

Origins

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Origins is designed to publicize
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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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Chaplain (Captain) Rowland Koskamp



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This Issue

This issue contains a number of articles on a variety of topics. We begin with the military chaplaincy of Rowland Koskamp (Reformed Church in America), who was killed in action during WW II, written by Calvin Cevaal. Gerlof Homan details the life of Adriaan Barnouw, who attempted to bring Dutch and American people to a better understanding of each other. Doctoral student Michael Douma describes the brief appearance of socialist candidates in early twentieth-century Holland, Michigan. We also include Robert Schoone-Jongen's work on missionfest in Minnesota and Rich Iwema's recollections of vacations at Cedar Lake, Indiana. We conclude with Howard Spaan's last installment on the Christian Reformed congregations that formed in the far West during the pre-WW II years. ♣

Available On-Line

We compiled the membership records of the South Holland, Michigan, Presbyterian Church, 1852-1867. This group was the first to leave the Reformed Church in America after the Dutch immigrants had joined in 1850. As with our previous such efforts, to make these data readily available, they are now at http://www.calvin.edu/hh/family_history_resources/soholland_church.htm. In addition we have added the birth, marriage, anniversary, and death dates from the 2008 issues of *The Banner* to our index now available at http://www.calvin.edu/hh/family_history_resources/2006-2008.pdf. ♣

News from the Archives

Since our last report we opened for research sixty-two cubic feet of processed records. Among the larger collections are the research files of Dr. George M. Marsden, noted scholar of American religious history; the papers of Paul Zylstra and Tymen Hofman, ministers in the Christian Reformed Church—the Hofman files detail his life-long research into the history of the Dutch in Canada and the United

States. Records from institutions include a significant run, filling fourteen cubic feet, of the various publications produced by Faith Alive; a significant addition to the records of the Calvin College Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Dance, and Sport Department, precipitated by the move of the department to temporary space while the just-completed athletic complex was being built; and four cubic feet of the records of the Seminars for Christian Scholarship. Among the smaller collections processed were the records of the Mountain Lake, Minnesota CRC (a discontinued ministry); CR World Missions; the Chaplaincy office; records from Classis Lake Superior; the papers of Rev. Emo F. J. Van Halsema; and the WW I correspondence and diary of Edward DeVries, who was killed in action. Although it may seem that we process everything we collect, during the past six months we tracked the disposal of seventeen cubic feet of duplicate or material unlikely to be used for research.

Our volunteers continue working on the translation from Dutch into English of the minutes from

Manhattan, Montana CRC and Holland, Michigan's Central Avenue CRC. Indexing of *The Banner* vital records continues. The collating and keying into a database the information on post World War II Dutch immigrants in Canada was completed and is currently being proofread.

Accessions include the papers of H. Evan Runner, noted Christian philosopher and member of the college faculty, 1950-1981. Runner was one of the premier advocates of the philosophy of brothers-in-law D. H. Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978) and Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) in the United States. We also acquired the personal papers of the late William Spoelhof, president emeritus of Calvin College, who died three days before what would have been his 99th birthday; and additional material from Robert Swierenga, noted scholar in Dutch-American studies. 🐾

Staff

Richard Harms continues as the curator of the Heritage Hall archival holdings. Other staff members are: Hendrina Van Spronsen, office man-

ager; Wendy Blankespoor, librarian and cataloging archivist; Melanie Vander Wal, processing archivist; Robert Bolt, field agent and assistant archivist; and Dana Verhulst and Cyn-di Feenstra, our student assistants. We are particularly grateful to our dedicated volunteers: Mr. Ed Geritsen, Mr. Fred Greidanus, Mr. Ralph Haan, Dr. Henry Ippel, Mrs. Helen Meulink, Rev. Gerrit W. Sheeres, Mrs. Janet Sheeres, Mrs. Willene De Groot, and Mr. Ralph Veenstra.

Last October we lost our oldest volunteer (and the Christian Reformed Church's oldest pastor) Henry De Mots at the age of 97. His facility in both Dutch and English made him a particularly gifted translator, a role he filled until the very end. In the last weeks of his life as physical limitations prevented him from writing he had made arrangements to dictate translations. 🐾

Endowment Fund

Not surprisingly the dramatic economic decline during the last half of 2008 caused the *Origins* endowment fund to shrink by 14 percent to

\$350,229. The decrease eliminated the entire gain we saw during 2007, but we are grateful that our decline was relatively small compared to losses suffered by others, some of whom have reported investment losses in excess of 20 percent. We are still in sound financial condition and the annual subscription rate remains at \$10. We are most grateful to our supporters many of whom contributed well above the subscription cost which has allowed us to operate without having to withdraw from the endowment principal. 🐾



Richard H. Harms

Rowland A. Koskamp: Minister, Army Chaplain, Prisoner of War¹

Calvin D. Cevaál

The Battle of the Bulge
D-Day, 6 June 1944—the day the Invasion of Normandy began, launching the Western Allied effort to liberate mainland Europe—was, as Field Marshal Erwin Rommel had commented to his aide in early 1944, “the longest day.”² It was a long day, but the Allies prevailed, partly because Hitler and many of his generals believed that the invasion was a diversionary movement, and that the main thrust would come in the area of Calais, only thirty miles from the English port of Dover.

By late summer of 1944 the Allied armies occupied all of France, Belgium, and Luxembourg, and by December some units were in German territory. Optimism was so high in the summer of 1944 that Allied soldiers were hoping to be home by Christmas. In September, Hitler summoned his generals to his field headquarters in East Prussia and announced, “I have made a momentous decision. I shall go on the offensive . . . with the objective Antwerp.”³ The German attack came through the Ardennes, with their last strategic reserves—a total of twenty-four divisions versus six US divisions. The commander of the Luftwaffe, Reich Marshal Herman Goering, would muster as many planes as possible from his depleted arsenal. The attack would encompass an area fifty miles wide, preceded by a massive artillery barrage.



First Lieutenant Rowland Koskamp when he enlisted in the US Army in 1943. Image courtesy of Karen (Koskamp) Daniels Bables.

US Colonel Hurley Fuller, commanding the 110th Infantry Regiment of the 28th Infantry Division, was guarding Clervaux, a small village in Luxembourg with an important road leading to Bastogne. In Bastogne seven main roads through the Ardennes converged; consequently this town was absolutely necessary if the German force was to succeed. The invading tanks broke through the American perimeter defenses and were in the streets of Clervaux early in the morning of 16 December 1944. Fuller, with the rest of the US

Calvin D. Cevaál, retired, resides with his wife, Patricia, in North Carolina, and writes about people from and events in Oostburg, Wisconsin. Several of his pieces have been published in editions of Origins.

First Army, was caught completely off guard by the attack and failed to comprehend the magnitude of the offensive. It created an unparalleled crisis for the Allied forces and would point out the failure of intelligence. Fuller's regimental command was in the Clara-vallis Hotel. Looking out the window he saw German tanks and infantry within fifty yards and called the 28th Division chief of staff for permission to pull back his troops to an area more suitable to defend. His request was denied and during the conversation an explosion rocked the hotel. The chief of staff inquired where the noise was coming from and Fuller informed him that "a Tiger tank is laying 88mm shells in my lap."⁴

Fuller made the decision to disregard his orders and abandon the town. He asked for volunteers to remain with the wounded, and Captain Rowland A. Koskamp, a chaplain, was among several to step forward, knowing they would be captured.⁵

From Oostburg, Wisconsin, to Europe

Rowland A. Koskamp was born on 24 February 1916 in Oostburg, Wisconsin, the oldest of Dennis and Frances Heslink Koskamp's five children. Both parents were children of Dutch immigrants who came to America in the late 1800s. Dutch was spoken in the house and both Rowland and his sister, Joyce, acquired a rudimentary Dutch vocabulary. They were members of the Oostburg Reformed Church.

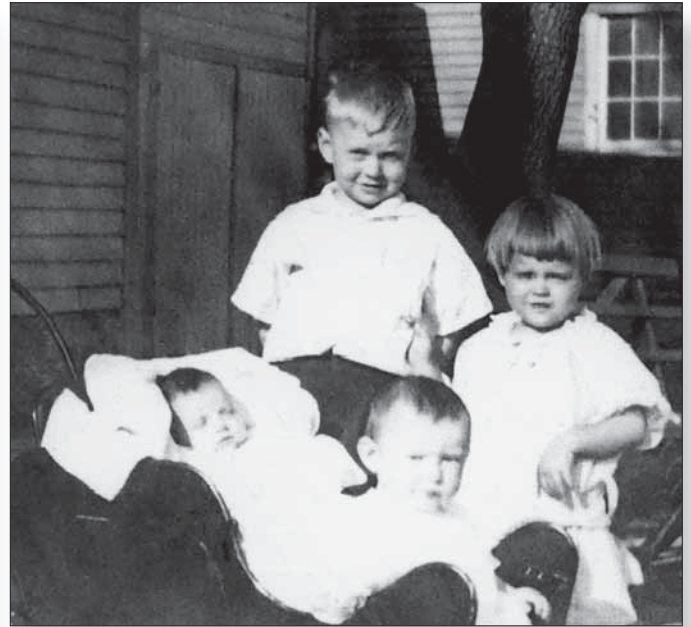
Dennis Koskamp had a high school education, having attended Cedar Grove Christian Academy, established by the Reformed Church in the



Koskamp, dressed for an Oostburg, Wisconsin, winter day. Image courtesy of Joyce Koskamp Lubbers.

five miles south of Oostburg. This training was sufficient for him to teach elementary school for a couple of years. He then opened a shoe repair shop that also sold farm equipment, like harnesses and halters, and had a small inventory of men's work shoes and boys' and women's shoes. He also served as a substitute rural mailman, filling in as circumstances warranted.

Three daughters, Ruth, Joyce, and Doris, followed Rowland's birth. A fourth daughter, Carolyn, subsequently was adopted when her parents, relatives of the Koskamps, died. Joyce recalls that Rowland was a willing worker, helping his father in the shoe shop. One summer he drove a team of horses to pick up milk from farmers and deliver it to the Pet Milk factory, where it was condensed and canned. He also had a paper route, delivering the *Sunday Milwaukee Journal*. He had thirteen customers and the profit was a penny a paper. The papers arrived



Rowland Koskamp is standing in the center behind the buggy, his sister Ruth is to the right, his sister Joyce is lying in the buggy, and cousin Winfred Wieskamp is seated in the buggy. Wieskamp was also killed in action during WW II. Image courtesy of Joyce Koskamp Lubbers.

predominantly Dutch village of Cedar Grove

via train late Saturday night. Because of the strict Sunday observance in the village, the paper had to be delivered before midnight Saturday. Joyce helped and on Monday Rowland would take her to the store to spend her three cents on candy.

In school he was active in sports, playing basketball, and he was especially good in baseball. He excelled in oratory and won recognition in district finals. According to Ethel Harmeling, who was in high school with Rowland, he was a willing partner in anything that might produce some excitement and would provide some additional learning. He entered Hope College in 1933. Joyce is quite sure he received financial aid from the local classis (regional governing body of the denomination).⁶ He was a friend of Dave and Tom Laman, his pastor's two sons who had both decided to enter the ministry, and they may have influenced his decision to do likewise.⁷ From Hope he entered Western Theological Seminary and graduated in 1940. While in semi-

nary he married Florence Vandenberg from Holland, Michigan. A daughter, Karen, was born in 1942.⁸

In 1940 he accepted a call from the Third Reformed Dutch Church in Raritan, New Jersey. Rev. Peter Mauer, the present part-time pastor of the church, estimates the congregation then had about three hundred members and many children.⁹ Doris Hill, a teenager when Koskamp started his ministry and one of the few members of the congregation who remembers him, said she was struck by how handsome he was. He was an excellent leader for the young people.¹⁰ In 1943 the congregation's consistory granted him a leave of absence to enlist in the army.

After training at the Chaplain School at Harvard University he was assigned to the 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division, stationed successively at Forts George G. Meade, A. P. Hill, and Pickett. In October 1943 the division was deployed to England and in July 1944 to France and then Belgium during the summer. During October and November the 28th Division fought in the Heurtgen Forest. During those two months the division suffered 5,000 casualties, or about one-third of its total complement. Because the division was made up of National Guardsmen from Pennsylvania, with its red keystone shoulder patch, the unit came to be cynically referred to as the "Bloody Bucket" Division. Because of the bloody and tenacious battles fought by these Americans, the German army also called it the "Bloody Bucket" Division. During the summer and fall of 1944 the 28th Division advanced an average of seventeen miles a day against strong German resistance and, on 11 September 1944, became the first American unit to enter Germany. By the end of November the division held a 25-mile sector of the front line along the Our River, generally the

German border in that region.

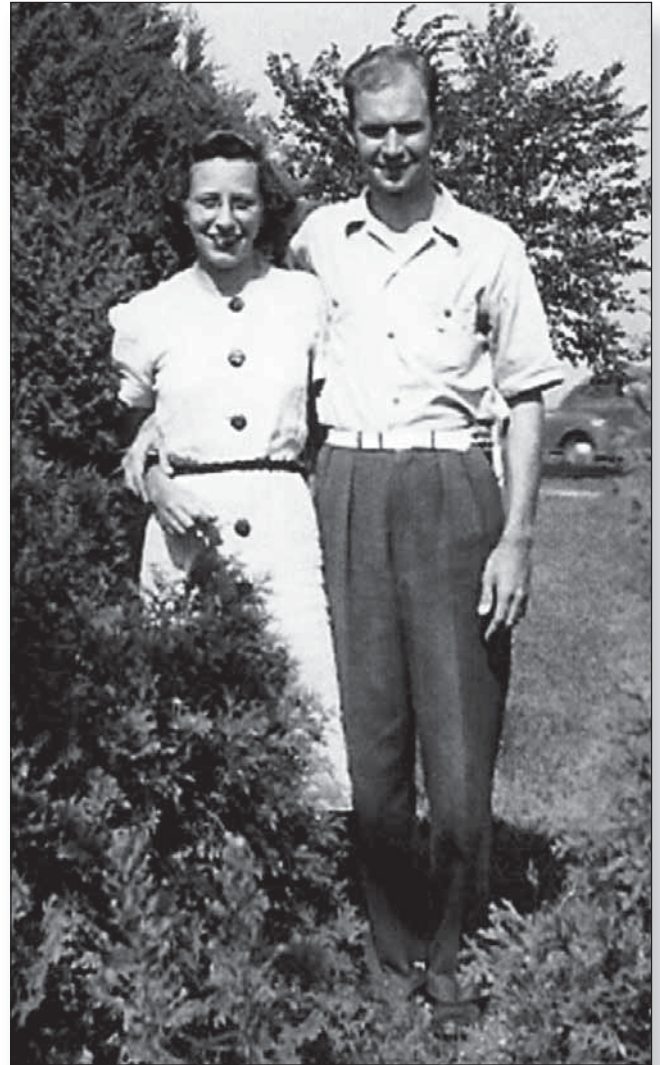
Koskamp was attached to a medical unit, helping medical corpsmen recover wounded from the battlefield. He was awarded the Bronze Star for "meritorious service" and, in answering a letter to his parents in December, he explained the circumstances that led to the award:

We came to this area from the bitterest and hardest and costliest fight we've seen so far, and from what I hear, it was some of the hardest of the war. I don't see how it could be any worse. Also, by the way, I had by far the closest call I have had so far, but remain unscratched. I don't think I have ever been dirtier in my life than when we came out of the woods after those three-plus weeks. I wasn't particularly tired physically after it was over, but I certainly felt worn out, and I certainly welcomed the rest.

It is a rest in the sense that the pressure is off, but as far as my work is concerned, it is not. We are now scattered in a dozen different directions, and to hold services for my group requires travel to nine different places.

You asked if there was any specific thing for which I received the Bronze Star. The citation accompanying it didn't mention anything specific; it just said for "meritorious service." If I were to think of anything that the colonel might have had in mind when he made the recommendation, I guess it was something that happened back in August.

I don't know what the impression was



Koskamp and his bride Florence Vandenberg. Image courtesy of Joyce Koskamp Lubbers.

back home of the fighting after St. Lo (Saint-Lô), but we do know that there was about three weeks of bitter fighting after that, before the Germans decided to beat it out of France. At one particular time, in the woods at St. Sever Calvados, the Germans were throwing everything they had at us, with good effect. A lot of men needed to be brought out of the woods for treatment. It was getting to be a rather risky business for the aid men and they were getting a little jittery about it. I asked one of the jeep-ambulance drivers what the situation was, and he said there were men needing to be brought out, but the woods were too "hot" to go in to get them, so I said I'd go with him if he were willing to take a load of litter-bearers up. We



Pastor Koskamp on the steps of the Third Reformed Church, Raritan, New Jersey. Image courtesy of Karen (Koskamp) Daniels Bables.

went up. We got to a certain corner and asked an officer whether it was safe to go in, and were told to go on. About an hour later he was killed at that very spot.

We were in the middle of it by that time, so it didn't make much difference which way we went. While we were taking stock of the situation in the woods, to see which of the men needed attention first, the Colonel came through. I talked to him for a minute about the situation and then we went on with our business. That may have been the particular thing that caused him to put in the recommendation.¹¹

Three weeks after he wrote this letter, Captain Koskamp was captured

and became a prisoner of war—a POW.

POW

Along the thinly fortified line held by the 28th Division the Germans launched their last major counter-offensive on 16 December. Five German divisions stormed across the Our River on the first day of the operation, followed by four more during the next few days—the Battle of the Bulge was underway. Although faced with superior enemy armor and troops, the 28th maintained its lines long enough to throw the assault off schedule.

Joseph Sansone, a fellow soldier of Koskamp, gives a full account of their capture on 17 December:

We stayed in the basement at our aid station all afternoon during the artillery barrage. The whole house above us was demolished. At four o'clock that afternoon the Germans came. They came in tanks and all kinds of other vehicles. Chaplain Koskamp went outside and talked to a German officer. He found that the German couldn't speak English so he spoke to the officer in German or in Dutch—I believe it was German. Chaplain Koskamp would make himself understood and could understand the officer. Without allowing us to get any of our equipment, or even our overcoats, they took us to one of their "aid stations." We stayed there all night. The next day we went to a hospital and stayed there for a night. Then we rode on a truck for about ten miles and were put in a barn for a night with other prisoners. After that we marched with about three thousand prisoners to a railroad. Chaplain Koskamp must have been in the group because when we arrived at the freight cars he was there. Sixty men were put in each boxcar; the boxcars are about one half that of American boxcars. The train took us to Stalag 9B at Bad Orb.¹² It took us eight days to get there. While parked in one town, planes came over and strafed the train. They must have been American planes. We were locked in the cars. The German guards

ran away during the strafing. Some of the men in the cars were killed; none was killed in my own car. I do not know which car Chaplain Koskamp was in; he wasn't in mine.

We had no food all day the first day we were captured. The next day we had bread and water. We had nothing the third day. On Christmas we received English Red Cross boxes; five of us shared a box. We hadn't eaten for two days before we got to Bad Orb. When we arrived we got grass soup, a kind of soup which didn't taste too bad and gave us nourishment. We also got two slices of bread that night.¹³

From the Bad Orb Camp, a spa town in the Main-Kinzig district, in Hesse, known for its salt deposits, the POWs were brought about thirty miles to the southeast to Hammelburg, to Oflag XIII-B, one of three POW transit camps for officers, adjacent to the Stalag XIII-D. Previously the camp had housed only Serbian officers. On 11 January 1945 the American officers were moved to the nearby Stalag XIII-C, hastily constructed to meet the new detainees. Non-commissioned officers and enlisted men were kept nearby. By 25 January, 453 American officers, 12 non-commissioned officers, and 18 privates again were at Oflag XIII-B.¹⁴ First Lieutenant Emmet J. Shaughnessy from Somerville, New Jersey, described conditions and life in general. The prisoners lived in long wooden barracks with one wood-burning stove for heat. The enlisted men slept on the floor and the officers on wooden beds without springs or mattresses but a little straw. Each was provided with one blanket. There was no running water and toilet facilities were in an outside latrine. Unsanitary conditions contributed to problems with lice and vermin.

Worship services were held on Sunday and Bible classes throughout the week. To relieve boredom a toastmasters club was organized by



Koskamp holding his daughter Karen on her baptismal day in 1943. Image courtesy of Karen (Koskamp) Daniels Bables.

Koskamp and the six other Protestant and two Roman Catholic chaplains. They kept minutes of their meetings and a responder and a grammarian were appointed for each speech. The Serbian prisoners had a shortwave radio that enabled them to get news from the British Broadcasting Corporation; among Koskamp's tasks was obtaining this news and delivering it to his fellow American prisoners. The news contrasted with the rosy picture the Germans were giving out.¹⁵

Twice, on occasion three times, a week a soup with a small amount of meat provided some nourishment. For the other days it was a watery barley soup with cabbage or turnips. Each day a slice of dark bread was provided with coffee that was tolerable. As the weeks passed the content of the average daily ration was reduced from 1,700 to 1,070 calories and most men lost thirty-five pounds of weight during the four months of imprisonment. POWs generally augmented their food rations with the contents of Red Cross packages, but none were delivered to the Americans, however the Serbian officers insisted on sharing their packages with the Americans.¹⁶

In March Lieutenant-

General George S. Patton, commander of the Third US Army, ordered a secret and controversial mission called Operation Hammelburg. Commanded by Captain Abraham J. Baum, the mission was to penetrate about fifty miles into German territory to free the prisoners at Oflag XIII-B, which included Lieutenant Colonel John K. Waters, Patton's son-in-law, who had been captured in Tunisia in 1943 and was among a group POW officers marched the 345 miles from Sczubin, Poland, to Hammelburg, arriving on 9 March. The task force, known as Taskforce Baum, launched on 26 March 1945 with approximately three hundred American troops in fifty-seven tanks, jeeps, and other vehicles from the 4th Armored Division. Due to poor maps and German resistance, just over half of the task force reached the camp and breached its perimeter the next day to the cheers of the 1,500 prisoners, instead of the three hundred the Americans were expecting to liberate. During the fighting to liberate the camp, Waters had been shot in the abdomen and taken to the hospital in the Serbian section of the camp.

Because Baum could only take three hundred prisoners in the vehicles, the rest were given the option of attempting to walk to Allied lines or remaining in the camp. Because of the miserable conditions in the camp and the poor diets, most were too weakened to walk and elected to stay. The next day, as the liberators were leaving, they were surrounded by elements of three German divisions and captured or killed.

The mission was a failure; of the roughly three hundred men, thirty-two were killed in action during the raid and thirty-five made it back to Allied-controlled territory on foot, the remainder were taken prisoner. All of the vehicles were lost. Baum was wounded and captured by the Germans and became a fellow patient



Third Reformed Church, Raritan, New Jersey, organized in 1848. Image courtesy of Karen (Koskamp) Daniels Bables.



Chaplain (Captain) Rowland Koskamp. Image courtesy of Karen (Koskamp) Daniels Bables.

with Waters in the camp hospital. Ten days later, because they couldn't walk to another camp further inside Germany with the rest of the POWs, the wounded were left behind and were liberated by the 4th Armored Division.¹⁷

Immediately after this attempt to free the POWs, and as the Soviets

approached from the east, Germany began to move those POWs who were physically strong enough to walk toward Nürnberg, about ninety miles to the southeast. At this point Lt. Shaughnessy was separated from Koskamp. Another unnamed fellow prisoner gave this account of their days in the German countryside, including Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, in Bamberg, about thirty-five miles north of Nürnberg in "Communion in a Corral near Bamberg, Germany." Koskamp was "everyman's preacher." He gave courage and confidence to the faltering, and calmed the complainer. He assured all that present circumstances were only temporary, and that there is a caring God who is concerned and offers eternity to those who call upon him.

Easter morning! We had been on our trek for about a week with early mornings on the road. Usually we were placed in barns where we would spend the night. Rowland had requested that Easter morning be spent at the same barn in which we had spent the night before so that those who wished to attend a service could do so—not a sunrise service, but an early morning worship.

Those of us who wanted to attend the service were taken by the guards to a nearby corral. I was one of the last into the corral and I was standing at the rear of the group. Just before Rowland's first words, the German colonel in charge of the group of about three hundred prisoners entered the corral, closed the gate, and stood next to me. He did not establish eye contact, and I thought that perhaps he had come for security purposes.

Rowland's message was first about the meaning of Easter, the historical event, and its meaning to Christians. Then he delivered a powerful sermon on man's inhumanity to others and the need for people to overcome petty human concerns and to serve God and one another. The colonel, standing beside me, was in nearly constant movement as he almost imperceptibly

twitched and dug his toes into the mud of the corral.

Always a very innovative and thoughtful man, Rowland had saved his bread rations for a few days and had somehow obtained a bottle of wine in the war-torn countryside. Then he led us in communion. First, after the words of institution, he passed a part of a loaf of dark bread. Each broke off a piece and passed the bread along. The colonel accepted the bread from me, broke off a piece, and passed it along. When all had been served, we took the bread together. Then the bottle of wine was passed and each of us, including the colonel, took a sip and passed the bottle along. To me it was an extremely meaningful time, especially as I shared the loaf and the wine with a man who was our enemy.

This deeply moving experience occurred on the last Sunday on earth for Rowland and the colonel. They would both be killed the following Thursday.¹⁸

On that Thursday, after the communion service, the prisoners approached Nürnberg, detouring to the west of the city. Over six hundred American planes bombed the city, some of the bombs weighing as much as five hundred pounds, and the men could feel the earth shake. But the prisoners felt safe as they were three to four miles from the center of the city where the bombing was occurring. An open field with a clump of pine trees lay just off the road providing some protection as the bombers started home after completing their mission. A railroad track with a train was a short distance away and the bombers unloaded their remaining bombs on the stopped train. It was a munitions train and a direct hit spewed its deadly metal among the prisoners in the grove of pines. A wave of P-47s started strafing the woods taking an additional toll of wounded and dead. Thirty men were killed and scores wounded. Chaplain Mark Moore, one of the survivors,

wrote, "The colonel in charge asked me to be in charge of helping the wounded and identifying the dead. As I began securing the dog tags from the bodies of the dead, I came to one and read his name, Rowland A. Koskamp. I quickly dropped the tag and reached for his shirt collar. There was his cross. I prayed a prayer for his wife and little daughter. The thought came to me, 'This could have been Chaplain

Moore, just as it was Chaplain Koskamp.'"¹⁹

Raritan, New Jersey

A memorial service was held on 10 June 1945 at the Third Reformed Dutch Church of Raritan. Resolutions from the consistory, Classis of Raritan, and the Somerville Ministerial Association were read. John R. Mulder, president of Western Theological

Seminary of the Reformed Church in America, delivered the eulogy.²⁰ Chaplain Rowland A. Koskamp is buried at the Lorraine American Cemetery in St. Avold, France. He lies beneath a cross in plot K, row 17, grave 9. "Far more importantly," writes Rev. Gregg Mast, "he lies in the eternal arms of God."²¹

Endnotes

1. The author acknowledges Rev. Gregg Mast who made his extensive file available for research.
2. Cornelius Ryan, *The Longest Day* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994) 4.
3. Charles B. MacDonald, *A Time for Trumpets, The Untold Story of the Battle of the Bulge* (New York: Bantam Books, 1984) 11.
4. Robert F. Phillips, *To Save Bastogne* (Burke, VA: Bordino Books, c1983) 135.
5. Ibid., 137, 138.
6. Joyce Koskamp Lubbers, in numerous telephone conversations, whom the author wishes to particularly thank.
7. Correspondence with Ethel Harmeling, in the author's possession.
8. Karen, now Mrs. Karen Bables, was able to supply me with a few photos. She wrote: "My mother never recovered from my father's death and, after she married one of his friends from Raritan, a pilot who did return from the war, she burned my father's letters and letters from many who had served with

- him. She regretted that much later in her life. I wish I had those to share with you as well."
9. Telephone conversation between Peter Mauer and author.
10. Telephone conversation between Doris Hill and author.
11. Letter to his parents, dated 8 December 1944, in the author's possession.
12. Stalag IXB (the Germans used Roman numerals) was located in Bad Orb approximately thirty miles northwest of Frankfurt. The camp held French, Italian, Serbian, Russian, and American POWs. Because of the extremely poor conditions, the stalag ranks as one of the worst German POW camps.
13. Excerpts from a speech by Joseph Sansone, Raritan, NJ, given at the church.
14. "Report of the International Red Cross," 25 March 1945, on 13 January 2009 available at <http://www.taskforce-baum.de/oflag13/report1.html>.

15. Excerpts from a speech delivered by 1st Lt. Emmet J. Shaughnessy, in the author's possession.
16. "Report of the International Red Cross," 25 March 1945.
17. According to Carlo D'Este in *Patton, A Genius for War* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996) 717, the operation was one of a number of controversial decisions by Patton.
18. Gregg Mast, "Easter Hope Behind Enemy Lines," *The Church Herald*, April 2001, 8.
19. Mark R. Moore, *Prisoner of the Germans* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1945) 3.
20. "Our Tribute of Honor in Loving Memory of Captain Rowland A. Koskamp," Third Reformed Dutch Church, Raritan, NJ, 10 June 1945; copy in the author's possession.
21. Mast, "Easter Hope Behind Enemy Lines," 7.

Adrian Jacob Barnouw: A Dutch Cultural Ambassador to the United States

Gerlof Homan

Few individuals of Dutch descent have been more successful than Adriaan Jacob Barnouw in explaining the history and culture of their native land to their adopted country and to foster good relations between the United States and the Netherlands. Born in 1877 in Amsterdam, the city he knew and loved, he was descended from Huguenots from Lyon, France, who spelled their name Barnou. The Barnous and other Huguenots fled France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 by Louis XIV. They were among many who found refuge in the Dutch Republic.



Adriaan J. Barnouw as a young man. Image courtesy of the author.

Adriaan Barnouw was the second oldest of the four children of Pieter Jacob Barnouw and Wilhelmina Cornelia Matthes. The father was a prominent gynecologist and obstetrician with a very extensive practice throughout Amsterdam, who also taught at the local city hospital. Sitting on the box seat next to the driver, young Adriaan often accompanied his father in his carriage on his rounds throughout the entire city, which at that time was still small enough for him to learn every nook and cranny. "Those were unforgettable expeditions," he wrote many years later.¹

In 1882 the family moved from the gloomy Oudezijds Voorburgwal

to the Prinsegracht, one of the old Amsterdam canals, located close to the famous Rijksmuseum. Here young Barnouw had ample opportunity to study the old Dutch masters. At a very young age he dreamt of becoming a painter, however his father disapproved. Painting could become an avocation, not a vocation, he admonished, but he did approve of Adriaan taking painting lessons.²

Adriaan did not like secondary school and never finished. He had to take a special examination in order to be admitted to the University of Leiden. In Leiden he studied linguistics and later spent one year at the University of Berlin. After five years of philological training in Leiden, Barnouw wrote many years later, he approached one his professors and asked him if he should study at Cambridge or Oxford. The answer was "Go to Alois Brandl in Berlin."³ Brandl's specialty was old and middle English. Barnouw never regretted that decision. In Berlin under Brandl's direction he started writing his dissertation which he completed in Leiden, written in German, and titled, "*Textkritische Untersuchungen nach dem Gebrauch des bestimmten Artikels und das schwachen Adjektivs in der altenglischen Poesie*" ("Textual critical research in the use of the definite article and the weak adjective in Old English poetry").⁴ In June 1902 he received his doctorate.

In the same year he received a

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An Amsterdam street scene from Barnouw's youth. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

teaching appointment at the municipal gymnasium in The Hague. There he taught Dutch language and literature and Dutch history. From 1907 until 1913 he also served as private docent in English at the University of Leiden.⁵ Barnouw has been described as an easy-going teacher who gave little homework and loved to read poetry to his students. However, it seems that then and later at Columbia University, Barnouw was somewhat of an introvert and did not have much intimate contact with his students.

In order to increase his knowledge of the English language and to learn more about Chaucer, Barnouw spent the summer of 1904 in the Bodleian Library of Oxford University. He had become very much interested in Geoffrey Chaucer and considered translating the *Canterbury Tales* into Dutch in the original meter. At Oxford he met Anne (Annie) Midgley, to whom he became engaged in the same year. They were married in 1905 and moved to The Hague where Annie had to learn Dutch, which she never quite succeeded in mastering.

Four children were born of this marriage between 1906 and 1915: Willem, Elsa, Erik, and Victor. Thanks

to Annie's shrewd investments, the family could afford moving to a large four-story, sixteen-room house and to hire two maids and a governess. This made the Barnouws more than middle class, but they were not part of the local elite in the very class-conscious city.⁶

World War I brought hardships for most Dutch citizens. Although the Netherlands was fortunate in remaining neutral, there were serious food and other shortages. Most Dutch citizens supported the Allies but some, especially in the academic world, were pro-German. German submarine warfare, which resulted in the sinking of many Dutch vessels, and the German treatment of Belgium turned many Dutch citizens against Germany. Thanks to the Dutch government, a number of interned soldiers in England and Germany were permitted to stay on Dutch soil for the duration of the war. Some of them were even allowed to stay with private families. The Barnouws extended hospitality to three British and one German POW. One of their guests was George Clark, Annie's nephew. As a result, the Barnouw children grew up in a rather international atmosphere.⁷

In 1915 Barnouw was asked to become foreign correspondent of *The Nation*, a well-known liberal American periodical. Barnouw established that connection by mere accident. One day Barnouw purchased in the open-air market in The Hague a very interesting collection of sketches of boats and ships by the Dutch painter Albertus van Beest. Barnouw was familiar with most Dutch painters but had never heard of Van Beest. He soon learned that Van Beest had settled in the United States, where he died in 1860. In order to find out more about him Barnouw wrote to *The Nation*. It is not clear how Barnouw knew about this liberal periodical which had appeared since 1865. Barnouw received a personal reply from the editor, Henry de Wolf Fuller, whom he had met in Leiden at the home of Professor Gerrit Kalff, at that time one of his Leiden University's prominent Dutch literature professors. Fuller not only provided Barnouw with some data on Van Beest, but at the same time asked him to become *The Nation's* foreign correspondent. Barnouw eagerly accepted that challenge and in the years following wrote numerous articles.⁸

In 1918 Fuller severed his ties with *The Nation* and decided to start a new periodical, *The Weekly Review Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, of Social and Economic Tendencies of History, Literature and the Arts* and asked Barnouw to join him in New York in that venture as associate editor. Barnouw readily accepted. In February of 1919 Fuller asked him to be in New York on 15 April. Barnouw and his family were not quite ready to leave that soon, but he left in August to be followed by his family in September of that year.⁹

At the time Barnouw gave no specific reason for moving to a foreign country. Perhaps teaching secondary school was no longer sufficiently challenging for him, but since he had

written nothing since his dissertation he was not qualified for a university professorship. Or, perhaps his wife would be happier in an English-speaking environment. He was part of other Dutch scholars who migrated to the United States between the two world wars. Among these were mathematician Dirk Struik; astronomers Gerard Kuiper, Peter J. Debye, Jan Schilt, and Dirk Reyl; geographers John M. Broek and Samuel Van Valkenburg; and physicists Samuel A. Goudsmit, George E. Uhlenbeck, and Max Dresden.

The family quickly adapted to the new environment. Barnouw reveled in his job as associate editor. Those two years were “among the happiest of my life,” he wrote many years later. In addition to his regular work as editor, Barnouw also wrote many articles for *The Weekly Review*.¹⁰ *The Weekly Review* appealed to only a small group of readers and was forced to merge with another journal in 1921. Barnouw was fortunate, however, for in 1919 he had been appointed part-time Queen Wilhelmina lecturer of Dutch Language, Literature and History at Columbia University. The position became a full-time professorship when his editorship was eliminated.

This chair had been established in 1913 by a number of Dutch businessmen such as the publisher Wouter Nijhoff, who had “discovered” the United States during a business trip in 1901. He and others formed, in 1913, a *Vereeniging voor de Oprichting and Instandhouding van een Bijzonder Nederlandsch Lectoraat* (The Association for the Establishment and Maintenance of a Special Netherlands Lectureship). Nijhoff suggested establishing a chair of Dutch Literature and History at Columbia University. President Nicholas Murray Butler and Professor William H. Carpenter, member of the Department of Germanic Languages, were interested

and promised to contribute \$500 to its endowment. In 1913 Leonard Van Noppen was appointed lecturer. Van Noppen was born in the Netherlands but had lived most of his adult life in the United States. He knew the Netherlands well and had complete command of the Dutch language. He had demonstrated his mastery of Dutch with his excellent translation of the tragedy *Lucifer*, by Joost van den Vondel, the Netherlands’ most famous seventeenth-century poet. Van Noppen had also been involved in negotiating the agreement with Columbia University.¹¹ Van Noppen did “brilliant pioneering work” but resigned in 1918 to accept a position with the American legation in The Hague and later in London.

The chair was then reactivated and upgraded to a full professorship in 1921, with financial contributions from the Dutch government and Columbia.¹² Barnouw was a member of the Department of Germanic Languages but he also taught in the English Department. Since 1969 the chair has been in the History Department. Currently a new arrangement is being negotiated between Columbia and the Netherlands government.¹³

The Dutch government placed no restrictions on Barnouw’s curriculum but would not allow him to write a foreword for Nienke van Hichtum’s very popular children’s novel, *Afkes Tiental*. Nienke van Hichtum was the pseudonym of Sjoukje Troelstra-Bokma-De Boer, spouse of the well-known Dutch Socialist leader Pieter Jelles Troelstra, who in November 1918 called for a revolution in the Netherlands. Apparently, the Troelstras were not very supportive of the Dutch royal family. There is no indication that

Barnouw supported these anti-monarchical views. He met the queen only once, in July 1942, during her visit to the United States when she had tea with a group that included Barnouw. On that occasion the queen reportedly asked Barnouw, “And where do you teach, professor, and what?”¹⁴

Barnouw never had many students in his Dutch language, literature, and history courses at Columbia and supervised only three doctoral dissertations. One of his doctoral students was Rosalie L. Colie, who was taken aback when Barnouw did not seem eager to accept her as a student. She had to insist firmly to be taken on as a student. She wrote a dissertation on the famous seventeenth-century Dutch poet Constantijn Huygens. Later Barnouw was very pleased about



Adriaan J. Barnouw as a faculty member of Columbia University. Image courtesy of the author.

the result of her work.¹⁵

Much of his scholarly work was devoted to writing various books on Dutch history and translating Dutch poetry into English and Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* into Dutch. Barnouw's scholarly works can be divided into three categories—historical, sociological, and literary. Barnouw wrote a number of books on Dutch history, none of which were based on archival or primary materials. Perhaps his best historical work is his *Pageant of Netherlands History*, which to some extent includes Belgium. *Pageant* is a cultural history including the manners, customs, and beliefs, achievements in the arts, learning, and letters in the Netherlands, especially in the seventeenth century. It provides the reader a good idea of the vitality of Netherlands culture in the early modern era.¹⁶

A very insightful work is his sociological study, *The Dutch: A Portrait Study of the People of Holland*.¹⁷ As in a previous historical work, Barnouw preferred to use the term *Holland* and not the *Netherlands*. A common feature in all languages, he asserted, is that “the name of a part is used for the whole.”¹⁸ Barnouw also defended the use of the term *Dutch*. One should not be ashamed of this word, which was older than the word *Deutsch*, he argued. In this book, Barnouw discusses such interesting subjects as the Dutch national character, city planning, love of gardens, the educational system, the language, literature, religion, and politics, the reclamation projects, etc. A “finicky” attention to detail, a sense of caution and realism, and the love of freedom are some Dutch traits, he concluded. The Dutch are not phlegmatic, he asserted, yet their emotions are not easily aroused and there is no room for demagogues. He also felt they are also a self-conscious people who criticize themselves freely.¹⁹ The book was published shortly before

the Netherlands came under German occupation and undoubtedly helped to arouse American sympathy for the plight of the Netherlands during a time of national agony. Apparently it was well-received and by 1948 had gone through four printings.²⁰

Perhaps his most important “historical” work is his *Monthly Letters, On the Culture and History of the Netherlands*. It contains a great variety of essays Barnouw wrote for the Netherlands-America Foundation between 1924 and 1961. No other work tells us more about Barnouw's erudition and vast knowledge of Dutch history and culture than these essays. In them Barnouw discusses Dutch poets, painters, scientists, political figures, the Dutch origins of golf, Amsterdam's Jewish Quarter, the Island of Terschelling, SS *Nieuw Amsterdam*, the 13,659 *juffers* or piles driven into the ground to lay the foundation of Amsterdam's famous *Stadshuis* or city hall, etc. But he also writes about the Dutch in the New World. For instance, there is a very interesting essay on Maria Van Rensselaer's correspondence which tells us much about life in colonial New Netherlands between 1669 and 1689. He has an interesting essay on Dutch-born American writer David Cornel De Jong and his novel, *Belly Fulla Straw*. He also writes about Pieter Stuyvesant, that “honest, irascible despot,”²¹ as he calls him, the Dutch-American author, Hendrik Willem Van Loon, and many others.

Barnouw knew Van Loon. The two had much in common. Both were successful Dutch immigrants who felt comfortable in the United States but retained a deep love for their native land. Both tried to familiarize Americans with Dutch culture and history. They were both popularizers of history but Barnouw was the more scholarly of the two. Both did much for the Netherlands in World War II. For these efforts and their contributions to

internationalizing Dutch culture, both received the Order of the Netherlands Lion on the same day at the same ceremony in New York on 2 October 1942. Of course, the two men had entirely different personalities: Barnouw was a bit introverted; Van Loon was very extroverted and flamboyant.²²

Barnouw was foremost a philologist who had remarkable talent for translating English poetry into Dutch



Adrian J. Barnouw, during his retirement years, continued to speak to Americans about his native Netherlands. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

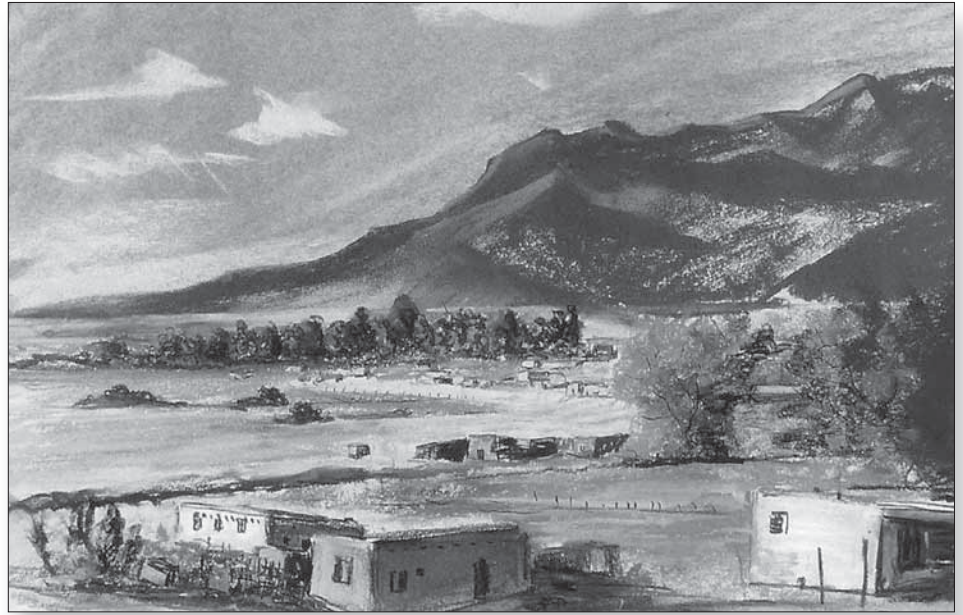
and Dutch poetry into English while keeping the same meter and making it rhyme. Barnouw loved the English medieval poet Chaucer, and for many years tried to translate *The Canterbury Tales*, titled *De vertellingen van de pelgrims naar Kantelberg*, into Dutch.²³ He finally finished this task in the early 1930s. He was a bit chagrined when he learned the Dutch publisher, Tjeenk Willink, had deleted some of the more vivid parts in the Dutch version. He was pleased when, shortly before his death, he saw the unexpurgated draft of a new edition.²⁴

Barnouw also traveled widely. In 1927 he went to Indonesia and in 1932, at the request of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, he visited South Africa. As a linguist Barnouw was very much interested in history and the structure of Afrikaans and tried to determine how much it differed from the official Dutch. He also studied race relations there and observed how the Dutch-speaking population discriminated against the natives the way the British had treated the Boers.²⁵

In the late 1930s he and others organized the Society of Dutch Scholars in North America, later renamed the Netherlands University League, and in 1948 the Netherlands-America University League. In fact, even before and certainly after the founding of this league Barnouw became some kind of mentor to many Dutch scholars who tried to pursue an academic career in the USA.²⁶

In the meantime, he had also become an unofficial Dutch cultural ambassador, often representing the Netherlands legation at various functions in Washington, DC. During much of this time the Netherlands did not have a cultural counselor. Barnouw seemed to be the ideal person to represent his native country. Furthermore, he soon became a popular after-dinner speaker who was much appreciated for his wit and erudition.

Like other persons of Dutch descent living in the United States, Barnouw worried about his relatives in the Netherlands, which had come under Nazi control in May 1940. His brother Justus and family survived the terrible *hongerwinter*, the winter of starvation, in Amsterdam in 1944-1945. His brother Hendrik, a Reformed pastor, spent some time in Kamp Amersfoort²⁷ as punishment for having sheltered a Jew. But all the relatives survived the war. In New York City Barnouw and others, such



In retirement Barnouw was also able to pursue his avocation for painting. This is his "Taos Landscape." Courtesy of the Harwood Museum, University of New Mexico, Taos, New Mexico.

as the colorful Van Loon, participated in various commemorative activities for Dutch citizens and others to keep the plight of their native land before the American public. For some time Barnouw also served on the editorial board of *The Knickerbocker Weekly: Free Netherland*, a Dutch publication in the United States. Barnouw was disgusted with Dutch collaborators and predicted a *bijltjesdag* or hatchet day for them after the war. But Barnouw also hoped the Dutch people, whom he described as being divided by class and religion as much as a jigsaw puzzle, would emerge more united from the Nazi ordeal.²⁸

Barnouw retired from Columbia in 1948. He had been considering retirement in 1942 at age sixty-five, but the Dutch ambassador, Alexander Loudon, persuaded him to stay. He wrote very little in the next twenty years except his monthly letter for the Netherlands-America Foundation. Much of his time in those years was devoted to his main hobby, painting.²⁹

He was not affiliated with any religious denomination nor did he attend any church. Yet, he was in-

terested in Christian literature and ethics. He studied the beginnings of Christian literature which, he felt, drew upon the ancient Hebrews and pagan legends. For instance, the epic poem *Beowulf*, he felt, was the work of a Christian convert who tried to reconcile his love of heathen hero poetry with his new creed. He argued that the teachings and the poetry of the church lived only through a reconciliation with heathendom.³⁰ Finally, he readily worked with religious material as in his translation of *Beatrijs*, the well-known Flemish legend of a woman who regained her faith.³¹

His work in translating poetry is particularly well done, and he worked with Dutch poetry from early medieval times until about 1940. One of most interesting translations was the poem, "Het Wilhelmus," which in 1932 became the Netherlands' national anthem. "Het Wilhelmus" was probably written between 1568 and 1572 by Philip van Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde (1540-1598), a loyal follower of William of Orange (1533-1584). The melody to which it is sung was current among the Huguenots in

France in the sixteenth century. In the translation Barnouw used the same meter, maintained the rhyme pattern,

Wilhelmus van Nassauwe
Ben ik, van Duitsen bloed
Den vaderland getrouwe
Blijf ik tot in den dood
Een prince van Oranje
Ben, ik, vrij overveerd,
Den koning van Hispanje
Heb ik altijd geëerd

and kept the acrostic for all fifteen verses which read:

William of Nassau, scion
Of a Dutch and ancient line,
I dedicate undying
Faith to this land of mine.
A prince am I, undaunted,
Of Orange, ever free,
To the King of Spain I've granted
A lifelong loyalty.³²

Barnouw also pursued his hobby of painting and would have preferred to become a professional artist.³³ He became an accomplished painter and in 1936 even organized an exhibition in Amsterdam of his pastels of Montana Blackfoot Indians.³⁴ During his retirement he spent much time in Taos, New Mexico, where he was accepted and included by fellow artists. Art critic and connoisseur Mabel Luhan felt that Barnouw's interpretation of the Taos Valley and Indian life had "a grasp and maturity as well as poesy" lacking in many other artists at Taos, and that he had contributed enormously to the prestige of this art colony. In fact, she ranked him alongside Georgia O'Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, Maurice Sterne, and other western painters.³⁵

For his various contributions to Dutch-American understanding Barnouw received the Order of Orange Nassau in 1926 and, as previously noted, was made a Knight of the Order of the Netherlands Lion in 1942. In 1945 the Holland Society presented him the annual gold medal for his scholarly contributions towards "the preservation and advancement of Holland-American amity." In the Netherlands he received the Golden Goose Quill of the Royal Guild of Publishers in October 1957 for his efforts to "internationalize" Dutch culture.³⁶

Although Barnouw felt at home in the New World he could never fully immerse himself as deeply in American culture as Van Loon did. Undoubtedly, age played a very important role in the Americanization process of the two men. Van Loon arrived in the United States in 1882 at age twenty; Barnouw was forty-one when he arrived in New York, already very deeply steeped in Dutch culture. Therefore, he saw his task as one who could explain the richness of his cultural heritage to his adopted land. Yet, in general, he felt Dutch immigrants did not assimilate very rapidly. The American melting pot, he argued, had produced a "nervous, excitable, romantic type of people, fond of novelty and sensation." The Dutch, however, are unromantic and realistic with a good amount of common sense and a strong aversion of publicity and self-advertisement.³⁷

To Barnouw the two sides of the Holland Society gold medal awarded him spoke of a love of two countries joined by an unbreakable edge that holds them as one.³⁸ Other immigrants in the United States could share this sentiment. The question is, would he have been as successful had he remained in the Netherlands, or was it the New World that enabled him to become so successful in his many endeavors?³⁹

Endnotes

1. Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Monthly Letters On the Culture and History of the Netherlands* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1969), 360. Barnouw told very little about his early life in *Monthly Letters*. One of the principal sources on his early life is: Erik Barnouw et al., *Migrations: A Family Chronicle* (Fairhaven, VT: Ruby Printing Co. Inc., 2000), 6ff. There is also a good article about him in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland*, 1985 ed., s.v. "Barnouw, Adriaan Jacob."

2. Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 358-359.

3. Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Holland under Queen Wilhelmina* (New York, Scribner, 1923), 167. Perhaps it was Professor Gerrit Kalff who advised Barnouw to go to Berlin. Kalff was one of the most prominent scholars on the history of Dutch literature at that time.

4. (Leiden: Brill, 1902).

5. Barnouw, *Migrations*, 24ff.

6. *Ibid.*, 28-29.

7. *Ibid.*, 30-32. One recent account on the Netherlands during World War I is: Paul Moeyes, *Buiten schot: Nederland tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog, 1914-1918* (Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers, 2001). The presence of Allied and German POWs on Dutch soil is discussed in Evelyn de Roodt, *Oorlogsgasten: Vluchtelingen en krijgsgevangenen in Nederland tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog* (Zaltbommel: Europese Bibliotheek, 2000).

8. Much later Barnouw would show his Van Beest collection to future president Franklin D. Roosevelt, who enjoyed seascapes. Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 344. Barnouw wrote on the problems of Dutch neutrality; the German occupation of Belgium; the Flemish poet, Guido Gezelle; Belgian refugees; Dutch painting; the Dutch Socialist, Pieter Jelles Troelstra, etc.

9. Barnouw, *Migrations*, 38-45.

Shortly after their arrival in New York the Barnouws' son, Victor, and Barnouw were stricken with scarlet fever. They were quarantined for fifty-six days and cared for by Annie.

10. Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 344-345. Barnouw also wrote a large number of articles in the *Weekly Review*. As in *The Nation*, he wrote on a great variety of subjects such as Bolshevism in the Netherlands, Hungary, the Syrian question, the Afrikaners, the Pilgrim

Fathers in Leiden, colonial problems in the former Netherlands East Indies, etc.

11. Gerrit Kalff, *The New Holland-America Line* (n.p.: 1920), 10-16; J. M. Jalink, "A Sketch of the Personality, Life, and Work of Professor Dr. Adriaan J. Barnouw." In Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, xiii-xxxvii; 302-303; W. Thijs and J. M. Jalink, *De Nederlandistiek in het buitenland: Het universitair onderwijs in de Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde, cultuur — en politieke geschiedenis buiten Nederland en België* (The Hague: Werkcommissie van hoogleraren en lectoren in de Nederlandistiek aan buitenlandse universiteiten, 1967), 143-144; Leonard Van Noppen Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

12. Kalff, *New Holland-America Line*, 12; Columbia University Archives.

13. E-mail from Willem Smit, 8 Jan. 2005; e-mail correspondence with Nederlandse Taal Unie, The Hague.

14. Bernard J. Fridsma, *Never Broken Bond: 60 Years of Frisian Activity in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: n.p. 1998), 372; Gerard Willem Van Loon, *The Story of Hendrik Willem Van Loon* (Philadelphia: Lippencott, 1972), 360.

15. Jalink, "Sketch," xxiii; Seymour L. Flaxman, *Herman Heijerman and His Dreams* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1954), vii. Author Gerd D. Gillhoff thanked Barnouw for inspiring him to write the dissertation *The Royal Dutch Theater at The Hague 1804-1876* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1938) ix. Rosalie L. Colie wrote: *Some Thankfulness to Constantine: A Study of English Influence upon the Early Works of Constantijn Huygens* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1956). Colie thanked Barnouw for "his patience with a presumptuous student who thought it might be easy to learn Dutch," Colie, *Some Thankfulness*, x.

16. (New York: Longmans, 1952).

17. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940).

18. Barnouw, *The Dutch*, ix.

19. A national character changes and one wonders how much of what Barnouw defines as Dutch national traits in 1940 is still true. *Ibid.*, 17, 174-175, chapter 2.

20. Reviews in the *New York Times*, 20 Feb. 1940, 4 and 17 March 1940.

21. Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 156-158. Barnouw wrote other historical

works. Among them are: *Holland under Queen Wilhelmina* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1923); Vondel (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1926), and an English edition (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1925); *The Making of Modern Holland: A Short History* (New York: W. W. Norton, and Co., 1944). The latter is a cultural history with heavy emphasis on the Golden Age, the seventeenth century. None of his historical works were based on primary, archival materials. He also translated other works and edited, with Bartholomeus Landheer, *The Contribution of Holland to the Sciences: A Symposium* (New York: Querido, 1943). He also did other translations. Barnouw became quite angry when C. B. Riddle, a reporter for the Washington Star, published on 15 March 1942, one of his articles that had previously appeared in *The Netherlands-America Foundation Monthly Letter* without giving credit to the author. He demanded an apology and a sum of \$100. The Hague, Archief Ministerie van Buitenlands Zaken [Archives Ministry of Foreign Affairs] G BZ/1945-1954/795 501.

22. *New York Times*, 10 Oct. 1942. Barnouw and Van Loon knew each other well and had been corresponding since the 1920s. Letterkundig Museum, no. 262.

23. 3 vols (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1930-1932).

24. Barnouw, *Migrations*, 66; Jalink, "Sketch," xxiv.

25. Adriaan J. Barnouw, *A trip through the Dutch East Indies* (Gouda: Koch and Knuttel [1927]; Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Language and Race Problems in South Africa* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1934). Although Barnouw was critical of some aspects of Dutch rule in Indonesia, he praised the Dutch for their exemplary administration of their colony. After the war he favored independence but he rejected American criticism of post-war Dutch intentions. His favorite Indonesian nationalist was Sutan Shahrir who was more conciliatory. Adriaan J. Barnouw, "Holland's Problem in Island Asia" *Asia* 36 (Oct. 1936): 677-681; Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 282-284; *New York Times*, 14 December 1945.

26. Not much is known about the activities of this league. Most likely the idea to form such a league came from

Alexander Loudon, the Dutch ambassador to the US. It was founded in 1938 i.a. by Barnouw and the Frisian linguist Louis de Boer. Louis de Boer, "Autobiography," 52. Grand Rapids, MI. Calvin College Archives, Collection #422; Jalink, *Sketch*, xxvii. Het Letterkundig Museum in The Hague has some correspondence between Barnouw and Willard Wichers on 15, 21 May, and 18, 19 June 1941. The Hague, Letterkundig Museum [Literary Museum], no. 113. The Sept. 1941 meeting was held at Hope College. The League issued a *Bulletin*, but only a few have been located some of which are in the New York City Public Library.

27. A German camp notorious for its cruelty to prisoners. Those who survived the cruelty and deprivations of Kamp Amersfoort generally were used by the Germans as forced laborers.

28. H. C. Touw, *Het verzet der Hervormde Kerk* (The Hague: Boekencentrum, 1946), 1:436 and 581; 2:350; Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 262; some of his war-time activities are mentioned in *New York Times*, 8 June 1940; 2 December 1940; 8 May 1941; 11 May 1942. Van Loon's activities are mentioned in Van Loon, *Story of Hendrik van Loon*, passim and Cornelius A. Van Minnen, *Van Loon: Popular Historian, Journalist, and FDR Confidant* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 199ff. There is also a Dutch edition of Van Minnen's book: *America's beroemste Nederlander: Een biografie van Hendrik Willem van Loon* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2005).

29. Barnouw to Loudon, 28 Sept. 1946. Letterkundig Museum, no. 105.

30. Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Anglo-Saxon Christian Poetry: An Address delivered at the Opening of the Lectures on the English Language and Literature at Leiden*, 12 October 1907, trans. Louise Dudley (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1914).

31. Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Beatrijs: A Middle Dutch Legend* (London: Oxford University Press, 1914).

32. Adriaan J. Barnouw, *Coming After: An Anthology of Poetry from the Low Countries* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1948), 63-69.

33. *New York Times*, 28 September 1968.

34. *Ibid.*, 4 July 1936.

35. Mable D. Luhan, *Taos and Its Artists* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and

Pearce, 1947), 28. Barnouw is also cited in various reference works such as Peggy and Harold Samuels, *The Illustrated Biographical Encyclopedia of the American West* (Garden City, NY, Doubleday Inc., 1976) 22.

36. *New York Times*, 12 September 1926; 10 October 1945; *Haagse Courant*, 26 October 1957.

37. Barnouw, *Monthly Letters*, 241.

38. *Ibid.*, 265.

Memories of Cedar Lake, Indiana

Rich Iwema

Cedar Lake Song

lyrics by John Duff,
music by Leota Morris

*We're down in Indiana,
at Cedar Lake, yo ho*

*We're feasting on the manna,
to the Promised Land we go*

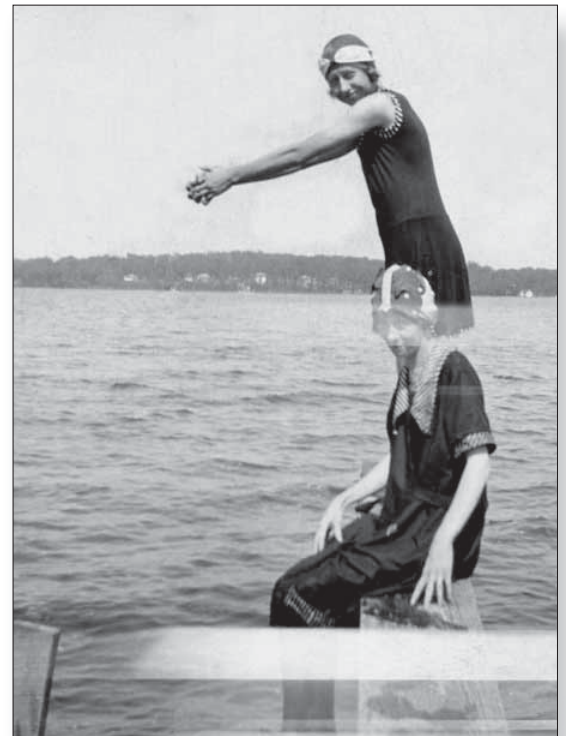
*We'll raise a loud hosanna,
and happy hours you'll know*

At Cedar Lake, in Indiana

As children we sang this song on the way to Cedar Lake, Indiana, from Cicero, Illinois. We packed our family and some cousins, as many as a dozen in total, into our Essex automobile. I measured everyone's breadth to determine the best seating arrangement. Travel in the old Essex was slow and rather bumpy. The trip of thirty-five to forty miles took almost three hours. We traveled down Cicero Avenue and after just a few miles we passed Midway Airport, Chicago's only commercial airport at that time, straining our eyes to see a beautiful DC-3. Miles later, at the half-way point, we turned east on Route 30. This was open country for most of the time. There were no rest areas back in the 1930s and 1940s so Dad would stop the car in a secluded area with tall bushes and declare a "nature study stop." If it began to rain we had to stop and snap on the isinglass windows. Later we traveled "in style" in our Essex automobile. Just past the first town in Indiana, Dyer, we turned south on US 41 and headed to Cedar Lake, so called because of the red cedars along its shoreline. Soon we were at the gate of the Cedar Lake Bible Conference Grounds and were greeted by a sign above the entrance which read "Come Ye Apart and Rest a While."

The grounds began as a venture of the Monon Railroad, from whose hub at Monon four main lines connected to Michigan City and Indianapolis, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky;

and Chicago. To encourage ridership railroads often built or supported recreational facilities, and in 1881 the Monon Line laid tracks along the western shore of Cedar Lake and purchased land along the lake's shore. The railroad also earned money from the lake during the winter as first the Armour Meat Packing Company and later others harvested ice from the lake. Within a few years picnic grounds, benches, and comfort stations had been built and a growing number of visitors led to the construction of a number of hotels. In May 1897 several additional buildings were constructed, including a bowling alley and a dancing pavilion, now called Torrey Auditorium. Because of rowdiness at



About to dive into the green water of Cedar Lake. Image courtesy of the author.

Rich Iwema graduated from college in 1952 and spent thirty-eight years teaching school. In retirement he currently is the editor of three newsletters. He and his wife Jane live in Dutton, Michigan.

the dance hall, and other unseemly behavior by some of the picnickers, by the second decade of the twentieth century the railroad was looking to sell the grounds. E. Y. Woolley, associate pastor of Moody Memorial Bible Church of Chicago, thought his church's membership could use the property as a summer camp and conference grounds. In 1914 the railroad gave the church permission to manage the park, informally renamed Rest-A-While. Chautauqua educational programs and lectures held in tents replaced the former midway as the church made many improvements to the park, not the least of which was that of a far better behaved clientele that came to the area. By 1919 Monon Park was officially sold to the church for one dollar and named Rest-A-While Conference Grounds.

After World War I the annual conferences began. By 1923 the church experienced financial difficulties and transferred the work at Cedar Lake to three church elders who incorporated the Cedar Lake Conference Association to operate the park. Following a period of prosperity, the country entered the Great Depression. Money was so tight in 1935 that the Association decided to discontinue the insurance on the large wooden Glendenning Hotel. This proved to be a poor decision, as later that year the hotel burned to the ground. The Hotel Rest-A-While was built the following year. For city folks from places like Cicero, the large number of trees was an unusual sight.

The Christian Reformed churches began their annual Fourth of July week-long conferences at Cedar Lake in 1937; these continued into the late 1980s. Conference brochures promised:

Come for social pleasures—have a wonderful time meeting other Christians and families from many states—share this week of distinctive Bible

study. Also come for physical relaxation and join the organized activities for all ages. Good music—children's hour—teen time—Wednesday is Youth Day—Thursday is Ladies' Day and the men's golf tournament.

In addition to Illinois and Indiana, people came from as far away as Michigan, Wisconsin, and even Iowa. Of course, other church groups came to Cedar Lake during the other weeks of summer.

Attendance during the Fourth of July week was almost a must for Christian Reformed people living in Chicago and its suburbs. Many just came for Independence Day to enjoy playing ball, pitching horseshoes, playing shuffleboard, swimming, and just plain relaxing. But the full week of conferences had a distinct structure and purpose. As a boy, I remember the many worship services throughout the week and especially

on Sundays. Strict rules applied to all groups. No swimming was allowed on Sundays, as the sign on the dock made clear, as did the padlocked gate to the pier. Smoking was not allowed on the grounds at any time, a hardship for the large number of Christian Reformed cigar smokers. Swimming (on weekdays) had rules: Women had to wear black stockings while swimming and wear a cover-up around them when



One of the cottages, with a screened "porch," used by the campers at Cedar Lake. Image courtesy of the author.



The extended Iwema family during one of their visits to the Cedar Lake grounds. Image courtesy of the author.



The author's father and sisters in regulation swimming attire of the time. Image courtesy of the author.

walking to the beach. Men and boys could wear trunks but had to wear a top. Boy's suits with tops were hard to find so I wore a tee shirt to cover my top. The suits were made of wool which made them very "clammy" when wet. The lake water was green with algae and you had to be careful not to swallow the water. A three-story diving platform was located at the end of the pier.

The main emphasis during the Christian Reformed week was on spiritual growth. Each weekday the morning Bible study began at eleven o'clock. Attendance was not mandatory but most people, including the children, went nevertheless. There were inspirational messages

(church services) at 7:30 each evening. Sundays were celebrated with morning Sunday school for all ages followed by worship services at 11:00 and another service at 7:30 in the evening. Some of the first speakers were Dr. Peter Eldersveld, of the "Back to God Hour" radio broadcast; Rev. John Schaal; Rev. Wilbert Van Dyk; and Dr. Leonard Greenway. Also included were such leading denominational personalities as Dr. Edward Masselink, pastor of Burton Heights and later LaGrave Avenue CRC—both in Grand Rapids; and Henry Schultze, professor at Calvin Theological Seminary and later president of Calvin College. Later conference speakers included Rev. Benjamin Essenburg and Dr. Martin Van Dyke. The Essenburg family was musically talented and provided special music when they attended. At times special music was provided by a ministers' quartet consisting of Donald Drost, Ralph Heynen, D. H. Walters, and Louis Voskuil, who had begun singing together as seminary students and paid their tuition from summer tours to various Christian Reformed communities. Katherine Vree played the accordion at many services.

Not all the activities were organized. There was the pleasure of simply relaxing amid the cedars. There were softball games, shuffleboard contests, and of course horseshoes for the men, but only for men. There was a candy and ice cream store which sold Green River "soda pop," which was a favorite with the children. A sturdy wooden bridge allowed access between the grounds and the lake. Hanging out on this bridge was a favorite "sport" for the younger crowd. Since the Monon passenger and freight trains passed by quite frequently, we put pennies on the track and after the trains passed all that was left was a thin piece of copper. It was also fun to put down two straight pins that crossed each other—after



The author's parents (far right) on the beach between the lake and the Monon Railroad bridge. Image courtesy of the author.



One of the “sheep sheds” (also called “dog houses”) available to house visitors to Cedar Lake. Image courtesy of the author.



When baseball was America’s pastime, softball allowed those not as asked or older to continue to play ball. Image courtesy of the author.

the train went by we had a pair of flat “scissors.”

For some reason my family delighted in writing on the bottoms of their shoes. Simple messages were spelled out and then photos were taken of these messages. There were many ways to keep entertained and also opportunities for making good photos. The human noise was at a minimum

on the grounds, but the raucous blue jays, the many screaming cicadas, and the mellow horns of the passing trains provided a background obbligato.

A regular visitor to the grounds as a child, Grace Dinucci recalls that often families from Cicero drove in caravans to Cedar Lake. That way they could help each other change flat tires and deal with mechanical break-



The rules of behavior were clearly delineated on the grounds. Image courtesy of the author.

downs. The average speed was 25 mph and the forty-mile trip took around three hours, which included a stop for a picnic lunch. Some families stayed in the Glendenning Hotel, later the Hotel Rest-A-While, while others stayed

in primitive “cottages” which were lovingly called “*schaaphuisjes*” (sheep sheds), and not a bit less lovingly “dog houses.” John Stob, another regular childhood visitor, remembers the train whistles blowing during the night; standing on the railroad bridge looking down as the train passed below; the smell of hot sulfur coming out of the steam engine’s smoke stack; and the dinner bell ringing to signal it was time to eat in the large dining hall. Often young single girls took the Monon train from Chicago to the stop at the town of Cedar Lake, about a half mile south of the grounds. It was at Cedar Lake that some of them met their lifetime partners.

When the Monon Railroad relocated their tracks, about a quarter of a mile to the west by 1948, the Cedar Lake Conference Association purchased the vacant right-of-way for \$15,000 and landscaped the area. New facilities were built and existing facilities were upgraded throughout the decades following World War II. In 1980, with all these improvements,



(above) A present-day view of Torrey Hall. Image courtesy of the author.

(right) A Monon train from the bridge over the tracks from the conference grounds to the beach. Image from video footage provided by the author.



the Cedar Lake Bible Conference Grounds became the Cedar Lake Bible Conference Center. Since then the septic system was connected to the municipal sewer system; a park for recreational vehicles was built; and a new, larger dining hall and conference center was opened. Torrey Auditorium, built in 1897, has been completely renovated, beginning

with a new foundation, seats, carpeting, windows, and drywall; it now has a heating and air-conditioning system. The Rest-A-While Lodge was also renovated and now has eighteen new rooms and a conference room on the lower level.

Oh yes, thanks to greater environmental responsibility today, the lake water is now quite clear and not as green as it was in the early to mid-1900s.³



Selected sources (in addition to the author's personal experiences):

Interview with Grace Dinucci

Interview with John Stob

Although difficult to see, the message on the soles of the Iwema clan reads, "Cedar Lake, Ind." Image courtesy of the author.

Gatherings in the Grove: Missionfest Comes to Minnesota, 1898–1910

Robert Schoone-Jongen

Denominational rivalry often has been seen as a virus infecting the Protestant tradition. And the Calvinist branches of that tradition have been as susceptible to this illness as any of their ecclesiastical cousins. Religious strife sundered Dutch-American colonies in Michigan and Iowa during the 1850s as factions struggled to safely connect their traditional piety and beliefs to the adjustments their new circumstances demanded of them. In particular, each set of “true believers” needed to come to terms with how to remain faithful within a different civic culture. How comfortable should they become with American habits, attitudes, and practices? Differing answers spawned tensions that succumbed to schism, which then created warring camps sustained by stubborn inertia sharpened by both the narrowness of their actual differences and the blandishments of their clerical leaders. Christian Reformed married Christian Reformed, and Reformed married Reformed, and each produced offspring after their own kind. Such convenient truths, unfortunately, confronted inconvenient anomalies when the immigrants moved beyond their first homes and developed new communities in places like central Minnesota, away from the established seats of power.

During the 1890s evangelistic pep rallies became annual events that served both social and religious purposes among the Dutch Calvinist settlers in the Midwest. “Missionfest” combined a day of bucolic fellowship

with a day of renewed support for the efforts of missionaries who devoted their lives to winning the lost, both overseas and nearer to home. For one day each June, linguistic and denominational divisions disappeared in the shade of a prairie farm’s grove as German and Dutch speakers, Reformed and Christian Reformed adherents melted into one community united by a common interest in winning the lost for their province in the Kingdom of God.

Rev. Henry Beets and other denominational leaders of both the Christian Reformed and Reformed churches saw missionfests as a kind of Calvinist Chautauqua, but spiritually cleansed of the jugglers, mimes, and actors who sullied those “secular” events. Like the folks in Minnesota, Beets saw them as occasions to at least once in a year display a unity often lacking among the Dutch Calvinists during the balance of the time, an ecumenical ceasefire concluded in the interest of promoting conversions both at home and abroad. And the chance to socialize for a day (without the usual Sabbatarian restrictions) offered a welcome change in an age of slow transportation.¹

Though the Christian Reformed and Reformed Church in America were closely identified as being “Dutch” churches, both included significant German-speaking minorities by the 1890s.² These adherents emigrated from the areas of Ostfriesland and Bentheim, just over the border from the Netherlands, where

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Rev. Hermann Johann Potgeter, a native of Veldhausen, Germany, came to the German-American communities as a pastor and was the moving force behind organizing the Missionfests in these communities. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dutch-trained ministers often led their congregations. Theological ties had not produced cultural clones, and the Germans had developed traditions and practices unique from those of their Dutch Calvinist cousins. One of those differences was a heightened zeal for evangelism.³

By the time he accepted the call to serve as minister for the Christian Reformed congregations at Bunde and Emden, Rev. Hermann Potgeter had been in the United States for over ten years. He convinced the consistories of the two congregations to host the first area missionfest. Neither Bunde nor Emden hardly fit the image of cultural trendsetters in 1898. Neither was large enough to support its own minister; seven prairie miles separated one from the other. They each had a modest white clapboard building in the sea of grass that was quickly disappearing in the wakes of gangplows and drainage ditches. The railroads had not bothered to pass near either location. Yet Potgeter arrived in the area in 1896 brimming with enthusiasm and ideas about how to stimulate

his parishioners' zeal for the faith, to imbue Calvinistic exuberance into the lives of these two new and remote congregations. He campaigned on behalf of better church music, organizing the congregation's singing society, and introducing musical instruments into the worship services.⁴ Now he proposed to extend his enthusiasm to a larger audience through a community-wide gathering that would extend beyond the paired parishes, embracing every Dutch- and German-speaking congregation in the area.

On a fine day near the end of June in 1898, only days before the annual Fourth of July celebrations, the Dutch Calvinists of Central Minnesota gathered in a farmer's grove for a day of speeches, singing, and socializing. Missions provided the theme for the speeches. Singing helped raise the level of enthusiasm for the topic. Socializing centered on the food canteen. The grove could not have been that large, since mature trees could not be found for one hundred miles west of Minneapolis. On these grasslands, any shade-giving plant loomed large, since they were so rare. Since the oldest farms in the colony were only eleven years old, the trees around the farmsteads must have reflected the longevity of the man-made buildings.

That gathering in the northwest corner of Minnesota's Renville County was a sort of coming of age for the colony—the spread from Roseland in the east to Clara City in the west, from Renville in the south to Raymond in the north. Prinsburg,

the inland hamlet at the center of this spread, gave the colony its generic name among the Dutch. But the general term masked the underlying variety of folks that lived in the area, both German and Dutch speakers, as well as provincial fissures that divided the Dutch into subgroups. That general label also inflated the Christian Reformed presence in the colony, as it emphasized just the one congregation that met in that tiny hamlet. Instead, that meeting in the grove actually defined the colony's most expansive definition of itself. German speakers and Dutch, Reformed and Christian Reformed, Gelderlanders, Frisians, Groningers, Ostfrisians, and Bentheimers converged to enjoy each other's company, for at least one day that year.

Often big categories create big



The church building of the Prinsburg, Minnesota, congregation completed in 1902. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

generalizations that mask big differences. Ethnic groups are susceptible to this problem. “German” covers Bavarians, Prussians, and Oldenburgers; in turn, each of these names shrouds local variations in a general mist. “Dutch” suffers from the same problem, as the word obscures distinctions between Protestants and Catholics, Seceders and Reformed, Gelderland-ers, and Frisians, and a host of other variations on the common theme.

When Dutch Calvinist settlers began arriving in central Minnesota during the 1880s they arrived with their own unique combination of differences. In the first place, a sizable segment considered themselves Ostfrisian, not Dutch. Among those who did deign to be “Dutch,” the fissures ran along provincial lines as Gelderland-ers from southeast Minnesota and Wisconsin encountered Groningers from the Chicago area.

Divisions threatened the future, so unity was preferable. But when divisions came they defined what the community was, and was not, who belonged and who did not. Crises established the boundaries. Rituals also

sharpened these definitions through ceremonies open to the entire community. These rites helped place the crises and fights in different lights, changing them into aberrations in the common memory. The happy moments of unity counterbalanced the distresses to help keep the community together. Both Prinsburg and Friesland invented their own traditions.

Beginning in 1898 two Ostfrisian congregations’ (Bunde and Emden) sponsorship of an annual mission festival during the balmy days of June proved to be a unifying ritual in the fractional community.⁵ For one day each year modest-sized congregations gathered into one sizeable group, reminding them that they each formed a piece of a much larger picture. No matter how fierce the internal battles over drainage ditches or liturgical languages raged, this day kept its air of tranquility.⁶ In a farmstead grove near the middle of the colony, hundreds of people met for a day of singing and talks by ministers on domestic and foreign missionary activities, while the women of the host congregations plied the crowd with dinners and des-

serts and handwork for sale. The day’s proceeds were donated to Christian Reformed mission stations in China, a Navajo reservation in New Mexico, and a Jewish neighborhood in Chicago.

The annual missionfest symbolized the Prinsburg colony’s broadest definition of itself. Reaching across denominational and linguistic lines—Dutch and Ostfrisian—Reformed and Christian Reformed all sat together for one day in a convenient prairie bower. For an entire day they met on common ground for a common purpose, listening to the dominies of all the participating churches. For one day each year they visibly shared a common interest—reviewing progress missionaries were making in calling the rest of the world to join the Calvinist ranks. During the balance of the year each constituent congregation might look beyond their own four walls to see greater visions. They took collections for their distressed cousins in the Transvaal during the Boer War and closer kin suffering through droughts in South Dakota. They supported denominational schools and



The Bunde Christian Reformed Church and parsonage in the 1900s. Image from “Golden Jubilee, Bunde Christian Reformed Church,” [11]; copy available in the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

hospitals in Michigan and Colorado. But those were done on a church-by-church basis. Missionfest was their collective expression of who they were as an ethno-religious community in Minnesota.⁷

Two weeks after the missionfest celebrations the colony observed the Fourth of July following the pattern Matthew Dennis described, a national holiday fractured into ethnic components.⁸ The Ostfrisians spent the day in Clara City with their German and Yankee neighbors; the Dutch, by themselves, in Prinsburg. Clara City began the day with a parade. In 1898, at the height of the Spanish-American War, the procession featured two bands, forty-five girls dressed to represent the states, Uncle Sam, and the Goddess of Liberty, a group of German army veterans and Cuban Guards, the village president, the speakers of the day, the local Modern Woodmen of America camp on horses, the fire department, and business floats.⁹ The Bunde congregation's minister, an Ostfrisian immigrant, gave the main speech of the day. A bicycle race capped the official festivities. Then a secret cache of fireworks was ignited by accident, exploding at random bombarding the town water tower and blowing out a store window. During the barrage, one of the young men responsible for the fireworks fell thirty feet from the tower.¹⁰

In stark contrast to Clara City's display of shock and awe, Prinsburg's observances started with a solemn church service in the morning. Having established a more sober tone for the day, the revelers repaired to the grove next to the church for a picnic followed by games and more oratory. No fireworks, no parades, no metaphorical states. Dutch services, Dutch conversation, and Dutch food

were marshaled to celebrate American independence. By 1900, when this rite began, these Calvinists had changed from dissenters who had discerned God's favor residing in the Dutch Reformed Church, the House of Orange, and the Dutch countryside to prairie settlers for whom church and state

could presume to hold numerical dominance, they joined as one, each contributing to the religious patina of the day.¹⁴

Labor Day became the Friesland community's holiday of choice. Matthew Dennis has noted that Labor Day assumed a local character, reflecting



Cars parked for the 1919 Missionfest in Clara City, Minnesota. The annual event sanctioned a day of rest and relaxation while engaged in church outreach work. Image from "Diamond Jubilee, Bunde Christian Reformed Church," [15]; copy available in the Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

cozily coexisted even on the Fourth of July.¹¹

Friesland's Dutch Calvinist colony also embraced the Fourth. When the settlement included around fifty households, they gathered for a picnic near the village, with the Reformed minister acting as impresario. Rev. John Kots, a native of Gelderland, the Netherlands, arranged for a tent, flags, and even a portable organ.¹² But as the colony's fortunes flagged, the Dutch joined the nearby, larger community observances. Reformed ministers joined their Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian counterparts in delivering prayers at the Sandstone town gathering.¹³ Though ethnically diverse, Sandstone's Independence Day actually brought Swedes, Germans, Dutch, and Yankees together for the day. Since none of the groups

an area's economic history. Given the presence of the Great Northern Railway's interests in the Sandstone area, and the history of Dutch settlers working in the quarries and rail yards, it is not surprising that one of the nearby lakes served as the gathering place for the scattered settlers. With time, better roads, and the arrival of the automobile, the day took on the color of an old settlers' reunion. People who had once lived in the colony and now resided in places up to forty miles away began to return for a day of fishing, picnicking, and reminiscing. Initially the day's activities doubled as the Reformed church Sunday school picnic, with games for the children and a fatherly talk from Superintendent Albert Vork. Even after the Sunday school event became a separate date on the calendar, the

Reformed church ministers invariably spoke to the Labor Day gathering, and ended the day with prayer.¹⁵

As for distinctly church connections, Pine County's Dutch congregations were isolated by muddy roads and poverty. Ironically, when better roads and reliable automobiles arrived, their close theological kin slashed the mystic Calvinist cords. When the Sandstone Reformed Church heard of the missionfest phenomenon, its elders invited two Christian Reformed congregations forty miles away (with several former Frieslanders on the rolls) to cooperate in organizing a regional celebration. The request fell on hard, dry ground. At the insistence of a minister, both congregations pointedly snubbed the Sandstone overture and then proceeded to organize a missionfest without inviting the little Pine County group.¹⁶

Rejection by their erstwhile companions welded the Pine County Dutch to their Scandinavian neighbors. Isolation and modest numbers doomed their church, and their Dutch identity. Younger members, with no memories of life in the larger Dutch Calvinist communities, saw little need to either form a separate ethnic identity in Minnesota or bond with distant people they never knew. The

Sandstone and Friesland congregations regularly participated in ecumenical services. Forging closer ties with the folks at hand loosened the links to the broader Dutch Calvinist religious network. Ethnic durability rested upon concentric social circles: biological families, in-laws, church members, business associates, civic participation, and schoolmates. In Pine County these circles shifted, first overlapping, then separating. As they moved, the circles fractured. The religious circle became increasingly isolated from the others, intensifying a sense of isolation. In this shifting process, the sense of being Dutch became something only old-timers and a rare newcomer knew firsthand. Quirinus Huyser might make the pilgrimage back to Zeeland for the sixtieth anniversary celebration, or Klaas Feyma might visit cousins in Holland, Michigan, during his retirement years, but their children, reared in Pine County, forged no similar ethnic relationships and did not retrace these trails. A few enduring, familial ties stretched as far as Montana and California, but institutional bonds disappeared. The Reformed church died in Pine County, Minnesota, and with it Friesland's colonists lost their Dutch Calvinist identity.³

Endnotes

1. Henry Beets, "Why Not a Joint Mission Festival in Michigan?" *The Banner*, 13 August 1908, 508.

2. The two denominations had originally included the word Dutch in their names. The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church became the Reformed Church in America in 1887, while the Holland Christian Reformed Church renamed itself the Christian Reformed Church in 1890. In each instance this was done in deference to the Germans who had affiliated with each group.

3. The impact of the Ostfrisians on the development of the Christian Reformed Church has been examined in a number of works. Among them are Herbert J. Brinks, "Ostfrisians in Two Worlds," in Peter DeKlerk and Richard R. DeRidder, eds., *Perspectives on the Christian Reformed Church: Studies in Its History, Theology, and Ecumenicity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983) 21-35; and Wayne Brouwer, "The German Element in the CRC," *The Banner*, 11 April-23 May 1980.

4. Hermann Johann Potgeter (1856-1931) studied for the ministry in Ostfriesland under Jan Schoemaker and Johannes Jager. He was ordained in the *Altereformierte Kirche* in 1883 and served three congregations before accepting a call to the German-speaking Christian Reformed congregation in German Valley, Illinois, in 1889. In 1892 he moved to Parkersburg, Iowa, and to central Minnesota in 1896. His denominational loyalties were rather fluid, serving Presbyterian churches for six years after his departure from Minnesota and then a German-speaking congregation of the Reformed Church in America until his retirement in 1914. Given his background and biography, it is apparent that Potgeter harbored notions about proper liturgy at odds with those Christian Reformed ministers who came from the Dutch-oriented seminaries on both sides of the Atlantic. This

may also help explain his willingness to leave that fold.

5. Some denominational historians have noted that the Ostfrisian faction of the Christian Reformed Church tended to exhibit a more pronounced outward-looking sense of mission. Equally, the German ministers tended to place more emphasis on joy drawn from a sense of forgiveness than on the pain of seeing the effects of the Fall on humanity. Their Dutch counterparts tended to reverse this equation. See Herbert J. Brinks, "Ostfrisians in Two Worlds," in Peter DeKlerk and Richard R. DeRidder, eds., *Perspectives on the Christian Reformed Church: Studies in Its History, Theology, and Ecumenicity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983) 21-35; Wayne Brouwer, "The German Element in the CRC," *The Banner*, 11 April 1980, 10-12; 18 April 1980, 14-15; 25 April 1980, 14-16; 2 May 1980, 17-19; 9 May 1980, 14-15; 16 May 1980, 16-18; 23 May 1980, 18-20.

6. Minutes of the Bunde church, 25 January 1900, and Emden church, 2 February 1898; also "Bunde Centennial," 4, and "Emden Centennial," 17. The missionfest tradition also existed in the Missouri Synod Lutheran congregations. Coburn, 130-31.

7. There is a rich and varied body of historical literature on the topic of the rituals groups use to define their communities. Among the notable titles are Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), especially Hobsbawm's own essay on the mass production of traditions in nineteenth-century Europe (263-308) and Trevor-Roper's on the Scottish Highland traditions (14-42), Matthew Dennis, *Red, White, and Blue Letter Days: An American Calendar* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism,*

1776-1820 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997). A work which looks at the rituals associated with manners is Karen Haltunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). Three works which place this process into the context of American religious history are Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1997); and Orsi, Madonna. Placing the topic in the context of European peasant society is Eugen Weber, *Peasants to Frenchmen: The Modernization of French Society, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), especially 377-497; Maurice Agulhon, *The Republic in the Village: The People of the Var form the French Revolution to the Second Republic*, trans. by Janet Lloyd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Edward Berenson, *Populist Politics and Left-wing Politics in France, 1830-1852* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

8. For an account of the development of the Fourth of July holiday see Dennis 13-80. He specifically deals with the holiday among nineteenth-century immigrants on 38-39. Other authors have remarked that one hundred years before, the holiday had served as a flash point between immigrant communities and the native-born population. See Len Travers, *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1997) 118, 170, 171.

9. *The Clara City Community Story: A History of the Clara City Community, Including the Townships of Crate, Lone Tree, Louriston, Rheiderland, Stoneham, and Woods, and the Village of Maynard*

(s.n., 1963) 74.

10. Dennis relates the antipathy of the medical community to these ersatz displays, a factor in the regularization of the displays under the watchful eye of Progressive leaders after 1900, and the general rowdiness the immigrants often manifested. Dennis, 68-73. Genevieve Fabre also makes this point in her work on festivals. See Genevieve Fabre, *Feasts and Celebrations in North American Ethnic Communities* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1995) 40.

11. That first July 4th celebration in Prinsburg also helped define the political divisions in the community. In addition to the observance by the church, John Bosch held a separate holiday picnic in his grove, located diagonally across the road from the Christian Reformed church. (*De Volksvriend*, 12 July 1900). To the present, Independence Day in Prinsburg begins with a patriotic church service in the First Christian Reformed Church.

12. *De Volksvriend*, 7 July 1902, 8.

13. *Ibid.*, 15 July 1920, 3.

14. According to the 1900 Census schedules, the ethnic percentages of the Sandstone area was Swedish (29%), American-born (14%), Dutch (10%), German (9%), Canadian (7%), Norwegian (6%), Irish (6%).

15. *De Volksvriend*, 26 September 1907, 3. Dennis, 240-254.

16. The Christian Reformed congregations in question were located in Ogilvie and Pease, Minnesota. Both congregations included members who had been among Friesland's founders. There were regular social contacts between residents of all three colonies, but the Christian Reformed minister in Pease would not tolerate sharing sponsorship with a Reformed congregation. Apparently he regarded them as too "liberal" for his theological tastes. *De Volksvriend*, 27 September 1923, 8.

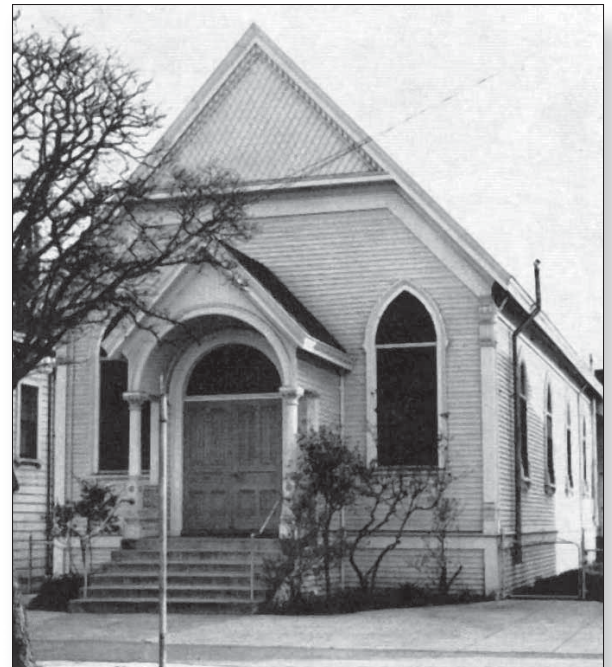
Early Pacific Coast CRC Churches, Part 3

Howard B. Spaan

Alameda, California
On the West Coast domestic missionaries from the Christian Reformed Church continually looked to serve people of Dutch origin or descent who had moved west and were gathering to worship. After a congregation was organized in Los Angeles in 1914, attention focused on the other major city of the state—San Francisco and the surrounding area. That year Missionary Leonard P. Brink, stationed in Hanford, visited the “City by the Bay” (population 420,000). He did not find a core group but continued to visit, as did his successor in Hanford, Rev. Frederik W. Stuart. In 1922 Otto De Jong, a graduate from Calvin Theological Seminary, was doing post-graduate work at the San Francisco Theological Seminary (Presbyterian) in San Anselmo, just thirty miles north across the bay from San Francisco. He began preaching on Sunday afternoons to people with Christian Reformed backgrounds. This work showed signs of promise for the organization of a congregation.¹ But complications following two surgeries for a swollen and infected appendix took his life on 28 June 1923.² Oren Holtrop, a Calvin Seminary student, spent the remain-

der of the summer working in the Bay Area.

Rev. Peter J. Hoekenga of Ripon continued this work and therefore in late 1923 was called by Classis Pella to become the domestic missionary for Northern California. Hoekenga



The church of the Alameda Christian Reformed congregation, organized in 1924, thanks to the work of missionaries, seminary students, and ministers over the course of a decade. Image from the “Silver Anniversary First Christian Reformed Church (Alameda),” [1].

conducted services in both San Francisco and Oakland. Midweek meetings took place in his home. Unlike the other congregation in California, consisting mainly of farmers, the people in the Bay Area held a variety of occupations and Hoekenga discovered that there was more interest in forming a church community in

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the East Bay rather than in the city. A small group in Alameda, a city with some 29,000 residents, located on an island across a narrow channel of water from Oakland, became the focal point of his work. Services were held in a Presbyterian church and then in a Methodist church.

The congregation was organized in July 1924 with one service in Dutch and the other in English. The church numbered thirty-four communicants and thirty-three baptized members. Afternoon services continued to be held in San Francisco, but waning interest by residents there led to those services ending in 1925. Instead of making the Sunday ferry crossings between Oakland and San Francisco, Hoekenga immediately began traveling sixty-five miles to the east to Stockton in the Sacramento River Delta where another group was meeting. In addition, he earned a BD degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary in 1925, conducted urban mission work, made calls on crews of the Holland-America Line ships in port, and used the radio to extend his ministry. His workload was such that when the last Hoekenga child was born, in 1926, the oldest sons attempted to drive their mother a few blocks to the maternity house, but the old Buick wouldn't start so they pushed their mother in the car to the maternity house.

Although his health was frail, Hoekenga refused to slow his work pace. In the evening of 24 September 1927 he was a bit late for the evening service, having just arrived from preaching twice in Stockton. He hurried into the church and, as he finished shaking the hands of the elders in the consistory room before the service, he collapsed and died at the age of fifty-one.

The church in Ripon next called Rev. Nicholas De Vries, previously in China, to be the missionary to the twenty families in Alameda and to



Peter J. Hoekenga's ministerial career included city mission work in Chicago, mission work among soldiers during WW I, followed by his indefatigable mission work in California. In spite of health problems, he died while rushing from an afternoon worship service to an evening worship service. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

work as the domestic missionary in Northern California. In 1929 the congregation bought property and built a parsonage. The next year the number of Dutch services was reduced to one every other Sunday; all English services began in 1937. As the congregation continued to grow, space became a problem and in June 1934 they purchased the property and building of the Lutheran church for \$3,000.³

The same year that the Dutch services were discontinued, De Vries accepted a call to work with the Navajo in New Mexico. He was succeeded by Rev. Evert Tanis. The congregation's outreach work continued through youth programs and radio ministry and the auditorium was enlarged in 1938. On the eve of the outbreak of WW II the congregation had grown sufficiently to become financially self-sustaining.

Stockton, California

In 1921 the Arie den Dulk family

came from Michigan and went to Stockton, where a relative, George Roek, was living. About eighty miles east of the Bay Area and with a population of 48,000, Stockton afforded employment opportunities for the young men in the families. The two families began meeting for worship, most often in the den Dulk home. Theological student Otto De Jong, who also led worship services in the Bay Area, did the same in Stockton. Like the families in Alameda, the Stockton group was under the care of the Ripon congregation, which was located some twenty miles to the south. But because the Stockton group was small, they became a branch of the Ripon congregation, rather than becoming an independent congregation.

During the spring of 1923 the meetings in Stockton came to an end. At the time the rapidly growing Ripon congregation required much time from Rev. Hoekenga, and because of the distance to Stockton, the families were not able to receive the pastoral attention they required. In 1924 the den Dults moved to Ripon. However, others moved to Stockton from Ripon and another group began meeting and sought to become an organized church later that year. The first request to become an organized church was rejected because of their small size, but two years later, on 6 April 1926, they again sought to become an organized church.

When Hoekenga became the domestic missionary in the San Francisco area he also ministered to the people in Stockton. Every Sunday, after having preached in Alameda, he drove to Stockton for a late morning service, followed by lunch, and then an afternoon service, returning to Alameda for the evening worship. As noted earlier, this arrangement ended when Hoekenga died in 1927. The Stockton congregation, which a Ripon

elder described as “looking like a sick child,” struggled on for a few years. The congregation was dissolved in 1931, with most of the group returning to the Ripon church.⁴

Vancouver, British Columbia

The origin of the Christian Reformed congregation in Vancouver is different than that of most other Pacific Coast churches. During the last half of the 1920s a growing number of Dutch immigrants moved to farms in Alberta. Severe winters and lack of work during the winter months caused many of these immigrants to look for work in a milder climate and in a good-sized city. On an inland Pacific waterway, Vancouver, with 120,000 residents, became the destination for these immigrants. Like with many immigrant communities elsewhere, soon a Dutch social club was organized. Among the club's members were people from the Reformed tradition who began worship services consisting of singing religious songs and a religious meditation. All interested people were welcomed at the Sunday services and afterward the day was devoted to social activities.

Peter Hoekenga suggested to club member Henry Meyer (they had met when Meyer was in San Francisco) that this service be expanded to regular worship services. He suggested contacting the stated clerk of Classis Pacific to ask for help in doing this. Soon Rev. Derk Muyskens from Lynden, Washington, visited, leading to the establishment of a home mission station in Vancouver. In 1925 Jacob Bonhof, Henry Meyer, Dirk Iwema, and John Uitenbroek were appointed to a committee to oversee the worship services. During the fall, meetings began in the Central City Mission in downtown Vancouver, a skid row district where rents were low but interruption from drunken individuals was a problem.

A newcomer, Henry Polinder, became a great asset to Henry Meyer in contacting people and spreading the news of the meetings. Sometimes ministers in Classis Pacific were guest preachers, but most of the time sermons were read. Some of the readers would delete or add to the sermon feeling that since there was no commitment to join the Christian Reformed Church, liberties could be taken with the content of sermon material provided by the denomination. Others objected to this, resulting in tension within the oversight committee and the group so that attendance declined. In the spring of 1926 the prospect of establishing a congregation seemed almost hopeless. But Lambert Wouters and Henry Pounder assumed two vacant positions on the oversight committee and helped to find a small vacant church building on Adanac Street, which they rented for \$17 per month. That October a CRC congregation was organized with a total of thirty-nine members, the denomination's eighth congregation in Canada. That same month Peter J. Hoekstra, a candidate for the ministry, became their pastor.

The extremely sociable dominie unified the immigrants regardless of their places of origin in the Netherlands.

Rough financial times came during the Great Depression. The budget called for \$1,200 a year with a weekly per family contribution of eighty-five cents. Other churches in the classis

had to help with financial support to meet the budget. At the same time there was a considerable turnover of members, and troublesome members had to be disciplined and, at times, removed from the membership.

Adapting to the culture of their new homeland proved to be a challenge, producing humorous anecdotes. One young lady was given an undressed turkey for Christmas by her boss. Wrapped in brown paper, the turkey's head and feet stuck out and accompanied her to supper at the Empire Café, to the catechism class and the following young people's meeting, and then on the interurban train home to Burnaby. A bachelor was given a small room in the basement of the church as his residence in exchange for janitorial services. He also prepared the bread and wine for the quarterly communion observances; curiously the bottle of wine, only slightly consumed by the handful of communicants, was always empty by the next communion service.⁵

After an eight-year pastorate, Hoekstra moved to Sultan, Washington, and Karst Bergsma became the



Unlike most other early Christian Reformed congregations, which were in rural areas, the Vancouver, British Columbia, congregation was organized as an urban congregation. Image from “1926-1967 First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver,” cover.

new minister. He was a fine preacher, but he lacked the sociability of his predecessor. Later this behavior was excused since he had been plagued with mental problems. After two years the Home Missions Board transferred him to the newly formed church in Seattle.

At six foot six inches tall, Rev. John De Jong arrived in early 1939 from Ripon, California, to become their third minister. Most of the time he rode a bicycle to visit members of the congregation, appearing dressed very formally in a black suit and black tie. De Jong, with the help of Peter Pel and Rita Kool, also began a radio ministry on station CJOR called "The Calvin Hour."

As the war clouds were gathering over Europe, the congregation's young people hosted a mini-convention of the Pacific Northwest Young People's League. The leader of this event was the 20-year-old Peter Pel. The city's forested Stanley Park was the scene of the outdoor rally, with police escorting participants in about forty-five cars from Stanley Park through the heart of the city to Hudson's Bay for the banquet—which made the young people coming from Washington and Idaho feel rather special.

Bellflower, California

During May 1926 a small group of members from the Los Angeles church met in the Cloverdale Dairy in Huntington Park, a southeastern suburb, and organized a mission station named the South Los Angeles Mission Society. This was in response to the growing number of Dutch immigrants moving into the area; not surprisingly, worship services were soon conducted in both Dutch and English. A 1918 Model T Ford was purchased for \$30 to meet the transportation needs of the newcomers. A collection totaling \$42.30 was taken to keep the vehicle in good working condition, with Wil-

liam Beezhold appointed as mechanic.

In the fall of 1926 the group petitioned Classis California to become an organized congregation, which was denied on the grounds that Huntington Park was too close to the Los Angeles church. A new venue some distance to the southeast was found in Downey. The group then became known as the Christian Reformed Mission Society. This location proved to be unsuitable, so Bellflower, a town with 6,400 residents, was chosen next.

At the time Bellflower was a 20- to 25-mile drive south along the Pacific Coast through an open countryside interrupted by only one stop sign. The pastures in the area were ideal for the immigrants interested in becoming dairymen, many of whom came as milkers. Most obtained land as quickly as possible and each typically owned a herd of thirty cows. The milk was marketed mostly in Los Angeles. Dairy farmers began to move into the area in growing numbers as Los Angeles and its market for milk grew.

Rev. Henry De Vries, CRC Home Missionary for Southern California in 1927, immediately began working with the group worshiping in Bellflower's Woodruff Hall. Under his guidance it appeared they would purchase a portable church building, but the decision was postponed until they became an organized congregation. That fall the group, now a fair distance from the Los Angeles church, petitioned Classis California a second time to become organized. Classis



From a small mission effort, the Bellflower congregation grew into a thriving congregation. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

approved the petition of twenty-two families and the congregation was organized on 18 October. The congregation voted to purchase the property of Mr. Woodruff, which included the hall in which they were worshipping. The \$2,750 purchase was aided by Woodruff's gift of \$250. The congregation had a few hundred dollars on hand and support from Classis and the Los Angeles and Redlands churches made the purchase and some remodeling possible.⁶ As was the case in other churches of the time, worship services were in Dutch and in English each Sunday. Interestingly, it was decided to use English when writing the official minutes, although discussion could be in Dutch.

In March 1928 the congregation approved calling Rev. Joseph (Johannes) Werkman of Oak Harbor, Washington. The continuing growth of the congregation quickly reached the point at which the facilities became inadequate. During the spring of 1929, after much discussion, the congregation decided to sell their church property. It developed that Mr. Woodruff was willing to trade a piece of land plus some cash for the church property which they had originally purchased from him. Werkman took the lead in raising funds

for this project and a facility seating three hundred people was erected on the new property. The new facility was dedicated in April 1930, with the congregation counting sixty member families. Toward the end of 1930, members of the Christian Reformed and Reformed churches in the area organized a Christian school society. Classes began as a summer school in a facility which sold beer.

As was the case elsewhere, the impact of the Great Depression was significant. In October 1931 cash was scarce and unemployment among members led to a drop in anticipated revenue. The minister offered to take a \$200 cut in his salary. In spite of the united efforts to meet the difficulties of the Depression and the dangers made vivid by the 1933 earthquake, there was dissension within the congregation. The dissension seemed to be fed by the rapid growth of the congregation as people moved to California—by 1934 there were seventy families. But the dissension seemed to focus on the minister—some supporting him, others criticizing him. The tension reached such a point by the fall of 1934 that classical effort at conciliation failed and the sad separation of Rev. Werkman and the congregation took place. He later became the pastor of the Reformed Church in America congregation in Bellflower.

After the unfortunate tensions between some of the congregation and Rev. Werkman, in May 1935 Rev. Gareth Kok came with his wife to reestablish harmony. The first project he undertook was the opening of the Christian school that fall. It opened with four classrooms. The fiftieth anniversary booklet reports, “Perhaps no person did as much for our congregation during those early years as did Kathryn Kok, the pastor’s wife. Every women’s organization which was started during the years of 1935 to 1946 was promoted by her and

often she would lead more than one society at a time. She was also the first president of the Women’s Missionary Union in Southern California.” As a result, by 1937 the church membership reached 150 families. That year two new wings were added to the sanctuary, increasing seating to five hundred; a new pipe organ was also purchased.

This was the year of the tenth anniversary. Ladies of the church made a beautiful lace and linen bedspread with the names of 380 members embroidered on it at ten cents per name. In the center of the bedspread a Bible text, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar . . . and I will write upon him my new name,” was embroidered. Shares were sold for communal ownership and this handiwork became the property of the church. When someone asked what to do with it, it was decided that it be sold to the highest bidder. Kok was made the auctioneer. The member who bought it for several hundred dollars said, “Sell it again.” It was then sold a few more times. After the last bid

was taken the assembly presented the bedspread to the Koks. The \$1,800 gained in the unique sale enabled the church to purchase 1½ acres for a parking lot.⁷ As the decade closed, the congregation numbered 185 families, with a total membership of 1,000.

Grangeville and Amsterdam, Idaho

In 1907 families from Manhattan, Montana, moved to the Camas Prairie in Idaho County, Idaho. Jan and Hiltje Workman, immigrants from the Netherlands in 1901, came with their five children, as did their long-time friends Henry and Tena Korthuis, with three sons.⁸ They came to Grangeville, a town not far from where the Salmon River flows into the Snake River east of the intersection of the Idaho boundary with those of Washington and Oregon. The two families shared a large house where reading services were held. During 1911 they moved more than 250 miles to the south and a bit east, to the new irrigation district twenty-five miles south of Twin Falls that already had a railroad connection. There they,



Organized in 1927, the Grangeville, Idaho, congregation began as a branch of the Zillah, Washington, congregation and was initially comprised of members who had moved from Amsterdam, Idaho. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



The congregation of Amsterdam, Idaho, is an example of the perseverance through hardship endured by many congregations in frontier areas. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

with other Dutch farmers, planned a community on land being sold by the Holland Realty and Land Company. The community was initially to be called Apeldoorn, but the name was changed to Amsterdam. In late 1911 the Dutch families began meeting for worship services and the land company paid for the construction of a church.⁹ The group moved into the building and in 1912 formed a congregation that was organized by the Christian Reformed Church.

Clearing land, removing rocks, and digging irrigation ditches was hard work, particularly for the arthritic Workman. The two families' sojourn at Amsterdam was short-lived; after barely two years they returned to Grangeville. They were joined there by a brother-in-law of Workman, Ger-

rit Witt, and his wife. Over the next several years, other families who had previously lived in Michigan, Alberta, Montana, Minnesota, and Iowa, left Amsterdam and went to Grangeville. The town is situated on a productive agricultural plateau surrounded by mountains that sustain the local lumber industry.

The Amsterdam congregation was dissolved in 1919, but the group resumed reading services in various homes, with Lambertus Vrieling and John Vander Wall doing most of the sermon reading. Next they met in the Star School. In 1917 this group of worshipers erected a small building four and a half miles north of Grangeville, placing their memberships with the Zillah Church, 275 miles to the west in

Washington, thereby becoming a branch of that congregation. Some of these settlers found it difficult to make a living in the area and moved to Dutch communities in the Yakima Valley and Lynden areas, so the Grangeville congregation remained small. In addition to reading services and occasional visits by ministers, for a number of summers Calvin Theological Seminary students served the small congregation.

Spearheaded by Vrieling and Vander Wall, this group became an organized congregation again in 1927, with seventy-two charter members. In 1932 Candidate John Zwaanstra became the congregation's first minister. The congregation subsequently began to grow as "Dust Bowl" migrants came to the area from the Dakotas,

but most did not stay long, as they continued moving westward. In spite of the difficult financial times, in 1935 a new sanctuary and in 1937 a parsonage were built.

The congregation thrived under the five-year pastorate of Rev. Zwaanstra. During those years the church had a considerable number of young people, many of whom subsequently left the community looking for jobs. Rev. Garret Pars became the congregation's second pastor in 1939, when its membership totaled 132.

Ontario, California

During 1924 a few dairy farmers had moved from the Bellflower area thirty-five miles east into the Chino area, where they held Sunday meetings in each other's homes. In 1926 Classis California established a mission station for this group, which continued to grow in size and eventually began worshiping in the Brethren in Christ Church. At this point the Chino group began to experience outmigration and the group asked the denomination's Home Missions Board for help. As a result, Rev. Henry J. De Vries was appointed Home Missionary for Southern California, dividing his time between Bellflower and the Chino area. De Vries's effort led to a group of eighteen families petitioning Classis California to become an organized congregation. Classis approved, but since Ontario, just to the northeast of Chino, was more central to the eighteen families, the new congregation was called the Ontario Christian Reformed Church, with De Vries as their home missionary. A house and lot were purchased on South Euclid Street where in 1931 a church was built.

As the worst of the Great Depression began to have its impact, half the congregation's families moved from the Ontario area as dust storms swept through the Chino Valley. The nine

families remaining in the congregation struggled to continue and Classis advised the congregation to dissolve; De Vries, whose salary came from Classis, preached his farewell sermon on New Year's Eve 1935. The families refused to close the church doors and held reading services, often led by Edward Plett. After Plett moved from the area, services continued with Classis periodically sending ministers to preach and, during the summer months, sending seminary interns, who slept in the church's balcony.¹⁰ Although the congregation remained small as the 1940s began, significant growth came during the post WW II years.

Glendale, California

On a June Sunday in 1931 a group of twenty-three people met in the Glendale YMCA for worship under the direction of home missionary Henry J. De Vries. A candidate for the ministry, Casper Van Dyk, arrived at the beginning of the next year to minister there and on 28 March this group of nine families and five individuals living in this city of 62,000 was organized as a congregation. These folks had come from Michigan and the Netherlands and settled near Glendale and the San Fernando Valley, north of Los Angeles. Young people from Midwest farms sought job opportunities in the aircraft industry; others went into the poultry and egg route business. The membership also included several involved in the building trades.

Van Dyk became the congregation's first pastor in 1932 but left the ministry in 1936. For the next two years the church was without a pastor, but for short periods two candidates, Walter Hekman and Christian Ter Maat, ministered to this small flock. At the time, because of the Great Depression, many churches were unable to pay pastors' salaries, so seminary graduates did not receive calls but did accept short-term appointments

as candidates. The congregation held worship services in the Jewel City Funeral Chapel. On one occasion, after the service, a group of young people decided to tour the premises. Upon rejoining their families they were unusually quiet because they didn't want to awaken the "sleeping people" in the other rooms!

In 1938, seasoned minister J. J. Weersing accepted a call from Glendale. During his first year a church facility and a parsonage were built on the vacant three lots which had been purchased just before he arrived. The minister was described as an able preacher and a caring pastor. He worked with able council members, many who were well-versed in their duties. Glendale was a close-knit fellowship. By 1939 the congregation numbered one hundred persons, and in 1955 moved to Sun Valley, just north of Glendale and Burbank.

Sunnyside, Washington

The first Dutch in the mid-Yakima Valley of Washington settled in Zillah or Sunnyside, about fourteen miles to the east. Worship services were held in both communities and when the group in Zillah organized as a congregation in 1901, the six families in the Sunnyside group became a branch of the Zillah church. As was the case elsewhere, the Sunnyside branch held services in members' homes and occasionally in the Liberty School located between Sunnyside and Zillah. These families regularly travelled to Zillah when the sacraments were administered. By 1910 seven more families from the Netherlands had come to the Sunnyside area. A one-room church building was built on Cemetery Road, north and a bit east of Sunnyside. Regularly the Zillah pastor came to this building to provide catechetical instruction.

On 26 April 1932 these worshipers officially became an organized church.

With the continued growth of the church, a larger facility was needed. The existing building had already been enlarged once and doing so again was prohibitive. A few years earlier the Congregational church had vacated their facility. It had sometimes been called the "stone church" because of its gray stone-block exterior similar to that of the parsonage. The building had three floors, with the sanctuary on the top floor. The entire property was purchased in 1936 for \$1,500.¹¹

At the time the area near Sunnyside that was irrigated was fairly restricted. But then the Rosa Irrigation Project, several miles north of the town, began and a much larger area became available for agriculture. Instead of the previous sage brush with rabbits and coyotes, it became a productive area for corn and alfalfa. The expanded farming area led to an influx of more people into the community.

Initially candidates served the congregation, as was the case elsewhere, but when the stone church was purchased a trio was formed and Rev. Karel De Waal Malefyt of Edmonton, Alberta, received the call. He declined the call as did a number of others during the following year. The congregation called him again in 1938 and he accepted. During his ministry in Sunnyside the transition from Dutch services to English services began. De Waal Malefyt's work in Sunnyside was most fruitful, including the inauguration of a Daily Vacation Bible School.¹² He remained as pastor for five years and then accepted a call from the new congregation in Artesia, California.

Buena Park and Artesia, California

Because of the growing number of Reformed people in the area south of Los Angeles, Classis California in 1927 opened two mission stations, one in Santa Ana, about thirty miles southeast of Los Angeles; the other in San Pedro, about thirty miles due west



The "stone church," formerly home to a Congregational church group, was acquired by the Sunnyside congregation in 1936. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



After serving churches in Michigan and Minnesota, in 1921 John De Jonge (1876-1946) worked for almost two decades as a minister and home missionary in California. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

of Santa Ana. One week the morning service was at San Pedro and the evening service at Santa Ana; the next week this was reversed. In 1929 Rev. John J. De Jonge became the home missionary to work at both locations. The San Pedro group remained small, but the Santa Ana group often had fifty worshipers and in 1933 they elected a supervisory board and rented

a club house in Buena Park. On 12 November 1933 the Santa Ana group, with sixty members, was organized as a congregation but named for nearby Buena Park. Most of the members had come from the Midwest, but new members joined occasionally during the middle years of the Great Depression.

In early 1937 new meeting space was rented from the Artesia Women's Club, which was approximately five miles to the west. New members joined and when De Jonge left for a mission assignment in Wisconsin the congregation felt able to call its own minister. Candidate Louis Bouma, a native of Hull, Iowa, and a former teacher, accepted the call and was installed in October 1938. At the end of the year, because of their location, it was decided to reorganize the congregation as the Artesia Christian Reformed Church. Almost immediately, because of the number of young people, the decision was made to switch from services in both Dutch and English to services only in English. As the membership grew from twelve to twenty-five families that first year, land was purchased and in

October 1939 the new sanctuary, with seating for 350, was dedicated.¹³

Duvall, Washington

In 1916, two years after the founding of the Sultan, Washington, congregation, John Roetcisoender, formerly an elder in Sultan, and John Spoelstra bought farms in the Cherry Valley area near Duval and moved their families there. The weekly twenty-mile trip to worship was made with horses and buggies. Others of Dutch origin moved to that area, some settling on farms as far south as ten miles, near Carnation, home of the widely-known Carnation Farms, famous for its Holstein cows, Carnation milk, and Carnation milk products.

Those arriving later found the thirty-mile or more trips for worship too far for horse and buggy. When Rev. Arend Guikema was conducting catechism classes in a Duvall church in 1930, Classis Pacific approved the establishment of a branch congregation, which began holding services in rented space in Duvall. The branch church began holding reading services in 1934, but often the pulpit was occupied by classical appointments and other ministers who regularly came to preach. Meetings were held in a small hall heated by a potbellied stove.

For these folks who no longer had to drive long distances, the branch church arrangement was an improvement, but still less than satisfactory. Classis then decided that Duvall should become an independent congregation, which was organized in October 1934 with seventy-two charter members. Quite soon after this event the rented hall was no longer available for Sunday morning services; two and eight o'clock evening services were begun. This was also unsatisfactory, and in the spring of 1937 a new building, with a seating capacity of 96 in this village of 200, was dedicated by the Duvall Christian Reformed Church.



As was the case elsewhere, the Sumas, Washington, congregation began as a branch of a larger congregation (First Lynden). Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Rev. Arend Guikema and his successor, Rev. Peter Hoekstra, conducted three services each Sunday, divided between Sultan and Duvall. Later each church obtained its own pastor. In 1951 Sultan and Monroe were merged into a new congregation, Monroe Christian Reformed Church, located between Sultan and Duvall.

Sumas, Washington

During the early 1920s, as less and less farm land was available in the Lynden, Washington, area, some farmers and members of the First Christian Reformed Church moved ten miles northeast to Sumas, a community of about six hundred on the US-Canadian border. By 1931, when more families had moved to Sumas, two elders from First Lynden came to teach catechism on Saturdays during the winter months. When the elders couldn't come, Jelte Visser of the Su-

mas group took over as teacher. By 1933 there were thirty-six students being taught.

At this time the group requested of First Lynden's council to become a mission station, which was approved if the Sumas group could find a suitable place to worship. The vacant Baptist church was available for \$275 and First Church placed a \$25 option to buy the building, provided the Sumas families agreed to repair and improve the old building. On 1 July 1935 the first service was held in the former Baptist church. Meanwhile, First Church hired Candidate George Stob to pastor the Sumas families.

The church became an organized congregation on 6 November 1935 with eighty-six charter members. The new congregation called Stob the next spring and he was installed as their first pastor. Stob, a bachelor from Chicago, had to adjust to living in this farming community. For instance, when he decided to raise a vegetable garden, as other families did, he planted one short row of carrots. When asked why such a short space, his reply was, "Well, when you buy carrots in the grocery store, a couple of bunches of carrots cover that much space."

The young minister both preached and played the piano during the services in his first congregation. In 1940 he accepted a call from the Burton Heights congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At the time the Sumas congregation had grown to thirty-eight families and the number

of young people taking catechism instruction had grown to eighty-five.

Modesto, California

In the late 1920s, some ten miles south of Ripon, a small number of people spearheaded by Charles Viss, Henry Veneman, and Henry Vermeulen wanted to establish a congregation in Modesto. First to lead the group was Home Missionary Henry J. De Vries, who served from 1935 until the summer of 1937. Donald Houseman, a summer intern student, followed De Vries; in the fall of 1937 Albert Selles, on loan from World Missions from work in China, conducted services.¹⁴ At first services were held in a vacant Pentecostal church in an inconvenient location, so the group moved to Thompson's Social Hall. Sunday mornings began with the early arrivers clearing the debris from the dances held the evening before. On one occasion there was so much debris that they decided to meet in the basement, which housed a beauty shop. During the music portions of the service the beauty shop's birds warbled along.

By 1936 the group was granted permission by Classis to become a mission station and on 7 March 1937 the group, with thirty-two communicants and thirty-two baptized members, was organized into a congregation. Rev. John Zwaanstra came from Grangeville, Idaho, to be their first resident pastor in 1938. Because of zoning requirements the congregation had difficulty building inside the city limits, so in 1939 they bought land just outside the then city limits. In 1940 the sanctuary was dedicated. It was built for under \$500 and designed to accommodate growth.

Lynden, Washington

In 1938, eighteen years after the Second Lynden CRC was organized, the need for more English-language

worship services grew as the population of the community increased. The First CRC had one Sunday service in English and the other in Dutch. While the membership of Second CRC had grown to approximately 700, a new generation of young people and young families had wanted all services to be in English. During the summer of 1937, First CRC added an additional English service, but this proved unworkable, so the council approved a request to circulate a petition to form a third congregation. Henry Heusinkveld, U. J. Otter, and Lewis Stremmer conducted the campaign and collected fifty-four signatures from persons who pledged support for the formation of a new congregation.

With the approval of the council of First CRC and classical permission, the congregation was organized as the Third Christian Reformed Church on 2 November 1938 at a service held in the First CRC sanctuary. Initially, meetings were held in three different locations: Sunday mornings in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Hall, Sunday afternoons in the Methodist Church, and midweek in the Christian school. On Sunday mornings, if there were not enough seats, a number of men crossed the street to the Knapp Funeral Parlor to borrow folding chairs. The Methodist Church had ample seating so that adequate seating was not a problem at the afternoon service.

Property was purchased at the corner of 6th and Liberty and, following the pattern of the Second Church eighteen years earlier, a basement church was built. Shortly afterward the house on the adjoining property was purchased as a parsonage. In April 1939 the congregation's first pastor, Rev. Albert Van Dyken, began his ministry at Third CRC. With Van Dyken's leadership the congregation began to grow while using the "basement church."¹⁵

The location of the new church created a parking problem on the surrounding streets. The church was on the same block as the IOOF Hall; one block south was the large Reformed church; and almost two blocks southwest was the Second CRC; two blocks farther west was the First CRC; and Faith Reformed Church built their facility one block from Third. Parishioners of these five large congregations vied for parking spaces. This was somewhat alleviated on the western end when First CRC began to use the half-block behind the church that years earlier contained the covered horse stalls.

Afterword

One common theme among these early Pacific Coast congregations was the desire by farmers to find better land and conditions than where they had been. Some went into near wilderness; others, into much more well-developed areas in search of this goal. But all took with them their commitment to the Reformed faith, and the very first ones also took their Dutch language and culture. Subsequently people, especially with respiratory problems, came seeking better climates and, as the areas grew during the 1920s, the churches diversified by reaching out to the growing urban population and subsequent generations. The struggle over language predominated. At times church buildings moved to follow the congregants. Most began with members with limited financial means and so the first structures were modest. Typically they were very small wooden buildings which bore little or no resemblance to typical church structures. In several cases the efforts failed to produce a lasting congregation, but these experiences did not dissuade the efforts of others or even the same individuals who moved to new locales. After WW II the westward movement of

America gained momentum and part of this was an ever growing number of people from the Dutch and Reformed traditions.³

Endnotes

1. "Silver Anniversary, First Christian Reformed Church," 1924-1949 (Alameda, 1949) 4.
2. He was the older brother of Frank De Jong; Frank later spent thirty years as home missionary doing church planting work and pastoring in California.
3. "Silver Anniversary, First Christian Reformed Church, 1924-1949" (Alameda, 1949) 5.
4. Records of Stockton could not be found. The sources which were available came from Ripon members and a few references in memoirs held by the church.
5. "Early Happenings in the First Vancouver CRC," manuscript account in the First Vancouver CRC Collection, Archives, Calvin College.
6. "Fiftieth Anniversary 1927-1977, First Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower, California," 5. Copy available in the Archives, Calvin College.
7. Forty years later at the church's golden anniversary, Rev. Kok and his second wife (Kathryn died in 1951) presented the bedspread to the congregation. It now hangs in the social hall.
8. Marsha Greenwood, "Grangeville CRC History," unpublished manuscript available in the Grangeville CRC Collection, Archives, Calvin College.
9. J. Howard Moon, *Early History of the Filer, Idaho, School District* (Filer: Print Shoppe, 1976) section X.
10. "Ontario, California," *The Banner*, 24 December 1943, 1091.
11. "Sunnyside, Washington," *The Banner*, 5 May 1938, 419.
12. "A History of Sunnyside Christian Reformed Church," 1982, copy available in the Sunnyside CRC Collection, Archives, Calvin College.
13. "Artesia, California," *The Banner*, 14 December 1939, 1168.
14. "Modesto, California," *The Banner*, 6 July 1962, 24.
15. Building of the superstructure began in 1949.

When Holland had a Socialist Councilman

Michael J. Douma

The Marxist ideal of a classless society was perhaps more closely approximated in the nineteenth and early twentieth century American Midwest than in any other setting to date. But in the minds of many in Holland, Michigan, this equality was brought about by democracy, respect for the law, and charity, not a social or economic ideology. In fact, threats to general stability were scorned. In 1912 the editor of *Ottawa County Times* wrote, “We are opposed to those who preach agitation and discord”¹ The local Dutch-language newspaper, *De Grondwet*, added that America was “no place for socialism with its impossible, unworkable demands, nor less for anarchism with its wild dreams and unholy vessels.”² According to Henry S. Lucas, an early historian of the Dutch-American experience, there had never been a Dutch-American socialist element. In 1955 Lucas wrote, “Neither among the Dutch farmers in Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and the Dakotas, who are as determinedly independent and individualistic as farmers can be, nor among the Dutch factory workers in Grand Rapids and Holland, Michigan, were there any socialists.”³

Careful research shows, contrary to the assessment of Lucas, that there were indeed socialists in Holland and some of them were of Dutch heritage. Surprisingly, despite Holland’s anti-socialist milieu, the city came to have a sizeable socialist community in the early twentieth century and even

elected a number of socialist officials to public office. Socialism offered Hollanders, both American- and Dutch-born, an alternative political platform, however unorthodox, for challenging traditional norms. During the first two decades of the twentieth century Holland witnessed a considerable socialist movement led by Vernon F. King, a short, fiery man from the city’s industrial second ward (the northwest section of the city). King and his supporters rallied with all their energy to bring change to the city; yet the Socialist Party never received the critical mass of support needed to maintain long-term local political influence, and by 1915 faded from the scene, rejected by the majority of Hollanders, and forgotten or neglected by their chroniclers.

A New Party in Town

The Socialist Party, both nationally and locally, had to struggle for acceptance and recognition. One obstacle to overcome on the road to legitimacy was the party’s poor reputation associated with its violent, anarchist wing. The 1886 Chicago Haymarket Riot, in which anarchists killed police with a bomb during a May Day rally calling for the eight-hour work day, and the assassination of US President McKinley in 1901 by an East European anarchist immigrant, had given socialists a reputation for violence. When Hendrik Meijer (later known for his grocery stores), a racial socialist who emigrated to Holland from the Netherlands in 1907, asked an

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American of Dutch descent if he knew about anarchy, the man responded with nothing else but that those people “throw bombs.”⁴

The Socialist Party in Holland was formed in 1897 and was one of the first such organizations in the state. Despite this early start, the party faced strong opposition and its membership initially remained small. Those in the Holland, Michigan, Socialist Party thought little of violent revolution, and only a few members had anarchist leanings. The party was comprised of members who had earlier been in labor organizations and, to a lesser extent, of those who adapted Populist Party ideals. The West Michigan Socialist Party sought change through the ballot box, and it attempted to convince the workers that they were being abused by capitalist business owners.

For many in Holland, socialism was both foreign and threatening. Holland's two major church bodies, the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) both opposed social-

ism; church doctrine taught that it was a contradiction to be both a practicing church member and at the same time to espouse socialist ideologies. Traditionally, Hollanders sided with the Republican Party first and considered only the Democratic Party a legitimate political alternative. A writer in Holland's *Gereformeerde Amerikaan* admitted that many of the periodical's readers knew as much about words like “Communism” and “Socialism” as a cow knows about the Spanish language.⁵ But Holland by the turn of the century was not a homogenous city of Dutch-American churchgoers and readers of Calvinist periodicals. Local socialists tended to come from the ranks of the city's non-religious or un-churched, who often lived on the cultural periphery. This included Americans born in other cities, Dutch immigrants not into religious tradition, or most immigrants and people who for one reason or another did not completely fit in.

This diversity was evident among the socialists themselves, for there was considerable debate on the party's

platform and goals. Some of the new immigrants, being influenced by the socialist-anarchist ideologies of Domela Nieuwenhuis, known as the pioneer of socialism in the Netherlands, were of a more radical and utopian disposition and were called “Free Socialists.” These radicals (Meijer claims fifteen of them in total) formed a separate, largely Dutch-speaking, wing of the local party. The English-speaking American socialists tended to support the more moderate ideologies of the Socialist Labor Party leader Eugene V. Debs. Debs had even made his presence felt locally, addressing a large audience when he spoke in Holland in 1905. Two years later, a committee of the local Socialist Party attempted, this time without success, to secure Debs as a speaker for Holland's Fourth of July festival.⁶

The Growth of the Party

Changing economic tides helped bring the local Socialist Party into recognition. In 1907 a financial panic disrupted the national markets. The socialists in particular placed the blame for the panic on the shoulders of a few very powerful men, like the industrialists J. Pierpoint Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, and Cornelius Vanderbilt, who controlled large segments of the economy and had allegedly manipulated the banks for their own gain. Socialist sympathies in Holland reached their peak during the time following this economic downturn. Several socialist newspapers appeared on the local scene, including the *Volkstem* in 1908 and the *Holland Progressive Worker* in 1910.⁷ In 1914, the Dutch Socialists broke off from the later newspaper to publish *Voorwaarts*, then the only Dutch-language Socialist newspaper in North America, the *Volkstem* having ceased publication.⁸

More telling, however, were the sweeping changes brought in by the



Early twentieth-century scene on Holland, Michigan's 8th Street. Image courtesy of Archives, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

municipal elections of the spring of 1911, in which not a single alderman, nor the mayor, was re-elected. The newly elected officials believed that the change was indicative of the voters' desire to readjust along new and progressive lines. This included, in the second ward, the election of a Socialist alderman, Vernon F. King, a worker at a local furniture factory. King benefited from a three-way race, and with 85 votes he slipped past Gerrit Van Zanten (77 votes) and Jacob De Peyter (37 votes) to claim the office. It was rare indeed that Holland would vote for a Socialist, but this had much to do with the demographics of the second ward, which had a population of largely native-born blue-collar workers.

King Leads the Way

By 1911 Vernon King had been associated with the local socialist scene for at least a decade. He had long endured threats and name calling like "Shorty King, the Anarchist."⁹ But King had rejected this wing of socialism and considered anarchism to be in conflict with socialism.¹⁰ At the 1902 socialist county convention, the twenty-eight-year-old King had made his politics known. There he proclaimed,

The slavish wage worker, in submitting to being robbed of the meat from his table, may be assured that he may soon eat husks with the swine unless he asserts his manhood and stands for his birthright with the organization of his class, the Socialist labor party. The preachers of the Christian Reformed Church may assert the brotherhood of capital and labor but the fact of the miners and teamsters strikes proves the class struggle in big broad facts.¹¹

King, as this passage shows, would not be a traditional politician in Holland, Michigan.

After King's election, the Republicans and Democrats of Holland were

Socialist Paper Gives History

The Holland Socialist worker gives a brief history of the beginning of socialism in Holland. They naturally are elated over the election of Vernon King as alderman of the Second ward and do not hesitate to tell about it, the clipping follows:—

Fourteen years ago the Socialist organization was formed in Holland. At that time there were only two similar organizations in this state, one at Detroit and one at Saginaw. This little band of five men rounded up by Comrade King, alderman elect, then applied for a charter from the national organization of the Socialist labor party, there being no state organization at that time. Many have been the bitter struggles, slurs and slanders thrown at this little band of workers, especially during the time of the assassination of President McKinley, when such phrases as "Shorty King, the anarchist" were hurled into the ears of this little band of workers. Many times attempts were made to run Comrade King out of town, by the capitalists refusing him employment but Comrade King and this little band of workers had determined to remain and plant the seed of Socialism in Holland, the first fruits of which we have harvested on Monday, April 3, 1911, by electing this same so-called "Shorty King, the anarchist" as a member of the body

to govern the city of Holland. Now while the Socialists of Holland have today added many members to this little band of Socialists which originated fourteen years ago, there is no reason if every Socialist now added to this band will only put his shoulder to the wheel, why we cannot carry this city for Socialism in a few years. Now comrades, get busy and show the workers our goods.

Many times the question has been asked around town since election, "what stand will Socialist Alderman King take on some of the important questions to be considered by the next common council?" The Progressive Worker will answer, that Alderman-elect King will consider every question from the workers' point of view. If he thinks it is against the interests of the working class of Holland then Alderman King will vote against it. If it is for the best interests of the workers of Holland, then Alderman King is for it. The Socialist Party stands for the working class only, and every candidate elected on the Socialist Party ticket stands pledged to work and vote for the best interests of the workers.

Story from the Holland City News about the Socialist Party in which Vernon King is referred to as "Comrade King" and "Shorty King the Anarchist." Holland City News, 27 April 1912, 4.

curious, and a bit concerned. After all, what would councilman-elect King do? The Holland socialists responded to this with political tact. "If he thinks it is against the interests of the working class of Holland then Alderman King will vote against it. If it is for the best interests of the workers of Holland, then Alderman King is for it."¹² King tried to stay true to this maxim. For one, he argued that the city was favoring large consumers too much in electricity and water rates. He supported a city-run gas plant to spread out the costs of this utility among the taxpayers. While Hollanders wanted to see a city-run gas plant, none wanted to pay the high taxes to support

it; yet they feared that a private gas company might gouge the consumer. When the city council finally decided in 1911 to let a private gas company operate in the city, King was the sole holdout for a gas plant financed by city taxes.¹³

King's largest battle, however, concerned the length of a working day. In the first city council meeting of 1912 he proposed an eight-hour workday for city laborers. This proposal set off a fiery debate that continued into the next several council meetings. Councilman Arthur Drinkwater supported a nine-hour day for city laborers on account of the strenuous nature of their work. But other councilmen felt

it unfair to pay city workers for ten hours if they worked fewer hours, and they argued the standard work day in the city was ten hours. King jumped in, "What's the matter with Holland, we are too conservative, always following, never leading. Let us lead in this eight-hour movement." But King was pragmatic and settled for the nine-hour work day when, on 17 January 1912, the council resolved, with only one dissenting vote, that the men working to dig sewers for the city, due to the nature of the work and the hot weather, be given ten hours' pay for nine hours of work. This decision gave King some confidence, but when this movement was rescinded at a later meeting, "rocket" King, speaking in a loud voice as usual, protested vigorously. Alderman John Lokker took offense to King's rampage and said he would not "be hollered deaf, and be made a boy by a socialist agitator." Convinced by Mayor Evert Stephan to lower his voice, King continued, and spoke honestly about the grievances of the laborers, pleading for an eight-hour work day. To sufficiently appease, or at least temporarily quiet councilman King, the council resolved to set up a committee to investigate labor conditions and to ask factories to cooperate with a nine-hour work day.¹⁴

While on the outside King appeared to be accepted as a fully functioning member of the council, inwardly many had their regrets about King's election to office. *The Holland City News* often portrayed King as a "loose cannon," and ridiculed him for having more passion than brains.¹⁵ The *News* reported that he often "jumped" from his chair and roared like "the King of beasts." They also labeled his orations "spiels." Despite this, King considered the *News* to be a friend that stood up for him on labor issues even if it would not stand for socialism.

In 1912, with the fiery council debates as impetus, King ran for mayor of Holland. Although he finished last in a three-way race, he received nearly twenty-five percent of the vote. Other socialists began to make their mark as well. Olef (also written Olaf) J. Hanson, who had worked at a tannery and later as a mail carrier, was ideologically rooted in the labor party of the 1880s. Hanson failed numerous times in his pursuit of political office: for alderman in 1905, 1909, 1914, 1915, and 1916; for constable in 1908; for coroner in 1910; for mayor in 1906, 1910, 1911, and 1913; and for state representative in 1914. But in this one year, 1912, Hanson was successful in being elected councilman from the fourth ward in the west part of the city, while another socialist, Leonard DeWitt, who had also endured many electoral defeats, was elected constable for the second ward. This was the peak of socialist involvement in city government.

In both of the following years, 1913 and 1914, King was re-elected to a seat on the city council, but in 1914 Holland's Socialist Party asked for King's resignation due to his alleged abuses of power while in office. King unsuccessfully appealed to the state organization, but appears to have left Holland after his fallout with the party.¹⁶ He had been the leader of the local Socialists and their number one champion; now he was an outcast. In 1914, when Holland initiated non-partisan municipal elections, a candidate's political affiliation became secondary in importance to his personal character, if it had not been so already, and the Socialist Party faded into obscurity.

Conclusion

Why, despite its short-lived success, did socialism not catch on in Holland? An August 1907 news report displays Holland's working class on

the eve of the growth of the local Socialist Party. Local workers struggled but rarely rebelled:

There was a strike Saturday in the ranks of the men employed by the city to build a sewer on West Fifteenth Street. A number of Hollanders claiming that they did not get their share in the American Square Deal refused to work and became so violent that it nearly came to blows. They were, however, soon appeased and sent to work.¹⁷

While this report does not say how the workers were appeased, it carries a familiar tone: that Hollanders did not necessarily desire equality, only fairness. They found capitalism, the handshake between employer and employee, a preferable method of earning a living.

Even Dutch immigrant Hendrik Meijer, originally an anarchist-leaning radical socialist, was won over by capitalism and the tide of progressivism. Meijer's biographer, his grandson, wrote, "In the Old Country such radicalism seemed to a factory youth like him the one hope for altering the oppressive status quo." But, he continues, "[The radicals] found themselves swept up in the tolerant tide of the Progressive Era. Radicalism . . . [was] never a match for the American Dream."¹⁸

For many Hollanders, socialism, despite the value of some of its proclamations, and strong personalities like Vernon King, was simply not as attractive as capitalism. Socialism in local politics was an undercurrent with a substantial, albeit short-lived following at the polls. The party had legitimate claims for the laboring class, but socialist ideology was only accepted by the mainstream as far as it did not conflict or interfere with church doctrine, capitalism, or progressivism.¹⁹

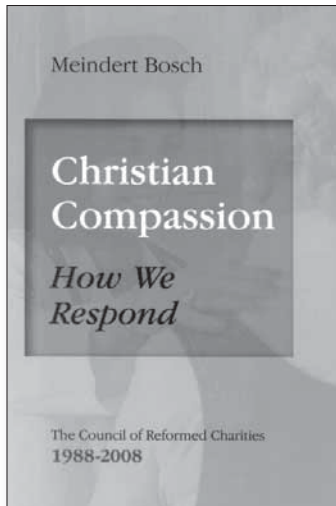
Endnotes

1. *Ottawa County Times*, 22 Feb. 1912.
2. *De Grondwet*, 1907. Quoted in Hank Meijer, "Coming to Holland in 1907: Life in a City of Immigrants as Seen Through Its Newspapers." Meijer Collection, Joint Archives of Holland (JAH). Translation of "*Geen Socialisme met zijn onmogelijke, onverwerkbare eischen! Noch minder Anarchisme, met zijn wilde droomen en onzalige werktuigen.*"
3. Henry S. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1955), p. 573. Also Hank Meijer, "A Young Radical in Holland: 1907." 4 Aug. 1980. JAH.
4. Hendrik Meijer (Holland, MI) to Zientje Mantel (Hengelo, Netherlands), 17 Sept. 1907. JAH, H05-1566.
5. *De Gereformeerde Amerikaan*, (Holland, MI: Henry Holkeboer, 1902), 131.
6. Stokvis, "Socialist Immigrants and the American Dream," in *The Dutch-*

- American Experience: Essays in Honor of Robert P. Swierenga*, (Free University of Amsterdam, 2000), 98; *Holland City News*, 9 May 1907. *De Grondwet*, 4 Feb. 1908, reports that another well-known figure, John C. Chase, a utopian socialist who later ran for governor of New York State gave a speech in Holland in early 1908.
7. *Holland City News*, 15 Dec. 1910. Netherlands Historian Pieter Stokvis writes that a German newspaper, *Der Anarchist: Anarchistisch-Communistisches Organ*, printed in New York, was also read among the Dutch Socialists in Holland, MI. See: Stokvis, "Socialist Immigrants and the American Dream," 91-101.
 8. *Holland City News*, 30 Apr. 1914. *De Grondwet*, 14 April, 1908. *De Volkstem* was a monthly periodical under director Arie van Doesburg of Holland and editor J. Hoogerheide of Grand Rapids.
 9. *Holland City News*, 27 Apr. 1911.

- King failed in his bid for city justice under the Labor Party platform in 1901.
10. *De Grondwet*, 1 Oct. 1901.
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 12. *Holland City News*, 27 Apr. 1911.
 13. *Holland City News*, 21 Sept. 1911; 19 Oct. 1911; 26 Oct. 1911.
 14. *Holland City News*, 18 Jan. 1912; 8 Feb. 1912.
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 16. *Holland City News*, 22 Oct. 1914.
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 18. Hank Meijer, "Coming to Holland in 1907: Life in a City of Immigrants as Seen Through Its Newspapers," p. 32. JAH. Meijer, Hank. *Thrifty Years: The Life of Hendrik Meijer*. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1984, 45.

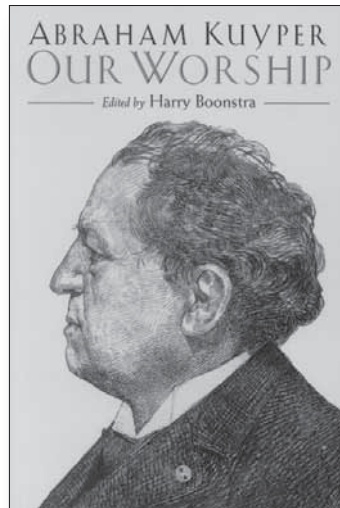
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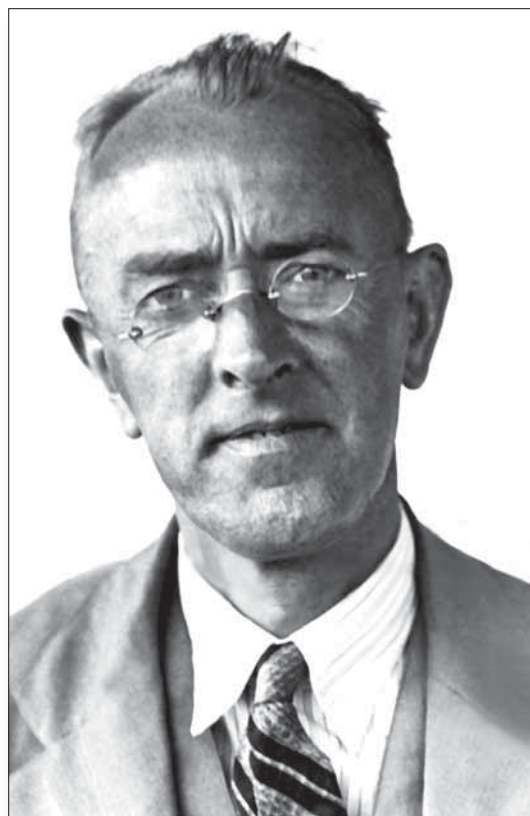
for the future

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

Peter Ester presents the diary of Dutch social geographer Jacob Van Hinte's trip to the United States in 1921.

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