and other Lake Michigan ports.

60. *Naar Amerika*, 21.

61. *Naar Amerika*, 22.

62. *Naar Amerika*, 23.

63. Albert Oosterheerdt, office clerk in Chicago, was the author of *Critisch-psychologische Beschouwingen over het Leven van de Nederlanders in de V.St. v. N.-Amerika*. Onuitgegeven werk. Opstellen mijner Jongelingsjaren. Holland, Michigan, 1905.

64. See Robert P. Swierenga, *Dutch Chicago: A History of the Hollanders in the Windy City* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

65. *Naar Amerika*, 23.

66. Hoekstra published many of his critical observations in *Onze Toekomst and Het Oosten*.

67. *Netherlanders in America*, 875.

68. Pieter de Jong (*Zwarte Piet*), former school teacher in Kerkebuurt (municipality of Haringcarpsel), was one of the founders of the Roseland settlement (*Netherlanders in America*, 154; Swierenga, *Dutch Chicago*, 299-300).

69. Van Lonkhuyzen (1873-1942), former pastor in Aarlanderveen (the Netherlands), was also the author of an article on Dutch emigration to Argentina: *Argentinië. Een belangrijk land ook voor Nederlanders* (1908). He was pastor in Chicago (1918-1928), and Grand Rapids (1911-1918). In 1928 he accepted a call from Zierikzee (Zeeland, the Netherlands); in 1939 he retired in Zeist (also the Netherlands). Returned to America just before WW II and died in 1942 in Grand Rapids. For a picture of Van Lonkhuyzen, see Swierenga, *Dutch Chicago*: 181).

70. See: <http://www.cinematreaures.org/theater/348/>. Van Hinte was probably in the company of Verhoef.

71. *Netherlanders in America*, 347.

72. Van Hinte stayed in "the only hotel" in Pella, probably *The American House*, see: G. A. Stout, *Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa, 1847-1922*. Pella, Iowa: *The Booster Press*, 320.

73. Kommer Van Stigt was a local shoemaker who wrote a history of Pella: *Geschiedenis van Pella, Iowa en Omgeving*. Three Vols, Pella, 1897 and publisher of *De Christelijke Uitdeeler*.

74. *Netherlanders in America*, 862-863. Hoffman (1886-1973) was born in Overisel, Michigan. He had been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in 1912, Professor of Latin at Hope College (1913-1917), and after his presidency at Central College (1917-1925) he became professor at New Brunswick Theological

Seminary (1925-1956) and RCA minister in East Millstone, NJ (1956-1970).

75. *Naar Amerika*, 26.

76. *Netherlanders in America*, 1008. Scholte had three daughters who lived through adulthood: Sara, Maria, and Johanna.

77. *Naar Amerika*, 26.

78. *Ibid*, 27.

79. *Ibid*, 27.

80. See *Netherlanders in America*, 985-1023.

81. Van Hinte provided the following travel fares: Pella – Des Moines, \$1.80; Des Moines – Orange City, \$8; Chicago – Des Moines, \$18; Buffalo – Grand Rapids, \$24; Orange City – Chicago, \$22.

82. Rev. John Engelsman (1864-1938) born in Uithuizermeeden, Groningen, was pastor of First Reformed Church in Orange City from 1908-1925. Mayor Klay was later elected to the Iowa State House of Representatives.

83. *Naar Amerika*, 28.

84. *De Volksvriend* began in 1874, published by Henry Hospers. From 1891 the paper was published and edited by Hendrik Pieter (Henry Peter) Oggel.

85. *Naar Amerika*, 28.

86. Marmon Motor Car Company was located in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was established in 1902 and was merged and renamed in 1933. Marmons had a reputation as reliable, speedy, and upscale cars.

87. See *Netherlanders in America*, 802, for a photo of the Mouw business.

88. *Naar Amerika*, 30.

89. *Ibid*, 31.

90. *Ibid*, 29.

91. *Ibid*, 32. Van Hinte stayed in the Harrington Hotel located between the Capitol and the White House (<http://www.hotel-harrington.com>).

92. *Ibid*, 33.

93. Van Hinte had another meeting that day—in Baltimore—with a person called "Meyendirck." It is neither clear from the diary who this person is nor what the purpose of the visit was.

94. *Ibid*, 34.

95. *Netherlanders in America*, Editor's Introduction, xxxviii.

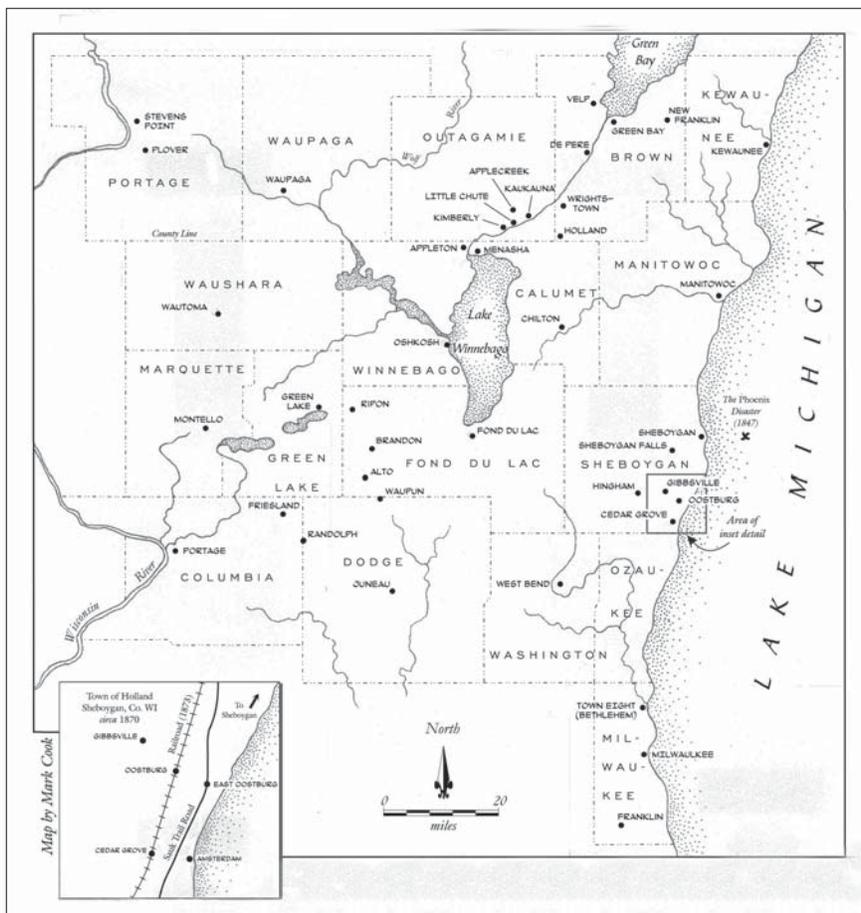
Building the Reformed Church in Early Wisconsin

Robert P. Swierenga

Immigration studies make clear that Dutch Protestant settlements only flourished with a vibrant church at the center of the community. Dutch settlements in frontier Wisconsin lacked charismatic clerics of the caliber of Albertus C. Van Raalte in Michigan or Henry P. Scholte in Iowa. Nor were

the prestige and influence of dominies. As a result, the immigrants had to make their own way as best they could; the resulting individualism lent itself to internal dissension. Consequently, many of the fifteen to twenty thousand Dutch immigrants in Wisconsin were dispersed and absorbed into the mainstream culture rather than remaining distinct communities as was the case elsewhere.¹

Rev. Pieter Zonne might well have been the Wisconsin equivalent of Van Raalte and Scholte. He had studied for the ministry under Van Raalte's brother-in-law, Rev. Anthony Brummelkamp, and became a disciple of Scholte. Zonne arrived in Milwaukee in December 1847 with 160 followers as the first Seceder preacher in the state. But the popular and eloquent former businessman from Delft lacked the patience and tact necessary to be a colonial leader. He had also been deposed by the synod of the Christian Seceded Church in the Netherlands, which action Zonne unfairly laid at the feet of Van Raalte. In 1847, Zonne organized a congregation in Sheboygan County's Town[ship] Holland (see inset map).² Originally Town Holland was known as the "Zonne Settlement" and then as Town Thirteen or, as the Dutch said, "Town Dertien" (township no. 13). After five years, in 1852, the congregation fell into turmoil and Zonne left, or was dismissed, and formed the First Presbyterian Church of Sheboygan.³ It did not help that he had opened a store to support his family and had stocked whiskey. The



A map of the Dutch settlements in Wisconsin, provided by the author.

there migrations of congregations with their pastors to Wisconsin. Instead lay leaders had to plant colonies and attract settlers. These lay leaders lacked

continuing congregation later affiliated with the Reformed Church in America as Cedar Grove.⁴

Geerard (Gerard) Brandt, an elder, lay preacher, and catechetical teacher, was another potential Dutch Reformed leader in Wisconsin. A Zeeland shopkeeper who had immigrated in 1848 to Sheboygan, Brandt gave forceful leadership to the Bethlehem (then Town Eight) Church at Fox Point from 1854 until 1857. Then a controversial third marriage brought him under classical discipline and caused a schism in the congregation. He continued to lead a splinter group for two years, until 1859, when an accident in the dark of night with his horse and sleigh killed him instantly. His followers scattered.⁵

From the 1840s until the present day, the two major Dutch Reformed denominations in Wisconsin, the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), attracted fewer members than in Michigan, Iowa, or Illinois.⁶ In 2005, the two denominations in Wisconsin counted 14,200 souls, far below the RCA Classis of Zeeland alone, with its nearly 17,000 souls. That year RCA and CRC churches in Michigan numbered 76,000 souls; in Iowa, 29,000; and Illinois, 25,500.⁷

How different the history of the Wisconsin Dutch Reformed would have been if Van Raalte had carried through on his initial plans to found his colony at Fond du Lac on the southern tip of Lake Winnebago. He and his advance party of fifty-two followers arrived in Detroit in late November 1846, intending to take a ship immediately for Wisconsin. Michigan's reputation had suffered in the 1830s from rampant land speculation and the bankruptcy of several canal companies. Immigrants were advised to avoid the state.⁸

Word came that the shipping season had ended because the Straits of

Mackinac were freezing over. The Van Raalte party could not afford to travel overland to Chicago and Milwaukee—the railroad reached only as far as Kalamazoo, so they prepared to spend the winter in Detroit, then the state capital. This gave businessmen and government leaders the opportunity to counter the Dutch dominie's biases against Michigan. The Michigan boosters stressed the fertile soil and verdant woodlands, the railroad link to New York markets, and the Calvinistic cultural hue. The Lower Peninsula was heavily populated with Yankee Calvinists—Old Dutch Reformed, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists. In contrast, the Milwaukee region, Van Raalte was told, was thick with German Catholics, winters were bitterly cold, and rail connections to eastern markets were years away. In January 1847, after several Michigan “boosters” took Van Raalte on a personal tour of the Black Lake watershed between the Kalamazoo and Grand Rivers, Van Raalte made the decision to locate his colony there. “Man weighs but God decides,” Van Raalte confided to his brother-in-law in the Netherlands. Both Scholte and Zonne castigated Van Raalte's choice of the Black Lake region as isolated, unhealthy, and lacking a harbor; they would not take their followers there.⁹

The first Dutch immigrants settled in Milwaukee in 1844, fully three years before Van Raalte founded the Holland Colony. Milwaukee was a convenient Great Lakes steamer stop en route from Buffalo to Chicago. Henry Lucas lists nine Dutch families in Milwaukee by the summer of 1846, almost all from the provinces of Gelderland and Zeeland. No wonder that the “America letters” (1846) of Arnoldus Hallerdijk and Roelof Sleijster, followers of Van Raalte and Brummelkamp, had such an impact on the dominies. They even published the letters in their emigration pamphlet. By 1850,

at least 10 percent of Milwaukee's population was Dutch-born and most were concentrated in the “*Hollandsche Berg*” [Dutch Hill] on the northwest side.¹⁰ Bethlehem, located eight miles north, and Franklin, located fourteen miles south, were satellite settlements in Milwaukee County.

The second Dutch Reformed settlement began in 1845 fifty miles north of Milwaukee in Sheboygan County's Town[ship] Holland, which included the villages of Gibbsville, Cedar Grove, and Oostburg. As noted, the arrival in 1847 of Zonne's followers, mostly from the provinces of Zeeland and Zuid Holland, made these villages viable. The third and last concentration, located fifty miles northwest of Milwaukee in Fond du Lac County, began with the arrival of Albertus Meenk in 1845. The next year, Roelof Sleijster and his father John founded a Reformed church at Alto (which served people from both Alto and Waupun) in 1847. This was the first true seceder colony in Wisconsin and was comprised entirely of Gelderlandes.¹¹

Alto gave birth to five more Calvinistic congregations between 1845 and 1883, including the seceding *Hollandsche Gereformeerde Sion Kerk* of Alto (1858) that later affiliated with the Congregational denomination, the Alto Presbyterian Church (1878), Ebenezer Reformed Church in Alto (1879), and the First and Second Alto Christian Reformed churches (1881 and 1883, merged 1886).¹²

All of the pioneer churches began under lay exhorters, followed by brief pastorates of ordained men. None of the early clerics could hold a candle to Van Raalte, who led his Michigan congregation for twenty years. Those in Wisconsin had the eccentric Rev. Huibertus Budding, who organized the Bethlehem congregation and then departed for Buffalo, New York. Zonne briefly served at Milwaukee, Bethlehem, and Town Holland. Alto's



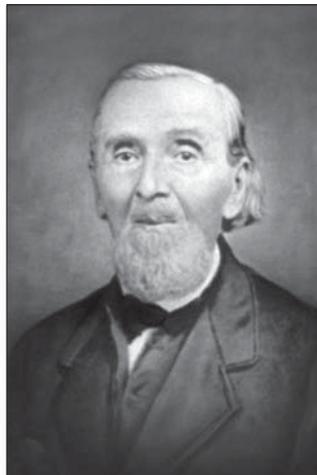
Henry DeGroot's General Store in Alto, Wisconsin. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

first pastor, Rev. Gerrit Baay, died a year and a half after his installation. Franklin's first pastor, Rev. Hendrik G. Klyn (Klein, Kleijn), remained less than two years (1852-1853), and then the congregation remained without a pastor until 1902. Rev. Koenraad S. Vander Schuur left the Grand Haven, Michigan, church in 1852 to accept the call of the Town Holland.¹³

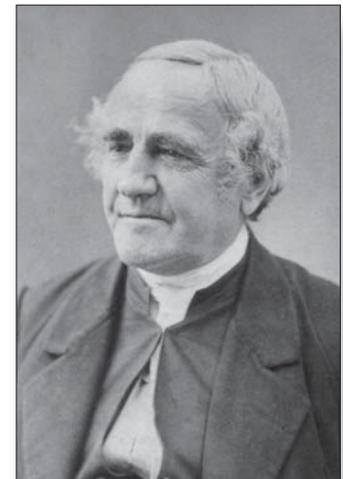
Vander Schuur, a student of Hendrik de Cock, father of the Secession of 1834, had accepted a call in 1848 from the breakaway South Holland church in Van Raalte's colony, while under censure by the Christian Seceded Church in the Netherlands. The Holland classis rapped his knuckles and castigated the congregation for issuing a letter of call without first obtaining classical approval, but the classis acquiesced because of the great need for preachers. Vander Schuur was the first pastor to stay put in Wisconsin. He served fourteen years until retiring in 1866, five in Town Holland (that congregation dividing into Cedar Grove and Oostburg in 1857), and nine years in Oostburg. He built Oostburg into a stable congregation.¹⁴

The RCA ministers from Michigan visited the Wisconsin Dutch communities. Van Raalte on a trip through eastern Wisconsin in 1850 found the spiritual condition of the scattered Reformed settlers to be "lamentable, owing to the temptations peculiar to their situation, and the lack of church

privileges." His colleague, Rev. Cornelius Vander Meulen of Zeeland, Michigan, had visited Milwaukee a year earlier. Through the efforts of the two clerics gradually the various independent Wisconsin Reformed groups came under the aegis of the Classis of Holland. Vander Meulen returned in 1851 to organize the Dutch Reformed church in Milwaukee. That same year the fledgling body called Rev. Klyn of Graafschap, Michigan, a student of Scholte. Klyn accepted and left for Milwaukee without the approval of the Classis of Holland, which condemned his conduct and referred his case to the General Synod. This prompted the Milwaukee congregation to request by letter permission to join the Holland classis, which it did by a unanimous vote. Klyn was finally installed in 1852. A tall, austere man, Klyn was remembered for believing



Rev. Hendrik Klyn (1793-1883) briefly served in Milwaukee in 1850, and then again from 1852-1854. But the nascent Wisconsin congregations did not have the financial means to support his salary. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Rev. Cornelius Vander Meulen (1800-1876) along with Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte attempted to provide early spiritual leadership to the Dutch in Wisconsin, which was difficult to do from their West Michigan churches. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

the English language was “given to frivolity.”¹⁵

Milwaukee’s request forced the Classis of Holland to deal with the larger issue of its “obligation towards the churches of Wisconsin.” In its letter to the Milwaukee congregation, penned by clerk Van Raalte at the 17 October 1851 meeting of the Classis of Holland, the brethren noted that “our hearts bleed as we observe the looseness and disunion which prevail among the Hollanders. . . . We are a people one in history, one in faith, and one in purpose, for which reason we have need of one another and ought to strengthen one another.” Van Raalte continued, “Our annual meetings are, to be sure, somewhat difficult, and the work of the church visitors is very burdensome, but all are conscious that union is necessary and good.”¹⁶

The Wisconsin congregations were brought into the Reformed system of church government, even though the struggling churches in Michigan could barely afford to send pastors across the Lake to supply the vacant pulpits. Until a separate Classis of Wisconsin could be organized, the letter urged Vander Schuur’s Town Holland congregation to unite with the Milwaukee and Alto churches in “a fraternal circle” within “our [Holland] classical circle.” Seven months later came the reply from the pen of Rev. Vander Schuur to the effect that “their affairs were still too unsettled to enter upon a union, and that they were too poor to exercise ecclesiastical fellowship by coming hither, or by receiving in their midst” any representatives from Michigan. Distance (read money) militated against contact between the Wisconsin and Michigan churches. Nevertheless, in 1852 the three Wisconsin congregations, with a total of 365 souls, joined the Classis of Holland.¹⁷

In 1854, Rev. Klyn of Milwaukee was again on the agenda of the Classis of Holland. Klyn had accepted a call

from the Grand Rapids congregation, again without first obtaining classical approval. Apparently, the Milwaukee consistory did not grant his dismissal, given that he had served only two years. In his defense, Klyn stated that he had “resided with anguish of soul in Milwaukee, which was constantly growing in wickedness, especially when he thought of his children; that he also constantly felt the decisive and binding force of that call in his heart, in spite of many rising objections;” and that the Milwaukee consistory seemed lukewarm as to his staying. A deciding factor might well have been the defection of a large part of the congregation for the Milwaukee Presbyterian Church, a Calvinist body with Scottish roots.¹⁸

Rev. Seine Bolks

A turning point came in 1855 with the formation of the Classis of Wisconsin and the arrival of Rev. Seine Bolks in Milwaukee from Grand Haven, Michigan. The new Classis of Wisconsin included three Chicago-area congregations: First (Dutch) and Second (English) Chicago and the “Prairies” (South Holland, then Low Prairie, and Roseland, then High Prairie churches), and five Wisconsin churches: Milwaukee, Bethlehem, Franklin, Town Holland, and Oostburg. A year earlier the brethren had assembled twice (in July and October) as an independent body, hosted by Rev. Vander Schuur of the Town Holland church. Alto, a congregation with no pastor, did not participate. The stated purpose of the classis was to unite with the RCA. Until they did, they would no longer send delegates to meetings of the Classis of Holland in Michigan. The \$15 travel cost for delegates was deemed prohibitive.¹⁹

The Wisconsin brethren seemed not to know proper Reformed church polity. When Vander Schuur sent the Classis of Holland a copy of the Wis-

consin classical minutes of 1854, Van Raalte, as clerk, had to tutor them. New classes can only be organized under the auspices of Synod. The Classis of Wisconsin, Van Raalte explained, must apply to the Particular Synod of Albany, and three congregations and three ministers were the absolute minimum for organization.²⁰ The Chicago-area churches had no ministers; Wisconsin had only one—Vander Schuur. This situation improved in 1855 when Rev. Martin Ypma of the Graafschap (Michigan) church took the joint call from the two “Prairies” congregations south of Chicago and Bolks came to Milwaukee. With Vander Schuur, Ypma, and Bolks, the Wisconsin and Chicago-area churches could form their own assembly, the Classis of Wisconsin.²¹

Bolks had left Grand Haven for Milwaukee, and at the first meeting (in April 1855) of the now proper Classis of Wisconsin, he was elected president.²² Bolks was an able leader, having studied briefly under Van Raalte in the Netherlands. In 1848, Bolks had led his Hellendoorn (Overijssel, the Netherlands) congregation to plant the Overisel settlement on the eastern fringe of Van Raalte’s Holland colony. Bolks and his congregation united with the RCA in 1850, along with the other congregations in the Classis of Holland. In October 1851, Bolks had been deposed from the ministry because of a sexual indiscretion, but his repentant spirit and the great need for ministers induced the classis to reinstate him six months later.

RCA statistics in 1857 (the 1855 and 1856 reports are incomplete) show eight Wisconsin congregations with a total of 664 souls; the Milwaukee congregation had 206 souls; Oostburg had 110; Alto, 80; Franklin, 67; Cedar Grove, 66; Bethlehem, 62; Gibbsville, 58; and Sheboygan Falls, 15. The churches grew slowly, with 772 souls in nine congregations

in 1865, 821 souls in eight congregations in 1870, and 1,710 souls in thirteen congregations in 1900. The mission church founded in 1859 at Eden (eight miles southeast of Fond du Lac) had about thirty souls during its eight years of existence (1859-1867). Between 1870 and 1900, new congregations were established at Greenbush (1884), Waupun (1887), Hingham (1890), Sheboygan (1891), Randolph Center (later Friesland, 1893), and Kenosha (1896). The number of souls of the thirteen congregations in 1900 was as follows: Cedar Grove 320, Alto 300, Gibbsville 290, Milwaukee 284, Hope (Sheboygan) 174, Oostburg 128, Waupun 110, Randolph Center 73, Sheboygan Falls 59, Hingham 55, Franklin 32, Greenbush 24, and Kenosha 21.²³

The RCA classical minute books are replete with insight into the lives of these congregations.²⁴ In 1854, the Milwaukee congregation disagreed on whether an elder reading the sermons could stand in the pulpit, a spot generally reserved for ordained pastors. Classis responded that he could. The Cedar Grove congregation was rent by “strife and disunity” when Peter Theune, a member, claimed to own the church building and closed it to the congregation. The council wanted to take the dispute into court, but classis told them to “leave the outcome in the hands of the Lord,” and offered financial assistance to build another edifice. This decision did not sit well with the elders, who refused to attend the next classical meeting. That year the classis also established a fund to “rescue” needy believers in the Netherlands by providing money for ship passage, just as the Classis of Holland had done.²⁵

The Wisconsin churches faithfully supported domestic and foreign missions, and Van Raalte’s Holland Academy, and occasionally designated monies for scholarships, such as one for Pieter Baay, a son of the late Rev.

Gerrit Baay. Classis also took some controversial theological stands. One was a decision to baptize children of parents who were not confessing church members, but who “understand and desire” the sacrament and had themselves been baptized as infants. Such offspring, said classis, were “covenant children.” Van Raalte espoused the same policy in his Michigan congregation. This was a variant of the so-called “half-way covenant” that had undermined the Puritan churches in early New England.²⁶

In 1855, Vander Schuur and an elder visited all five Wisconsin congregations and found most “dwelling in love and peace.” Two members of

assigned the Alto petitioner to draw up the overture. Subsequently classis reprimanded Alto elder Abram Beeuwkes and Holland Academy student Pieter Baay for submitting letters to classis and publishing the same in the *Sheboygan Nieuwsbode* that questioned whether slave owners might be members of the RCA. It was not the sentiment expressed in the letters that led to the “strong disapproval” of classis but the act of publication (in a newspaper that reached Dutch immigrant communities everywhere). The authors had put the immigrant classis in the “hot seat” of the denomination, which counted slave owners among its members.²⁷



Waupun, Wisconsin, was founded in 1839, well before the arrival of Dutch immigrants, but over the years it came to be known for its Dutch settlers. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

the Milwaukee congregation, however, were excommunicated for leaving their spouses and living together in “public adultery and whoredom.” Elder John Sleijster, a farmer in the Alto church, challenged classis to petition the synod to require slave-owning members in the East to instruct their chattel in “the way of salvation.” The delegates “enthusiastically agree” and

Classis also petitioned the Wisconsin legislature to restore the death penalty, which “is in harmony with God’s Word” and reflects the will of the citizens. The delegates agreed unanimously and Rev. Ferris wrote the petition, which each delegate signed. Such was the strong social conscience among the church leaders.²⁸

In 1856, the Classis of Wisconsin

ruled that members must not “unequally yoke” themselves to unbelievers, and specifically mandated that four congregations, presumably with offenders, must inform their members of this decision. Benevolence was a Reformed church hallmark since the Reformation. With help from sister congregations, the Bethlehem congregation was instructed to provide for a woman whose husband was killed in an accident. Classis concluded that she must not beg “outside the fellowship.” The Milwaukee congregation suffered a schism in 1858, when a number of families left to form the Holland Presbyterian Church (later renamed the Perseverance Church, because it subsequently twice had to be rebuilt after fires).²⁹

In 1859, the Franklin congregation applied to the RCA Board of Education to support a parochial school to strengthen that body of believers from within. This set off an extended debate in the church and classis over parochial vs. public schooling. The two Franklin elders were on opposite sides and would not budge. Several other congregations were also troubled by the issue. When Franklin opened its parochial school, however, the disagreement subsided. The Cedar Grove church also applied to the RCA Board of Education for parochial school funding. Christian education, including higher education, was clearly a top priority in classis.³⁰

The commitment to Christian schools brought the Classis of Wisconsin into conflict with the Classis of Holland over ecclesiastical oversight of the Holland Academy. Wisconsin churches faithfully took offerings for the Academy and expected to be given an equal role in its governance. But the Classis of Holland seemed to demur, leading Wisconsin to conclude: “Our role is peripheral, and we are merely an appendage.” Unless Holland placed the Academy under

the supervision of both classes, and gave Wisconsin a binding document to that effect, Wisconsin would cut off all funding. Thanks largely to the efforts of the much-trusted Cornelius Vander Meulen, Holland yielded and gave Wisconsin two seats on the board, and the brouhaha passed. In 1863, the two classes agreed to levy an annual “benevolent contribution” of seventy-five cents on every communicant member to support the Academy. The next year, the quota was raised to one dollar to support two additional professors, which would obviate the need for students to finish their studies at New Brunswick.³¹

In 1900, at the instigation of Hope College President Dr. Gerrit Kollen and the urging of the RCA General Synod, the Wisconsin Reformed churches founded the Memorial Academy at Cedar Grove to prepare high school students for teaching careers and the Gospel ministry. The school grew to sixty-six students and four instructors in 1920, and dedicated a new three-story brick building in 1925. Unfortunately, the promising school suffered from a lack of support during the Great Depression and closed in 1937. The building then housed the first public high school in town. The loss of the Academy, which might have evolved into a full-fledged college like its sister school Northwestern, in Orange City, Iowa, caused a crippling “brain drain” in the Reformed communities of Wisconsin; the best and brightest went off to study elsewhere and few returned.³²

Obtaining reputable ministers was the primary concern of the Wisconsin churches. Most New Brunswick Seminary graduates could not preach in Dutch, so the churches had to call pastors from the Netherlands. The few men who responded favorably to letters of call seemed to be renegades and malcontents. Willem Van Leeuwen left his Christian Seceded congregation

under a cloud to take the call of the Town Holland congregation, all without a classical letter of dismissal from the Netherlands or approval of his credentials by the Classis of Wisconsin. After he had begun his ministry the classis condemned him for ignoring the church order on both sides of the Atlantic, but they allowed him to serve the congregation as an evangelist while his credentials were sorted out.³³

Six months later, in 1858, at the Spring classis meeting, Van Leeuwen raised the issue of freemasons as members of the church and, after extensive discussion, the body decided that no lodge member could be received as a church member unless he could prove that lodge membership “is not in conflict with the true Christian faith and the Reformed confessions of our church.” This was a precursor to Rev. John H. Karsten’s campaign in the 1870s to have the Classis of Wisconsin overture the General Synod year after year to condemn freemasonry.³⁴

Hermanus Stobbelaar, a student from the seminary at Kampen, the Netherlands, accepted a call from the Alto congregation in 1858 after the manse had been vacant for eight years, but he had failed his final examination and could not be ordained. Upon a recommendation of Van Raalte’s brother-in-law, Rev. Carel G. De Moen, as to Stobbelaar’s competency and orthodoxy, Classis appointed him an evangelist at Alto, following the Van Leeuwen precedent. The church order had to give way to the need for pastors. However, the need did not stretch enough to include Rev. Zonne. His overture in 1857 to join Classis was rejected out of hand. Stobbelaar in 1860 took a call to Zeeland, Michigan, and made a “hasty and disorderly departure” without first seeking the required classical letter of dismissal.³⁵

Even the stellar Bolks had his quirks. The Classis of Wisconsin in 1859 reprimanded him twice; once

for taking the Sunday school pupils on an outing “in the guise of religion” to see animals, and then for using his medical training to practice midwifery, which aroused slanderous talk. To escape the nit-picking criticism by his colleagues and congregants, Bolks accepted the call of the First Chicago church and shook the Wisconsin dust off his feet.³⁶

Until additional credentialed ministers became available for the churches, classis decided in 1861 to ask the synodical board to send out a New Brunswick Seminary graduate to serve as a “missionary” pastor at Milwaukee. Candidate Jacob Vander Meulen, a son of Cornelius, expressed interest and this prompted the Dutch church to call him successfully. Milwaukee then called Candidate Roelof Pieters. He declined the first call and the congregation called again, this time with a letter from the full classis that presented the church situation in and around Milwaukee as dire. The letter continued that there remained only the sickly Vander Schuur at Oostburg and the fresh young Vander Meulen at Holland. Four congregations—Bethlehem, Franklin, Alto, and Waterville (Eden)—were “pastorless” and in “danger of disappearing.” In the case of Alto, this was surely a gross overstatement.³⁷

Pieters declined again in favor of a pastorate in West Michigan, but five years later he came to Alto. Meanwhile, in 1862 the elderly Marten Ypma accepted Alto’s call and Jacob Vander Meulen’s younger brother John, New Brunswick class of 1862, took Milwaukee’s call. The sons of Cornelius brought fresh blood and sound leadership, but Jacob left after two years. By then, Ypma had died barely a year after coming to Alto and Vander Schuur, who was often incapacitated, leaving only John Vander Meulen, until Stobbelaar returned to Holland in 1864 (again by way of an

“irregular” call), Pieters came to Alto in 1865, and Karsten replaced Vander Schuur at Oostburg in 1867. Many congregations relied on theological students for preaching, especially during the summer months. Those with pastors in the manse severely underpaid them. Oostburg was ordered in 1865 to double Vander Schuur’s salary, in keeping with a general synodical directive on salaries. Clerical leadership in Wisconsin remained weak indeed, and spiritual progress in the pews was not much better.³⁸

CRC Congregations

CRC statistics are less sanguine, because the denomination grew more slowly in Wisconsin than in other Great Lakes states. The CRC remained more conservative in doctrine and traditional in polity than the RCA. It refused to sing hymns in divine worship and banned members of secret societies. Its initial name, the *True* Holland Reformed Church, spoke volumes. The CRC was known as the “Dutchy” church for several generations, since it retained Dutch as its language of worship and called its pastors from the Christian Seceded Church in the Netherlands. The RCA, in contrast, was impacted by the Second Great Awakening and had become English-speaking, except for the new immigrant congregations.³⁹

Dutch Reformed immigrants in Wisconsin were generally independent-minded and quite willing to assimilate into the dominant culture and not attracted to the CRC. They could have gone to Van Raalte’s or Scholte’s colonies but chose otherwise. They scattered widely in eastern Wisconsin and formed house churches led by laymen. When the congregations decided to affiliate, they chose the English-speaking RCA and Presbyterians denominations rather than the Dutch-speaking CRC.

The 1857 secession of what would

become the CRC in western Michigan barely reached Wisconsin. That year, the Franklin congregation announced that it was joining the True brothers, but its classis talked them out of it, thanks to the persuasive powers of Seine Bolks and John Ferris, minister of Chicago’s English congregation (Second Reformed). Bolks rehearsed the reasons for the Union of 1850 and attested to the RCA’s “soundness” in doctrine and discipline. Ferris then initiated “an extensive conversation” concerning the objections of the Franklin congregation (which were delivered in writing but not attached to or summarized in the minutes). The gathering “accepted his remarks, and the objections were cleared up and resolved.” The secession of the Franklin congregation is not confirmed in the records of the RCA or CRC, so the decision likely was rescinded.

For a few months during the winter of 1862-1863 a group in Milwaukee joined the CRC, but the lack of ministers caused the group to join the Presbyterians.⁴⁰ The first ongoing CRC church in Wisconsin, the Gibbsville (later Oostburg) congregation, came in 1868. The church edifice stood two miles equidistant from Gibbsville and Oostburg. Next came Alto in 1881, Baldwin (St. Croix County) in 1888, Sheboygan in 1889, and Vesper (Wood County) in 1898. In 1899 the five CRC Wisconsin congregations counted 818 souls, less than half the 1,710 souls in the Wisconsin RCA. The CRC church memberships were as follows: Alto, 270; Oostburg, 200; Baldwin, 163; Sheboygan, 150; and Vesper, 45. Later came Kenosha (1902), Racine (1906), Randolph (1908), and Wau-pun (1921). Initially these churches were part of Classis Illinois, until 24 September 1924 when CRC Classis Wisconsin was formed.⁴¹

Many CRC congregations were born in controversy, including Gibbsville, Alto, and Oostburg. At

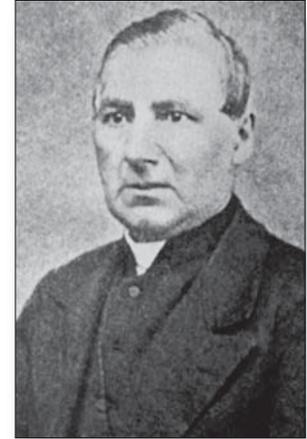


In addition to churches, Christian day schools, like this one in Baldwin, Wisconsin, tended to unite some Dutch immigrant communities. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Gibbsville, in 1866, sixteen fresh immigrant families from various provinces—Zuid Holland, Zeeland, Gelderland, and Groningen, who had been worshipping in a log church northeast of Oostburg, asked the nester of the CRC, Rev. Douwe Vander Werp of the Graafschap (Michigan) CRC, to come and organize them under the True Church umbrella.⁴² Vander Werp had been the scribe for Rev. Hendrik de Cock (the “father” of the Secession of 1834) and a schoolmaster in the Christian Seceded Church. The key stipulation of the Gibbsville applicants was that they be permitted to keep Peter Datheen’s 1566 versification of the Psalms. The CRC synod meeting in Grand Rapids agreed to send Vander Werp, but he was told to persuade the Datheenians to give up the old versification for the 1806 hymnbook (*Evangelische Gezangen*), or at least not to bother those who wished to do so. The 1806 collection, adopted by the Hervormde Kerk, included 192 hymns, and many seceders refused to sing even one of them in divine worship, since their lyrics had not come directly from the Bible.⁴³

Within months of Vander Werp’s visit and the installation of the consistory, the Gibbsville congregation was split by a schism. Besides the issue of singing hymns, a larger part of the problem was their itinerant minister, Rev. Jacobus De Rooy. A man with Baptist leanings, no formal theological training, and a questionable ordination by an independent church in New Jersey, the CRC Classis Illinois would not allow the Gibbsville church to call him. Yet, he was an eloquent speaker and the people welcomed him warmly. De Rooy also “caused a crumbling” of Vander Schuur’s RCA Oostburg congregation by enticing half the members and half the consistory to form a new congregation virtually within sight of the mother church.⁴⁴

Rev. Hermanus Stobbelaar of the Alto RCA backed a move to have De Rooy received into his denomination, but De Rooy’s breakaway group instead affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, which willingly ordained him. De Rooy ministered in the Oostburg Presbyterian Church until 1875, when he and twenty-five families



Rev. Jacobus De Rooy (1812–1884), at various times a Baptist, Independent, and itinerant preacher, served the Oostburg Presbyterian Church, 1865–1875, when he and part of that congregation left to form a Christian Reformed church, which he served until he died in 1884. Image courtesy of the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

seceded to found the Oostburg CRC. De Rooy, an Old School Presbyterian, disapproved of the merger with the New School Presbyterians in 1870 to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States. This time the CRC welcomed the Oostburg congregation and its minister; apparently, De Rooy had proven himself in the intervening eight years.⁴⁵

In the mid-nineteenth century, the experiences of the pioneer Dutch immigrant churches in southeastern Wisconsin stood in marked contrast to their counterparts in western Michigan, where Van Raalte had provided strong leadership in a frontier environment. The absence of such leaders in frontier Wisconsin took a toll that required many decades to surmount, but surmount they did. Today, there are dozens of thriving congregations of Dutch Reformed heritage in Wisconsin.³

Endnotes

1. "John H. Karsten's A Half Century of Dutch Settlement in Wisconsin, 1847-1897," in Henry S. Lucas, ed., *Dutch Immigrant Memoirs and Related Writings*, 2 vols. (Assen, Netherlands, 1955, rev. edition, Robert P. Swierenga ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 2:130-31.
2. The congregation of Town Holland later divided into First Cedar Grove and First Oostburg.
3. In the pioneer period, 1847-1875, four Presbyterian bodies recruited Dutch Reformed immigrants in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, and western New York, namely, the Old School and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church, and the Associate and Associate Reformed branches of the Scottish Presbyterian Church. The Wisconsin Dutch joined all four bodies, but mainly the Old School group. Richard Harms cogently clarifies this confusing story in "The Other Reformed: Dutch Presbyterians in Nineteenth-Century America," *Calvin Theological Journal*, 42 (Apr. 2007) 33-49. See also, "Presbytery of Milwaukee" and "The Presbytery of Milwaukee," 1888, unpublished mss, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pa., copies at the Archives, Calvin College.
4. Brian R. Winter, "Rev. Pieter Zonne: Founder of Dutch American Presbyterianism," unpublished paper; J. G. Zonne, "Brief Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Pieter Zonne" (Zuidland, The Netherlands, 1999), translated by William D. Buursma; Richard Dykstra and Patricia Premo, eds., *Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, 150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition* (Cedar Grove, Wis., 1997); Harms, "The Other Reformed," 42; Henry S. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America: Dutch Immigration to the United States and Canada, 1789-1950* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1955, reprinted Eerdmans, 1987) 206-07.
5. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America*, 198; E. William Kennedy, "Annotated Minutes of the Classis of Holland of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of North America," manuscript, Van Raalte Institute, Holland, MI. A collection of transcribed and translated Brandt letters to his two daughters in Milwaukee and siblings in the Netherlands are in "Wisconsin Pioneer Experience: Gerard Brandt, Milwaukee Small Collection 47, Box 1, 1850-1860," available online at <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/wipionexp.Brandt2p>.
6. The Reformed Church in America before 1867 was the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in America. The Christian Reformed Church was previously the True Holland Christian Reformed (1861-1880) and the Holland Christian Reformed Church (1880-1894).
7. CRC *Yearbook*, 2005; *Acts and Proceedings of the Reformed Church in America*, 1950, 2005. RCA figures above exclude "adherents."
8. For this and the next paragraph see Robert P. Swierenga, "Decisions, Decisions: Turning Points in the Founding of Holland," *Michigan Historical Review*, 24 (Spring 1998) 59-66.
9. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America*, 205-06; Albert Hyma, *Albertus C. Van Raalte and His Dutch Settlements in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 75 (quote).
10. A. Brummelkamp and A. C. Van Raalte, *Landverhuizing, of Waarom Bevorderen wij de Volksverhuizing naar Noord Amerika en niet naar Java?* [Emigration, or why we promote the emigration of people to North America and not to Java?] (Amsterdam, 1846) 40-43; A. Brummelkamp, *Stemmen uit Noord Amerika, met een Begeleidend Woord* [Voices from America, with an Accompanying Word (Amsterdam, 1847)] 53; Lucas, *Netherlanders in America*, 200.
11. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America*, 201-08; Elton J. Bruins, "The Dutch Immigrant Congregations of Alto, Wisconsin, 1845-1900," *Origins*, 7, No. 1 (1988) 23-33.
12. Bruins, "Dutch Immigrant Congregations;" *First Christian Reformed Church of Oostburg, Wisconsin, Diamond Jubilee, 1868-1943*, booklet.
13. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America*, 198, 203, 240; Rev. H. D. Terkeurst, "Historical Sketch," *Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Souvenir, First Reformed Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1847-1922* (Milwaukee, 1930), 3-4; Russell L. Gasero, *Historical Directory of the Reformed Church in America, 1628-2000* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 414; H. J. Brinks, "Father Budding, 1810-1870," *Origins* 4, No. 2 (1986), 22; Gerrit Baay, "Dear Friends Back Home . . .," Town Alto, 4 January 1849, published in *Delta* (Sept. 1959), 26-35. Baay in an 1849 letter published in the Netherlands urged marriageable women to emigrate, because "I consider American women unsuitable for Dutchmen." They were too dainty and refused to get dirt under their fingernails (*ibid.*, 34).
14. Robert P. Swierenga and Elton J. Bruins, *Family Quarrels in the Dutch Reformed Churches of the Nineteenth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 67-69.
15. *Classis Holland Minutes, 1848-1858* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 35, 41-42, 64, 98; Letter, G. De Jonge, Vriesland, Michigan, Mich., to William Moerdyk(e), Kalamazoo, Mich., 20 Mar. 1899, Joint Archives of Holland; Mrs. G. J. De Gelleke, "The Years of Our Century," *First Reformed Church of Milwaukee Centennial, 1847-1947*, booklet, 4.
16. *Classis Holland Minutes*, 64-66.
17. *Ibid.*, 66, 89; *Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in North America*, 1852, 261.
18. *Classis Holland Minutes*, 152-53.
19. "Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, Holland Reformed Church in America, 1854-1869," 12 July, 11 Oct. 1854, Western Theological Seminary Collection, Joint Archives of Holland, Hope College, translated by William D. Buursma.
20. Van Raalte had disregarded this very rule, when in 1848 he, Vander Meulen, and Ypma organized the independent Classis of Holland.
21. *Classis Holland Minutes*, 164-65; Gasero, *Historical Directory*, 23; Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 25 Apr. 1855.
22. *Classis Holland Minutes*, 70-78, 88; Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 25 Apr. 1855. Frederick Beidler, a German Reformed cleric who had taught one year at Van Raalte's Holland Academy, agreed to be the missionary pastor at Cedar Grove in 1855. He was fluent in English and had already begun preaching in that language.
23. *Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America* [title after 1867], 1857, 186; 1865, 611; 1870, 92; 1900, 1288; Gasero, *Historical Directory*, 528.
24. The Classis of Wisconsin Minute Book One (1854-68) and Book Three (1877-86) are in the Joint Archives of

Holland. Book Two is missing.

25. Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 12 July, 11 Oct. 1854, 25 Apr. 1925. In 1858, Classis began extensive discussions to form their own academy, to be located in Franklin, but the plans were “postponed” as impractical in 1859 (ibid., 8 Sept. 1858, 9 Feb. 1859).

26. Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 25 Apr. 1855. Classis approved the excommunication of a man in the Oostburg congregation for marrying his niece, “in order to avoid the wrath of God upon the congregation” (ibid., 26 Sept. 1855).

27. Ibid., 30 Apr. 1856, 20 Aug. 1856, 23 Apr. 1857, 14 Apr. 1858.

28. Sleijster resigned as elder a year later over the decision to baptize children of non-confessing parents (ibid., 30 Apr., 20 Aug. 1956).

29. Ibid., 18 May 1859, 29 Feb., 26 Sept. 1860. In 1863, the Milwaukee Presbyterian Church birthed a daughter congregation with 34 families (Harms, “The Other Reformed,” 44).

30. Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 13 Mar., 24 July, 9 Oct. 1861.

31. Ibid., 9-10 Apr., 10 Sept. 1862, 8 Apr., 9 Sept. 1863; Jacob Van Hinte, *Netherlanders in America: A Study in Emigration and Settlement in the Nine-*

teenth and Twentieth Centuries in the United States of America (Groningen, P. Noordhoff, 1928, Robert P. Swierenga editor, Adriaan de Wit translator, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 864-65.

32. Nancy Vander Puy, comp., *History of the Reformed, Christian Reformed and Dutch Reformed Schools in Sheboygan County* (Sheboygan Falls: Sheboygan Falls Historical Research Center, 2000), 54-67.

33. Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 23 Apr., 10 Sept. 1857.

34. Ibid., 14 Apr., 27 May 1858, 13 Mar. 1861. The anti-freemasonry campaign in Classis started in 1868 (ibid., 22 Apr., 23 Sept. 1868). Classis deposed Van Leeuwen from the ministry in 1859 for committing adultery with his housekeeper.

35. Ibid., 10 Sept., 9 Dec. 1857, 14 Apr., 8 Sept. 1858, 26 Sept. 1860. Classis later approved Stobbelaar’s credentials (ibid., 9 Feb. 1859).

36. Ibid., 14 Sept. 1859.

37. Ibid., 13 Mar., 24-25 July 1861.

38. Ibid., 9-10 Apr., 10 Sept. 1862, 8 Apr., 9 Sept. 1863, 13 Apr., 14 Sept. 1864, 27 Sept. 1865.

39. Firth Haring Fabend, *Zion on the*

Hudson: Dutch New York and New Jersey in the Age of Revivals (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000).

40. Art 11, Classical Assembly held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1 October 1862, Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

41. Richard H. Harms, compiler and editor, *Historical Directory of the Christian Reformed Church* (Grand Rapids: Historical Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, 2004), 511.

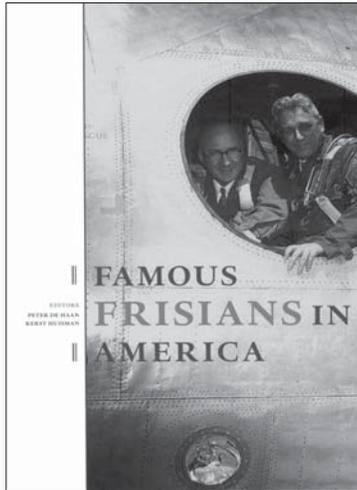
42. Janet Sjaarda Sheeres, *Son of Secession: Douwe J. Vander Werp* (Grand Rapids, Mich., Eerdmans, 2006).

43. Bert Polman, “The Hymn Question in the Christian Reformed Church,” *Origins* 16 No. 1 (1998): 17-18.

44. Robert J. De Smith, “Jacobus De Rooy: Rural Wisconsin Diarist and Preacher,” *Origins* 2, No. 2 (1984): 27-36; “History of the Church,” *First Christian Reformed Church of Oostburg, Wisconsin, Diamond Jubilee, 1868-1968*, booklet (Oostburg, 1968); Harms, *Historical Directory*, 189; Classis of Wisconsin Minutes, 5 Oct. 1866.

45. De Smith, “Jacobus De Rooy,” 27-36; “History of the Church.”

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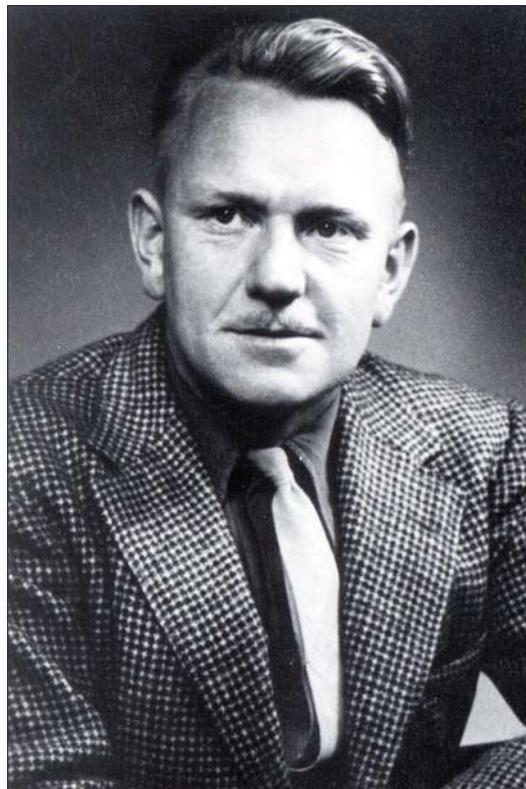
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