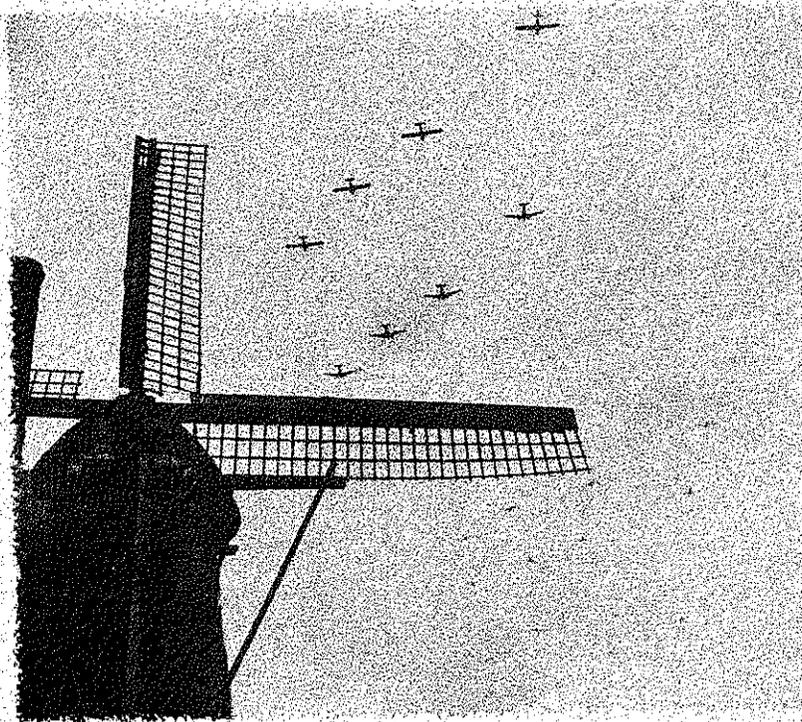


Origins

Historical Magazine of The Archives
Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary
Volume XXII • Number 1 • 2004



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*Historical Magazine
of The Archives*

Calvin College and
Calvin Theological Seminary
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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.

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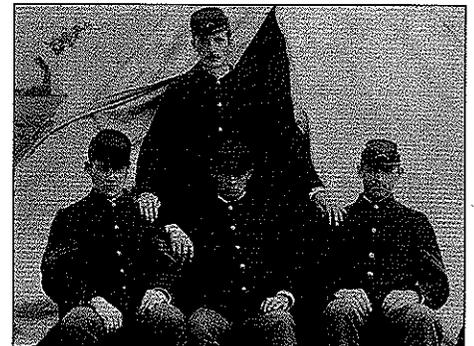
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*Cover photo:
Douglas C-47 Skytrain transports
towing gliders over Eindhoven at
the beginning of the Allied liberation
of the Netherlands.*



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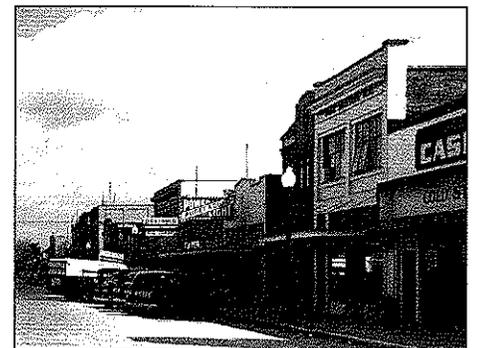
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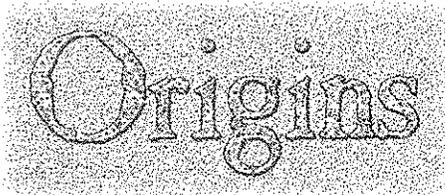
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This Issue

In this issue we feature two recent college graduates, Abram Van Engen and Peter Bratt, both with talent and ability for historical research, analysis, and writing. The latter is now in graduate school and the former is planning to attend in the fall. The fourth article is part of Dr. Harry Boonstra's ongoing research that compares some of the major Reformed denominations in North America whose roots reach back to the Netherlands. ☪

Available On-Line

For those of you interested in genealogical research, our website now links to several online data bases in the Netherlands that contain birth, marriage and death data. Genlias covers all of the country save for the province of South Holland, Tresoar is specific to the province of Friesland and is more extensive than what is in Genlias. The

third, and most detailed, is a fully linked website with information on 30,000 plus families in the municipality of Ferwerderadeel, located in the northwestern part of the province of Friesland. We have also added to our website a list of marriages performed by Revs. Douwe J. Vander Werp and Roelof T. Kuiper while pastors in Graafschap (Michigan) Christian Reformed Church. We have completed adding images to our database of ministers which now has images linked to 90 percent of the 2,826 ministers. Our new translation of the Christian Reformed Church's synodical acts, 1857-1880, has been electronically published in a PDF format. All of these resources can be found on our main site at www.calvin.edu/hh/ ☪

News from the Archives

We are pleased to report that the *Historical Directory of the Christian Reformed Church* has been published by the denomination's Historical Committee. Among other things, the 511-page book lists all ministers and the congregations back to 1857. *Origins* readers are eligible for a 20 percent discount off the retail price of \$34.95 (see the book notes section). We have completed organizing 24

cubic feet of records for the collection for Calvin Theological Seminary and 18 cubic feet from the Social Research Center were added to the Calvin College collection. We also processed records from the General Secretary's office of the Christian Reformed Church, collections from such various related groups as Dynamic Youth Ministries, Christian Reformed Conference Grounds, and the Committee for Women in the Christian Reformed Church. We also arranged approximately 35 cubic feet of records from various Christian schools and other agencies related to the Dutch in North America.

Archival records from 99 CRCNA congregations (nine more than last year) were received, microfilmed and returned. We also microfilmed the records of three Christian school organizations. The microfilm copies are stored in our vault and are available only with the written permission of the individual congregation or school. The film copies are crucial given the frequency that we hear of missing or destroyed records.

We have completed keying-in cataloging data of about 7,000 of our audio recordings (reel-to-reel, cassette, and compact disk formats) into a

campus-wide database. This database, shared with the Seminary, College Audio Visual and Conferences and Campus Events departments, is available for searching via web access at <http://www.calvin.edu/admin/av/titles/index.htm>.

When *Origins* was founded twenty-two years ago, one of its mandates was to publish books in addition to the magazine. A number of short run titles have been produced during the past years but now we are formalizing this process a bit with the creation of a board of editors, composed of scholars in the area of Dutch-American studies. The goal of this effort is to raise funds so that we can publish book-length manuscripts with all the proceeds above expenditures from sales used to fund future publications. We will report regularly on the progress of this exciting endeavor.☪

Staff

Richard Harms continues as the curator of the Archives, housed in Heritage Hall at Calvin College. Other staff members are: Hendrina Van Spronsen, office manager; Wendy Blankespoor, librarian and cataloging archivist; Boukje Leegwater, departmental assistant; Dr. Robert Bolt, field

agent and assistant archivist; Nateisha De Cruz and Kay Bykerk are our student assistants. We continued to be well served by our corps of volunteers including: Floyd Antonides, Rev. Henry DeMots, Ed Gerritsen, Fred Greidanus, Hendrick Harms, Dr. Henry Ippel, Helen Meulink, Rev. Gerrit Sheeres, and Rev. Leonard Sweetman.☪

Endowment Fund

The Friends of the Archives Endowment Fund increased in value for the first time in almost two years. In January 2004 the endowment fund's market value stood at \$257,250. This level is slightly higher than where it was two years ago. Although some of this increase resulted from improvement in the stock market, another component came from the generosity of *Origins* readers who contributed above the \$10 annual subscription. We are grateful for this support from our readers.☪



Richard H. Harms

Neal and Jacoba Mast Life in Occupied Holland

Abram Van Engen

“It was hopeless to fight them. It was blitzkrieg. We weren’t prepared.” Neal Mast looks down at his hands on the table. The whirring tape records the silence — a silence amplified by recollections of the airplanes he has just described roaring through a cloudless sky, the barrage of bombs he woke to watch as it fell on his country and its neutrality. He is eighty-one and looking back.

At 1:30 A.M., 10 May 1940, squadrons of German aircraft passed over Holland, heading west. By 2:45 they were gone — no bombs dropped, no war begun. The Dutch government hoped the Germans might be flying on to England. Instead, the Germans wheeled about over the North Sea. At 4:00 A.M. they attacked. Neal watched from the family home in Capelle aan den Yssel, about 10 miles outside of Rotterdam.

“We were just kids,” he explains. “When they came it was early in the morning and we were all surprised. We just stood there gaping at all those airplanes when they came over. Then, a couple hours later, they bombed Rotterdam. If they had had a machine gun they could have killed us all as they flew over. We were just that ignorant, that green. We didn’t see the

danger, of course, until later.”

“Suddenly, the Germans were all over the place,” he says. His wife Jacoba clarifies, “They were in the country already. *Landverraaders*,” (betrayers) she says. “There was betrayal. The government knew it.



German paratroopers invading the Netherlands on 10 May 1940.
Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

Some of the betrayers had Germans in their houses. Then that morning came and the Germans just walked out and conquered the city. And they came from those big ships on the Rhine.”

The Germans had not attacked according to expectations. The city was taken in part by Germans already encamped, in part by Germans flown in. Instead of bombing airfields, the Germans captured them — blowing out the hangars and anti-aircraft weapons that surrounded landing strips. On 10 May the first day of the war, the German air force made 240 landings and deployed five thousand soldiers at Waalhaven, Rotterdam’s

Abram Van Engen is a 2003 graduate of Calvin College with a double major in English and Philosophy. He will begin PhD work this fall at Northwestern University in English, studying 20th century literature and literary theory.

airfield, ten to fifteen miles from the Mast home.¹ Rather than battling their way through heavily fortified lines along the border, German paratroopers landed far behind the border fortifications.

“My mother was scared,” Neal says. “She was walking back and forth in the house. My oldest brother, Harry, 21 years old, was in the service. He was not right in Rotterdam, but my oldest brother-in-law, Pete, was right in the fight, right in the line of fire at the Maas River. He survived it, but he could tell stories. He saw his comrades killed next to him. They both came out all right, but they saw people killed, comrades shot, people shooting at them from the windows.”

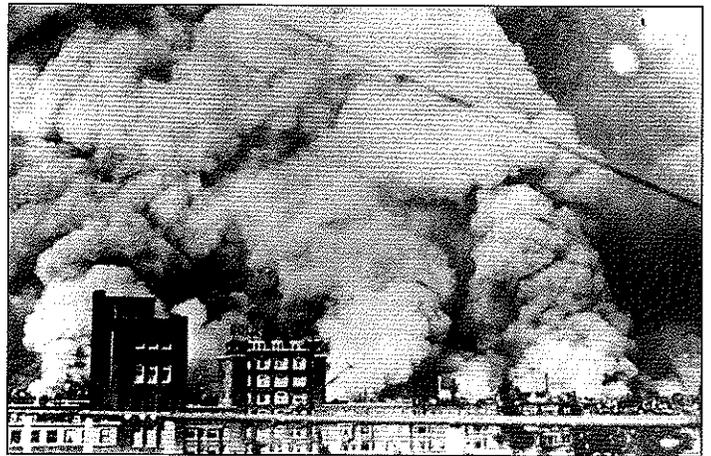
The initial wave of attack had awakened seventeen-year-old Neal and his future wife Jacoba Vander Linden, a baker’s daughter living four miles away. Four days later, they were surprised again — this time by a mass exodus from the city. “It was an awful sight with all the smoke.” In a strategy

similar to the Allied bombing of Dresden, or Hiroshima, or Nagasaki several years later, German leaders had decided to wipe out a city, threaten others, and thereby force a surrender.

“They really bombed the oldest part of Rotterdam,” Neal says. But his wife describes it more accurately, “The heart of the city.” Kralingen was an area east of the city; a heart that would lose twenty-one churches and four hospitals. “They bombed it fiercely, but the fire was worse. The fire destroyed more yet than the bombs.”

“When the Germans started bombing Rotterdam, my parents opened the door of our home to all those people

fleeing, and that night we had probably forty or fifty people sleeping on the floor. There was also a Jewish family that had a Model A car. I used his car to haul people out, just from the edge of the city. I brought them to safety and then went back again. I did that two or three times, and then the third time, when I was almost home, a plane flew over and dropped a bomb

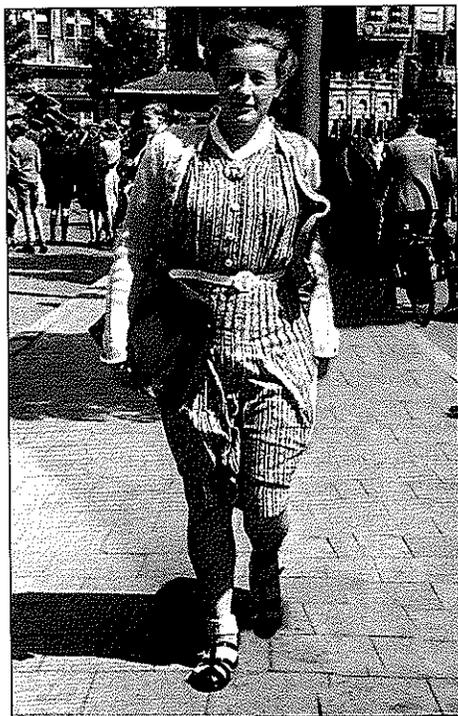


Rotterdam ablaze 10 May 1940. The fires resulting from the exploding bombs destroyed more than did the actual explosions. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.



(left) Bombing damage after the fires were extinguished in Rotterdam. The St. Laurens Kerk, upper left, suffered less damage than surrounding buildings.

(above) When the rubble was removed, only the shell of the St. Laurens Kerk remained. It was later extensively rebuilt. The German bombing destroyed the “heart of the city.” Photos: Archives, Calvin College.



Jacoba vander Linden in 1943. Photo: Mast Family.

right in the middle of the street — that was, say, 1000 feet in front of me — and there was a big crater, a big hole. That scared the daylights out of me. I turned around right then and went back home and gave him the keys to his car and said, ‘That’s enough for me.’ ”

The fleeing families spent only one night in the Mast home. In the morning, when the bombing had ceased and a sudden calm spread, the former city-dwellers did not return to their city. They spread out from village to village in the countryside, wherever they had relatives, wherever they could go. “Their houses were not there anymore,” Jacoba explains. Nine-hundred civilians lost their lives and many more were injured, but in one afternoon of bombing and fire, 78,000 lost their homes.²

“Rotterdam,” Neal shakes his head, “that was a lesson. Then the government gave up.” At 4:50 P.M., Tuesday, 14 May, General Henri Gerard Winkelman, supreme commander of

Dutch land and sea forces, told his soldiers to lay their weapons down.

For the Netherlands, World War II meant five days of fighting and five years of occupation, characterized by an ever decreasing supply of food, particularly in the larger cities. Dutch agricultural product was designated for export to Germany. Survival required good fortune and imagination, using what they had to stretch what they could get. As the war continued and the Germans remained, food became scarcer each year. At first people could get along fairly normally. But as each year passed, rations decreased, and as the food decreased, transportation became all the more necessary. Transportation enabled one to cover a greater distance in the search for food. Yet the Germans confiscated not only trains and automobiles, but even bicycles. As a result, in occupied Netherlands wheels meant food — transportation was survival. And the Mast family was unique in that they owned a truck. Much of Neal Mast’s wartime survival story centers on that truck. They ate because they drove. More importantly, because they drove, others ate as well.

“Because my dad was in the greenhouse business,” Neal begins, “we had a truck going to the market, and we had all these places to go where we could find some food from farmers — wheat and potatoes and all kinds of dairy products. Once we were out in the truck, we could always find something to bring back. We had to be sneaky — we had to hide it — but we always had something.

Though their fortune required furtive daring, Neal and his family, because they gathered the food, were a bit more fortunate than those who awaited it. “When we came by the farmers, we could always get ten or



Neal Mast and his younger siblings, circa 1943. Photo: Mast Family.

twenty pounds of wheat which we hid away under the potatoes. That’s how we stayed alive.”

But the truck also meant an increase of interaction with the Germans. And though the Masts had documents indicating they could legally own and operate their truck, still the Germans took what they wanted, and they wanted trucks. More important than simple ownership, the family needed to keep the use of the truck. In a country occupied with German soldiers unrestrained by any higher law, the truck could be confiscated or held up or emptied out at any moment.

Dick, Neal’s younger brother by one year, was invaluable to the movement and maintenance of the truck for one simple reason: he knew German. “That was a great help. He always went with two of us to haul potatoes from the farmers. We’d have to go across the Maas River in Rotterdam, and that was a busy checkpoint, and there were more places where we had to go through German checkpoints. But because he could speak fluent German, he always got us through all right.”

Fuel was another problem. Initially gasoline was replaced by natural gas. “We had eleven cylinders of gas under the truck’s bed,” Neal notes. “We had

to go to the gas factory at night and we could fill them up with 120 pounds pressure. Then we could drive 50-75 miles with it before we had to go back and refill it. If the Germans came and took the truck, Dick and I closed nine of the eleven cylinders — we could close them real tight — and we removed the cap and we left two of them open. When the Germans drove away in our truck, they ran out of gas in no time, of course. Then Dick would go to the commandant and give him some kind of story, and he would get the truck back, since without fuel it was useless to the Germans. They couldn't figure it out. They were not mechanical at all."

Once the natural gas supply was cut off, an alternative fuel source was found. "The nicest part," says Neal, "is that we had a bus company right behind the greenhouses and they had a whole set of gas generators mounted on trailers that could be hauled behind



The Mast house in Capelle aan den Yssel, outside Rotterdam. Photo: Mast Family.

vehicles. Since none of those buses operated anymore, all of those gas generators just sat there. The man from the bus company said, 'I will fix you up and I will give you men to help run it, but try to get something for me to eat too.'

"There was a kettle," Neal explains, "and there was a bed of charcoal, and you lit it and then you put all the pieces of wood on top of that in the kettle — that was 5-6 feet high and almost three feet across — and it had a cover on top where you fed in the

wood. That wood lay on the red hot charcoal and as that wood lay on it the gas was released from the wood by the heat from the charcoal. On the side of the kettle was a little flapper through which the vacuum of the motor drew the gaseous fumes into the carburetor — that's how it ran. It was a dirty business, of course. And after a while that engine was full of tar and had to be cleaned. But that is how transportation went.

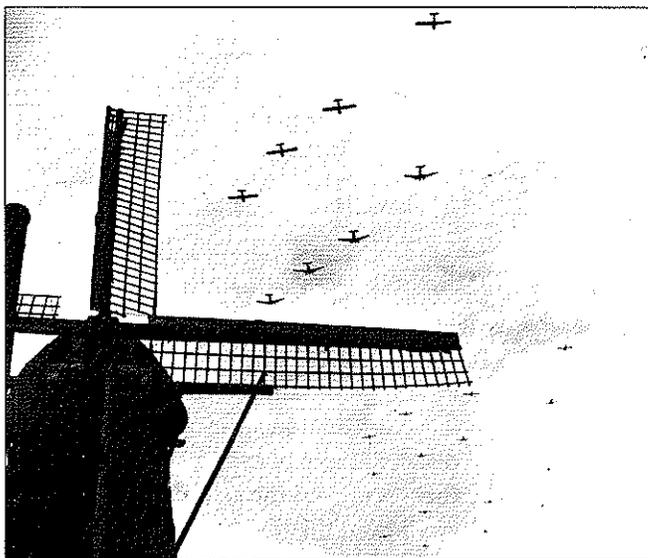
"Since we were one

of the few who still had a truck with a gas dolly, the mayor of the city asked if we were willing to start hauling potatoes from the farmers for the public kitchens." Neal then helped gather potatoes from farmers and they were distributed from the family's barn. Every person who came," says Neal, "you gave them each a pound, which was weighed, of potatoes for each member

of the family. And a whole row of people waited — doctors and even a minister, and well-to-do people." The Masts did what the nation was doing. They offered what they had — mainly transportation — to a nationwide service system of public kitchens — a system which in Amsterdam alone fed 160,000 daily.³ And that is how we went to get all those potatoes. But," he adds, "we got a little wheat too."

The truck was used to haul more than just potatoes. "Well my dad was very strong on using manure in the greenhouses instead of fertilizer," he begins. "There was a large cattle market once a week in Rotterdam — where the cows were sold — this was toward the beginning of the war. Every Wednesday I had to go and get that manure. We could get it for nothing, but it was a lot of work, of course. And then I came home with a load of manure and a canvas over it.

"Once, on the opposite side of the street, there were German soldiers marching and singing. And behind them was a commandant on a horse. The truck we had, of course, was an old truck. It needed fixing up all the time. The muffler was gone and we couldn't replace it, so we just welded the pipe all the way to the back end of the truck instead of having a muffler. So it had a nice *rump* to it." He smiles



Douglas C-47 Skytrain transports towing gliders (probably Waco CG-4As) over Eindhoven at the beginning of the Allied liberation of the Netherlands. The C-47, also called the "Gooney Bird," was a modification of the civilian DC-03 airliners. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

widely and begins to chuckle. “If you turn the key on and off, there was a BANG! especially in the pipe. I couldn’t withstand the temptation. When we were in the middle of the troop of Germans I turned the key off quick. BANG! Then that horse reared on its hind legs. The officer came galloping toward me and he stopped. He slapped me in the face. My dad was with me and he was as white as a piece of paper and he took out the family picture and showed it to the officer. He talked to my dad — he didn’t understand a word of it — but he saw that my dad was pretty nervous. I got off. I could have been killed right there.

“Really,” he says, “we came through the war well compared with so many other families. They suffered a lot more than we did. We saw people drop dead from hunger.”

The “Hunger Winter” of 1944-1945 has been described as “the most serious famine of World War II that occurred in Western Europe.”⁴ “At the beginning of October, the official individual food ration in occupied Holland amounted to 1,400 calories. Three months later it had dropped to 500 . . . 5,000 Dutchmen died of hunger and cold . . .”⁵

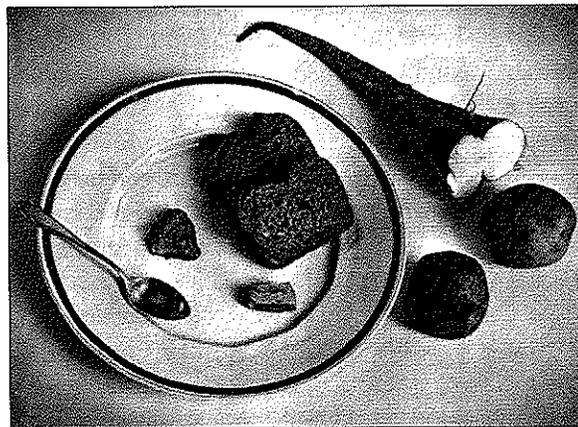
“Near one farmer,” Neal says, “there was also a baker, and every time I went for a load of potatoes I stopped there and bought two loaves of whole wheat bread for twenty-five guilders each (about \$6.00 each before inflation). Two of them fit right behind the seat in the truck. I did that quite a few times. Then one time I came to Rotterdam. Oudedyk was the name of the street. There was a whole bunch of people all around the sidewalk. Two people had collapsed from hunger. That I’ll never forget. I had two loaves of bread behind me and people were lying dead from hunger. That, I’ll never forget.”

“For most people life revolved

around two main thoughts: how to get something to eat and how to keep the men out of the clutches of the Germans.”⁶ Necessity drove the Dutch like a taskmaster to find solutions by any means. The Mast family was fortunate enough to have the truck to gather food. Jacoba’s family was not. “There were difficult things,” he says, “what to eat and all — but we were never hungry. My wife can’t say that. She is the daughter of a baker, and baking was pretty slim in the last year.”

“Very slim,” she affirms. “See, my dad did not believe in the black market. So he had customers, say, with big families, and he knew they did not get enough, so he gave something extra once in a while until there was nothing left to give. Then in the last half year — from, say, the winter of 1944 into the spring of 1945 — then we didn’t get anything either. We were hungry like the rest.”

“In that last year,” Neal jumps in,



The daily 665-calorie ration during the “Hunger Winter” of 1944-45. Photo: Holland and the Canadians, p. 55.

“after that last trip we made, until then, we did all right. The last time we hauled potatoes, we were in Rotterdam and we loaded up the potatoes. Then the Germans — two of them on motorbikes — stopped us. They brought us to the train depot to unload all the potatoes. They took our papers and said they would come back

in an hour to see that we had done it. As soon as they were gone, the station master came to us and said, ‘That stinking *mof*⁷ — why don’t you put them in the next [rail] car. They won’t know anyway.’ There were a lot of potatoes already in the car where the Germans wanted us to put ours. So the station master said, ‘If you put your load in this other car, I will see to it that it gets on the other side of the Maas where you can get them again. If you do that, then give my sister who lives there — I will contact her — give her a sack of potatoes too.’ We were young. That was the challenge, you know, to be a step ahead of them. So we did it. We worked real hard, and then we backed the truck up to that first car. Then the Germans came back and looked, and nothing happened. They gave the papers back. We went home empty. The next morning we went and got the potatoes out. But when we came home and we told my dad that story he said, ‘That’s it. That’s enough.’ He was scared that something worse could have happened.

“But at the end — into the spring of 1945 — we had mainly sugar beets that we grated and then cooked to make sugar with pressure. Sugar beets,” he muses, “there was some nutrition in that, some food value.” The entire nation learned about their value from the newspapers, which published accounts of the nutrition contained and how to get at

it. Unfortunately, one of the many disadvantages of eating sugar beets was that “it caused the sensation of having swallowed thistles.”⁸

In addition to eating sugar beets, the Mast family joined in another national food phenomenon. “We had a greenhouse and we grew flowers and tulip bulbs. At the end of the war,

when it was so bad, we dug the bulbs up — they had sprouted already — and then we sold them to a florist in Rotterdam. I forget now what he paid for them; say seven or ten cents a piece. And he ground up the bulbs and he baked loaves of bread from them — from tulip bulbs.” “And that was hardly edible,” Jacoba quickly qualifies. “Well,” says Neal, “it tasted awful of course, but there was some nutrition in it. People were desperate then. You got something in your stomach.”

Quickly, however, Neal restates that he was better off than most. He is not complaining. “The majority of the people, especially working people, had very little. They,” he pauses, “they suffered a lot more than we did.”

In addition to their concerns for food, the Dutch always had to be mindful of forced labor. “At the end,” says Neal, “when it started to pinch for the Germans, when they needed people to work in the factories, then all of a sudden they had *razia*. You know, they picked up men from the street, and they just put a whole troop off to Rotterdam and then in the ships and down the Rhine for the German factories.”

Just before Christmas in the final year of occupation, the Germans decreed that all Dutch men between the ages of sixteen and forty had to register in their hometown within three days. Even before then, German occupiers were free to pick up any Dutch man and send him off to a labor camp if he could not present the proper credentials. “Terror was once more the ‘order of the day.’” No young man was really safe in those



Jubilant citizens greet the liberating forces in Eindhoven, in the southern Netherlands. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

months; he could be arrested at any time, at his home or on the streets. If he could not present an exemption, he was either deported to Germany or put to work on the fortifications in the eastern Netherlands.⁹ “When they came,” Neal says, “there was always somebody who saw them coming, and we warned each other by word of mouth. Sometimes they came all of a sudden, too. But I had an *ausweiss* — papers — because I worked in the greenhouse for food production.”

There were occasions when the Germans surrounded the Mast home. “They came in and we were all sitting around the kitchen — my dad and three or four boys and my brother-in-law. Then my dad pulled a family picture out of his pocket to show that we were all family. In the back room I had my coat with my papers in it, and I had to show that. So I had to go out of the kitchen, and a German went along with a gun in my back. I showed him my papers and that was all right, so he let me go.”

In the final year of occupation — especially after the formal decree of

registration — no one was safe at all. “All the young men and not-so-young men,” Jacoba says. “It was forced labor — labor camps.” “They took everyone, *ausweiss* or no *ausweiss*,” Neal says. On occasion Neal himself had to hide. “We had a big kitchen, and we had a plank in the floor with a carpet over it. We could quick pull that away and we had a crawl space underneath. We were in that crawl space for many hours when the Germans were looking for men. They went house to house.”

“My oldest brother Harry was picked up once. They took him to Rotterdam. And then my brother Dick, who knew German, signed a paper — a false signature — and he went to the commandant for our brother’s sake and gave a whole story that he was self-employed, needed for the food production and so forth. Dick got him out. With a false signature of a German commandant, he got him out. Ja, he wasn’t scared either,” Neal says proudly. “He wasn’t scared at all. He could lie like he believed it himself.”

“There was quite a few in the resistance,” he says, “and they did a lot of good. But also, they did a lot of harm too. For one example, in Rotterdam in the Coolsingel — that was one of the main streets — the underground killed a German officer. As a reprisal the Germans just took ten people, ten or twelve, whoever just happened to be there, and shot them and laid them on the sidewalk for people to see. They left them there for two days for everyone to see. Or,” he continues, “if they [the underground] hit the train when the ammunition

came over they derailed it. There was a brand new farm house, a beautiful building, and the Germans burned it down. They killed the owner, who just happened to live there. They never could find the person who derailed the train, so that is how the Germans handled it."

Neal Mast and his family did not join the underground. "Well," he says, "we saw the danger of it — the good and the bad. And we were active with food distribution, too. We did our part for the population to help everybody through the war." Yet they didn't have to go far to find those they knew had joined. "I knew a lot of people in there," he tells me.

Eventually the long-anticipated liberation came. "Nobody could believe it," Jacoba begins. "Everybody was so happy. And then, during the evening, around 7:00, I heard a lot of noise outside, and there were a lot of people, and I heard them hollering and screaming. I was on the second floor and I looked down the street and here came a bunch of girls, maybe fifteen or sixteen or so, and they all had their heads shaven and

painted red, and they were all tied to each other by a rope around the neck. Those were all the girls who had been friends with the German soldiers. Those who were friends with the Germans, well, you know, they were outcasts."

"That was a really — a really ugly sight." Neal notes. "You know, when people take the justice system in their own hands, that is what that was. There's a name for that, but I can't think of it. I thought it went too far. That was ugly. Those girls, they deserved something, but not that kind of thing." Jacoba is a little less sympathetic. "Well, they lived with the Germans, and they did not go hungry. They got from the Germans what had been confiscated from others, a bag of potatoes or whatever else."

"But really," Neal says, returning to the good news of the liberators, "when the Canadians came and drove the Germans back, then the first thing we saw were whole columns with artillery and army trucks, military equipment all down the street. The whole population was waving and jubilant. They were our rescuers. That was impressive. You know, we have seen those Germans marching and oppressing everything for five years. But then we could see the difference — different material, different uniforms. That was quite a relief when we saw that."

But amid the ugliness and cruelty of the war experience, Neal and Jacoba met. "We met when I hauled potatoes," Neal says. "She lived about 4-5

miles away from where I lived." Jacoba was among those who lined up to get potatoes being distributed from the Mast barn, where Neal first saw her. They did not meet or speak, however, until the incident of the punished girls. Jacoba recalls, "I went with my younger sister. My parents let us go out for a change because before, when the Germans ran things, it was never safe to leave home. But now with the Canadians we could finally go out. So we followed the townspeople, and there were — oh, I don't know how many people, we were just crammed in. I looked around. I thought it feels just like somebody is looking at me. And that was him."

Neal and Jacoba married in 1946 and immigrated to Grand Rapids in 1948. Neal and Jacoba still live in Grand Rapids, but they make sure to visit the Netherlands at least once a year.✻

Endnotes

1. Walter Maass, *The Netherlands at War: 1940-1945* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1970), 33.
2. *Ibid*, 40.
3. *Ibid*, 208.
4. *Ibid*, 205.
5. *Ibid*, 212-3.
6. Cornelia Fuykschot, *Hunger in Holland: Life During the Nazi Occupation* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1995), 85.
7. A derogatory term for Germans, implying they were crude, uneducated, loud, and unkempt.
8. Maass, *The Netherlands at War*, 208.
9. *Ibid*, 214.

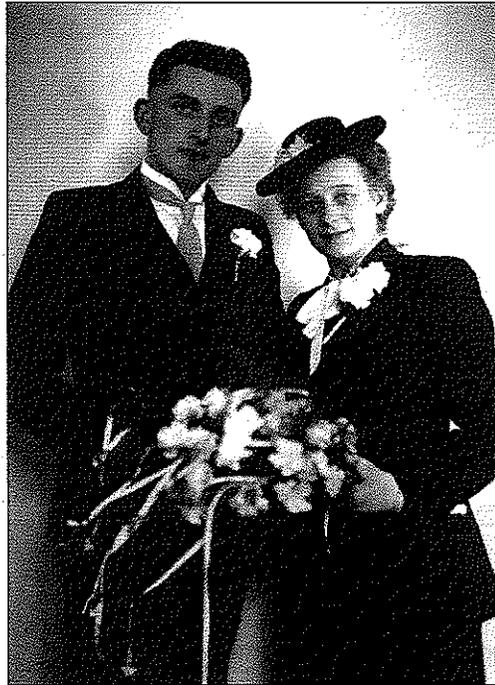


The citizens of Leende, south of Eindhoven, responding to their liberation from privations of the occupation. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

Emigration

Abram Van Engen

Following WWII a large number of people emigrated from the Netherlands. A number of studies have examined the various causes of this migration. Fewer in number are the personal stories, the process by which a family decided it was time to pack up and leave, and the often harrowing



Neal and Jacoba on their wedding day in 1946.
Photo: Mast family.

experience of actually doing so. This is the story of Neal and Jackie Mast. Married in 1946, they worked in the greenhouses of Neal's father, trying to make a living during the aftermath of WW II. For two years they worked hard but to no avail. One of the primary causes for the financial difficulties of the Mast family in Holland was the government. In response to the crisis of the economic depression and the new need for reconstruction after the war, the Dutch government "actively made its influence felt in most social spheres."¹ "[I]ncreasing post-war government intervention in almost all areas of society" resulted in voluminous restrictions.²

"The last two years I was in Holland," Neal explains, "we had to have a separate license for every aspect of the business — a license to grow flowers, another to grow vegetables, one to grow in cold greenhouses, another to grow in warm ones. When I rented a greenhouse from my dad right after the war, men came around collecting donations for Arnhem, a town in the south of Holland hit hard by the war. Many homes in Arnhem had all their windows blown out by the bombing. So businessmen went to greenhouses. We had loose windows in old wooden frames covering each greenhouse, and many of the frames we used were beginning to rot. The businessmen sat down with my dad and said, 'If you let us use three thousand windows, we can temporarily enclose homes. Then, as soon as there is new glass available, we will give you back three thousand windows in brand new frames. In the meantime, we will pay you rent for your glass.' Now, my dad owned the greenhouses — I just rented from him — so he could do what he wanted with the windows. The proposal appealed to him. He agreed. Of the six thousand windows I had, three thousand were taken away. I had just the frame of the greenhouse left."

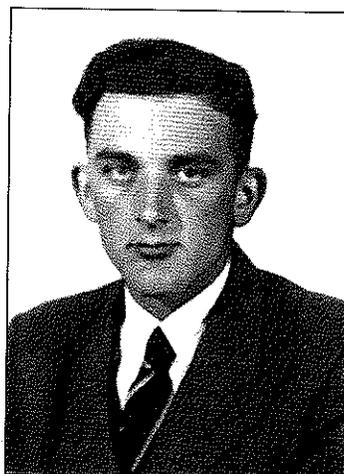
"Still that didn't mean I couldn't grow. I put chrysanthemums in the windowless greenhouse — cut flowers — with the idea that if the tomatoes were harvested just before the frost, I could take the three thousand windows from the one greenhouse and cover the other so as to keep it heated for the flowers — so I could harvest

them later. But my dad had a license to grow chrysanthemums only on open ground, not under cover. So when I had the windows transferred, the police showed up. We had no valid license. I had taken a chance, and was caught. They fined me 1,500 guilders. I couldn't come up with the money. My dad and I went to the main office in The Hague to plead my case, but they wouldn't let me off. On top of that, I wasn't allowed to harvest the chrysanthemums. I had to destroy the entire crop, and I ended up having to borrow money to pay the fine. That was the last straw, the final push. After that, emigration looked good."

By 1946, 22 percent of the Dutch population expressed a preference for emigration; by 1948, the percentage had risen to 32.³ Several factors contributed to what has been termed an "emigration psychosis" following the Second World War.⁴ A common perception of overpopulation and bleak employment prospects, combined with memories of the depression, drove many Dutch into desiring a new life in a new country.⁵ Four years after the Masts left, one author could still assert, "On every level of social intercourse in the Netherlands today, emigration is a subject of interest."⁶ The war had devastated the Netherlands:

After the liberation the general situation in the Netherlands had sunk to an alarmingly low level. Enormous state debts, great war damage, a worn-out population, a building deficit of five years, enormous economic losses in Indonesia and the potential loss of Germany as an economic hinterland all helped to crush the country.⁷

Four months before Neal and Jackie finally packed up and left, Dutch Prime Minister Willem Drees gave a kind of "State of the Union Address" in the Second Chamber of the States-General. He said, among other things:



Neal Mast when they emigrated to the United States. Photo: Mast family.

There is still great material distress and a moral depression has not yet been entirely averted. Many people find that their expenditure for bare necessities is out of proportion to their earnings. . . . Furthermore, the economic situation is in reality far worse than people on the whole realize. We cannot maintain the standard of living we have attained, and which many still feel to be inadequate, by ourselves.⁸

Although the incident with the chrysanthemums convinced Neal and Jackie of the need for emigration, the idea for emigration did not arise from economic setbacks. Emigration first was presented as an option through an advertisement blitz beginning shortly after the war. "After the war, emigration really started to open up," Neal says. "It was publicized more and more, especially emigration to Canada. A lot of films advertised the country and, of course, when it was pictured like that, it looked like heaven on earth — not just the opportunities but the beauty of the land. We started to think, 'Emigration — that's how we'll get out. That's how we'll start again.' That advertising really affected us. And when we looked to emigrate, we looked to Canada first."

But the Masts did not go to Canada. They had insiders' information. "I had

an uncle, Dominie Cornelis Smits, who preached in Grand Rapids three months before he returned to the Netherlands. When he heard that Jackie and I, along with my brother Harry, were planning to emigrate to Canada, he came to visit my parents. He said, 'No, don't go to Canada. In Canada, you have to do too much pioneering, living in the boonies somewhere.'

"The trouble was," Neal continued, "to go to the States you had to have a sponsor, and we, of course, didn't know anyone in the States. But my uncle saved us again. He wrote a letter to his congregation in Grand Rapids and, for the dominie's nephew, sponsors came forward willing to pledge financial assistance for up to five years." The Masts also had to be fit into the US quota system which, since 1929, allowed only 3,316 Hollanders to immigrate annually.⁹

"In addition," Neal says, "we needed permission from the Dutch. So my brother and I went to the counsel in Rotterdam to register." Neal and Harry had to receive permission to emigrate from a government that viewed emigration strictly in terms of employment. In the immediate post-war era, "Emigration could not be allowed to endanger [the] reconstruction."¹⁰ "[W]orkers whose skills were deemed essential to the reconstruction of the Netherlands were initially encouraged to remain in the land of their birth."¹¹ Neal, however, worked in agriculture and "agrarian workers, especially farmers' sons, constituted the only category whose emigration was encouraged from the start."¹² "Farmers were in surplus."¹³ Land was limited, particularly after German forces salted great tracts of it, making it unusable for years. One study at the time estimated that "12,254 new jobs in other sectors of the economy will have to be found annually for males in agriculture."¹⁴

Because of this, the Dutch government was almost eager to get rid of its agrarian males: “[T]he commission set as its goal during the first four years the annual emigration of 15,000 males in agriculture.”¹⁵ Thus, when Neal applied for emigration, he found

arrived, they were homesick, one leaned on the other, and soon they had to return.”

“But we left together,” Jackie says. “And we left with no money at all. It all happened so fast — in a period of only three or four months.”

elsewhere. Otherwise, they stayed where they were.”¹⁶ But Neal and Jackie left. They had a confidence founded on nothing but their dreams — a confidence that required moving from decision to action, packing up their belongings, booking a passage, and saying farewell. “I was kind of cocky when I left,” Neal says. “I told myself, ‘If that land is really so good, I’d have to be pretty bad to fail. It will probably take some adjustment, but I will get through it and I will rise. I will make something of myself.’ And,” he smiles, “I would never go back in a greenhouse again.”

“We booked passage with the Holland-America Line,” Neal continues, “but the workers went on strike in Hoboken, New Jersey, where the ships docked, so the date kept getting postponed. We waited and we waited, and finally we switched to a company in Rotterdam. They told us we could leave from Antwerp, Belgium, on a rebuilt troop ship called the *Ernie Pyle*.” “On the Black Hawk line,” Jackie adds.¹⁷

The Masts shipped their furniture ahead to Harry, Neal’s oldest brother who had left three months earlier. On 15 December Neal and Jackie left. “My parents hired a bus and we packed the whole family in there — parents and siblings and in-laws and friends. At the time Jackie was pregnant with Joyce and we had two small children in tow: Andy was two and Rozelind was eight months old.”

Yet Neal and Jackie faced a problem they did not expect: Belgium and Holland still imposed a curfew on border crossings. All family and friends had to be back in the Netherlands by 9:00 P.M. “That was no big deal, we thought; the boat was supposed to arrive at noon. We arrived in Antwerp and the boat wasn’t there. It was sailing from Hamburg, and somewhere along the way it was delayed. So there we were, pregnant,



A 1985 photos of the vander Linden house. Photo: Mast family.

himself scooted to the front of the list.

“Our turn came up pretty quick,” he says, “and all of a sudden we had to decide.”

“Oh, and that is not easy,” Jackie understates.

“My parents wanted us to stay,” Neal explains. “My dad would keep us there at any cost. But we were young. We were stubborn. We were impatient for a change. The markets, of course, would change; the country would recover. But when you are young, you see only the circumstances that immediately surround you, and what surrounded us we did not like. We said, ‘Let’s get out of here.’”

“And we could leave only because we *both* wanted to,” Jackie clarifies.

“That’s true,” Neal says. “It is a decision you both must want together. In some families, one wanted to stay, but they still left. Then when they

“At the time,” Neal says, “I had just bought several truckloads of manure and spaded it into the ground. My money was stuck there. My dad would take it over, but he didn’t want it. He wanted me. What other money we had we couldn’t take; the government wouldn’t let us. So instead, we paid to take our furniture along — that was allowed. We hired a company to pack our oak furniture in a big crate and ship it to the States. Aside from that, we were broke. We emigrated with a destination and a sponsor and a dream — and that was it.”

Neal and Jackie emigrated in mid-December 1948, at the height of frenzied interest in emigration. Despite the frenzy, however, most would-be emigrants remained at home. “Most Hollanders who thought of emigrating had to believe that their socioeconomic aspirations could be better achieved

with two small children, saying good-bye to everyone we knew and huddling alone on a crowded dock without a ship in sight. That was hard."

"The worst of it was when I said good-bye to my dad," Neal continues. "He started crying. I had never seen him cry like that before." Jackie echoes softly, "My dad cried as well."

Without a boat in sight, food became an immediate concern. Jackie begins, "They had told us — and I specifically asked — that the boat would be leaving at noon. Rozie was eight months old and I said, 'How about food for the baby? Do I have to take that along?' 'No, that was not necessary,' they said. 'The boat would have everything we would need.' The baby had the last bottle — and no boat. Thankfully, Rozie slept almost the whole time." "I had some change with me," Neal jumps in, "just a little bit of silver. It wasn't Belgian money, but the vender took it anyway for a couple bananas we fed to Andy and Rozelind. Still, they needed more."

When the boat finally arrived, it was after midnight. "We boarded and Jackie went in search of milk. Of course, we couldn't speak a word of English and none of the crew could speak Dutch." "So I just showed a steward the baby bottle," Jackie picks up. "He understood enough to lead me to the kitchen, but then he left. In the kitchen, I had to point to what I needed. They showed me around until we hit on it. And boy, was the baby hungry then!"

To add to the unpleasantness, when Neal and Jackie boarded the *Ernie Pyle*, they were assigned to different rooms. Because it had been a troopship, sleeping quarters divided passengers according to gender; all children went with their mothers. "Neal went with the men," Jackie says, "and they led me to a room with another mother and her two kids."

The Ernie Pyle

One of fifteen ships, designated C4-S-A3 class, built as military transports beginning in late 1944. She was launched by the Kaiser Company Inc. shipyard in Vancouver, Washington, on 25 June 1945. An accomplished engineer during WWII, Henry J. Kaiser applied continuous-flow manufacturing to shipbuilding. During the war years his yards produced just less than 1,500 vessels, most notably Liberty Ships, which were smaller than the C4-S-A3 class.

Ernie Pyle was named for a well-known WWII correspondent who had been killed on the Pacific island of Ie Shima on 18 April 1945, at the age of forty-four. The ship was 523 feet long, had a beam of 71 feet, and a top speed of 16 knots. At 12,420 gross tons, she was fitted with accommodations for 3,800 troops. After the war she was refitted for 869 passengers. Chartered jointly to United States Lines and American Scantic, she sailed between Hamburg and New York from 1947 through early 1949. In March 1949 she was returned to the US Maritime Commission and mothballed until 1965 when she was sold to Central Gulf SS Co., of New Orleans and rebuilt as an 11,021-ton cargo ship renamed *Green Lake*. She was scrapped in Taiwan in 1978.

The women's rooms were cramped. "I had one side and the other mother had the other side. On the top bunk, I pushed Rozie toward the wall and I lay in front of her so that if the boat rocked she wouldn't roll out. I put Andy on the bottom bunk; that way if he did roll out, he wouldn't fall so far."

Meanwhile, in the bow of the ship, Neal watched as men turned green. "I slept where the troops had slept, packed into canvas hammocks stretched between metal poles," Neal describes, "each hanging two feet apart. I don't remember how many were stacked on top of each other — maybe five or six; I just remember being packed in and having to deal with the other men's smoke. A lot of people were seasick; that smoking didn't help." For many emigrants who faced a new and formidable anxiety, their smoking habits would become necessities. The means of smoking, however, were not always present: "Toward the end of the trip," one emigrant wrote of the smoking, "the

men were running out of matches. The smokers kept each other happy by passing on a butt to someone who was about to light a cigarette."¹⁸ Worse, however, than the smoking was the noise. One emigrant wrote of her troopship experience: "[T]he cramped quarters, the lack of privacy, the crying of infants, and moaning of sick adults interfered with restful sleep."¹⁹

The toilet facilities on the *Ernie Pyle* were no more luxurious than the sleeping conditions. The men's toilets were in the bottom of the ship's bow. Neal notes, "When we had rough weather, the front of the ship would go way up — maybe forty, fifty feet — and then come crashing down again. It is like using the restroom on a rollercoaster."

"Our toilets were not in the front like that," Jackie counters for the women, "so they didn't move as much. Still, they were not pleasant." One emigrant describes it vividly: "Five toilets, sinks and showers per eighty persons in one compartment with little ventilation were hardly adequate.

These few facilities also had to handle the many that were seasick, as well as the soiled diapers. Many complained of being sick just from the smell in those rooms.²⁰ Privacy was especially hard to come by. One emigrant woman wrote, “[The toilets] are like big jars all neatly in a row, separated by partial partitions with a flimsy curtain in front.”²¹ The same woman wrote, “I didn’t have the courage yesterday to wash myself, because everywhere you went there was vomit.”²²

“Three days we were at sea,” Neal says, “then we were hit by a terrible storm. The winds beat into us and the waves crashed over us and the rain kept coming. The boat hardly moved.” “It was not a big boat,” Jackie adds. “No, no. The *Ernie Pyle* was only half the size of a regular troop ship. So when the boat swooped to the top of a wave in that storm, the whole thing cracked and creaked and moaned. Each time we thought, ‘That’s it. This is the end.’

If you are a seaman you know the reality, but we were not seamen. We were from a greenhouse. Every moment we thought the boat would snap in two, especially when the propeller whirred up out of the water.” Neal adds, “The captain turned the engines down real low so that the screw wouldn’t spin itself to pieces in the air. But then we didn’t move. The boat just floated in the storm. It took us two days longer to reach New York.”

Another emigrant woman echoes the description: “It was an awful experience being tossed up and down on the waves, seeing clothes swinging

to and fro on the door while bracing yourself with your knees against the wooden bed boards. . . . Passengers were advised to hang onto heavy ropes fastened along halls and stairways, for a sudden move of the ship could throw you over.”²³

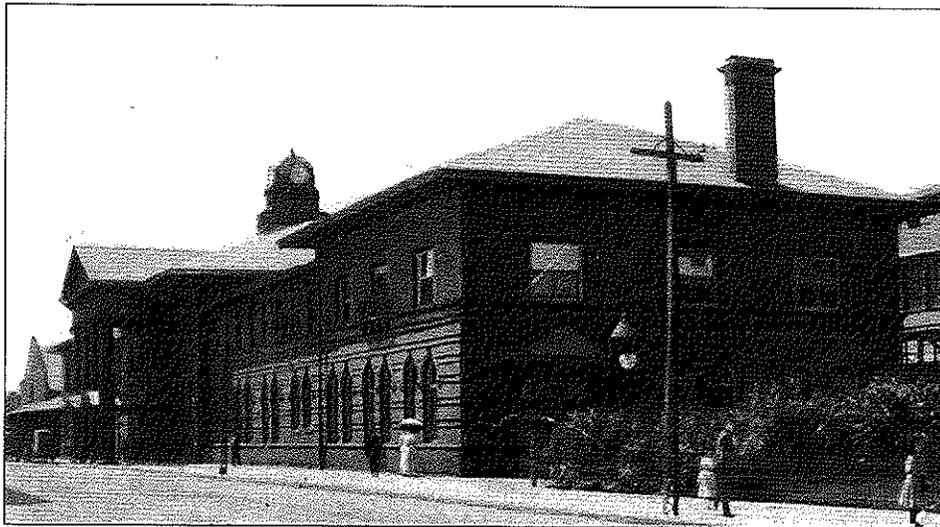
With so much movement and so much sickness, few ate the foreign, often spicy foods the crew prepared. “Ja no,” Neal says with disgust as if he were dismissing the food again. “I don’t remember at all what we were served, and I don’t want to. It certainly didn’t taste good.” “All I remember,” Jackie joins, “is that they put up rails on all the tables in the

unappetizing food, foreign music, and cramped quarters, the emigrants passing from a former home to a new one were often almost overwhelmed by the difficulty. “I know that at night, in the dark,” Neal says, “I went up to the deck and I had to hold myself with all my strength, both hands on the railing. The situation we were in — our new situation — hit us early, hit us immediately. We thought we had left home for good. And there you are for over a week on a boat where all you see is an endless stretch of water. The only thing you can do is think, muse. And as you muse, you begin to doubt. You start

to wonder, ‘Now, did I do the right thing? Was I stupid to do what I’ve done? What did we start for? Why did we begin?’ The whole trip was depressing.”

Arriving in New York did little to assuage the constant doubts. “We sailed right past the Statue,” Neal says. “That was very impressive.”

“Very impressive,” his wife echoes. “It was quite something to see after only water. But when we passed by the Statue, we were still dreaming. It was unreal. You think you are going for a better life, but then you stand there, all alone, in an unknown land. You start to wonder about all those nice stories that you heard. You begin to ask what the reality is. You realize, suddenly, that you had just thrown everything away. What little start we had in the Netherlands was broken off. All we had now was a future without a plan.” “Everything was



The Union Station in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The freight depot, where the Mast furniture was damaged, is at the far end of the building. Photo: From a postcard in the Archives, Calvin College.

storm. Then you had a bowl of soup or whatever, and it would slide around and everything would come out.” “Personally, I didn’t get seasick,” Neal says almost proudly. “But I was awful close.”

The music blaring from the various speakers scattered across the ship did not help to soothe their fears. “Everything was foreign to us,” Neal says. “I don’t remember what they played anymore — whatever was popular at the time — but it all sounded off pitch.”

Faced with the rough weather,

gone,” Jackie says as simply as she can. “Here you stand, two small children and another one soon to come, and in your mind you are thinking, ‘Where are we? Where are we going? How are we going to get there? What will we do when we arrive?’ You can’t go back.”

The *Ernie Pyle* docked briefly at Southampton on east Long Island. No passengers were permitted to leave. Others boarded, and a small boat then pattered up and led the *Ernie Pyle* to Ellis Island, where almost all immigrants disembarked.²⁴

“Oh, it was so big,” Jackie says. “SO big!” “They officialized us there — checking our papers, giving us a shot for smallpox, that kind of thing. We had good papers — green cards — but still you felt just like convicts.” “Just like cattle,” Jackie adds. “It was an assembly line,” Neal explains, his right hand drawing a zigzagged line across the table. “And 90 percent of the people didn’t know a word of English,” Jackie declares. “Everyone just pushing and shouting.” “But there was an order to it,” Neal counters. “It was crowded, but they had a system, and we made it through. I don’t remember if any of the officials spoke Dutch to us — I don’t think so — but the papers spoke for themselves.”

“After they let us through, we landed in Hoboken. Just as we came off the boat, I saw a man standing on the dock with all of our furniture. We figured it would already be in Grand Rapids, but because of the strike it was sitting on the dock in Hoboken. Still, at least, it had arrived.”

And it would seem that Neal and Jackie had arrived. They had survived several days of rough weather on a seemingly endless ocean, had been immunized and “officialized” and finally set down on stable ground, the mainland of the States. But Neal and Jackie were still on the



An aerial view of Grand Rapids about the time of the arrival of the Mast family. The Union Station is at the left just below the long train sheds. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

Atlantic coast; Grand Rapids lay over 600 miles away. Their immigrant passage was only partially complete.

“We took the train from New York to Grand Rapids, but that was not such an easy affair. I remember walking into Grand Central Station. Way up top on a platform an enormous organ spread out with a man playing at it and around him people were singing. It was not at all like the music of the boat. It was beautiful.” Neal and Jackie walked into Grand Central Station on Christmas day, and there they received their first gift in a new land — the presentation of a music so stunning its beauty would echo down in a memory fifty-five years old. “I remember that well,” Jackie muses.

“I was focusing only on how to find the right train,” Neal breaks in. “We couldn’t speak a word of English, of course, so the signs and the announcements didn’t mean a thing.

We had to find someone who knew.”

“Neal said to me, ‘Now you wait here. Don’t go away. Don’t move from this spot. I will go and find out where we have to be for the train.’ So then he left. I was so uncomfortable. I had been quite sick, and there I stood with two small children all alone. And I waited. And I waited. Neal, of course, didn’t realize how much time he was taking; he was busy trying to find help. But when you are just standing — just waiting — then you count every minute that goes by. I was so scared.”

“Finally,” Neal says, “I found a man to help us, and he told me that we had to hurry, so we flew back to Jackie and I grabbed her and we were off.”

“We ran.”

“The man lugged a suitcase to help with speed and we kept up as best we could.”

“But I got scared again,” Jackie

says. "I turned to Neal while we were rushing along, and I said, 'Does this guy really know where we have to be?' 'Ja, he knows exactly where we need to go,' Neal said. But still I didn't trust him. I said back to Neal, 'This guy doesn't know anything more than we do.' Just then, the man stopped and he turned around. In Dutch he said, 'Well, thank you lady, and here's your train.'" Jackie smiles, "That was a little embarrassing."

But the Masts didn't have time to ruminate on the embarrassment. "The train was already moving when we stepped on," Neal says. "We hopped in the last car, and I just had time enough to swing the suitcases up." Neal and Jackie took their seats and caught their breath. They had just made the train they needed. In their mind, they had virtually arrived. The train chugged nonchalantly through the countryside carrying an immigrant family between two homes — the one of their birth and upbringing and language and customs; the other, one which they did not know. "We rode through the night and arrived the morning of the next day," Neal says. "It must have been fourteen or fifteen hours."

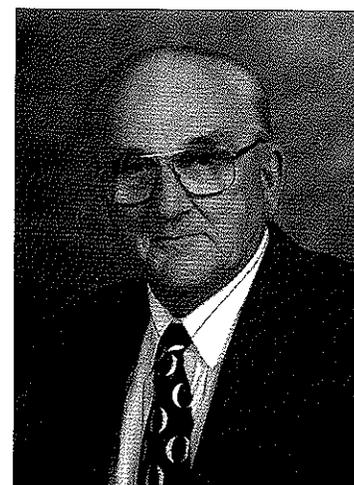
"Toward the end, the conductor of the train kept coming up to us and trying to tell us something. Of course, we couldn't understand him either. He was motioning and waving and doing all sorts of things, but we didn't get it."

"Then," says Neal, "we finally understood. In Jackson, Michigan, they were uncoupling the back part of the train. Only the front half was continuing to Grand Rapids; the back was headed somewhere else and, of course, because we had just barely caught the train, we were all the way in the back. So then we had to transfer everything from the back to the front and, like every other action along the way, we had to hurry."

"I took the kids," Jackie says, "and we passed through the train cars and to



Jackie Mast. Photo: Mast family.



Neal Mast, Photo: Mast family.

the front and we took our seats." Neal and Jackie separated once again. Once again she waited for him to show. "It took a while for Neal to get through to the front because he had to carry our suitcases in between those moving cars."

In the end, however, they made it. "We arrived in Grand Rapids on 26 December. It was gloomy. The whole sky was overcast and gray. The clouds hung low. Everything was covered with snow. I looked out the window and all I saw were the dark backsides of decrepit houses. I thought, 'Is this where we have come?' It looked so depressing, so uninviting."

"There was a foot of snow on everything — fresh snow — but that didn't make the place look any more light. Those homes looked so unfriendly. And all of it spread out. In the Netherlands, all the houses were put together, three or four stories high. I saw porches for the first time in my life, and I had no idea what they were for; they looked so strange."

"But," Neal says, "we arrived. We were nervous and scared and tired, but we were here. Our sponsor, a little farmer named Ana Deleeuw, stood at the train station with a big smile stretched across his face. Of course, he didn't know a word of Dutch either, but that was all right. He was welcom-

ing. From there, we made our way to my brother's place. We could stay with him until our furniture arrived." And from a home in the Netherlands to a house in the States, Neal and Jackie found family again.

Being with family, however, did not make Neal and Jackie feel any more at home. "We were in a totally new culture, new environment, new language, new everything. We were ignorant. The first couple days, weeks, months, I thought, 'I will never learn to fold my tongue like that.' Well," Neal laughs, "we still haven't."

But their experience was not quite complete. When the Masts saw their furniture stacked on the Hoboken dock and about to be shipped, it was the last time they saw it whole. Six weeks after they arrived, it finally appeared. "It came to the train depot," Neal explains, "and then a truck was going to deliver it from there. They used wooden rollers to roll it off the platform and onto the truck. But then, just when our crate of furniture was a little over halfway on the truck, the wooden rollers gave way. The men decided that they could back the truck up while pushing the crate onto it, using a big pole as a lever. But the worker who was holding the pole got scared and didn't aim right. When the

truck backed up, that pole went straight through everything.” “Including a brand new sewing machine,” Jackie proclaims.

“Ja, that was pretty hard to take,” Neal says flatly. “We got a little insurance for the furniture — twenty-five dollars I think — and eventually we had the sewing machine welded, but still, to have the furniture finally arrive and all of it damaged — that is hard.”

It was hard, but it was endurable. And such would define the beginning of their new life in the States — enduring hardship in the effort to establish a stable home in a new land.

After having arrived in Grand Rapids and settled in with Neal’s brother, the Masts turn to first concerns. With two small children to feed and no money for food, Neal had to find a job. Quickly he would discover that before he could lift himself above

his former economic level, he would have to sink below. After working various jobs in manual labor, including a foundry and a coal yard, Neal finally found the money to rent a greenhouse. The next year he bought his own greenhouse with a home attached and seven acres of land for

\$24,000. That was the beginning of what would become a flourishing business. Today, Neal has retired from the labor he has known his whole life. His and Jacoba’s four sons each operate their own piece of the business while their three daughters work in other successful endeavors. 6



Neal Mast and his four sons in 1974. Photo: Mast family.

Endnotes

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2. Roholl, “Emigration Policy,” 60.
3. *Ibid.*, 59.
4. Gerald DeJong, *The Dutch in America, 1609-1974* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975), 175.
5. *Ibid.*, 173; Roholl, “Emigration Policy,” 59.
6. William Peterson, *Some Factors Influencing Postwar Emigration from the Netherlands* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952), 11.
7. Ivo Schöffer, *A Short History of the*

- Netherlands* (Amsterdam: Albert de Lange, 1956), 139.
8. Quoted in B.P. Hofstede, *Thwarted Exodus: Post-War Overseas Migration from the Netherlands* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 24.
9. Roholl, “Emigration Policy,” 65.
10. *Ibid.*, 61.
11. DeJong, *The Dutch in America*, 184.
12. Hofstede, *Thwarted Exodus*, 32.
13. DeJong, *The Dutch in America*, 184.
14. Peterson, *Some Factors*, 12.
15. *Ibid.*, 3.
16. DeJong, *The Dutch in America*, 176.
17. “In the decade between 1945 and 1955, the Dutch government put into service for the emigrant passage three dormitory-type troopships which it

- owned and chartered others as needed.” See: Janet Sjaarda Sheeres, “The One-Way Journey of Dutch Emigrants on the Castel Bianco,” *Origins* 18:2 (2000), 2.
18. Leo Hovins quoted in Albert VanderMey, *To All Our Children: The Story of the Postwar Dutch Immigration to Canada* (Jordan Station, Ontario: Paideia, 1983), 97.
19. Sheeres, *The One-Way Journey*,” 5.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Mrs. Koop Kollen, quoted in VanderMey, *To All Our Children*, 99.
22. *Ibid.*, 101.
23. Mrs. Cornelia Sheehy quoted in VanderMey, *To All Our Children*, 114.
24. Ellis Island operated from 1892 to 1954, and during that time 12 million people passed through its turn styles.

Dutch Grand Rapids and the American Civil War

Peter Bratt

As recent arrivals from Europe in the 1850s, the Dutch immigrants in Grand Rapids, Michigan, experienced the competing forces of assimilation and political upheaval during their first twenty years in America. The pull and tug of assimilation has long been the standard focus of historians of ethnicity, and it is true that the Dutch in Grand Rapids experienced their full share of such concerns.¹

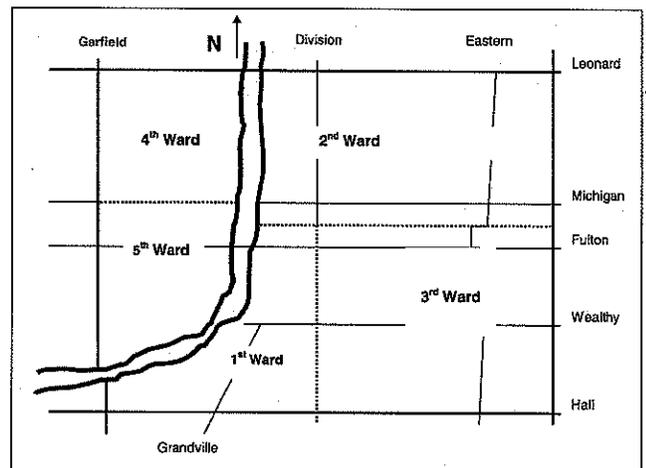
Yet this growing western Michigan community was impacted by an event of much greater consequence for both them and the United States.

This American Civil War did much more than simply resolve long-standing political and economic issues between the Northern and Southern states. The war occurred at a moment when Northern states,

such as Michigan, were undergoing a rapid economic, ethnic, and political transformation. For immigrants the Civil War placed their adopted nation and future at risk. This resulted in a faster pace of Americanization particularly through service in the military. By using the census records and Civil War enlistment data, we can see how the war pushed the Dutch of Grand Rapids further along the path of Americanization.

Grand Rapids experienced migration

patterns similar to other Northern communities. Founded in 1837, Grand Rapids began as a fur-trading post established by Louis Campau in the late 1820s.² Growth came with New England pioneers such as the Windsor and Lyon families, who came from southern Vermont and western Connecticut. They were later joined by a stream of upstate New Yorkers like the

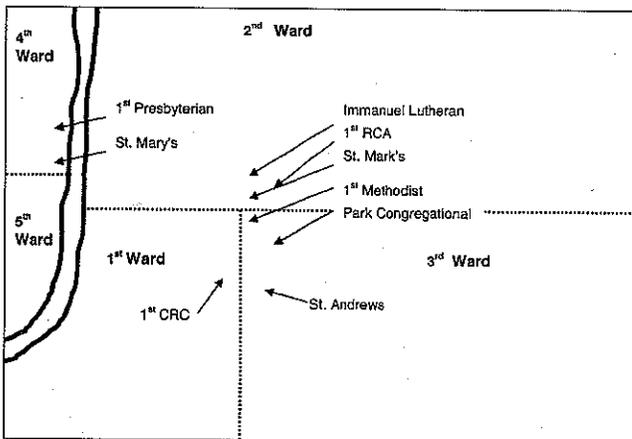


Map showing the political wards of Grand Rapids during the early 1860s.

Burton, Turner, and Withey families, who hailed primarily from Genesee and Monroe counties.³ These families and others from upstate New York were from the "Burned Over" district, whose residents despised Masonry and the "Regency" of democratic President Martin Van Buren. They had different political loyalties than the families from Vermont and Connecticut, who were more supportive of the Democratic Party.⁴

When Grand Rapids incorporated as

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Map with the major downtown Grand Rapids churches and their ward locations.

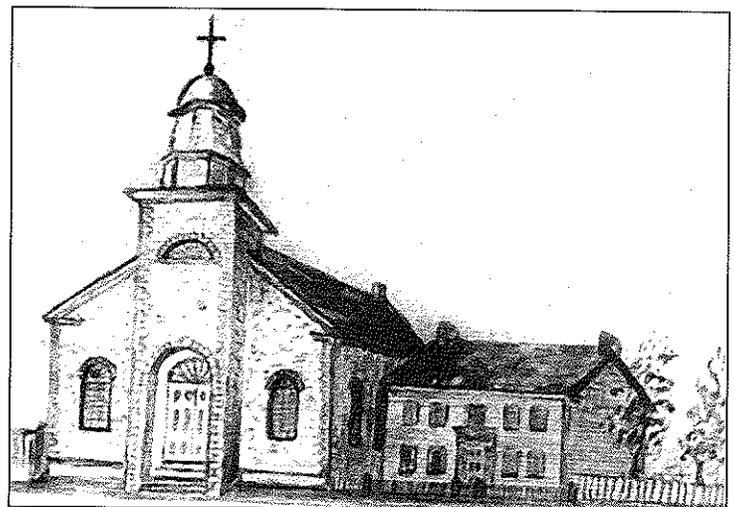
dominated the Fourth and Fifth wards. However, these immigrants were recent arrivals and were not politically active by the late 1850s, allowing the “Yankee” leadership to hold in these wards. Of the nine African-American males who lived in Grand Rapids in 1860, nearly all lived at the south edge of the First Ward.⁷

The distinctions between the ethnic groups of Grand Rapids were fostered and preserved by religion. The town reflected the diversity and divisions in American religious life during the nineteenth century. Across the North, the Second Great Awakening and the spread of Methodism caused sharp growth in the number and influence of evangelical Protestants. After 1840 evangelical Protestantism gained a larger hand in political affairs in tandem with the electoral success of the Whig Party. This expanded influence did not please non-evangelical denominations that strongly held to Jeffersonian principles of a free church and showed a decided inclination towards the Democratic Party.⁸

Locally, these divisions were very noticeable. Evangelical Protestantism, particularly Yankee Presbyterianism, dominated the Whig and Republican parties in Michigan from 1837 to 1896.⁹ Catholics, Lutherans, and Dutch Reformed immigrants were

strongly tied to the Democratic coalition in the 1850s, as were native-born Episcopalians. Methodists and some German Lutherans stood between these evangelical and liturgical camps.¹⁰

The Dutch presence in Grand Rapids grew from an immigration driven by strong religious overtones. These settlers left the Netherlands during the late 1840s and 1850s because of poor harvests and governmental efforts to squash the dissenting Reformed churches in the nation.¹¹ The immigrants who arrived in Grand Rapids quickly formed the Dutch-speaking Second Reformed Church, tied to the old Dutch denomination that had been founded in colonial New Netherlands. By the mid nineteenth century the descendants of this colonial denomination had become predominantly English speaking. The language divide led to the formation of the second congregation. But the Dutch-speaking congregation split in the late 1850s, with most members staying in Second Reformed, and the rest founding what would become the First Christian Reformed Church. This schism was caused by numerous factors, especially disputes between the laity and clergy, and questions about the integration of the church members into the broader American culture.¹²



A drawing of the first St. Andrew's Church on what is now Monroe Center in Grand Rapids. From a drawing in the Archives, Calvin College.

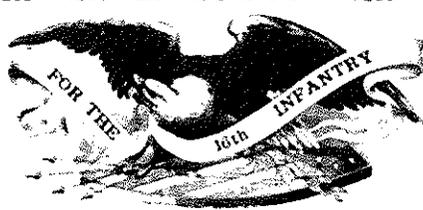
a city in 1850 it had a population of 2,686; ten years later the total had increased 200 percent to 8,085. The city's early industrial development, particularly wood processing and its related industries, attracted many skilled immigrants to Grand Rapids. They came from very different origins than had the city's pioneers—Germany, Holland, and Ireland—and settled into distinctive communities that helped to foster ethnic and political divisions. Grand Rapids' five wards manifested these differences clearly. Immigrants from New York and New England tended to settle on the east side of the Grand River near the business and cultural heart of the town. Large numbers of New Englanders settled in the Second and Third wards, while New Yorkers were especially prominent in the Second and Third wards. English-speaking immigrants from Canada and Great Britain settled across the city. In contrast, the Irish filled the First Ward, soon known as Shantytown, which became the durable Democratic ward of the community by the late 1850s.⁵ The Dutch primarily settled in the Third Ward, which during the four decades following the Civil War became the center of Dutch-American intellectual and cultural life in the United States.⁶ Germans settled on the west side of the Grand River and

Dutch from both denominations also contributed to distinct economic differences in Grand Rapids. Immigrants dominated the working class. Fifty-nine percent of the Irish and 61 percent of the Dutch immigrants were semi-skilled or unskilled laborers, while 44 percent of the Germans were skilled laborers.

These ethnic, religious, and economic differences strongly influenced the political divisions within Grand Rapids, much along the lines that ethno-cultural historians have argued. Native-stock Americans, especially descendants of Puritan New Englanders, along with English and Canadian immigrants, formed the Whig and later the Republican Party. The Democratic Party had consistent support from German and Irish Catholic immigrants and native white Southerners. German Lutherans and Dutch Reformed were part of the Democratic coalition in Michigan at the beginning of the 1850s, but this affiliation began to shift during the decade.¹³

The political transformation of the 1850s had a profound impact in Grand Rapids and the United States. Both in Michigan and the North, the Republican Party garnered a majority that would last through the Civil War well into the 1870s.¹⁴ But this shift was everywhere present. The Republican Party did gather a majority in Grand Rapids, but the Democrats retained their majority in Niles, Michigan, about 100 miles south-southwest of Grand Rapids. However, the divisions between ethnicities in both communities saw their differences hardened by the new political landscape and strife that followed. This polarization in Grand Rapids was crystallized in the 1860 election. Political conflict followed ethnic and religious lines, and the partisan rancor of the 1850s did little to heal the divisions; rather, it made them

UNITED STATES ARMY!



RECRUITING SERVICE!

100 Dollars Bounty!

WANTED, FOR THE REGULAR ARMY.

Enlistment pay, between the ages of 20 and 25 years and 550 times the last three months' pay, and of good character, officers in the Regular Service will be allowed the same benefits in every respect as those allowed or to be allowed to the men in the Volunteer Service.

Pay of Privates per month.	\$13.00	Sergeants.	\$17.00
Advances of Bachelors.	9.00	Orderly Sergeants.	20.00
Advances of Clothing.	3.83	Ordnance Sergeants.	22.00
		Hospital Stewards.	22.00

Specimens of the best writing instruments and other goods for sale by the Government will be exhibited from the 1st of the month to the 1st of the next month. The sale will be held at the residence of the Secretary of the War, in the city of Washington, D.C. The terms of sale will be published in the Official Gazette of the United States. The time of sale will be from 10 o'clock A.M. to 4 o'clock P.M. The time of sale will be from 10 o'clock A.M. to 4 o'clock P.M. The time of sale will be from 10 o'clock A.M. to 4 o'clock P.M.

AGENTS AT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
WM. H. PRESCOTT.
Capt. 29th U.S. Infantry Recruiting Officer

Recruiting Office for Michigan.

A Civil War recruiting poster. From A Grand Rapids Sampler, p. 64.

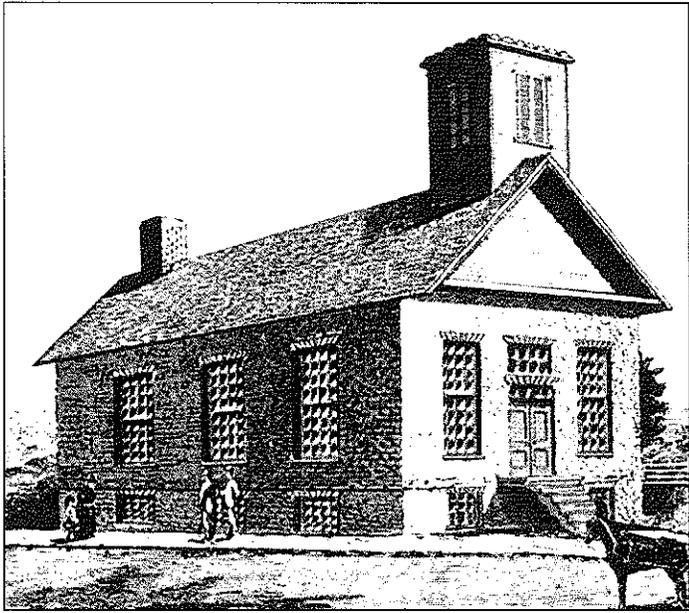
worse. The decade saw these divisions deepening throughout the North.

Whatever differences existed within Northern society seem to have paled in comparison to the insult to the Union that echoed from the guns that fired on Ft. Sumter in April 1861. Love for the Union matched a scorn of the South and southern society in the sentiments of the citizens of Grand Rapids, and it triggered a martial spirit which was evident in the uniform readiness to enlist in the Union army from all sectors of these communities. From historians' past arguments, we would expect different rates of enlistment, correlated with different social or political characteristics in these towns.¹⁵ In the first year of the war, however, such differences were not apparent, save for those among the Dutch.

The native-born enlisted at a 13 percent rate, as 100 of the 792 eligible men¹⁶ from New England, New York, and the Midwest joined in the Union

Army. While slightly lower, the enlistment rate among men from Ireland was 11 percent. Eight percent of the eligible men from Great Britain and Canada joined, as did 7 percent of the Germans from Grand Rapids. However, enlistments were strikingly low among the Dutch and Southerners in Grand Rapids, as only two of the 177 Hollanders enlisted, and only one of the 19 Southerners. The low enlistment numbers from the Dutch may be explained by the brevity of their tenure in Grand Rapids at that point. The first large number of Dutch settlers did not arrive in Grand Rapids until the mid-1850s.¹⁷ The Dutch who arrived in the United States during the 1840s and early 1850s tended to enlist in larger numbers than did their kinsmen in Grand Rapids. Holland, Michigan, which had received the bulk of her immigrants in the late 1840s, provided higher enlistment numbers.¹⁸

Church affiliation also shows the low levels of Dutch enlistments during the first year of the Civil War. Among non-Dutch groups, enlistment rates among the churches of Grand Rapids were remarkably similar from both evangelical and liturgical denominations. The evangelical churches of Grand Rapids—Park Congregational, First Presbyterian, and First Methodist—had 38 of their 268 eligible men, or 14 percent, enlist in the Union Army in the first year. Episcopal St. Mark's had an even higher percentage of eighteen, as fourteen of her 109 men joined the army. Despite the rampant anti-Catholicism and nativist sentiments among the evangelical churches of Grand Rapids, it is surprising that Catholics enlisted at a rate similar to those churches. In particular, the Irish proved to be "fighters" indeed. The two Catholic parishes of St. Andrew's and St. Mary's sent a percentage similar to



First Reformed Church of Grand Rapids from a lithograph also reproduced in *History of Grand Rapids Michigan* (sic).

the evangelical denominations, as 12 percent of their men enlisted. The Irish from St. Andrew's enlisted at a much higher rate than did the Germans who attended St. Mary's, again, probably reflecting the Germans' more recent immigration. A remarkable 25 percent of the Irish, along with St. Andrew's pastor, Father Thomas Brady, enlisted, but only two of the twenty-one Germans who attended St. Mary's did so, a rate of 8 percent. Protestant immigrant churches sent even lower numbers, with only 4 percent of the eligible men signing up. Four men from Immanuel Lutheran enlisted, while only one man from Second Reformed and none from First Christian Reformed enlisted from the total of eighty-two men eligible from both.

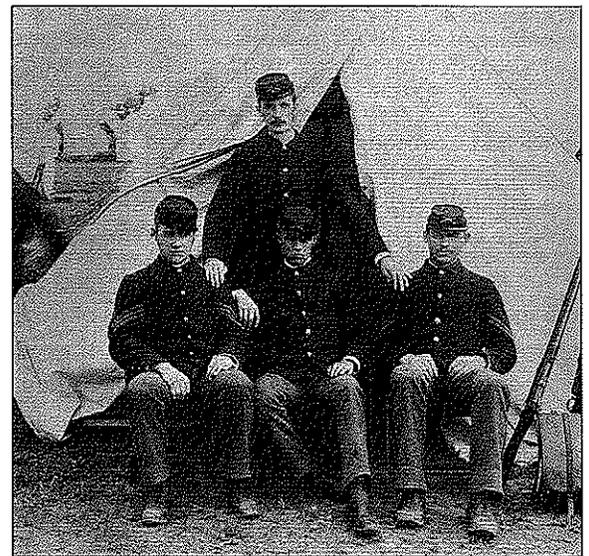
After early 1862 enlistment patterns began to change. This trend was evident in Grand Rapids, where enlistments for men born in New England, New York, and the Midwest increased after the Battle of Shiloh (also known as the Battle of Pittsburg Landing).¹⁹ Twenty-one percent, 162 of 792, of the eligible men from these regions joined the Union Army. Not unexpect-

edly, no white residents of Grand Rapids who had been born in the slave states enlisted after 1862, although three African Americans took up arms after 1863. Enlistment of British and Canadian natives also increased after the Battle of Shiloh. Due to a large number of enlistments of the Canadian-born—12 of 53 eligible men—the enlistment rate for these two groups rose to 13 percent,

nearly doubling their rate before Shiloh. Enlistments from other European immigrant groups remained static at 9 percent, as fifty-two of 578 men signed up. A closer examination of these immigrants show that enlistments among Germans fell sharply, with only 10 of 189 men joining, while the rate among the Dutch increased, as 20 men of 177 enlisted. This shift shows the rising disaffection among the conservative German immigrants in Grand Rapids after Shiloh, who found the alteration of the North's war aims to be frightening. At the same time, the upsurge in Dutch recruitment is testimony to the efforts of Rev. Albertus Van Raalte, the founder of the West Michigan Dutch colony and who became a prominent Republican within the Dutch community. His efforts in the winter of 1862 did much to increase Dutch enlistments, as he argued for his fellow countrymen to show their support to their new homeland and join the

Republican Party's crusade to eliminate slavery. Two of Van Raalte's own sons set an example by volunteering, even though Mrs. Van Raalte strongly objected to her sons going to war. The Dutch were somewhat receptive to the crusading evangelical-Republican fervor of their leader.²⁰

As the Civil War became increasingly run by Republican Party ideology, religious groups supporting the party became more enthusiastic for the war effort. Enlistments from the evangelical churches of Grand Rapids rose accordingly. Park Congregational, First Methodist, and First Presbyterian sent sixty-five of 268 men eligible men to the Union ranks after early 1862, an enlistment rate of 25 percent! Nor was this the limit of these evangelical churches' contribution. The minister of Park Congregational, Stephen Greeley, served as chaplain for the Sixth Michigan Cavalry under the command of George Custer, while the women of the congregation formed a soldiers' aid



Militia company from Grand Rapids, probably later than the Civil War. Photo: Local and Family History Department, Grand Rapids Public Library.

society in Grand Rapids to care for the sick and wounded that streamed from the local training camp south of town.²¹ Clearly, the sermons given over the years before the Civil War, testifying to

the deep-felt sentiments that the evangelicals held against slavery and the South, had their effect. Following the Battle of Shiloh, evangelical churches were enthused for a conflict that became a holy war against the southern infidels.²²

Catholic and liturgical Protestant immigrants from Europe saw the Republican-driven war in quite a different light. Enlistments among liturgical Protestants did rise as the war progressed. However, this was due to the large number of men from Second Reformed and First Christian Reformed enlisting in 1863 and 1864. Indeed,

men from these two congregations enlisted at a 14 percent rate after Shiloh, as twelve men joined. By contrast, enlistments from Immanuel Lutheran declined, as only two men joined after early 1862.

Enlistment patterns during the Civil War reflected the deep political divisions that existed in the North. The Democratic and Republican parties engaged in heated political conflict during the 1850s and only increased their attacks upon each other during the following decade. Indeed, these divisions continued long after the war had concluded, as political splits

between the Democratic and Republican sections of the community lasted well into the 1880s. In Grand Rapids, the First Ward still remained a Democratic stronghold nearly twenty years after 1865, while the wards which voted Republican in 1860 continued this pattern for years to come. For the Dutch in Grand Rapids, Michigan, initially part of the Democratic Party support and reluctant to join the war, the events of the war brought them to the Republican Party instead and a corresponding rise in enlistments, a phenomenon atypical of other immigrant communities in the United States. §

Endnotes

- 1 An excellent overview of immigration in the 19th century is Jon Gjerde: *Major Problems in American Immigration and Ethnic History* (Houghton Mifflin: New York, 1998) and *Minds of the West: The Ethnocultural Evolution in the Rural Midwest, 1830-1917* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 1997); see also Noel Ignatiev: *How the Irish Became White* (Routledge: New York, 1996).
2. Albert Baxter, *History of the City of Grand Rapids* (New York and Grand Rapids, MI: Munsell & Company, 1891), 51-52.
3. Baxter, *History of Grand Rapids*, 112.
4. Baxter, *History of Grand Rapids*, 114.
5. Z. Z. Lydens, *The Story of Grand Rapids* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1967), 50.
6. James D. Bratt & Christopher H. Meehan, *Gathered at the River: Grand Rapids, Michigan and its People of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 43; Henry S. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America: Dutch Immigration to the United States and Canada, 1789-1850* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989 [1955]), 49-61.
7. Randall R. Jelks, *Race, Respectability and the Struggle for Democracy: A Study of the Grand Rapids Afro-American Community, 1870-1950* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 54-61.
8. George M. Fredrickson, "The Coming of the Lord: The Northern Protestant Clergy and the Civil War Crisis" in Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, & Charles R. Wilson, eds., *Religion and the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 110-130.
9. Ronald P. Formisano, *The Birth of Mass Political Parties: Michigan, 1827-1861* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 310.
10. Formisano, *Birth of Mass Political Parties*, 310-324; Jacob Van Hinte, *Netherlanders in America: A Study of Emigration and Settlement in Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in the United States of America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985 [1928]), 430.
11. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America*, 53-58.
12. Elton J. Bruins & Robert P. Swierenga, *Family Quarrels in the Dutch Reformed Churches in the 19th Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 76.
13. Formisano, *Birth of Mass Political Parties*, 307-308.
14. For an excellent study of the durability of the Republican coalition, see Melvyn Hammarberg, *The Indiana Voter: The Historical Dynamics of Party Allegiance During the 1870s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).
15. Emily J. Harris, "Sons and Soldiers: Deerfield, Massachusetts, and the Civil War," *Civil War History*, 30: 2 (June 1984), 157-171; William Marvel, "A Poor Man's Fight: Civil War Enlistment Patterns in Conway, New Hampshire," *Historical New Hampshire* 43 (1988), 21-40; Philip S. Paludan, *A People's Contest: The Union and the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1988).; William J. Rorabaugh, "Who Fought for the North in the Civil War? Concord, Massachusetts, Enlistments," *Journal of American History*, 73 (December 1986), 695-701; Maris A. Vinovskis, ed., *Toward a Social History of the American Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
16. All numbers and statistics that follow are based on men eligible for military service.
17. Van Hinte, *Netherlanders in America*, 380.
18. *Ibid*, 381.
19. With 13,000 dead or missing on the Union side and 10,500 on the Confederate side, Shiloh was a much needed victory for the South. Their defeat pointed to the North's overconfidence and ended any notion for an easy victory over the South.
20. Van Hinte, *Netherlanders in America*, 640.
21. W. H. Kinsey & F. A. Baldwin, *Park Congregational Church: The Story of One Hundred Years, 1836-1936* (Grand Rapids, MI: Park Congregational Church, 1936), 9-11.
22. James H. Moorehead, *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the American Civil War, 1860-1869* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

To Go or Not To Go (To The Movies)

Harry Boonstra

“Moving pictures” began to spread throughout North America early in the twentieth century, and America and its churches have had to deal with the silver screen ever since. Although immigrant churches in the Dutch Reformed tradition were often able to keep American culture at some distance, they were not able to escape the lure of Hollywood. Initially the

the church’s traditional objections to the stage and the theatre. One of these objections concerned the actors and actresses. The Christian church had nearly always looked upon actors as immoral, dissolute persons, especially in their sexual conduct. When actors transferred from the stage to the movie studio, their loose living did not improve. Rather, with the general



The Strand Theater in downtown Grand Rapids. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

lowering of moral standards in America, church officials felt that many actors became more audacious in their decadence and they appealed to the worst in their audiences. As early as 1908 the editor of *The Banner* of the CRC complained, “Theatre going supports a class of people that frequently caters to the lowest tastes of depraved humanity, actors and actresses and

three major Reformed denominations — the Reformed Church in America (RCA), founded in 1628; the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), founded in 1857; and the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC), founded in 1925 — reacted similarly, but by the end of the century they had come to very different conclusions on films.

their employers.”² *The Church Herald* of the RCA echoed the same view forty years later. Lamenting that Hollywood stars had become the models for many young people, editor Louis Benes added, “. . . these idol-stars must be considered as much an enemy of the worship and service of God as the idols of the pagan nations surrounding Israel in Bible times.”³

Common Responses

The initial response to the movies was nearly completely negative — at least in the (semi)official opinions in church magazines and synodical pronouncements.¹ The disapproval was, in many ways, a carryover from

Another general objection was that the movie industry as a whole tended to be “of the world,” and thus against Christian values and the church — and ultimately against God’s kingdom. The CRC 1928 “Report of the Committee on Worldly Amusements” paid

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close attention to this question of worldliness in relation to the movies. It carefully analyzed the various uses of “the world” in Scripture and tried to discern how Christians may or must relate to the non-Christian world and its culture.⁴ The “Report” stopped short of calling the whole movie industry anti-Christian, but still issued severe warnings against attending movies. The editor of *The Standard Bearer* of the PRC was more direct: “. . . the movie has its source in the foul fountain of the world. Now what is the spiritual, ethical principle here? It is this: a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.” Therefore, “[D]ramatic productions . . . are without exception not lawful entertainment for a Christian.”⁵

The specific motion picture evils that were frequently targeted by the churches were the portrayal of violence and of sexual situations. The early producers were lambasted for their portrayal of gangster movies, in which both the life style of the criminals and the violence they perpetrated were often glorified. The portrayal of violence in horror and war films continued unabated and became even more explicit than in the 1930s. The criticism of such “gratuitous violence” also continued, especially in its impact on children. Benes protested against the “programs loaded with violence and criminal situations during the hours when children’s listening and viewing is at its highest,” and he finds “the increasing portrayal of sex and violence . . . a part of the deteriorating moral atmosphere of our time.”⁶

The portrayal of sex was protested

even more. In the history of the church’s condemnation of the theatre, the portrayal of sexual (im)morality has probably been the most frequent target, and the Dutch Reformed churches joined in this censure. For example, the CRC 1928 Synod judged, “The modern theatre . . . , in its unblushing, disgusting display of sex, is probably the worst school of immorality among us today, and for this it deserves the supreme contempt of every Christian. We do not hesitate to say that those who make a practice of attending the theatre and who therefore cannot avoid witnessing the lewdness which it exhibits or suggests, are transgressors of the seventh commandment.”⁷

In sum, all the representative authors in the three denominations indicate rather plainly that movies were generally seen as purveyors, at best of frivolity and more frequently of vice, and thus not fitting entertainment for (Reformed) Christians. From this point each of the three followed a different course in their attitudes toward movies.

Reformed Church in America

An early RCA mention of movies came from the 1921 General Synod. A rather cryptic directive mandated “that the

attention of our pastors and people be especially directed by this synod to the causes of Prohibition enforcement, Sabbath observance, Personal Purity, Censorship of Moving Pictures (to prevent the exhibition of immoral and demoralizing films) and Family Religion . . .”⁸ The intended censorship was apparently not aimed at the production of (immoral) movies, but at the distribution and showing of such films. It is not clear who was to perform such censorship.

The conservative western section of the RCA echoed this concern in its synodical deliberation. It passed a resolution “that our people be advised to scrupulously refrain from patronizing the movies until this public amusement has undergone a thorough cleansing process, since we believe that in its general character it has at the present time a grossly demoralizing tendency.”⁹

Another early criticism of movies focused on a contemporary problem — liquor and prohibition. The Prohibition movement was strongly supported in the RCA, and a 1926 promise that film producers would “make certain that into no picture there be allowed to enter any shot of drinking scenes, manufacture or sale of liquor, or undue effects of liquor which are not a



The theater in the Creston neighborhood of Grand Rapids. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

part of the story or an essential element in the building of the plot.” The writer was confident that “the public’s confidence will not be misplaced.”¹⁰

Later reactions to the movies continued to bemoan the evil influence of movies, both in the theatre and on television. Jacob Blauw, for example, judged that “one of the chief

be watched by Christians. However, he conceded that some movies are acceptable, and recognized that many RCA members, especially young people, did attend the movies. What then ought to be the church’s attitude? Not wholesale condemnation but “. . . enlisting personal judgment so that there may be proper discrimination.”¹² By the

bad movies (although Mulder added that Protestants generally have a higher “grade” of morality, since they usually condemn the use of alcohol).¹⁵ Louis Benes also lauded the work of Roman Catholic bishops to counteract the immorality of Hollywood and praised the Methodists for their efforts to do the same.¹⁶ In its report to the 1961 General Synod the Christian Action Committee noted that they were “. . . asking the National Council of Churches to act as a previewing agent for the churches and to recommend several outstanding films each year.”¹⁷

This appeal to the efforts of various churches is noteworthy especially because the other churches in our study (the CRC and the PRC) seldom appealed to other churches for support or guidance — certainly not the Roman Catholic Church or the National Council of Churches. The RCA showed itself to be an established American church, identifying especially with mainline Protestant churches, unlike the CRC and the PRC, who continued largely as immigrant churches, living in isolation.

In recent decades there has been very little discussion in the RCA whether a Christian should attend movies. Specific films are often reviewed, and praised or censured, but the question whether an RCA member may watch movies in the theatre or on TV is a moot point. Just as one does not debate whether a Christian may read novels, one need not discuss whether one should watch movies. The question instead is, does one watch with discrimination, with Christian sensitivity and judgment?

Christian Reformed Church

One of the earliest references to movies in the CRC came in an editorial in *The Banner*. Henry Beets wrote, “Judging by the way some of our own Holland



The plot of the 1929 film “Madame X,” a mother deserting her family for a man other than her husband, was an example of topics that caused concern about film attendance for some religious leaders. Photo: Archives, Calvin College.

contributory causes to moral decline in America is, undoubtedly, the moving picture industry.” The Christian’s duty is to refrain from participating in such evil, because “the world and the Church are two distinct, separate, social entities, the one under the sway and control of Satan and away from God, while the other is subject to Christ as her King and Lord. . . .”¹¹ The church’s response to such evil was to be found in the preaching of the Word and in prayer for revival.

Others in the RCA, however, did not share this blanket condemnation of all movies. An editorial by John R. Mulder in 1934 was very significant, since in many ways it set the tone for a more accepting RCA posture toward movies. Mulder acknowledged that many (or perhaps most) movies are morally objectionable and should not

1960s Bastian Kruihof agreed with this judgment. He also castigated much of the movie industry, but then he mentioned several films, such as *Lilies of the Field*, *Dr. Zhivago*, and Shakespearean plays as worthy of seeing. Again, the spirit was not avoidance but discrimination.¹³ A synodical pronouncement in 1962 urged the same posture for television viewing, as it advised “Christian discernment in the family viewing of T.V. programs.”¹⁴

Another notable element in the article by Mulder is the context for his writing — he was discussing the issue because the subject of movies was to be addressed by many Protestant churches on October 21 of that year. Mulder praised this united effort and even lauded the Catholic Legion of Decency for its attempts to weed out

people allow their children to attend the nickel theatre or moving picture shows, there seems to be little or no harm in them. But we believe that it is more than time to try to open the eyes of our people — if they need such — for the very pernicious character of most of the scenes thrown on the screens.”¹⁸

As the movies became more prevalent and attendance increased, the alarm in the denomination also increased. In 1926 three classes requested synod to warn against movie attendance and that it appoint a committee to study this evil in the churches. The resulting “Report of the Committee on Worldly Amusements” (1928) was a milestone in the CRC, since it set the tone for the church for some forty years. The 42-page report was thorough. It first examined several theological questions, paying special attention to “Christian separation from the world” and “Christian liberty,” followed by “The application of the foregoing principles to three forms of amusement.” The three were the (in)famous trio of movies/theatre attendance, dancing, and card playing; the committee judged all three to be spiritually dangerous and in most cases sinful. The final section of the report, “The proper policy of the church with regard to participation by its members in these amusements,” directed the church to teach the evils of these practices, and to warn against participation. Two specific recommendations were to cast a long shadow in the CRC: “Where repeated admonitions by the consistory are left unheeded, to apply discipline as a last resort”; and “to instruct consistories to inquire of those who ask to be examined *previous to making public professions of their faith* and partaking of the Lord’s Supper as to their stand and conduct in the matter of worldly amusements, and if it appears that they are not minded to lead the life of

We must have the freedom to openly discuss the things which concern us. When silence becomes interpreted as agreement, we are guilty of hypocrisy.

The question is the question of drama. And the question does not concern any particular type of drama or any abuse of drama, but drama *per se*. We are told that it is wrong in itself and consequently can have no place in our lives. Yet we are not convinced. We face the problem constantly and are not too ready to say that the solution to the problem lies in avoiding the problem entirely.

When we face the problem in the light of the negative injunction we have received, we raise these questions. If it is wrong to partake in dramatization, is it also wrong to watch such? If it is wrong to watch it, is it wrong to read it? If it is wrong to read it, is it wrong to write it? If one of the elders of our church tells us that “Scripture teaches that all drama is an abomination to the Lord” and that we may not attend plays, why does he sit home and watch drama on television?

Now we grant that people’s inconsistencies (which in this case are as multitudinous as the sands of the seashore) can be no ground for argumentation of principle. But the fact is clearly shown that most that seem to want the principle [that all drama is wrong] refuse to accept its application. And we wonder whether these people are so enslaved to sin or whether they do not agree with the principle as much as they indicate.

We raise this issue again not for the sake of defending drama but for the purpose of pointing out that it is still a problem. And, as we see it, it will continue to be a problem until all agree with the principle and follow it. This, apparently, will not happen immediately.

We are faced with two alternatives. We can bring the question out into the open once again and enjoy a healthy discussion or we can close the festering wound [declaring all drama sinful while watching it on TV] and wish that it would heal. The first alternative has been tried, and, while it has not solved the problem, it has taught us that the issue requires critical examination. The second alternative has been tried and has had a decidedly adverse effect. A man who is told exactly how he should make up his mind cannot reach a meaningful decision. And a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.

Jim Jonker, “The Settled Question,” *Beacon Lights*, Nov., 1961, 3-4.

Prior to 1960 the issue of acting and movies was discussed fairly frequently, especially at Young People’s Conventions and in the *Beacon Lights*, often with a pro-con format. However in 1960 H. C. Hoeksema gave a speech at a Young People’s Convention, virtually ruling out all further discussion: “This question ought to be a settled question among us.” (“Covenant Youth and Drama,” *Beacon Lights*, July-August, 1960, p. 1). Jonker’s article was the first (and only) challenge to this edict.

Christian separation and consecration, to refuse their confession.”¹⁹

The notion that candidates for profession of faith might be denied if

they frequented the theatre and that confessing members might be disciplined for theatre attendance was to become a troubling one, and local

consistories struggled with its application. Further, it was not clear whether this was advice or a binding pronouncement. By 1951 another committee reported to synod via a majority report and a minority report and after a full day of discussion synod largely confirmed the 1928 report. One can perhaps detect a slight loosening of interpretation: "Although Synod 1928 did not pass judgment as to whether or not theatre-attendance, card-playing, and dancing are always sinful in themselves, it did urgently warn, in no uncertain terms, against theatre-attendance, card-playing and dancing, and did not condone participation in them."²⁰ Synod 1951 also declared that the earlier statement was indeed a binding pronouncement, but that the application of the strictures was to be determined by individual consistories.²¹

It was not until twenty-three years later that synod took another serious look at movies. This attention was prompted by a study of Classis Eastern Ontario which showed that the CRC had come a long way during the intervening years. A questionnaire among the young people of the classis showed that 70 percent of them attended movies "more or less regularly." Many of these were youth who were active in their church.²² The CRC began to realize that its official stance and the practice of its members were at great variance, producing a denominational schizophrenia and/or hypocrisy.²³ The study of Classis Eastern Ontario in turn gave the impetus to a major report, "The Film Arts and the Church" in 1966.²⁴

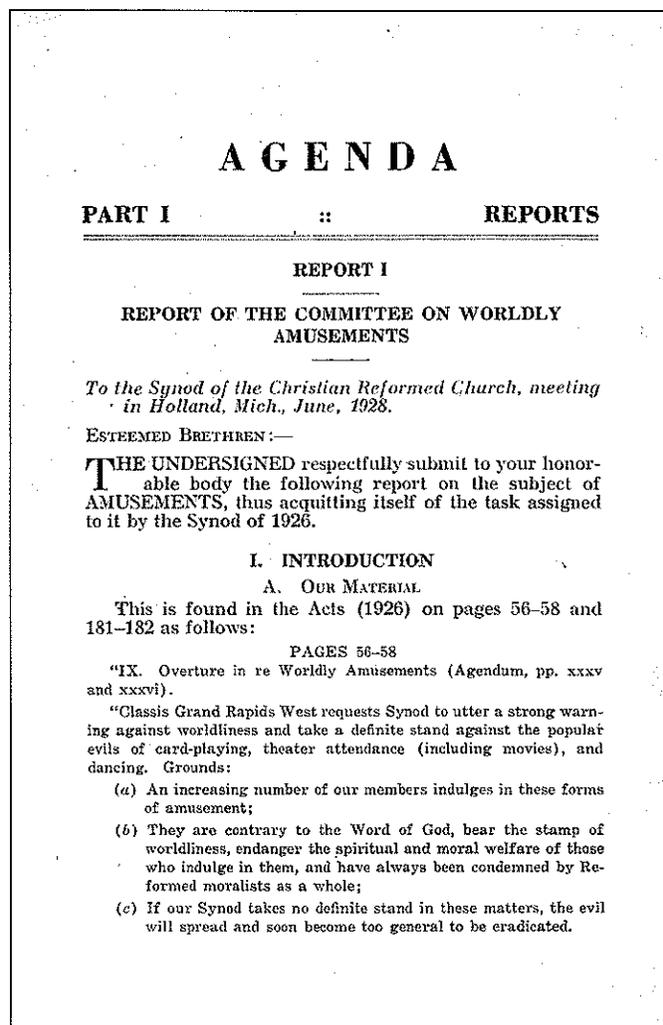
This report was a very thorough examination of all the

issues in the movies controversy. It summarized and critiqued the earlier reports, revisited the areas of "the world," and the Christian's relation to the world, including the doctrine of Christian liberty. The definitions of the world, the pervasiveness of sin, worldliness, particular and common grace, were much more nuanced than in the earlier reports. The report agreed with much of the 1928 and 1951 reports, especially in its emphasis on the spiritual antithesis between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, and on the Christian's obligation to resist evil. However, the "Film Arts" report also differed substantially from the earlier studies:

Our reaction to all this is that while [the 1928 Report] contains much that is praiseworthy, it fails to come to grips with the real nature of the theatre or the film arts as cited above and with the fact that the same objections can be brought against the other media of culture such as the press, magazines, literature, the modern novel and radio. No Synod has ever advised, nor has any Reformed moralist ever held that we should abstain from these areas of communication and culture. Yet in all these one can observe much that is false, immoral and perverse. The Reformed approach has generally been one of selection and discrimination rather than of abstinence. The film arts

must also be characterized as a cultural phenomenon. To label it all as "worldly" is to indulge in an uncharitable generalization which cannot stand the test of truth and is strikingly confusing.²⁵

New to the discussion was the inclusion of films in the context of the "cultural mandate," where films, along with literature and music, can be enjoyed by the Christian, and the idea that this cultural expression must be claimed and restored by Christians. Practically this means that Christians must be involved in film reviews and criticism, education in film arts in Christian schools and colleges, and the production of movies by Christians. Since the publication of this report Christian high schools and CRC-related colleges have instituted courses in cinematography and film criticism, and various magazines have regularly reviewed movies. The review of movies in *The Banner* was begun in 1975, but not without strong opposition. The



The first of the 52-page report adopted by the 1928 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church that warned its members to avoid gambling or card playing, dancing, and film attendance.

April 18, 1980, issue of *The Banner* contained ten letters to the editor, all castigating the magazine (and the church) for this policy. One writer resorted to rhyme:

Quack, quack, quack, in the name
of fine art,
How many CRC families are going
to fall apart?
Quack, quack, quack, and the devil
began to clap,
The CRC is falling in my trap.²⁶

Later that year *The Banner* editor published its defense of such reviews, with a full "Movie Review Policy."²⁷

The Film Arts report was a drastic departure from the traditional CRC posture, but it was considered by many to be a helpful corrective. Seeing drama and movies as cultural expressions that must be evaluated and critiqued seemed to be more sensible than calling "the movie-theatre the open sewer in the city of Amusement from which men and women of perverted tastes seek to satisfy their thirst for pleasure."²⁸ The report was also idealistic in hoping that members of the CRC would become discriminating and educated movie-goers who reflect on and discuss films as part of their cultural milieu. Certainly there are such viewers, but one also finds many who watch movies simply as recreation and amusement and are often not particularly discriminating. If the earlier CRC reactions to movies grew nearly completely out of the doctrine of the antithesis between church and world, this doctrine has probably become muted in the choice of movies made by many CRC members.²⁹

The Protestant Reformed Churches

The PRC arose out of the CRC in 1924, after intense discussion about the doctrine of common grace. One important aspect of this discussion dealt with the Christian's relation to the world and its culture. The PRC

judged that much, perhaps most, of contemporary culture is a product of "the world," and thus Christians should not participate in such cultural endeavors. Given this position, it is not surprising that the members of the PRC became fervent in their denouncing of movies and movie attendance.

Herman Hoeksema was the most important spokesman for the PRC, and he addressed the movie issue early in the denomination's history. In a bristling article he first attacked the CRC and added sarcastically, "I surmise movies are a gift of common grace." Then came his judgment about "the danger of the church being ruined and swallowed up by the world through the participation of her members . . . in these worldly amusements."³⁰

This PRC condemnation of the evil of movies has been maintained time and again. Both the source of the movies — the world — and the dominant themes of sexual portrayal, flouting of Christian morals about marriage, scoffing at Sabbath observance, misusing God's name, and a host of other transgressions, have consistently drawn the reproach of the PRC. In an evangelism lecture, Dale Kuiper warned, "Doesn't a little sanctified wisdom show that viewing movies and television leads to impure thoughts, improper language, silently partaking in the blasphemy of others, discontented attitudes, wicked behavior? . . . Certainly the content of almost 100 percent of dramatic productions (movies, television programs, plays, skits, operas) place these things out of bounds for the Christian."³¹ To cite just one more recent example — in a five-part series ("Renewing the Battle: Drama, Television, and Movies") Barrett Gritter surveyed the movie industry. In one of the articles he illustrated how each of the Ten Commandments is violated in movies. For example, "If violence and rebelling are

major ingredients in the devil's mixture, sex is the major ingredient he adds to the poison. Time and space fail me to give examples of this, not only of the gross sins that 'we detest with all our hearts,' but also the activities and words that 'can entice men thereto,' which we also detest (*Heidelberg Catechism*, Lord's Day 41)."³²

Moreover, often such articles continued to be used, as they were by Herman Hoeksema in 1927, as yet another condemnation of the CRC and its acceptance of common grace, especially as movies became more accepted in that denomination. Editor H. C. Hoeksema explained, "As far as *The Standard Bearer* is concerned, a not insignificant part of its task is to continue to be a testimony toward the Christian Reformed Church with respect to the issues which led to our being cast out. The movie issue as it is currently troubling the conscience and the life of the Christian Reformed Church is a direct and practical outgrowth of the error of common grace."³³

But in addition to the general condemnation of movies, shared with many other Christians, the PRC adduced another dimension — the stance that all acting, whether on stage or in the movie, in Broadway theatres or in high school plays, in "Oh God" or the "Andy Griffith Show," is sinful.³⁴

Since the 1927 article by H. Hoeksema, the basic argument tends to remain the same: that all acting is sinful. For example, in a Martin Luther film popular at that time, the actors would have to act out the evil thoughts and actions of Luther's enemies, as well as the conversion and prayers of Luther. Both the acting out of evil and of holiness are equally wrong: "To the Most High, who desires truth in the inwards parts, and in whose eyes all hypocrisy is an abomination, these things were of

darkness and of the evil one."³⁵ The current editor of *The Standard Bearer* concurs: "The reason, then, that the theatre and movies have always been gushing fountains of spiritual, moral sewage is that the curse of the holy God rests on the enterprise itself of acting."³⁶

Interestingly, the PRC, unlike the CRC, never made a synodical pronouncement on acting or movies. Herman Hanko writes, "The position that dramatic productions are wrong was held throughout the history of the PRC and remains so today, although no official decisions have had to be made on the question. The consensus was sufficiently strong that the position was never challenged in the church courts."³⁷

I found only one essay which questioned this PRC stance. Jim Jonker, the editor of the youth magazine *Beacon Lights* wrote a brief article that pointed to the inconsistency between principle and practice in the PRC in regard to movies, and to the questions that many church members had about the PRC stance that drama is evil in all its manifestations. Sadly, this was the last article Jonker wrote, since he was killed in an automobile accident a few months later. His questioning voice of integrity was deemed by some to be a great loss to the PRC.

Already in 1967 a writer noted that PRC practice did not match PRC principle: "When I was formerly an active pastor in a congregation, it was always a source of sad disappointment to me that so few of our young people could testify, when asked at confession of faith, that they had not indulged in the corruptions of the movie. I have no reason to believe that my experience was unique in that regard. And with the advent of television, I verily believe that the evil of movie attendance is greater than ever."³⁸ The writer certainly spoke prophetically,

because movie watching among the PRC members is common, already many decades ago and certainly today.³⁹ Such movie watching takes place both on video and television and in the theatre, among older members and certainly among the youth, among lay members and office bearers.⁴⁰

Certainly at one time it may have seemed reasonable for the PR to blame the evil of watching movies on the belief in common grace — an evil practiced by CRC members, but not in the PRC. Says one writer, ". . . the antithetical test [against watching movies] is vitiated by the common grace theory. . . . The real solution lies in a repudiation of 1924 and a return to the sound Reformed principle of the absolute antithesis."⁴¹ But, the PRC has existed for seventy-five years, with seventy-five years of preaching against the doctrine of common grace. Moreover, most of their children and young people have been educated in PRC schools. Still, the lure of the film continues and watching movies increases. The gap between preaching and practice is widening, and Jim Jonker's mention of "hypocrisy" and "a festering wound" should be a concern to PRC leadership. Something more is needed than criticizing and blaming common grace and the CRC.⁴²

Conclusion

The RCA has demonstrated the most consistent posture in its attitude. Although warning against the evils in the movie industry, it never engaged in a wholesale condemnation of movies. Instead, the church nearly always suggested a spirit of discrimination on the part of its members. Several reasons come to mind. Although the doctrine of the antithesis has been part of RCA theology, the application of this doctrine did not tend to emphasize a distinction between good and evil in terms of organizations or products.⁴³

Rather, the battle between good and evil is a spiritual contest in all of life, in Hollywood as well as in Pella, Iowa, in labor unions as well as the church.

Secondly, the 300-year-old Americanization process of the RCA played a role. In many ways the movies were initially an American phenomenon, from household names such as Walt Disney, Shirley Temple, and John Wayne, to the portrayal of the American West and Chicago gangsters. Although the denomination was initially wary of movies, in many ways they came to be, like baseball, an accepted part of American life. Again, American culture came to see movies as both entertainment and an art form, and the RCA generally accepted those categories.

The ecumenical posture of the RCA also was significant. By the 1920s the RCA often identified itself with the Presbyterian and Methodist churches and their causes. In these denominations the movies were generally not forbidden but evaluated. This attitude of discrimination rather than that of banning movies largely became the RCA position.

The CRC had the most dramatic change in its evaluation of movies. From the 1920s through the 1950s one finds virtually complete "official" condemnation of movies and movie attendance. However, the watching of movies increased steadily, both in the theatre and on television. By the 1960s the church could no longer ignore the gap between official teaching and the practice of its constituency, and in the synodical report, "The Film Arts and the Church" came to grips with this situation. The report charted a direction that differed significantly from earlier synodical studies, especially by placing movies in the same cultural categories as literature and other arts, thereby choosing *discrimination* rather than legalistic prohibition as the church's response. By emphasizing the

doctrine of common grace the report allowed that even secular studios can produce good movies. At the same time, the report encouraged teaching and instruction in film criticism, thus developing a more discerning constituency. Such instruction has taken place in classrooms and publications. Another recommendation ("the production of film arts materials that bear the stamp of the regenerate heart and mind") has proven to be much more difficult.⁴⁴

The PRC stance is perhaps unique among North American churches. I am not aware of any other denominations in which all acting is considered evil, as is the watching of acting on stage, in theatres, on television, on video. For the PRC, acting and the watching of acting does not fall into the area of Christian liberty. Rather, acting is sinful, hypocrisy, a living lie, a terrible

sin, and the movies produced from such sinful acting are moral sewage.

At the same time, beginning in the 1960s and continuing till today, various pastors and professors lament that large numbers of PRC members watch movies, either in the theatre or, more often, on television. Moreover, the watching is increasing, as more and more members wallow in such terrible sin, hypocrisy, and moral sewage.

Thus we have, on the one hand, a consistent condemnation and announcing of God's judgment on those who watch movies, while the folks in the pew simply disregard the teaching and warnings of the church. They turn on their television sets to watch "Little House on the Prairie" or "NYPD Blue." And the parents seem to encourage such disobedience, "Our children and young people are often

puzzled and angry about the fact that while parents condemn theatre attendance, the same movies which are shown in the theatres are piped into the homes via television and are watched assiduously by the same parents who refuse to let their children go to 'shows.'"⁴⁵

Three denominations with similar creeds and similar histories developed varying interpretations about movies and movie attendance. I have sketched the patterns of movie acceptance and non-acceptance and have indicated some of the reasons for the differences. These reasons include the varying degrees of Americanization, the variant ecumenical postures, and theological differences, especially about common grace. Theological difference is perhaps the most important and deserves more attention than is possible here and calls for future research.⁶

Endnotes

1. The magazines were: *The Banner* of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC); *The Intelligencer* and *The Church Herald* of the Reformed Church in America (RCA); and *The Standard Bearer* of the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC). The articles cited did not necessarily reflect official denominational positions, but certainly expressed the dominant sentiment of the churches.

2. Henry Beets, "Theatre Going Allowable?" *The Banner*, 12 November 1908, 724.

3. Louis H. Benes, "The Idols of Hollywood," *The Church Herald*, 11 July 1947, 4.

4. "Report of the Committee on Worldly Amusements," *Agenda, Synod Christian Reformed Church*, 1928, 13-21.

5. H. C. Hoeksema, "As to Movie Attendance," *The Standard Bearer*, 1 September 1967, 463.

6. Benes, "Uncleanness with Greediness," *The Church Herald*, 6 January 1960, 6.

7. "Report . . . Amusements," 37-38.

8. *Minutes of the RCA General Synod* 1921, 574.

9. *Minutes of the Particular Synod of Chicago* 1922, 18.

10. "Motion Picture Makers to Respect Laws." *The Christian Intelligencer and Mission Field*, 15 September 1926, 587.

11. Jacob Blauw, "The Christian Answer to Our Moral Decay," *The Church Herald*, 9 May 1947, 4.

12. John R. Mulder, "The Movies Once More," *The Church Herald*, 17 October 1934, 3.

13. Bastian Kruithof, "Of Antlers, Films, and Screens," *The Church Herald*, 18 February 1966, 21.

14. *Minutes of RCA General Synod* 1962, 219.

15. Mulder, "The Movies Once More," 3.

16. Louis Benes, "Hollywood's Objectionable Films," *The Church Herald*, 16 January 1961, 6.

17. *Minutes of the RCA General Synod* 1961, 212.

18. Henry Beets, "Moving Picture Shows Commendable?" *The Banner*, 30 January 1913, 68.

19. "Report . . . Amusements," 56. (Reprinted as a 6-part series in *The*

Banner, 9 November - 4 December 1928).

20. *CRC Acts of Synod* 1951, 65.

21. H.J. Kuiper, "Synod at Work," *The Banner*, 6 July 1951, 837. H.J. Kuiper's name looms large in the discussions on movies. As editor of *The Banner* he was always strident in his condemnation of all movies, and to a great degree he shaped the CRC cultural ethos. Synod must have thought that the discussion and resolution were a God-given elucidation, because "when the last decision was passed, the members arose and sang the doxology at the suggestion of one of the elders."

22. The study was reprinted in the *CRC Acts of Synod* 1964, 452-467.

23. The questionnaire was taken a year before *The Sound of Music* was released — which apparently broke the movie barrier for many more CRC folk.

24. "The Film Arts and the Church," *CRC Acts of Synod* 1966, 316-361.

25. "The Film Arts and the Church," 325-326.

26. *The Banner*, 18 January 1980, 24-25.

continued on page 32

27. Lester De Koster, "Movies, Maturity, and Turn-itis," *The Banner*, 18 April 1980, 8, 9. The movie review policy was approved by the 1980 Synod.

28. H.J. Kuiper, "Sodom and Gomorrah," *The Banner*, 12 December 1947, 1380.

29. An earlier study on movies in the CRC is a fine essay by William Romanowski, "John Calvin Meets the Creature from the Black Lagoon: The Christian Reformed Church and the Movies 1928-1966," *Christian Scholar's Review*, 25, 1 (1955), 47-62. For the controversy about movies at Calvin College, see Harry Boonstra, *Our School: Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2001) 92-105.

30. Herman Hoeksema, "A Compromise on Movies," *The Standard Bearer*, 15 April 1927, 318.

31. Dale Kuiper, "The Christian and Entertainment," *The Standard Bearer*, 1 September 1999, 472-73.

32. Barrett Gritter, "Renewing the Battle (2)," *The Standard Bearer*, 1 May 1993, 352.

33. H. C. Hoeksema, "As to Movie Attendance," *The Standard Bearer*, 1 September 1967, 463.

34. In all the articles I surveyed in *The Standard Bearer*, I found only one essay that did not hold this view. In 1941 an author posited that drama and movies are not wrong per se, and that (PRC) Christians are "to become fortified not by a convenient blanket condemnation, but by the development of spiritual discernment through God's Word so that we are able to discern evil and flee it." Andrew Petter, "Is Christian Drama Possible?" *The Standard Bearer*, 1 October 1941, 21.

35. H. Hoeksema, "Compromise," 320.

36. David Engelsma, "Response to Letter to the Editor," *The Standard Bearer*, August 1997, 440.

37. H. Hanko, *The Christian and the Film Arts* (Grand Rapids: Pamphlet . . . distributed by the First Protestant Reformed Church, n.d.), 2.

38. H. C. Hoeksema, "As to Movie Attendance. . .," 464.

39. When I came to Grand Rapids in the 1950s, I was befriended by several PR families. I had come from a non-television, non-movie home, but in these PR homes I was introduced to the pleasure of watching "Andy Griffith" and "Perry Mason."

40. A PRC educator explained his experience to me, "In the PR elementary schools I hear nearly all the children talk about the TV they have at home and the movies they watch. In the high school the young people talk about the movies they watch on video or in the theatres (including R-rated)."

41. H.C. Hoeksema, "In Support of Movies!" *The Standard Bearer*, 15 March 1967, 272.

42. In many ways the situation in the PRC is similar to that in the CRC in the 1950s — the stance of the denomination was against movie attendance but a large number of members attended. In both cases we see a situation of denominational schizophrenia or hypocrisy.

43. The major exception to this statement is the wholesale condemnation of the liquor industry during the Prohibition era in much of the RCA.

44. "The Film Arts and the Church," 360.

45. H. Hanko, "The Christian and the Film Arts," 1. Of course, church discipline is kept confidential, so no data are available on what steps church councils take with those who attend movies.

New Jersey Dutch, part 2

James J.H. Storms and John C. Storms, edited by George G. Harper

Editor's note

This is a continuation from vol. 20, no. 2 of a glossary of Yankee-Dutch spoken in New Jersey about 1800. As with the previous list, all material in square brackets was added by the editor. Since the list by Storms was spelled phonetically, the original words were not always clearly evident and the closest approximation is provided with a question mark.

- CAN — know [kennen; weten]
- CANEET — cannot [(hij) kan niet]
- CAP — bonnet [pet, muts; clearly Yiddish]
- CARN — churn [karn]
- CARNMALK — buttermilk [karnemelk]
- CATTING — chain [ketting]
- CHANY — Chinawear [China]
- CLAAR — ready, fair, clear [klaar]
- CLAREH — clothes [kieren]
- CLAUTJE — dumpling [klontje, which means small lump]
- CLEUR — color [kleur]
- CLOP — slap [klop]
- CLOREGHEMAUK — make ready [klaargemaken]
- CLOREHEIT — readiness [klaarheid]
- CLUCK — clock [klok]
- COKE — boil, cook [koken; n. kok, kokin]
- COKEHAUS — kitchen [kokhuis? Influenced by German?]
- COLLICOON — turkey [kalkoen]
- COMFEIT — preserves, sweetmeats [?]
- COMPT — comes [(hij) komt]
- CON — can [kan]
- COO — cow [koe]
- COOK — cake [koek]
- COORT — court(-house) [gerechtshof; Yiddish]
- COORSE — course [loop, stroom, richting, cursus]
- CORT — card [kaart]
- COSSEH — cherries [kers, -sen]
- COSSEHBAUM — cherry tree [kerseboom; influence of German]
- COTTOON — cotton [katoen]
- COUSINE — cousin [Dutch is neef, nicht; influenced by the French]
- COW — chew [kauwen, pruimen]
- COWT — cold [koud]
- COWTWERE — cold weather [koudeweer]
- COWSEH — stockings [koussen]
- CRAWK — crack [kraken, barsten; n. barst, breuk etc.]
- CROB — scratch, crab [krabben; n. krab]

George G. Harper is a native of Grand Rapids and emeritus professor of English at Calvin College. Having grown up in a bilingual community and being a scholar of English provide him the unique ability to examine Yankee-Dutch.

All illustrations from Harper's Weekly, 29 November 1890, p. 936.

Origins

- CROP — quite [?]
- CRUL — curl [krul, kronkelen]
- CRULLER — doughnut [krul]
- CUMCUMER — cucumber [komkommer]
- CUN — could, knew [kennen]
- CUNNEET — could not [kan niet]
- CUSTAIT — Christmas [kerstteit, kerstmis]
- DACK — cover, roof [dak, dek]
- DACKSAL — cover [deksel]
- DAD — father [clearly Yiddish]
- DAGH — day [dag]
- DAKEH — blanket [deken]
- DANE — did, put [gedaan; zetten; legen; doen; Yiddish?]
- DANK — think [denken, dacht, gedacht etc.]
- DAREOM — about [om, rondom; daarom (i.e., hence)]
- DARTEEN — 13 [dertien]
- DARTIGH — 30 [dertig]
- DARVE — dare [durven, tarten]
- DAUGHER — days [dagen]
- DAULDER — dollar [dollar]
- DAUN — done; through [gedan]
- DAURAOOT — throughout [geheel aan; door en door; influenced by German daraus?]
- DAUVE — dove; pigeon [duif]
- DE — that [dat, die; opdat]
- DECK — thick [dik, dicht]
- DECKELS — often [dikwijls]
- DECKOPH — catfish [?]
- DENG — thing [ding; zak]
- DENGSDAGH — Tuesday [dinsdag]
- DENGEST — fixture [ding; origin (dingus in US use since 1876)?]
- DEPTA — depth [diepte]
- DEUM — thumb; inch; [duim; prior to the middle of the 19th century the thumb had been a unit of measure]
- DEUN — thin [dun, mager]
- DEUR — door; through [deur; door]
- DEUR — dear (expensive) [duur; kostbaar; lief (i.e., held dear)]
- DES — dish [schotel; v. opdissen]
- DESPON — dishpan (clearly Yiddish)
- DESSLBAUM — neck yoke [?]
- DEUTSCH — Dutch [Nederlands; possibly assimilated to Deutsch, German?]
- DEUVEL — devil [duivel]
- DEZINE — dozen [dozijn]
- DIEN — earn [verdiene; verwerven]
- DIENSTMAIT — servant girl [dienstmaagd]
- DIEVE — thief [dief]
- DOCK — roof [dak]
- DODKAMER — death room [doodkamer]
- DOM — darn, damn [verdoemde]
- DOMINE — minister [dominee]
- DOMP — damp [damp]
- DON — then [dan]
- DONK — thank [dank]
- DONS — dance [dans; v.i. dansen]
- DOOK — cloth [doek]
- DOOT — does [doen]
- DOOZENT — thousand [duizend]
- DOPE — baptize; gravy [doop]
- DOPIES — dipped morsels [doopjes?]
- DORN — briar [doorn]
- DOT — that [dat]
- DOTE — dead [dood]
- DRACHT — load [dracht]
- DRAIVE — drive [drijven, voortdrijven]
- DRAUGH — carry, wear [dragen]
- DRAUT — thread [draad]
- DREE — three [drie]



- DREEDEH — third [derde]
- DREISAL — drier [? A room for drying?]
- DRENK — drink [drenken; n. drank]
- DREUGHEH — grapes [druif]
- DROGH — dry [droog]
- DROME — dream [droom]
- DRONK — drank [hij dronk]
- DROY — turn [draai; v.i.&t. draaien]
- DRUCK — dull, idle [oddly, druk=busy]
- DRUP — drop [druppel]
- DU — the [de; het]
- DUCHT — thought [gedachte; gedacht]
- DUGHTER — daughter [dochter]
- DUKTOR — doctor [dokter; arts, geneesheer]
- DUKTERSGHOOT — medicine [?]
- DUNDERDOGH — Thursday [Donderdag]
- DUNKER — dark [donker]
- DURVE — dared [durven]
- DUS — thresh, flog [geselen, ranselen; Yiddish: dust?]
- DUT — this [dit]
- DUZEH — those [deze]
- DWAS — across; contrary [dwaas]
- EBEL — able [Yiddish; bekwaam; knap]
- ECK — I, me [ik]
- EEN — 1 [een]
- EENDRACHT — union [eendracht]
- EENEGHDENG — anything [enig ding]
- EENIGH — any, only [enig]
- EENMAAL — onetime; once [eenmaal]
- EERSE — Irish [Iers]
- EILANT — island [eiland]
- EIRLANDT — Ireland [Ierland]
- ELFT — 11 [elf]
- EMEST — anyone [iemand; ierderen]
- EMMER — ever [immer]
- EMMERGRHUN — evergreen [immer groen]
- EN — in [in,]
- ENCE — once [eens, eenmaal]
- ENGESTAL — install [installeren, ingeboren, aangeboren]
- ENKBUTTEL — ink bottle [Yiddish]
- ENSPAN — to harness [inspannen]
- ENZEGHT — insight [inzicht; begrip]
- ES — is [is]
- ESEL — mule [esel]
- ESTAAT — estate [landgoed, bezit; fortuin; clearly Yiddish]
- EUR — hour [uur]
- FAMELE — family [familie; gezin]
- FEEST — stomach disgust [vies]
- FEOLE — fiddle [viool]
- FLAUT — whistle [fluiten]
- FLECKERTIA — slight flurry (as of snow) [?]
- FLOW — faint, weak [flauw]
- FLUDER — sloven woman [flodderen]
- FLUDERIGH — slovenly [flodderig (actually means baggy or loose)]
- FNEEZE — sneeze [niezen]
- FONTAINE — spring [fontein (actually a fountain)]
- FOUNDERT — found[er]s [zinken; vergaan; Yiddish]
- FRAUM — frame [raam]
- FRONS — France [Frankrijk]
- GALUS — suspenders [jarretelgordeltje; Yiddish for US galluses]
- GANZ — goose [gans]
- GHACK — fool [gek, dwaas, nar, vla]
- GHACKEHEIT — foolishness [gekheid]
- GHALE — yellow [geel]
- GHAST — yeast [gist]
- GHAVE — give [geven; gaaf, geschenk]
- GHAUN — go [gaan]
- GHAUP — gape [staren, aangapen]
- GHAUT — goes [gaat]

Origins

- GHEBAT** — prayer [gebed]
GHEBARGH — mountain [gebergte (entire mountain range)]
GHEDAUN — finished, ended [gedaan]
GHEDOO — noise, uproar [gedoe]
GHEEN — none [geen]
GHEENDENG — nothing [niets; Yiddish]
GHEENMANSE — no one [niemand; Yiddish]
GHEENTAIT — no time [geen tijd; Yiddish]
GHEFT — gift [gaaf, geschenk]
GHEKUFT — sold [gekoopt]
GHELAIK — alike, together [gelijk; alike version=Yiddish]
GHELL — yell [gil; v.i. gillen]
GHELOFE — belief [geloof]
GHELT — money [geld]
GHEMAUKT — make [gemaakt]
GHEMAINTE — congregation [gemeente]
GHENAME — taken [genomen]
GHENAUMED — named [genaamd]
GHENG — went [ging]
GHENUGH — enough [genug]
GHESCHÖTE — shop [?]
GHESNEDE — cut [besnijden?]
GHESOPEH — drunk [bezopen]
- GHEST** — visitor [gast; bezoeker; YD?]
GHETROWT — married [getrouwd]
GHEUSTER — yesterday [gister(-en)]
GHEVONGEN — captured [gevangen]
GHEVROHRER — frozen [bevroren]
GHEVUL — feeling [gevoel]
GHEWASTE — been [geweest]
GHEWEST — known [gewust]
GHEZEEN — seen [gezien]
GHEZUNTHEIT — health [gezondheid]
GHEZUNTlich — healthy [German?]
GHLOS — glass [glas]
GHLOVE — believe [geloven]
GHOLDERAI — gallery [galerij]
GHONZ — goose [gans]
GHOOT — good; chattels [goed; goederen]
GHOOTKOPE — cheap [goedkoop]
GHOOTlich — goodly [flink; aanmerkelijk]
GHORE — yarn [garen]
GHOT — posterior [achterste; i.e., gaat: hole]
GHOUT — gold [goud]
GHOV — gave [geef]
GHOW — quick [gau]
GHOY — throw [gooien]
- GHRAISE** — gray [grijs, grau]
GHRAUN — grain [graan]
GHRAUP — grapple [aanklampen; Yiddish for grope?]
GHRAUV — dig; grave [graf, grafkuils; to dig: graven]
GHRESEL — awesome [griezelig]
GHREUNING — greening [groening]
GHREW — grew [groot]
GHROSS — grass [gras]
GHROSTER — largest, greatest [grootste]
GHROTE — large, big [groot]
GHROTTER — larger [grooter]
GHROTEKENDERS — grandchildren [grootkinder]
GHROTEKENT — grandchild [grootkind]
GHROTEMAS — butcherknife [grootemes?]
GHROTEMUDER — grandmother [grootmoeder]
GHROTTERUCK — overcoat [overjas; Yiddish]
GHROTESHIES — grandparents [?]
GHROTEVADER — grandfather [grootvader]
GHRUNT — ground [grond]
GHUT — God [God]
GHUTlich — godly [vroom, godvruchtig]

GHUY — good one [goed]

GREDDLE — griddle [Yiddish]

GRUNTLACHSTER — founder
[Yiddish?]

HA — have [hebben]

HAASE — rabbit [haas]

HAASENPEPER — rabbit stew [Ger-
man: Hassenpfeffer]



HAAT — hate [haten]

HAB — have [heb; hebben]

HACK — gate [hek; poort]

HAGHLE — hail [hagel]

HAI — he [hij]

HAINING — fence [heinen;
omheinen]

HALE — all; very [heel]

HALP — help [hulp]

HAMER — hammer [hamer]

HAMPT — shirt [hemd]

HAMPTRUCK — vest [borstruk]

HAN — hen [hen; haan=cock]

HART — hard [zwaar; hard; moeielijk,
moiezaam]

HARTIGH — hearty [hartelijk]

HAUD — ought [behoeven; Yiddish]

HAUN — rooster [haan]

HAUS — house [huis; German
influence]

HAUST — hardly; nearly; almost
[haast; bijna; nauwelijks]

HAUVER — oats [haver]

HEEL — kept, held [hield (pret. of
houden)]

HEET — hot; to call [heet; noemen]

HEETWARE — hot weather [heete
weer]

HEIR — God [de Heer]

HESS — urge, incite [ophitsen; hence
prob. hitsen, etc.]

HET — the [het]

HEUM — him [hem]

HEUNING — honey [honing]

HEUR — her [haar (poss)]

HEURDPHANT — hired man
[huurvent]

HEUZZA — his [het zijne]

HIMMEL — heaven [hemel - German
influence]

HOCK — chop (hack) [hakken]

HOD — had [gehad]

HOGH — high [hoog]

HOGHDEISCH — German (language)
[hoogduits]

HOGHEIT — height [hoogte]

HOGHSTEM — highest [hoogste]

HOLFT — half [half]

HOLFTPACK — half peck [clearly
Yiddish]

HOND — hand [hand]

HONDLE — handle [n. handvat,
hengsel; v.t. greep]

HONDOOK — washcloth [handdoek
(towel)]

HONDSCHUN — glove [handschoen]

HONG — hang [hang]

HONKT — hangs [hangt]

HOO — hour [uur]

HOOK — corner [hoek]

HOONDERS — chickens [hoender]

HOORE — whore [hoer]

HOOST — cough [hoest]

HOOT — hat [hoed]

HOPE — heap, pile [hoop]

HORD — heard [gehoord]

HORE — hear; hair [hoor; haar]

HORING — hearing [gehoor]

HORY — hairy [behaard; Yiddish]

HOUT — wood [hout; bos (a wood)]

HOUT LAPEL — ladel (sic)
[soeplepel; suggests wooden spoon]

Origins

- HOUTPLAAS** — woodpile [hout
plaats]
- HOW** — held, keep [houden]
- HOWUP** — pause [hou'up;
ophouden]
- HOY** — HAY [hooi]
- HOYLANDT** — hayfield [hooiland]
- HUCK** — sty; to herd together [hok]
- HUCKY** — small enclosure [hoekje]
- HUINTER** — rear [?]
- HULL** — run, hole [probably Yiddish]
- HULLABALOO** — outcry [Yiddish]
- HULLIE** — they [jullie=you plural]
- HUNDERT** — hundred [honderd]
- HUNDT** — dog [hond; influence of
German]
- HUNGHERE** — hunger [honger]
- HUNGHERSNODE** — famine
[hongersnood]
- HUNGHERIG** — hungry [hongerig]
- HURKIES** — haunches [dij(-n);
lendestuk; bout; YD?]
- INFARE** — reception [ontvangst;
receptie]
- JA** — yes [ja]
- JEALARAUSY** — jealousy
[jaloersheid; semi-Yiddish]
- KAASE** — cheese [kaas]
- KAIKE** — look [kijke; n. blik,
voorkommen]
- KAIRKE** — church [kerk]
- KAIRKHOF** — congregation
[gemeente; but he means church-
yard, kerkhof]
- KALE** — throat [keel; strot]
- KAKE** — looked [kijkt]
- KAMER** — bedroom [kamer: merely a
room]
- KANNES** — sense, reason [rede,
verstand; billijkheid]
- KATEL** — kettle [ketel]
- KAUKEN** — little chickens [kuiken]
- KEDEL** — gentleman [heer;
kerel=mere fellow]
- KELDER** — cellar [kelder]
- KELDERCOKEHAUS** — cellar kitchen
[kelderkokhuis?]
- KELL** — brook [beek; source?]
- KEK** — look [kijk]
- KEKFUS** — frog [kikvors; kikker]
- KEN** — chin [kin]
- KENDERS** — children [kinderen]
- KENDT** — child [kind]
- KEOUY** — pig [?]
- KEST** — coffin [kist]
- KESTANG** — chestnut [kastanje]
- KESTANGNEUTBOHM** — chestnut
tree [kastanje nootboom]
- KEUR** — cure [v. genezen, herstellen;
n. herstel; genezing]
- KEUR** — choice [keus]
- KLAAVER** — cleaver [clearly Yiddish]
- KLATE** — cloth; cover [kleed]
- KLEIN** — little [klein; wenig]
- KLEINSTE** — smallest [kleinste]
- KLEINTJE** — little child [kleintje]
- KLEM** — climb [klimmen; steigen; Du
klem=clamp]
- KLEINHAUS** — outdoor toilet
[kleinhuis; influence by German?]
- KLENKER** — clinker [klinker]
- KLEP** — rock [cleft?]
- KLEPPER** — clam, mussel [mossel;
gaapschelp]
- KLOP** — knock; rap [kloppen]
- KNAIP** — pinch [knijpen]
- KNAPE** — pinched [knijp(-en)]
- KNAZE** — grumble [knorren; hij
knorst?]
- KNAZER** — grumbler [brombeer;
knorster]
- KNECK** — nod; bow [knikken]
- KNEP** — quit [?]
- KNOP** — very [knapjes: smartly,
hence very?]
- KNOPE** — button [knoop]
- KNOPESCHAUT** — buttonhole
[knoopsgaat]
- KOENIG** — king [koning; clearly infl
by German]

KOHL — cabbage [kool; German spelling again]

KOLF — calf [kalf]

KOLK — lime [kalk]

KOM — comb [kam]

KONT — edge [kant, side]

KOPE — buy [kopen]

KOPER — copper [koper]

KOPF — head [kop; influenced by German]

KOST — trunk, closet [kist]

KOT — cat [kat]

KOTZENYOMMER — self-pity [origin American German Katzenjammer: hangover & assoc. self-pity, remorse, etc.]

KOW — chew [kauwen, pruimen]

KOY — bed [kot; kooi (pen, cage) bed]

KOYRAUM — bedroom [Yiddish]

KRAAL — field [veld; kraal=corral]

KRAGH — get [krijgen, kreegen]

KRAGHE — got [kreeg]

KREUPLE — lame [kreupel, mank]

KREUPLEBOS — thicket [kreupelhout=undergrowth]

KROKALE — quarrel [?]

KROY — crow [kraai]

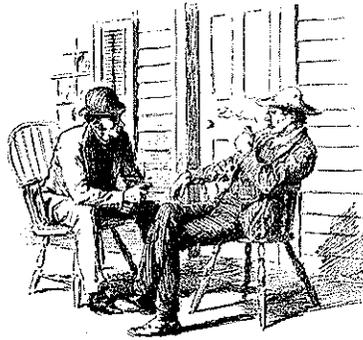
KRUM — crooked [krom, scheef; in ethical sense, oneerlijk]

KRUMHAINING — worm fence [krom onheining?]

KUFFEE — coffee [koffie]

KUFFEPUT — coffeepot [koffiepot]

KUFT — bought [koopt; infl of German?]



KUMPT — comes [komt]

KURT — short [kort]

KUST — cost; crust [korst; schaal]

LAAS — read! (imperative) [lezen; las, etc.]

LAKER — liquor [clearly Yiddish]

LACKER — tasty, delicious [lekker]

LAGH — lay [loog (fr. liegen); properly leggen, legte, gelegd, v.t.]

LAGHE — low, empty; badly, ? [laag]

LAIF — body, waist [lijf; waist?]

LAIK — corpse; like [lijk]

LAIKNESS — dageureotype [sic]; likeness [clearly Yiddish]

LAKE — leak [lekken, v.; lek, n.]

LAMOON — lemon [limon; citroen]

LAOUW — lazy [lui]

LAPEL — spoon [lepel]

LAPELVUL — spoonful [lepelvol]

LARE — ladder; leather [ladder; leer]

LARED — learned [geleerd]

LARER — learner [leerling; leraar=teacher]

LAS — lesson [les]

LATTERS — alphabet [Yiddish]

LAUKEH — quilt [gewatteerde spreij]

LAUT — late; leave; let [laat; verlaten; laten]

LAUTER — later [later]

LAVE — live; leave [leven; weggaan]

LAVEH — living [levend]

LAVENIGH — alive [levend]

LAVER — lever [lever]

LAVEROUM — livingroom [Yiddish]

LAVESMETLING — occupation [?]

LAWNING — lane [Yiddish]

LAXIE — election (political) [Yiddish]

LED — lid [deksel]

LEEP — walked; ran [liep]

LEET — let [laten, liet, gelaten]

LEGHT — light [licht]

LEGHSTE — lowest [leegste]

LENEH — linen [linnen]

LEOUSE — louse [luis]

Origins

LERE — learn, study [leer]

LEREBOEK — textbook [leerboek]

LEREMESTER — teacher [leraar, -in]

LEST — listen [luisteren]

LEUGHEN — lie (tell a...) [liegen, loog, gelogen]

LEUGHENOR — liar [leugenaar]

LEYT — lays (lies) [legde]

LIEB — love [liefde; v.t. liefhebben]

LIEBDE — beloved [bemind, geliefde]

LIGHD — lied [(hij) loog]

LOFT — garret [zolderkammer; vliering; clearly Yiddish]

LOGH — laugh [lachen; pret. lachte]

LOGHTER — laughter [gelach; clearly Yiddish]

LOMB — lamb [lam]

LOME — glow [Yiddish?]

LOMP — lamp [lamp]

LONG-EST(sic) — along [langst]

LONK — long [lang (spatial); gedurig (temporal)]

LONG EYLANT — Long Island [Yiddish]

LONT — laid [legde]

LONTERNE — lantern [lantaarn]

LOPE — walk [lopen]

LOS — wrong [los (loose); scheel (in error, adrift, etc.)]

LUS — loose; like; desire [los; gelijk; wensen, begeren, wellust (lust)]

LUT — lot [levenslot — one's lot in life]

MAACHT — might, power [macht]

MAAK — make [maken; vervaardigen]

MAART — March [Maart]

MAI — may [mogen, mocht; gemoogd]

MAIN — my, me [mijn mij]

MAIT — girl [maagd; meisje]



MAITJE — small girl [maagd; meisje]

MAKERE — want, need [magere? Nodig hebben; vereisen; n. behoefte, nood]

MAKORE — together, with each other [a heavily inflected version of met elkaar]

MALCK — milk [melk]

MALE — meal, flour [meel]

MALT — melt [smelten, vertederen; clearly Yiddish]

MAM — mother [Frisian mem]

MANG — mix [mengen, vermengen]

MANSE — person [mens]

MANSEH — people [mensen]

MARE — more [meer]

MARGEH — tomorrow [morgen, ochtend]

MARRIE — mare [merrie]

MART — market, mart [markt]

MAS — knife [mes]

MAST — manure [mest]

MASTFAL — manure heap [mestbult ?]

MAUGHER — slim, lean [mager]

MAUK — make [maken]

MAUKHAUST — hurry [mak haast]

MAUKWEIS — pretend [voorgeven; beweren; ?]

MAUL — meal; time [maal; as time in eenmaal, etc.]

MAUNDAGH — Monday [Maandag]

MAUNT — month [maand]

MAUT — measure [maat; maatstaf]

MAY — with, along [met, mee; bij]

MEDIGH — noon; dinner [middag]

MEDNACHT — midnight [middernacht]

MEDST — middle, center [midden; amidst?]

MEESE — corn [mais; koren]

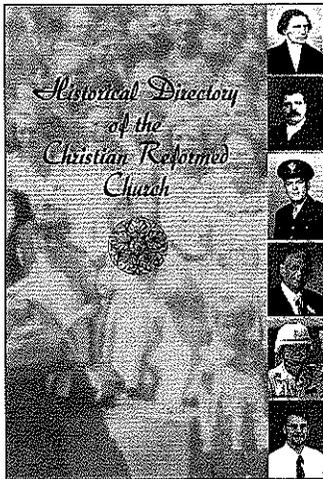
MEESELANDT — cornfield [maisveld]

MEESEMALE — cornmeal [maismeel]	MOOGH — tired [moe]	NATURLICK — naturally [natuurlijk]
MEESELIGHT — common [measly?; Yiddish]	MOOT — meet; humor [ontmoeten; moed (cheer, courage)]	NAULD — nail [nagel; but, naald=needle]
MEIN — mine [mijn]	MOOTING — meeting [verzameling; clearly Yiddish]	NAUKENT — naked [naakt]
MEINSALV — myself [mijnzelf]	MORE — but; except [maar]	NAULT — needle [naald]
MEISTER — mister [meester]	MORT — murder [moord]	NAUM — name [naam]
MELIONE — million [millioen]	MOW — loft [confusion of loft with mow?]	NAW — to; near; toward; afterwards [naar]
MEOUST — most [meest]	MOY — mow [maaïen]	NAWBAI — nearby, close [nabij]
MERE — ant [mier]	MOY — pretty, pleasant [mooi]	NAWCOMER — junior child [nakomer]
MES — miss (girl) [Yiddish]	MUDDER — mother [moeder]	NAWST — next [naast]
METAOUT — without [Yiddish]	MUGH — might, may [mocht]	NAZE — heal [genezen; past part. genas]
MEULING — mill [molen]	MUSQUAP — muskrat [corruption of Indian word?]	NECHT — niece [nicht]
MEUN — moan [kreunen]	MUSSIGH — dirty [YD: messy]	NEET — not [niet]
MEUR — wall [muur; wand]	MUT — must, with, moth [moet, met, mot]	NEIN — no [nee(-n)]
MEUSE — mouse [muis]	NACK — neck [nek, hals]	NEMEST — no-one [niemand]
MEUSETROP — mousetrap [muisval]	NAGHEH — nine [negen]	NEMMER — never [influence of German nimmer?]
MEX — straddle; across [?]	NAGHENTEEN — 19 [negentien]	NESCHERIGH — curious, anxious [nieuwsgierig]
MINAOUT — minute [minuut]	NAGHER — Negro [neger]	NEUYORE — New Year [Nieuw Jaar]
MOCKLIGH — easy [gemakkelijk]	NAGHEREN — Negress [negerin]	NEUHETJE — novelty [niewwtje]
MODDER — mud [modder]	NAME — take [nemen]	NEUS — nose [neus]
MOLL — crazy [gek, wrak, mal=foolish]	NAR — down, near [nabij; dichtbijzijnd]	NEUSDOOK — handkerchief [zakdoek]
MOLLIGH — foolish [mal, malle]	NAREBEI — nearby [naast]	NEUT — nut [noot]
MOLLIGHEIT — foolishness [malligheid]	NAST — nest, "mess" [nest]	NEWSPOMPIER — newspaper [?]
MON — man [man]	NAT — neat [net; zindelijk]	NOCHT — night [nacht]
MONT — basket [mand]	NATURE — nature [natuur]	
MONTJE — small basket [mandje]		

Origins

NOCHTEN — nights [nachten]	OET — ever [ooit]	ORLUGH — war [oorlog]
NODE — need [nood]	OGH — eye [oog]	ORT — kind [soort, aard]
NODIGH — needy [nodig]	OKE — too [ook]	OS — as; if [als]
NODIGHEIT — necessity [nodigheid]	OL — all [al]	OSS — ashes [assen]
NOM — took [nam; pret. of nemen]	OLYFONT — elephant [olifant]	OSSHOPE — ash heap [ashoop]
NOOT — new; bare [nude? Yiddish]	OM — about [om; rondom]	OSSPON — ashpan [Yiddish]
NORD — north [noord]	ONDERS — others [anders]	OST — east [oost]
NORDOST — northeast [noordoost]	ONGHELUCK — accident [ongeluk]	OT — ate [at]
NOT — wet [nat]	ONKLERE — to dress [ankleden]	OTEY — granny [alte?]
NOUGH — yet [nog]	ONKUST — purchase [n. aankoop; v. kopen]	OUERLENG — elder [ouderling]
NOW — narrow [nauw; eng; smal]	ONTHOW — remember [onthouden]	OUER — older [ouder]
NOY — copulate [fr. Du neuken?]	ONTVANG — catch [ontvangen]	OUERS — elders (non-ecclesiast.) [ouders]
NOYT — never [nooit]	ONTWANT — accustomed [ontwennen=lose the habit of]	OUSTEH — eldest [oudste]
OCHT — 8 [acht; through]	ONTWORT — answer [antwoord]	OUT — old [oud]
OCHDE — eighth [achste]	OOME — uncle [oom]	ONTSPON — unharness [ontspannen]
OCHTEEN — 18 [achtien]	OPEH — open [open]	OV — if [of]
OCHTER — behind [achter]	OPEHGHEDAUN — opened [open gedaan]	OVEH — oven [oven]
OCKER — acre [akker]	OPGHEWARKT — excited, worried [Yiddish from worked up?]	OWDERDOM — age [ouderdom]
OELE — oil [olie]	OPREL — April [April]	
OELEKLATE — oilcloth [Yiddish]		
OELEKOOK — doughnut [oliebol]		

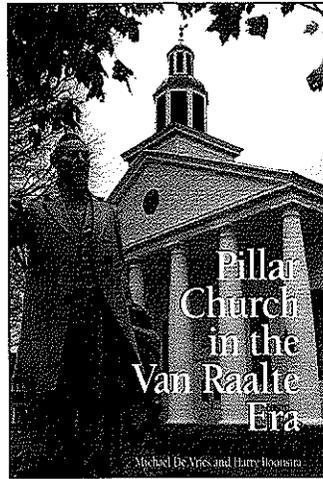
book notes



Historical Directory of the Christian Reformed Church

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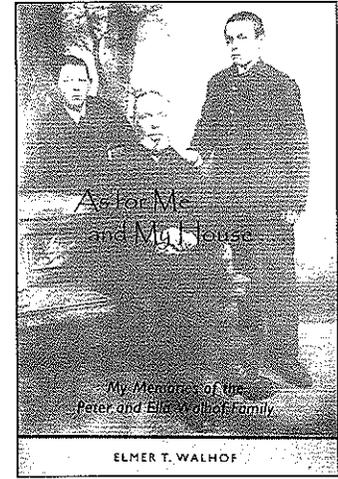
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Pillar Church in the Van Raalte Era

Michael De Vries and Harry Boonstra

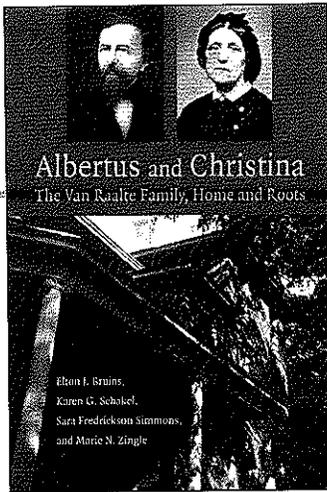
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**Albertus and Christina,
The Van Raalte Family,
Home and Roots**

Elton J. Bruins, Karen G. Schakel,
Sara Fredrickson Simmons, and
Marie N. Zingle
William B. Eerdmans Publishing
Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 2004
250 pages, \$25.00

In the first of his three chapters in this book, Elton Bruins, senior research fellow at the Van Raalte Institute, enshrines, not in bronze but in print, the founder of Holland, Michigan, Albertus Van Raalte, portrayed by Bruins as “person extraordinaire” (p. 30) and an “American Moses” (p. 221). Emerging from this thirty-page uncritical biographical vignette is a dynamic leader with very few flaws, highly respected by those in the Colony, as the Dutch settlement in West Michigan came to be known. About Christina, Van Raalte’s wife, we

Conrad Bult is the long-serving book reviewer for Origins, a published scholar of the Dutch in America and their periodicals. He is a retired reference librarian and expert on children’s books, postcards, and Dutch silver.

read, “Christina fully supported her extraordinary husband in all of his pursuits and interests, sharing in the hardships, working alongside him and reaping the rewards” (p. 1). The author heaps high praise on Van Raalte for his successful efforts urging Classis Holland, composed of folk who had been in America less than five years, to join the Dutch Reformed Church (now the Reformed Church in America). This 1850 merger of this Dutch Reformed Church and the followers of Van Raalte continues to be a matter of dispute among Reformed and Christian Reformed scholars.

Bruins devotes three pages to both early and lasting benefits resulting from this ecclesiastical arrangement but has little to say about the formation of the Christian Reformed Church in 1857. Formation of this denomination was a direct result of simmering discontent from the 1850 union. Critics of the union looked askance at the Americanized Dutch Reformed Church and found much not to their liking in the liturgy and theology exhibited by the laity and leaders of the denomination, which had a more than two-hundred-year history in America, compared to the handful of residents of the recently arrived Colony residents.

The second segment by Bruins, “The Van Raalte Family Homestead: Its Rise and Demise, 1847-1961,” both critical and candid, has all the appeal of a theatrical production titled “Demolition and Destruction of the Van Raalte Home: An Architectural Tragedy.” Among members of the cast are Van Raalte’s grandson Dick, who sold the home in 1947; Van Raalte biographer and scholarly entrepreneur, Albert Hyma; publisher and purchaser of the Van Raalte home, William Eerdmans, who deeded the house to Hope College; Hope president, Irwin Lubbers; Willard Wichers, a Holland, Michigan, resident and

advocate of all aspects of Dutch culture; and Western Seminary professor Donald Bruggink, who shared Wichers’s love for significant historical structures in and around Holland, Michigan. Cameo role players on the stage were William Spoelhof, president of Calvin College, and Calvin business manager, Henry De Wit. Sadly, in June 1961 the Hope College Board of Trustees voted against preservation; with only Bruggink and Wichers voting for its preservation. As the house was being razed and debris burned, Spoelhof and De Wit salvaged two front window frames, a lintel piece, a desk, books, and a few bricks.

Though the demolished Van Raalte homestead vanished from the Holland landscape in 1961, the Van Raalte papers survived and are now found at Calvin College. Why the papers are at Calvin and not at Hope or somewhere else in Holland is a question Bruins strives to answer in his final essay. Among the decisive events in this saga are Albert Hyma’s purchase of the papers from Dick Van Raalte in 1946 for \$1,100; the subsequent purchase of the papers by William Eerdmans from Hyma; Hyma’s unwanted meddling advice to Eerdmans about selling the papers; and the gift of the papers to Calvin College in 1962 by Eerdmans. In a detailed account of these events and others, Bruins characterizes Hyma, a University of Michigan history professor and Van Raalte biographer, as a scholar who knew the value of a dollar. Combined with his penchant for monetary gain, Hyma conducted scholarly research on topics such as Dutch-American immigration history and the Brethren of the Common Life. Oddly enough, this learned professor also consulted a psychic about where to drill for oil in Michigan.

When writing about the fate of an architectural treasure or the wanderings of archival material, Bruins does

not flinch from placing blame or giving credit where it belongs. His text and explanatory annotated footnotes help make what happened almost two generations ago come alive for every reader.

Pages 63-183 contain a very detailed narrative genealogy devoted to Van Raalte, his wife, and the seven of their eleven children who reached adulthood. A separate genealogy is given for each of the surviving children, and it is here that we find material about the mysterious disap-

pearance of the eldest married son, also named Albertus; the Civil War careers of two other sons, Benjamin and Dirk; and the accomplishments of daughter Christina Van Raalte Gilmore, who was described in a 1933 obituary as "One of Holland's Leading Women . . ." (p. 155). This meticulous genealogy, compiled by Marie N. Zingle, contains much more than a mere listing of names. Emerging from her biographical remarks are flesh and blood human beings. Among the remaining segments the reader will

note with interest are "Photographs of Van Raalte Descendants" and "Van Raalte-de Moen Ancestors in the Netherlands."

This lavishly illustrated informative volume with prolific footnotes, a source bibliography, and a name index, is a treasure trove for both the casual reader and professional specialist. Read this book; after doing so the words Van Raalte will mean more to you than ever before.

Reviewed by Conrad Bult

for the future

The topics listed below are being researched, and articles about them will appear in future issues of *Origins*.



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