

With the wish that you may receive this in good health, and with

greetings, we are

Your affectionate children

C. and J.

Letter from Janije to the Van Der Vliet family

Chandler, Min

April 11, 1910

Dear Family!

Received your best wishes last week, thank you all for them. We also wish the Lord's blessing and nearness for Mother on her continued life's journey. I hope you may all celebrate Mother's birthday with gratitude to God, as the Lord in this has again demonstrated that He is a hearer of prayer, since Mother may once again enjoy reasonably good health.

You have undoubtedly received a letter from C. since he left here on

March 31. Parting was difficult for both of us, and we hope God will grant that it will not be for too long a time. But I will find it difficult when the time arrives for me to leave from here. We are so accustomed to each other, and those dear little children make it so pleasant. Hadewij is such a cute talker. She respects everything, and she knows very well that Uncle C has gone to Canada. That little thing can say everything except Aunt.

That she will not say, and that little Jan is also such a dear - fat boy.

My brother Jan has come back to this neighborhood Saturday, to work for a farmer. We hope, D.V., to make the trip together as soon as Cornelis has a home for us. C met Harmen and Looy and four more Hollanders in Winnipeg, among them a farmer from Zeist, with his wife and a child.

Mother often asks eagerly about Beide. According to the latest reports all is still well there. Father's rheumatism has improved quite a bit, so that he is able to walk quite a distance again. Egbert took his teacher's examination on April 1, but I do not know the result yet. I am eager looking forward to it, Gerrit plans to be married in May. He has rented a place from Father, where he is farming at present. I am glad he has found a wife. Last week she sent me her photograph with a letter, in which she made a good impression on me, although I am not acquainted with her, except that I have seen her a couple of times. Hendrik must begin to serve the queen in May, which he dreads somewhat. My brother Jan has behaved well in spite of his ups and downs, and American food also helps me. I must let out all of my dresses. There is no further news. Greetings to Aaltje and Neeltje and the neighbors, and so forth. Greetings to all

Your loving
Jantje

Letter from Harmen Van Der Lee to Wilnis

Stettler, April 24, 1910

Dear Friends!

It is a sad situation which prompts me to write you. I was with your son C Van Der Vliet, on my way to Edmonton to look at some land. We were to reach Stettler on Friday, April 22, according to our plans. Up to that time everything had gone well. We were travelling by horse and wagon, and had remained in good health.

Friday morning your son was not feeling too well, but we thought it would pass. But in the afternoon he suddenly developed a stomach cramp, which became more severe so suddenly, that we felt it to be necessary, to stop at a farmer's. He gave him a bed and room and everything we desired. I spent an entire night with him, took care of him as well as I could, but it was in vain. After 24 hours he entered into eternal rest. I will never be able to forget, to see a friend die among strangers. I will write again soon. I have sent the news to his wife.

Hearly greetings to all.

Your affectionate friend

H. Van der Lee

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And on April 22 he became ill. At night he still said to me, "To think that I must become ill right on my mother's birthday."

The last thing he asked me to do for him was to send a post card to his wife, telling her he had become ill. But I should not make it seem bad. I wrote the post card and read it to him. Then I also wrote a short letter. (The doctor had treated him by that time). He laid down apparently to rest. So he entered eternal rest quietly and calmly. I did everything in my power for him, during his illness and burial. If you know of anything you wish to have been different, do not blame me. I was here by myself and still speak very little English.

Hearly greetings to all,

Your affectionate friend,

H. Van der Lee.

Cornelis Van Der Vliet died on Saturday April 23, as the result of an inflamed appendix. He was buried the following Monday, April 25. Except for the letters which Harmen Van der Lee sent to Wilnis, to the Van Der Vliet family and to his parents. He also sent a telegram to Jacobus Verbrugge. In those days a telegram was taken to the post office, and was sent with the mail.

The telegram from Harman was not in the Verbrugge mailbox until April 28, five days after Harman had sent it. On the evening of that day there was a song program in Leota, which Jacobus, Jantje and Jan intended to attend. The mailbox was a half mile from the Verbrugge home and Jantje often walked to get the mail. On this day, however, the mail was to be picked up on the way to Leota.

Details of the events are told in the letters from Jantje. There was great sadness in the Verbrugge home. The entire vicinity was in shock. Jantje was extremely despondent. Rev. Gulker came to visit there frequently, and Jacobus and Maria were very helpful, other people also. But it was the joy and the needs of the small children which awakened a sense of hope and usefulness in Jantje. Jantje paid special attention to little Jan, then seven months old, and became attached to him.

Many letters were written to Wilnis by Jantje, by Jacobus and Maria. Of these two came from Jantje, one to the Van der Vliet and Enserink families, and one to friends in Beide. There are also parts of letters from Jacobus and Maria and from Harmen.

seemed to help at first, but a little later, at 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon, April 23, life had ended. Oh, how inscrutable are the ways of the Lord.

How painful the great distances are. I would so much like to know about his final hours, and have asked Harman some question, but I cannot expect the answer until next week.

I can still hardly imagine the reality. Sometimes it all seems to be like a dream that such a turning-point has come about in my life. We loved each other so much, and we were in hopes a happy home life would be ours, but it is not to be. I will have to continue my life's pathway alone. May God's grace be my strength.

Oh, I can well understand that this life is one of trouble and sorrow, at best. But, oh how sad it is, as I have just read in Egbert's letter, that Mrs. Hoeve, committed suicide, and I can well imagine, that the distress can reach that point, and if we do not have a God, to whom we can cling. What a privilege it is at such a time, to know where comfort is to be sought, even though faith is at times small, amid my sighs I say: "Now Lord, what wait I for, my hope is in thee."

The last morning, when we knelt together, we were both so moved emotionally, and the prayer of my dear husband was: "Oh, Lord, do not put us to shame, for our eye is upon Thee."

C was buried on April 25. His body was followed by H. vander Lee, a certain Dykstra, a 29-year-old in Canada, Friesian by birth (who helped Harman in every way) and an English minister, I also received a hearty

letter from that Dykstra, and he was prepared to do everything he could for me in the future.

We received the telegram here on April 28. That evening the three of us were to attend to a song program in Leota, viz Kobus, Jan and I. On the way we took the mail from the box. I had the telegram in my hand but my eyes were blinded, so I did not see that it was addressed to Kobus.

He stepped out of the wagon and said he had to go home. I asked: "Is it a sickness?" but received only the answer: "You people go ahead, I must go home." He himself was badly shocked, and when I came home in the evening, I noticed that something unusual had happened, but did not ask questions, because I thought that probably something had effected their business affairs, which was not my concern.

That tense situation lasted until the following afternoon. (Kobus had gone to the minister in the forenoon). At first I suspected nothing bad, but when Verbrugge asked: "Can you possibly wonder why we are so quiet, and whether you are also involved," I immediately asked: "Is it something about Cornelis?" and I soon became aware that there was no more hope.

Gradually I was informed about the whole truth, and at once I was able to express my grief in the natural fashion; Jan was also with me.

How true it is that joy and grief follow one another. A year ago today I was busy making preparations for our wedding,--and now....

My brother-in-law will make arrangements for all the matters to be taken care of for me. H. Vander Lee will send the papers, and we have asked friends to sell all the things which are in Edmonton, except for clothing

and bedding, and they are willing to do all they can. All of that has taken

place in good order.

And then, when all matters have been regulated here, what am I to do?

Would it not be best for me to return to the land of my birth? What does

the family think about that? There surely are still opened arms and many

ties. And the Lord certainly has a life's calling for me to fulfill.

Remaining convinced of the sympathy and intercessory prayers of all of

you.

With hearty greetings,

Your affectionate daughter and sister

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Part of a letter from Jacobus Verbrugge to his parents-in-law

Dear Parents, etc.

With deep sadness in our heart and in mourning we must write to you

again. From the letter of last Friday you can already anticipate the worst,

even though we did not write about the matter in detail, which M. and I

already learned from the telegram which read: "C Van Der Vliet died

suddenly. Letter following."

According to the letter from Harmen, received by us yesterday, we

gather that you have had no other news, except that which you received from

us, and even the direct cause we were not able to tell you, because he did

not write that to us either. After we received the letter yesterday we at

once telegraphed for information.....

You realize what it means for us to tell you the complete details now. Cornelis was buried Monday evening, April 25, at five o'clock in the

cemetery in Stettler, Alberta, Canada where a grave was purchased for him. The very difficult task of telling Jantje fall upon me, and I dreaded it so much. But we have also experience what it means, in such difficult

circumstances to seek refuge at the throne of God, and we were not made

ashamed....

At times we weep together, and sometimes I must admonish myself to

fulfill the task which rests upon me under these circumstances, and that the

feeling must be suppressed.

Of course, when eventually the initial grief has been endured, there

will be many matters to regulate. All their possessions are in Edmonton,

and Cornelis had more business matters to attend to. We will stand by her,

with the ability and power which God has granted us, in brotherly fashion

and in love....

Your affectionate son and brother,

Jac. Verbrugge

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Letter from Maria Verbrugge - Van Der Vliet to her parents in Wilnis

Dear and deeply-saddened Parents and family!

How shall I begin to speak a word of comfort to you, especially Father

and Mother....

Oh, dear parents, I can well understand how your hearts bleed, but also

for you the Lord is a refuge in times of deep sorrow. Grace alone causes us

to be silent, and still one so often asks "Why?"

Jantje also experiences that she has Jacob's God as her helper, in the
despondent moments, which repeatedly arise. In this death I must also learn
to prepare for eternity, and I must constantly pray, "Lord take away from me
that which must be taken away, and to die unto sin, and what earth offers
us, and to number our days, in order that we may have a wise heart, to watch
and pray, and found to be striving, when the Lord also comes to take us
away."

Yesterday we received another letter from Harmen. It was inflammation
of the stomach. Cornelis had severe pain, and Harmen was so alone among
strangers...

The congregation here sympathized with Jantje. The minister soon came,
but had to control himself frequently, and in this way one experiences that
this is a valley of tears.

Committing you to the Lord and greeting you in love,
Your affectionate children

Jac. and Maria,

All of the children are also well. Undoubtedly Harmen has written to you
about details.

Greetings again

You loving M.

Letter from Harmen Van Der Lee to Jacobus Van Der Vliet

Stettler, May 7, 1910

Dear Brother-in-law and Sister!

I have long delayed writing to you. I should have written the name of the sickness, but you realize that I was confused and hardly knew what I was writing.... Today I will send all of the papers, watch and ring to Verbrugges, as he told me to do in this letter....

How suddenly the plan of men can be altered. We were on our way to look for land for several Hollanders. Your brother was well informed about everything, and we were on the point of executing our plan, when he was so suddenly taken away in death.

On Saturday, May 1, I had gone to Edmonton in the hopes of meeting my friends. Looy and another Hollander then went along to Stettler where we visited his grave. The cemetery is a half mile outside of the city....

The last days when I was traveling with him, he said nothing different from what he usually did. When one spoke to him about South Africa, he always spoke about it with enthusiasm, and also about his emigration; then during the final days, he said more than once, that it was really too risky, to just travel there alone. The same in regard to the roaming and travelling around. "Boy, Harmen, when I finally have a little place, I will not soon move again, I have seen enough of the world."....

I will close. If you wish to know anything else, just write....

Harmen

Part of a letter from Maria to Aaltje and Wijnand Oussoren

Chandler, May 23, 1910

Dear Brother-in-law and Aaltje:

Although you have probably read the letters we wrote home, I imagine you also long to hear from us. Oh, sister, how dreadful and painful it was for us to receive that news. I have never seen my husband so depressed and somber as he was when he came home with the telegram announcing the sudden death of Cornelis....but, he was able to prepare me, in the strength of the Lord, for the sad tidings that our brother was no longer on earth....

On March 31 he left us for Canada filled with courage, well and strong, and to begin again with all the plans which had been made.

We bade farewell to everyone. I wish Cornelis, the best, I do not wish for riches for you, but that your expectation may be from the Lord alone." Kobus took him away. Jantje was calm, and, after all had eaten, with her three oldest children still went to wave good-bye to him, since the train runs past our place through the hills, little thinking that she would not see him again on earth.

There are still so many memories of him, what he has built and done. He sowed the lettuce and radishes which we eat, berries and lilac bushes which he planted, and flower beds he laid out, a cheese-mold he made. At first it seemed like a dream. Cornelis have you entered eternity....

I frequently think of what Jantje must do, and in this way the ties of
Love become stronger. We hope to make her life pleasant and also experience
her genuine sisterly love....

Greetings with our love,

Jac and Maria

Letter to friends in Eelde

Leota, Minn, July 2, 1910

Dear friends!

Even though I address my letter to Jet, I do wish to direct it to my

three girl-friends, who give me such heart evidence of their sympathy.

It is certainly true that at such times words of comfort from

individuals sound so hallow in our ears, and long speeches even less

comforting, than a sympathetic look and handshake. But God uses

individuals, as means in His hand to point out His mercy and promises.

Not during the first moments, but soon later, I thought: How shocked

Jet must have been, having recently received a letter from me, which I wrote

where my dear husband was no longer in the land of the living. Oh, beloved,

I know all of you feel for me. How I wish I could talk to you. I can

imagine that you have thought: "Jantje will not be able to bear this,

unless God sustains her," and I would not be able to do so in my own

strength. Egbert wrote: "May God prevent you from becoming despondent." I

have experienced in these first days how necessary that is. Oh, when we

lose everything, Satan at times whispers: "What does life mean for you, it

is only one of trouble and sorrow."

Especially in the first days, the weather was so beautiful, but it seemed that it made me all the more sad, as if it was a mockery, in the midst of my deep suffering, and at times I could not grasp the reality of it all. God does all that which he sees fit, and we must remain silent. Oh, I so often think, how I wish Cornelis could have died here, not having a last glance or word from him, could the Lord lead by way of a deeper path? I recently heard of a man who in despair resulting from the death of his wife, took his own life, leaving 9 children as orphans. When I see such things I still have reasons for gratitude that I know God has done it, and that He sees my trouble and misery. When God gives us an eye to see, there are so many things in which we recognize His hand. Was it not remarkable the way that terrible news reached me?

I always went to get the letter, but that day I did not, because we planned to pick up the letters in the evening, so my brother-in-law first had the tidings in hand, and God gave him the wisdom to prepare me carefully. On one of the following mornings also, when I could not decide to get up, my smallest daughter stood at the stairs calling "auntie" repeatedly, (she was alone, her mother was doing the milking God caused me to see that there was still a task for me to perform, and I was not to confine myself to my grief.

And now I am with people who also need my help, to take care of a small child. I have been here two weeks already. I do not know how long I will stay.

So I can certainly experience that God is caring for me. It is so necessary for me to have diversion and work to do. I could very well remain

here for a half year, so many people ask me to. But I cannot endure the thought that I would then be of no benefit. And the people here are so superficial on the whole. Oh, so few with whom one can carry on a

conversation except about everyday matters.

At first, I thought it would be better for me to return to Holland as soon as possible. I would have left everything which had to be done in a mess, if wise people had not advised me to deal with all situations calmly and to plan prayerfully.

And why does God direct everything in such a way when matters are still not in good order? I do not know if I will return, I cannot yet give an

answer to that. My prayer is that God may instruct me in the way I must go. I hope that when I must make a decision, that it will be made plain to me.

Fortunately, I can make good use of my time. When my work is finished here I have promised other people to help them with their sewing a couple of weeks. I imagine there are many who say: (Translator's note: something

seems to be missing, - continues as follows)

I had never read anything by him before that fascinated me so much, and from which one can learn so much, coming into my hands unexpectedly. Do you also have it yet?

Now receive hearty greetings with your families from your affectionate

friend.

Jantje

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Harmen Van Der Lee went through with his plan to become a farmer in Canada. He settled in Chipman, near Stettler, married, and was a farmer

until he gave up farming and moved to Edmonton, where he died when he was 90 years old. In 1981 his widow was still living in Edmonton.

Jan Enserink also moved to Canada. He took up 320 acres of land,

homesteading near Chipman. He married a daughter from a Dutch family which came from Koudom. He lived in Chipman for a few years. Three of his

children were born there. Later he moved to Ripon, California, where he

lived until the time of his death. He and his family visited Holland twice.

Jantje lived in the Leota vicinity for two years. She worked for

several families, especially for a Mrs. Nick De boer. But her home was with

Jacobus and Maria.

In April, 1912, Jantje returned to Eelde. Her father had re-married,

and her brothers were more or less independent, so she sought work as a

housekeeper, finally for Rev. Harm Brouwer, a minister in Heteren in the

province of Gelderland. He had two children: Christien and Jan.

Early in 1915, Rev. Brouwer and Jantje decided to marry. Jantje wrote

a letter to Klaas and Grietje Van Der Vliet to announce their plans.

Jantje to her parents-in-law

Eelde, Jan. 7, 1915

Dear Parents and other relatives!

I would not like to have you hear the news from others, so I shall

quickly inform you.

Yesterday Rev. Brouwer was here, and we have promised each other our

love and faithfulness for life. I realized dear parents, it will be painful

for you to hear this on the one hand, as it awakens so many memories, but I

know, on the other hand that you can rejoice with me, since the Lord is

pleased to grant me new happiness.

It is not because of ulterior motives, but my true desire, to be a

blessing and to fulfill my task prayerfully. I fully realize the

responsibility which I am assuming. I will need a great deal of patience

and self-sacrifice. May the Lord grant me mercy to desire wisdom from Him.

We are both convinced that the Lord has so directed matters that we are

able to be in love again, which seemed impossible to me for a long time.

May we be a blessing for one another for time and eternity.

I can never forget all the love and care, which you have always

bestowed upon me. And we will never forget those who have died. If the

Lord so wills, if it is convenient to you, we hope to visit you after we are

married, which will probably be in March, D.V. I have written a letter to

Hendrik, to ask him to perform the marriage ceremony in Zutphen. We plan to

arrange everything very simply.

I was happy to receive Father's letter. It is good to know that

whatever happens, we are still in one another's thoughts, and continue to

respect each other. Father and Mother both approve of our plans. Father is

very well. Saturday he was massaged by a gentleman who also treats Ver

Meulen for rheumatism, and who is greatly benefited by it. He is coming

again this evening to massage Father. It is painful, if so it can be

helpful, it would be a relief.

Bernard has been in the hospital for five days, and came back home in

good spirits.... Egbert was home for the Christmas days and is looking very

5. Grietje Van der Vliet died on January 30, 1923. Marretje continued to live in the parented home until January, 1924. Then she moved to Woerdam to live with Aaltje and Wifjand.

the Lord give you patience and submissions in whatever way His hand leads thoughts, to which we are especially inclined in days such as these. May empty place which remains.⁵ But I hope you will not succumb to sad

behind us, and it will also be a painful milepost for you, considering the At the change of the years we once again look back upon all that lies Dear Sister Marretje,

Driezen, Dec. 28, 1923

Jantje to her sister-in-law Marretje

invited Marretje to visit her.

In a letter Jantje wrote to Marretje about her life in Zealand and

died in 1928.

from there, in 1921, to Borselle and Driewegen in Gelderen. Rev. Brouwer Jantje moved to the congregation of Wenerfrok in the Province of Drenthe,

Rev Brouwer served the congregation at Heteren until 1917. Then he and

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Jantje

As always your affectionate

Greetings from us to all of you.

for their pretty card.

birthday, Hearty thanks for the best wishes, not the least the little nieces

well. Hendrick has also been home for four days. Monday his wife had a

you. How long it has been since we have heard from each other, I frequently wonder: How is Marretje getting along? But how fortunately it is that the family lives in the neighborhood.

How they will miss you. When do you plan to move? Will you go to

Zeeland before that activity begins? We would be happy to have you visit us for a little while, and you always know how to make yourself useful....

The congregation has expressed its pleasure about our decision to

remain here, by giving us a clock. We did go to Meerkerk to look things

over, and it had many attractions externally: more salary, a fine parsonage

and a prosperous beautiful village. It was difficult for my husband to come

to a decision, but there was no feeling of readiness to lay aside the work

here. Two congregations in the Wintertime is quite difficult....

Leaving Meerkerk I spent a week in Eelde. Hein's wife was quite

seriously ill at the time, she has been ailing for months, but now is

improving nicely... I also talked to Jet Huisken who complained that she was

having a hard time at home, and was so misunderstood, her parents will have

nothing to do with the truth, her mother is completely helpless, and Jet

says, "How I try to win them by my conduct and life, and what a struggle

that is...."

How is the entire family getting along? We will surely hear soon?

Marie V sent me this church to forward, it is a beautiful building.

Hearty greetings from all of us.

Your loving sister,

Jantje

After Rev. Brouwer died, Jantje returned to Eelde. There she had a house built on a small piece of land which she had inherited. She lived with her step-daughter, Christien in one section, and rented the other part. She often visited Aaltje and Marretje in Woeden, especially after Wiinand Ouscoren had died on December 28, 1929.

Jantje to her niece Hattie Verbrugge, in 1926

on a picture-post-card from Eelde

Dear family:

This is a little picture taken near Eelde. It is so beautiful everywhere. Formerly I did not realize that Eelde and vicinity were so rich in natural beauty. We are all doing well. I hope to write a letter soon. Many greetings from Aunt J.

In 1935 Rev. William Masselink of Grand Rapids, Michigan was given a years leave of absence to go to Germany to study for his doctorate. He was married to Mary De Boer, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nick De Boer. The De Boers decided to go to Europe to visit the Masselinks. Maria Verbrugge persuaded them to visit Aaltje in Woerden, and also Jantje, who had been a housekeeper for the De Boes. So, in 1935, Jantje and Aaltje had an opportunity to hear something directly about Jacobus and Maria. They had by then left the farm and lived in Edgerton.

Jantje died on September 19, 1953. She was buried in the cemetery at Gorsse, near Eelde. Her step-daughter, Christien Brouwer was buried in the same place, in 1972.

weight of his service. May he be a blessing, just as Rev. Van Lonkehuygen has been in Wilnis, who is such a blessing here, and causes the trumpet to be heard according to the demand of God's Word. May it continue to be heard. America is in many ways religious, but oh so lacking in the true fear of God.

Letter fragment undated [1916]

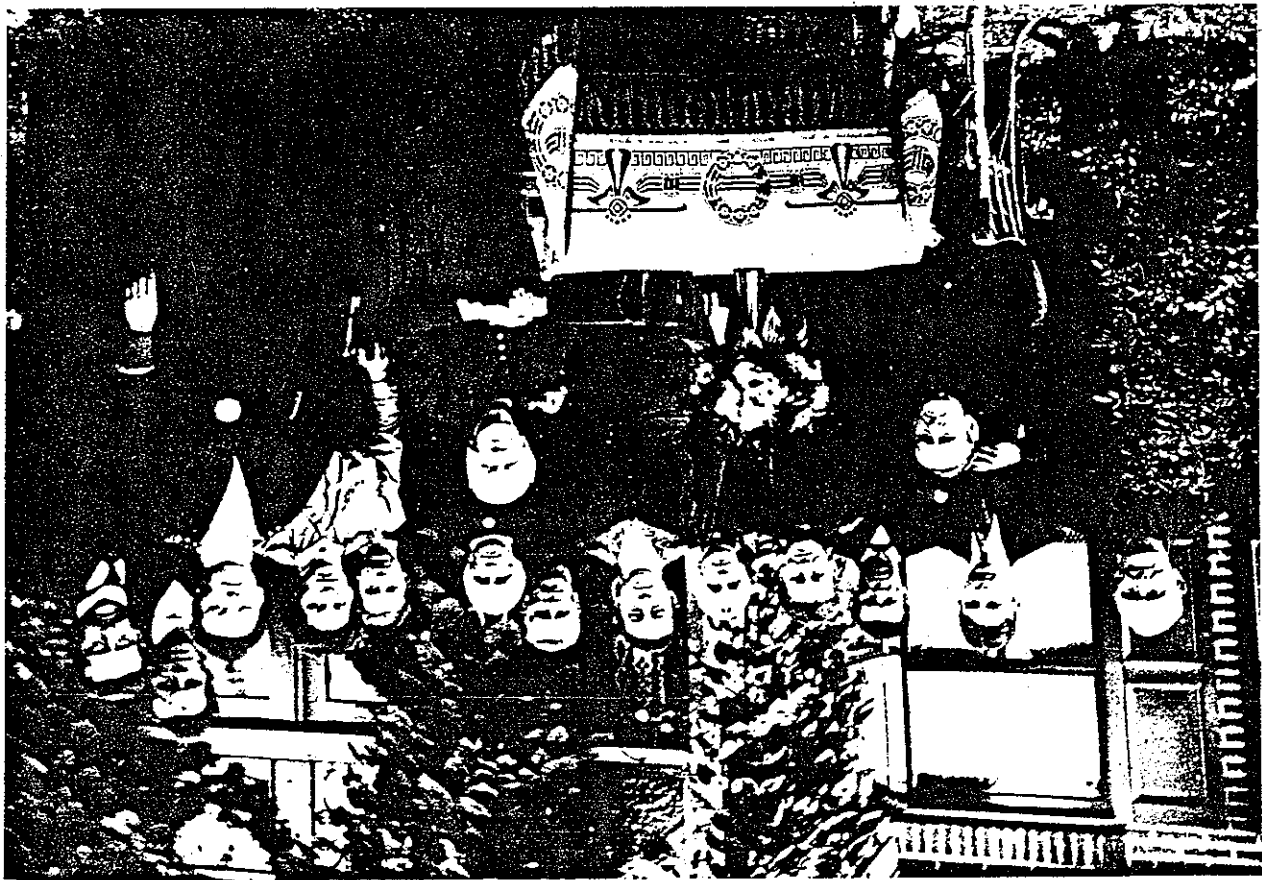
Klaas Van Der Vliet
Grietje Van der Vliet - Rozenboom
Standing, left to right:
Jan Tijmer Vis
Jan Brouwer
Cornelis Van Sevenhoven
Jantje Van Der Vliet Brouwer - Enserink
Neeltje Van Sevenhoven - Van Der Vliet
Maria Willemince Van Der Vliet
Wijand Ousorren
Aaltje Ousorren - Van Der Vliet
Ida Grietje Van Sevenhoven
Trijntje Van Der Vliet - Treur
Johanna Van Der Vliet - Van Der Lee
Jan van Der Vliet
Jacobus Van Der Vliet

Seated:

Family portrait taken at the 40th wedding anniversary of Klaas and Grietje Van Der Vliet, September 21, 1916 at Wilnis, the Netherlands.

PHOTOGRAPH

Family Portrait taken at the 40th Wedding Anniversary of
 Klaas and Grietje van der Vliet, 21 September 1916, Wilnis, The Netherlands.



Seated:
 Klaas van der Vliet
 Grietje v. d. Vliet-Roozenboom

Standing, left to right:
 Jan Tijmer Vis
 Jan Brouwer
 Cornelis van Sevenhoven
 Jantje v. d. Vliet-Brouwer-Enserink

Neeltje v. Sevenhoven-v. d. Vliet
 Maria Willemina van der Vliet
 Wijnand Oussoren
 Aaltje Oussoren-v. d. Louw
 Ida Grietje van Sevenhoven
 Trijntje v. d. Vliet-Treur
 Johanna v. d. Vliet-v. d. Lee
 Jan van der Vliet
 Jacobus van der Vliet

To begin with the latest great event: that last Sunday, the 26th of this month, a well-formed little daughter was born. The initial business caused me to delay telling you sooner. This time there was good reason to look forward to the time with concern, but the Lord, upon whom we were able to cast our cares, was a God who surprised us, helped us out and through, so

Yesterday was the national day of thanksgiving proclaimed by the government, and we also have many reasons to be thankful to the Lord.
Dear Parents, etc:

Nov. 30, 1916
Chandler, Minn

Jacobus to the Van der Vliet family

Once more, thanks for the picture.

Jac. and M.

Your loving children,

Love,

Greet all of the family, also Jan Vis, and greetings also to you in

Anneje.

The children are all doing well. Aaltje had begun to walk by herself this week. A dear fine little girl. In 14 days Hadevif⁶ is coming to visit us for a little while. They are doing very well. I have not yet met

that we are able to call everything very satisfactory. At present, Mother and child are doing very well. Oh, how many are the mercies of the Lord, when we consider our shortcomings, and on the other hand the blessings which are our portion.....

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The 1930's and the War Years

The time span between the decade of the 20's and 30's was a period during which important changes took place in the Van Der Vliet - Verbrugge family groups.

Wijnand Oussoren and Aaltje has decided in 1924 to discontinue farming near Kortrijk and to move to Woerden. When Marretje heard about this she suggested that they purchase a larger house, to contain an apartment for her. So it happened that Marretje also moved to Woerden. A couple of years later Wijnand developed a heart condition, and he had to live a careful life. He died on December 29, 1929. He was sixty years old at the time.

Marretje became ill in 1931. She had an operation and then came back to Aaltje's home. Aaltje had never been strong, so it was decided that Ali Van Der Vliet, the daughter of Jacobus and Johanna would also go to Woerden to help out. She came there in November, 1931. She was then 15 1/2 years of age. Marretje went back to the hospital for about six months and returned to Aaltje's home in the fall of 1932. She died early in the morning of Ascension Day, May 25, 1933, and was buried in Wilnis.

Ali lived in Woerden for about five years. Jantje lived in Eetde, and was also a widow. Jantje and Aaltje visited one another frequently so Ali heard a great deal about life in Wilnis and Op De Laan in former years, the

problems associated with the marriage of Jacobus and Maria, the adventures of Cornelis Van Der Vliet and the tragedies in the life of Jantje. Some of the letters in this collection were preserved by Ali.

But that was not all. During those five years Ali also became

acquainted with Hendrik Verburg. They were married in the summer of 1940. There were also many changes in the family life of Jacobus and Maria during the last years of the 20's. Their children began to leave the

parental home to follow their own life's paths. For example, James and Grace moved in 1926 to work a farm where Jacobus had purchased south of Leota. In 1929 both of them were married and established their own homes. James, with his wife Jennie continued to live on the Verbrugge farm. There were many other changes, and children left their home. For Maria, because of her close association with the life of her children and an intimate family circle, these changes were hard to cope with.

Marriage certificate: Cornelis Van Der Vliet and Jantje Enserink

Today May 7, 1909, there appeared before me, clerk of the municipality of Gorsel, for the purpose of consummating their marriage.

Cornelis Van Der Vliet

thirty years of age, a

farmer by profession, born in Wilnis, adult son of Klaas Van Der Vliet,

farmer in Wilnis, adult son of Klaas Van Der Vliet, farmer, and of Grietje Roosenboom, without profession, both residents of Wilnis, and

Jantje Enserink

thirty years of age, without

profession, born in Gorsell, and a resident of Reide, municipality of

Gorsell, adult daughter of Egbert Enserink, farmer living in Reide, and of

Hendrika Willemina Makkin, deceased.

The announcements of this marriage have been made locally without

objections being raised on Sunday, April 25, and May 2, of this year, as

also at Wilnis on the same dates.

After the participants had declared themselves to be prepared to accept

one another as marriage partners and to fulfill all obligations faithfully,

they were declared by me, in the name of the law, to be united to one

another in marriage.

Done in the presence of Egbert Enserink, sixty-one years of age, farmer

by profession, living in Reide, father of the bride.

Klaas Van Der Vliet, sixty years of age, farmer by profession living in

Wilnis, father of the groom,

Hendrikus Enserink, twenty-eight years of age, minister by profession,

living in Heteren, brother of the bride,

Jacobus Van Der Vliet, twenty-seven years of age, farmer by profession

living in Wilnis, brother of the groom.

I have at this time made a duplicate copy of this certificate at this

time and after having read it to them, have signed it, together with the

participants and witnesses.

(Name illegible)