Origins

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Volume XXXIV • Number 1 • 2016

Historical Magazine of The Archives

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

Cover photo:
Honorary Diploma for Garrett Heyns

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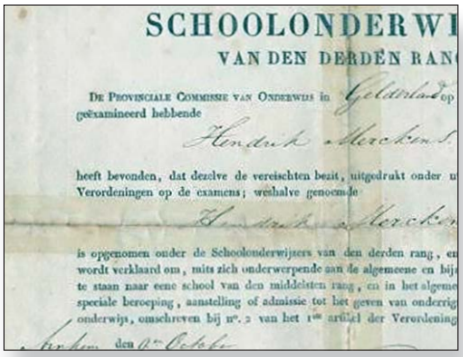

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from the editor. . .

This Issue

This issue focuses on the lives of a series of individuals whose stories add to the understanding of the Dutch-American experience in North America. Thelma Zigter and her family immigrated to Missaukee County in the north-central section of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, where, in addition to raising a family, she served as a midwife, providing the only medical help to women in labor in a rural community. An educator, Garret Heyns became involved with the treatment and future of those serving prison sentences. He advocated training and rehabilitation, and during the middle decades of the twentieth century came to be recognized as a leader in penal reform in the United States. Mins Reinsma describes three generations of his family moving from Friesland to North Holland, and then to New Holland, South Dakota, with insightful details, particularly of the emigration across the Atlantic in 1950. Starting in the ministry with a family during the years of the Great Depression is detailed in the warm and personal recollections of Rev. Cornelius Witt. And lastly we present the letter of Hendrik Merckens, a teacher in the Netherlands, considering immigrating to West Michigan in the nineteenth century.

News from the Archives

During the fall and winter most of our processing efforts were spent on records received for the archives of the Christian Reformed Church. From Christian Reformed Home Missions files we added 12.5 cubic feet to their existing material dealing with outreach work through various church plants, 1962-1980. The work of the Kalamazoo Diaconal Conference, 1985-1989, assisting the broader community is in three cubic feet of records; and the work of the denomination's Inter-Church Relations Committee, 1988-1989, is in two cubic feet of papers. Three classes sent records that resulted in additions to our holdings for Classis Rocky Mountain (3 cubic feet, 2001-2007); Classis Toronto (13 cubic feet, 1956-1971); and Classis California South (3 cubic feet, 1924-1966, 1989-1997). Included in these three additions are meeting minutes, supporting documents, correspondence, and financial summaries. And we organized the records of two discontinued ministries—the records of Cedar Hill, Texas, Christian Reformed Church, 1993-2002, amounting to one cubic foot; and one cubic foot of membership records from Crossroads Community Church, Flanders Valley, NJ, 1964-1979.

We processed eight cubic feet of records from the Calvin College President's office containing administrative and academic governance files, 2008-2013; ten cubic feet of records from the Provost's office having to do with curriculum development and faculty professional development, 2005-2012, were processed and opened for research. The appointment of a new Vice President for Student Life resulted in a large transfer of files, of which 28 cubic feet, 1994-2012, were processed; the remainder duplicated existing material and were discarded. Lastly,

we organized two cubic feet of brochures, journals, photographs, CDs, and DVDs from the Admissions Office, 1999-2014. The forty-eight cubic feet of college files were reduced from the 127 cubic feet received by removing duplicate and some extraneous items.

We also added collections to the Dutch in North America holdings—the papers of Diet Eman detailing her WW II experiences. Eman, with her fiancé, Hein Sietsma, agreed to assist in hiding Jews from Germany. Sietsma was arrested and died while in custody, but Eman, also arrested for a time, continued working as part of the Dutch underground for the rest of the war, finding shelter and food for Jews in hiding. For her work, the State of Israel awarded her the honorific "Righteous Among the Nations." Also processed were the journals of Dr. Glenn W. Geelhoed, surgeon and educator who led more than two hundred health care missions to the developing world, including Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, and South America, in five years. The family of the late Dr. Hessel Bouma III, a biologist and Christian ethicist who specialized in beginning-of-life and end-of-life issues and taught at Calvin College, donated his research files, speeches, lectures, and publications.

Publications

Origins funds were contributed to the publication of a tour of West Michigan Dutch sites produced by the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council and to the forthcoming commentary on the Classis of Holland (RCA) by William Kennedy, to be co-published by the RCA Historical Series, Van Raalte Institute Press, and the William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. We have electronically published another year of *Origins* (2012) via our webpage (*http://www. calvin.edu/hh/origins/Origins_Main_Page. htm*) and continue adding to our index of birthday, anniversary, and obituary announcements from the *Banner*.

Endowment

Currently the *Origins* endowment and operating funds have a total value of $492,318, which is a modest 0.7 percent increase from last year. The generosity of so many donors has allowed us to offset the year's marginal returns from investment income. The monies in our operating fund cover the expenses for *Origins*, programs in Heritage Hall, and our book publication projects. Now in our thirty-fourth year of publication, the subscription price remains the original $10 per year.

Staff

Richard Harms is the curator of the Archives and editor of *Origins*; Hendrina VanSpronsen is the office coordinator and business manager of *Origins*; Laurie Haan is a department assistant; Holly Waldenmeyer joined our staff as a department assistant; Robert Bolt is the field agent and assistant archivist; and Jessica Vos is our student assistant. Our volunteers include Phil Erffmeyer, Ed Gerritsen, Ralph Haan, Helen Meulink, Gerrit W. Sheeres, Janet Sheeres, and Jeannette Smith.

Richard H. Harms

A Dutch Midwife in Missaukee County, Michigan

Janet Sjaarda Sheeres

In 1789 Benjamin Franklin wrote ". . . but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." But before death and taxes there is birth, and with it delivery. Be it in mansions or hovels, on land or at sea, in field or forest, the business of birthing has been going on since the human race began. And all along there have been those who assisted in the delivery, namely, midwives.

In the Dutch colonies in America, Dutch women usually helped each other.[1] In her thesis about immigrant women and midwives, Charlotte Borst states that "immigrant women preferred to be assisted by a woman of her own ethnic background; someone who spoke her language."[2]

Thelma Zigter (1851-1937) assisted at the births of 170 children in rural Northern Michigan. Image courtesy of the author.

Thelma's Arrival in Missaukee County

In Missaukee County, Michigan, such a person was Thelma[3] Hoogstra Zigter, who arrived in Missaukee County in December 1881 when she was thirty years old. Arriving with her were her husband, Pieter, two stepchildren from Pieter's first marriage (Frank and Anna), and their three-year-old daughter Grietje.[4] Also in the group were her parents, Jelke and Nanna Hoogstra, and her sister, Cornelia Hoogstra. They had left the Netherlands on 31 May traveling on SS *Rotterdam*. Their first stop in America had been in Roseland, Illinois, where a daughter of Nanna Hoogstra by a previous marriage lived.[5] Seven months later, the Hoogstras and the Zigters traveled to Missaukee County. Among their belongings was a small casket containing the little body of the Zigter's one-and-a-half-year-old daughter Anna, who had died in Roseland, and who would be buried in Missaukee County.

Missaukee County had been organized a decade before the Zigters' arrival, and by the beginning of 1880 it already had a booming lumber industry. The 1870 United States Federal Census for the county lists only forty-one people who were born

Janet Sheeres, a Dutch immigrant to Canada, is an accomplished and published historian of several books and numerous articles, an expert genealogist, and a contributing editor for Origins. *She is currently working on biographies of the wives of the early ministers in the Christian Reformed Church.*

in the Netherlands. That number increased dramatically in consecutive censuses. The 1880 Census for Missaukee lists 169 people born in the Netherlands. Most had settled in Clam Union Township, while the remainder lived in Riverside Township and the village of Falmouth, four and a half miles northwest of Vogel Center on the Clam River, a branch of the Muskegon River. Falmouth had a general store, a sawmill, a school, and a church. Adrianus Copier ran a hotel in the village, and there was also a boarding house. And although the roads left much to be desired, a mail stage ran twice a week through Falmouth from Cadillac to Lake City.

According to the same 1880 census, there were approximately one hundred children born to Dutch parents between the years 1867 and 1880, ninety of whom were born in Clam Union Township, where Vogel Center was located, and ten in Falmouth, where the Zigters settled. It seemed that every week more Dutch settlers arrived so that by the 1900 Federal Census there were close to seven hundred Dutch-born living in the county, marrying, and producing off-spring. Thelma did not know it yet, but she would help deliver some of these increasing numbers.

Although by 1870 census takers were mandated to list the occupations of all individuals, including women, the Missaukee County census for that year and the one for 1880 do not list a single female occupation other than "keeping house." The only male physician in the county was Dr. Levi Morehouse, who lived in Falmouth proper and who certainly delivered children born in the area, but he had left for the warmer climate of California by 1888.[6] Borst's study on immigrant women working as midwives notes that, even with a doctor practicing in the area, most immigrant women looked for someone who spoke their own language to assist them.[7] Also, women coming from the Netherlands were used to being attended to by female midwives. Already in the 1820s the Dutch government had established a series of medical schools that taught midwifery to women.[8] And there were advantages to midwives. The cost of the service from a midwife was less than that from a medical doctor, and a midwife usually stayed on for a few days taking care of some of the household tasks that a male doctor did not do.[9]

The 1900 census for the county lists two occupations for women—seamstress and teacher—other than keeping house. Since there had been no doctor for the past twelve years, women giving birth in Missaukee County were assisted by relatives or friends, or giving birth unassisted. Hilda Diemer Nakken, for example, had arranged for her sister, Elizabeth,[10] to assist her when her time came to deliver, but she was alone in her cabin in the winter of 1888 when labor came two months early. With her husband away in the lumber camps and unable to get word to her sister or get out, due to the weather, she helped herself.[11] And Johan Stellingwerff in *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier,* quotes Andries Wormser: "The most influential people keep a maid and have a midwife when a baby is to be born. The wife of the minister, whose church Budde attends, is one of those people who do not have a midwife, but she helps herself."[12]

Older married women who had experienced childbirth themselves were often called on to assist younger women. There were at least twelve such women over fifty years of age in the Dutch population of Missaukee County in 1880.[13] Hiltje Sjaarda Vander Wal's mother, Geertje Brander Sjaarda, accompanied Hiltje and her husband, Folkert Vander Wal, on their move to Missaukee County in 1882 when she was sixty years old. During the following ten years she helped Hiltje safely deliver six children. However, on 28 November 1892, the seventh child and mother both died during the delivery. The winter of 1892-1893 brought deep snow and drifts, not an easy time for an old woman, but Geertje stayed on to help Folkert raise the six children until her death in 1902.[14]

Thelma Zigter's First Deliveries

The first births Zigter assisted with were the births of Matthew Boven in 1884 and Murk Talsma and Arthur Visser in 1885. Thelma's mother, Anna Hoogstra, also may have helped with those first deliveries. At seventy-seven in 1885, she would have been able to impart birthing information, but was really too old to undertake the travel and strenuous work involved with midwifery on her own, especially in the wintertime. Thelma delivered no babies during the years 1886 to 1887 and only a few babies in the years 1888 to 1893. This may have been due to the fact that she had three more children of her own to look after—Sena, born in 1884, Lena in 1886,

and Jennie in 1890. Nevertheless, she gained a reputation as a capable midwife and was called on more and more to help with births. She also benefited from the fact that her sister Cornelia and her mother lived across the street from her and could look after her daughters while she was away.[15]

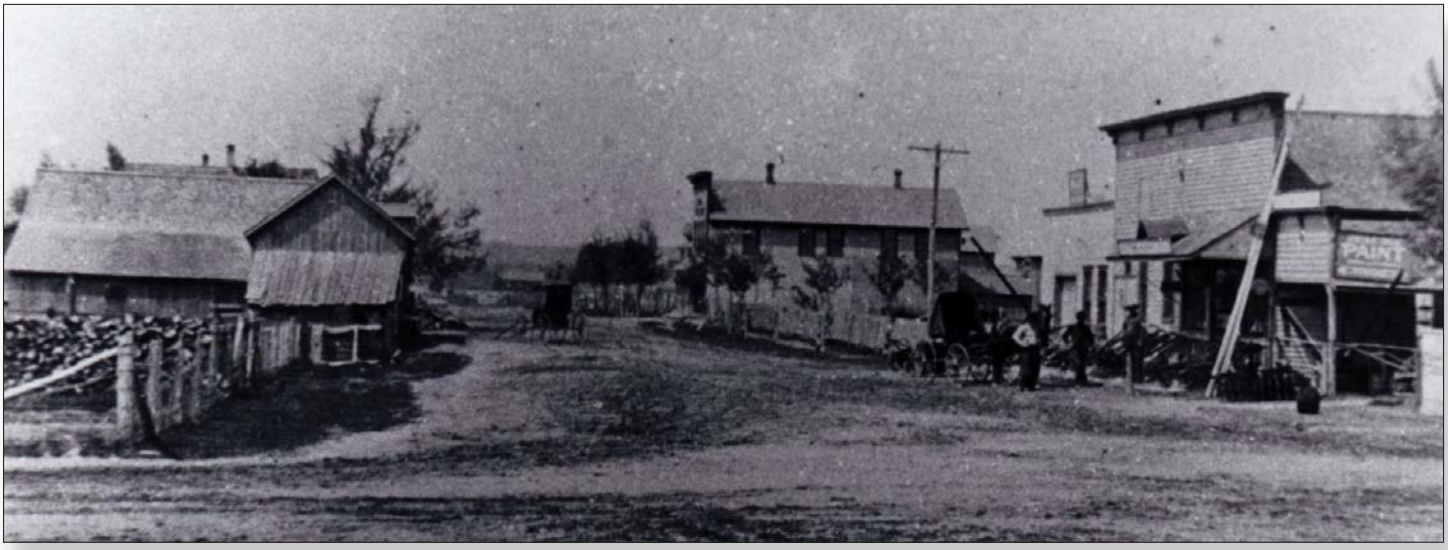
Zigter was born in 1851 in Niekerk, Groningen. Her father, Jelke Hoogstra, was a laborer, and like all children of laborers she received only an elementary education and at a young age had to go to work as a domestic.[16] She found a position with the farming family of Pieter and Grietje Zigter in neighboring Oldekerk. Besides household chores, she cared for the children. While working for this family, Thelma became acquainted with the cycle of birth and death. Grietje gave birth to four children, of whom two survived—Anna, born in 1867, and Frank, born in 1873. In between her pregnancies, Grietje was often ill, and the burden of caring for the children fell on Thelma's young shoulders. She especially took to baby Frank, who had been born with a clubfoot. Between 1871 and 1872 Pieter left farming and moved to Zuidhorn, where he became a bargeman dealing in and transporting grain. This work often took him away from home for days at a time, leaving his sick wife and little children in Thelma's care. Grietje died in 1877, and for the following year Thelma, by now a mature woman of twenty-six, became the children's sole mother. Pieter and Thelma married on 14 March 1878 in Oldekerk, Groningen, and in November 1878 Thelma gave birth for the first time and experienced firsthand the mysteries of pregnancy and birth. Living in the Netherlands, she would have been assisted by an ably trained midwife, because by that time the Netherlands was already used to a highly regulated midwifery structure.

Midwife Training in the Netherlands

Until the sixteenth century midwifery and childbearing was within the domain of women. They had no particular standing or authority because they were not organized as a guild with rules, regulations, and apprenticeships. There was no oversight, either. That all changed around the middle of the seventeenth century in the Netherlands, when cities and towns began to hire midwives and required they pass certain exams to be licensed.

Amsterdam led the way in 1668 by demanding that midwives pass exams before being licensed to assist in childbirth. Sweden, France, and Scotland instituted similar programs. Other cities and towns followed. From 1865 onward, midwives in the Netherlands were trained in state-run medical clinics. Around this time, male medical doctors also became interested in obstetrics, and a competition arose, so that midwives were prohibited from using instruments and at the first sign of trouble were to call in a doctor. This was not always the case in poorer neighborhoods and outlying areas, where untrained midwives, such as mothers, grandmothers, and other relatives of the woman giving birth, would assist, free from any regulation or oversight. In areas where women delivered alone or relied on untrained helpers, maternal mortality rates remained high.

Even with excellent midwife care, giving birth was fraught with peril. After tuberculosis, childbirth was the leading cause of death for women. Before 1800 in the Netherlands, 1.3 percent of all births ended with the death of the mother. In the middle of the 1800s one out of four children did not make it to their first birthday, and a quarter of those that remained did not reach their sixth birthday.



A photo of Vogel Center about 1900, when Thelma Zigter lived and worked in the area. Image courtesy of the Photo Collection, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Some of the Dutch women emigrating and living in various Dutch colonies in the United States had some training in midwifery in the Netherlands, but in outlying settlements, such as Missaukee County, without such a trained person, untrained women had to make do.

Pieter (1842-1916) and Thelma Zigter raised seven children in Missaukee County; two of the children were from his first marriage with Grietje de Windt (1835-1977). Image courtesy of the author.

Missaukee County Deliveries

By the time Zigter began to assist in deliveries in Clam Union Township, she had given birth to five children herself and knew what was involved and what could go wrong. She faithfully recorded the names of all the babies she delivered, from the first birth in 1884 to the last one in 1911; the list totals 170 children.[17] Of these, only four babies died during childbirth or were stillborn. Of course, she was not responsible for a stillbirth, yet it is a remarkable accomplishment that she successfully delivered almost 97 percent of the time, and that none of the mothers died in childbirths that she attended. This is more noteworthy considering these births took place under rather primitive conditions. Indoor plumbing with hot and cold running water was unknown. To heat water, the stove had to be kept fired up whether the temperature was minus 10 degrees or over 80 degrees. Laundry was done by hand and in the wintertime hung indoors to dry. Light, especially in the wintertime, was supplied by oil lamps or candles. Giving birth and assisting in the process in these circumstances was a risky undertaking.

Zigter took a keen interest in the wellbeing of the children she helped deliver, following their lives and making notes of their deaths along with the dates of their births. Of all the deliveries, twelve died within the first four years. That was probably the average for childhood deaths at that time. She also noted the exceptionally sad experiences—such as the death of Sietse van Haitsma of a stroke on 18 November 1899, three days after she had delivered his twelfth child, leaving his widow with a dozen children.[18] And she recorded her own noteworthy events; on 12 April 1910 she wrote, "Our dear mother, Anna Nannenga, died at the age of 91 years, 6 months, and 12 days. [She was] first the wife of Jacob Derks Hoogstra, who died in middle age and with whom she had two daughters; she later married Jelke Hoogstra, and from that marriage had two daughters and a son who died at age two."[19] Two years later she wrote, "Our father Jelke Hoogstra died at the age of 83 years and 28 days on 13 December 1912."

She kept track of the births in a small *Pierce's Memorandum and Account Book designed for Farmers, Mechanics and all people*.[20] The little 3-by-5-inch booklets also had some blank pages for people to use, but when those were filled, Thelma wrote her information along the edges of the printed pages. Besides births and the deaths of adults who had particular meaning for her, she also recorded marriages, perhaps with a view to possible childbirths in the future. In the midst of all the Dutch babies born in the Falmouth area, she recorded the birth of the Dutch crown princes, Juliana, born in the Netherlands on 30 April 1909, and the fact that the parents, King Hendrik and Queen Wilhelmina had been married for eight years before the birth of what would be their only child. This notation reflects how Dutch immigrants remained emotionally tied to the country of their birth even long after immigration.

True to the pattern of immigrant women giving birth looking for

someone of their own ethnic group, Thelma delivered mostly babies of Dutch parents. There were only five non-Dutch names among the 170 children she delivered. The three babies of the McQuaigs and one of Robinson were born to Dutch mothers married to Americans; the Gleasons were neighbors and it made sense she would help deliver their baby. Missaukee County also had American, Canadian, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Scottish, Irish, Swiss, and German settlers. Women from these ethnic groups would have looked to someone speaking their native language to help.

A 1906 plat map of Missaukee County illustrating the names of property owners shows the area where the women lived whom Thelma helped. Most were in Falmouth proper and east of the village toward Prosper, and as far south as Vogel Center. None were living east and farther south of Vogel Center, suggesting that there must have been another woman working as a midwife in that area.

Thelma and Pieter attended the Vogel Center Christian Reformed Church at first, but joined the Prosper Christian Reformed Church when it organized in September 1894.[21] What would Thelma have thought each time one of the babies she had helped deliver was baptized? The task of the midwife went unmentioned; still she must have found a certain amount of satisfaction in the fact that she helped another life into the world.

She did not disclose the amount she charged for each delivery but, no doubt, she would have received some remuneration. Rural midwives received between $3 and $5 per delivery. In cities the amount was higher.[22] While in some cases a wife's income was crucial to the family's survival, it is doubtful that was the case for the Zigters. Pieter managed a farm, and her income may have provided for some extras or savings for their eventual retirement. Her last will stated, "All what is mine is for the four of you, Maggie, Sena, Lena, and Jennie, and the rest is for the six of you, including Annie and Frank." (Annie and Frank were her stepchildren by Pieter's first wife.) This means that she intended for the family estate to be divided by the six children, but her personal financial assets were to go to her own daughters. The will also states that the money she had lent to Lena did not have to be paid back.[23] So she apparently had personal finances that were hers to disperse as she wished.

She delivered her last baby, Jennie Dik, on 23 March 1911; she was then sixty years old, and perhaps it was getting a bit taxing on her to travel in all kinds of weather and at all hours. A granddaughter wrote that Thelma was often assisted by her daughter, Lena, perhaps an indication that she was slowing down. By that time she also had twenty-six grandchildren and twelve step-grandchildren, and she may have wanted to help her daughters with their families.

But there may also have been another reason. By 1910 midwives were getting a bad reputation, and most pregnant women preferred to have a medical doctor attend to a birth. Medical doctors themselves were, in part, responsible for this. They often maligned midwives as unqualified. An article in the *Zeeland Record* of 13 December 1912 gives a glimpse of what midwives were up against:[24]

> BAY CITY — eight midwives were notified by the local board of health

Some of the residents from the Falmouth area at the beginning of the twentieth century when Thelma Zigter was the only medical help available at childbirth. Image courtesy of the Photo Collection, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Births delivered by Thelma Zigter

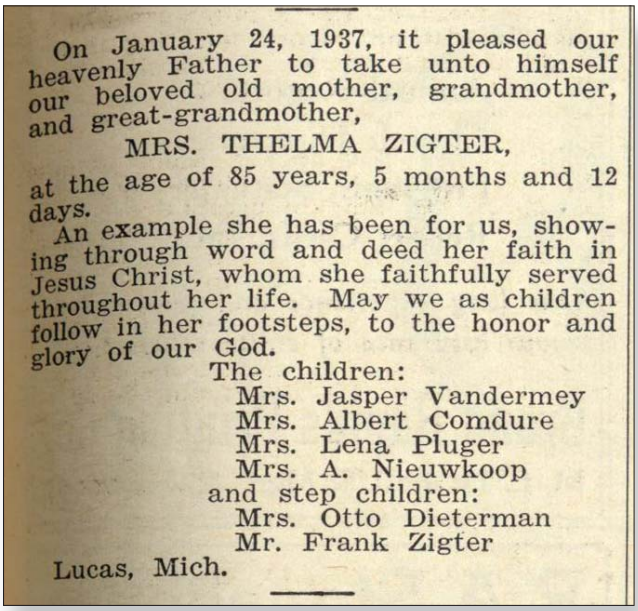
*Note: In some cases the fathers' names are in parentheses. The * denotes her grandchildren; the † those who died at birth.*

Aardema, Cornelia, 24 Mar 1909
Aardema, Kornelia (Jan) 18 May 1907
†Agema, P., born/died 26 Jun 1905
Agema, Tietje, 1 Jan 1911
Barber, A[a]gtje, 25 Jun 1898
Beerens, Henry, Aug 1907
Beerens, Henry (Joe), 11 Aug 1909
Beerens, Peter, 18 Sep 1907
Bisschop, 30 Apr 1905
Blauw, Clarence, 1 Oct 1908
Bolt, Manlius, no date
Boven, Emma, 1894
Boven, Matheus/Matthew, 1884
Boven, Derk (Geert) 1892
Braam Ray, 24 Jan 1896
Buining, Joe, 13 Feb 1904
Buining, Laura, 21 Jul 1906
Buining, Lucy (no date)
Buining, Geertruida, 31 Mar 1908
**Comduur, Frank, 3 Apr 1907*
**Comduur, Jennie, 3 Aug 1903*
**Comduur, Peter, 12 Nov 1904*
**Comduur, Ralph, 4 Jan 1906*
DeRuiter, Anko (G.), 26 Aug 1908
DeRuiter, Jantje, 12 Mar 1905
DeRuiter, Johannes, 7 Feb 1907
DeRuiter, Pearl, 4 Jul 1910
DeZeeuw, Andrew (Jacob), 14 May 1904
DeZeeuw, Annie (Jacob), 20 May 1909
DeZeeuw, Jakob, 6 Oct 1906
DeZeeuw, Tjalling, 14 Oct 1895
**Dieterman, Clara (Otto), 31 Aug 1908*
**Dieterman, Clode/Claud, 29 May 1906*
**Dieterman, Jennie, 20 Mar 1904*
**Dieterman, Menzo, 17 May 1900*
**Dieterman, Mabel, 15 Jan 1903*
Dik, Aagtje (Casper), 19 Apr 1902
Dik, Hendrik, 27 Nov 1904
Dik, Jennie, 23 Mar 1911
†Dik, Roelof (C.), born/died 29 Oct 1908
Doll, Joe, 15 Jul 1903
Ebels, Janie, 26 Jun 1910
Eising, Marigje, 20 Nov 1907
Engels, Geertuid, 5 Jan 1896
Freen, Charles, 2 Jun 1904
Gaaf (Schaaf?) Josef, 4 Apr 1896
Gleason, Genevieve, 18 Mar 1896
Haveman, Jacob, 1891
Haveman, Johannes, 1888
Haveman, Kornelia, 1889
†Hiethuis/Heethuis, Baby died [no date]
Huitzing/Huitsing, Gertruida, 14 Apr 1909
Jager, Anna (Geert), 1 Aug 1895
Jager, Antje, 13 May 1897
Jager, Frederik (Geert), 19 Oct 1905
Jager, Harmke, 28 Apr 1899
Jager, Jelte, 27 Nov 1901
Jager, Lillie, 29 Jun 1904
Jenema, Cornelis, 10 Jul 1910
Jenema, Gerrit, 30 Apr 1896
Jenema, Jan K., 21 Jul 1907
Joe and Jennie's baby, 8 Jan 1910
Kamminga, Tetje, 14 Nov 1894
Knop, Elizabeth (Willem), 3 Nov 1907
Knop, Anthony (Willem), 19 Feb 1904
Koetje, Geertruida (Jan), 31 Oct 1905
Koetje, Jacob (Willem), 14 Nov 1899
Koetje, Jan, 14 Nov 1895

Koetje, Jennie (Jan), 7 Feb 1898
Koetje, Jennie (Willem), 14 Jan 1898
Koetje, Klaas, 1 Aug 1901
Koetje, Nellie (Jan), 30 Mar 1900
Koetje, Trientje, 4 Nov 1903
Koetje, Willem (Jan), 23 Mar 1902
Koetje, Willem (Jan), 13 Jun 1903
Koetje, Willie, 21 Sep 1905
Koster, Hattie, 4 May 1910
Koster, Helen (T), 1 Sep 1908
Koster, Hiltje, 17 Mar 1907
Koster, Roelf, 23 Oct 1905
Leenhouts, Henry, 8 Feb 1897
Lutke, Ralph, 1898
McQuaig, Diena/Diane, 25 Nov 1902
McQuaig, Donald, 29 Feb 1905
McQuaig, Frances, 21 Sep 1900
Merchant, Willie, 30 Oct 1895
Meys, Johanna, 19 Sep 1906
†Mulder, Baby died [no date]
Mulder, Jacob, 25 Jun 1910
Mulder, Jan H., 15 May 1907
Oudman, Johannes, 19 Nov 1910
**Pluger, Arthur, 28 Aug 1909*
**Pluger, Peter, 17 Nov 1910*
Poole, Griet [Margaret], 23 Apr 1900
Powers, Floyd, 22 Jun 1906
Reinink, Geert, 19 Feb 1911
Reinink, Janna B., 19 Aug 1909
Robinson, David, 26 Apr 1909
Rykse, Anneke, 13 Jul 1904
Rykse, Jacob, 1891
Schaaf, Anna, 13 Sep 1909
Schaaf, Clare (Kornelis), 13 Aug 1903
Schaaf, Jan (Kornelis), 24 Jul 1907
Schaaf, Jan, 23 Oct 1904; died 12 Oct 1905
Schaaf, Jelk/Jess, 26 May 1901
Schaaf, Johanna, 13 Jan 1900
Schaaf, Klaas, 12 Mar 1895
Schaaf, Lucy (Kornelis), 5 Nov 1897
Schaaf, Maatje/Martha, 7 Feb 1896
Schepers, Maggie, 9 Oct 1907
Schepers, Siny, 20 Apr 1910
Schoemaker, Harman, 13 Sep 1896
Schoemaker, Harmanna, 17 Feb 1904
Schoemaker, Marten, 27 Jun 1906
Spoelman, Katie, 20 Jun 1906
Spykerman Johanna, 10 Jan 1903
Spykerman, Hillegien, 12 Mar 1905
Spykerman, Leonard, 26 Apr 1898
Spykerman, Maria, 16 Sep 1900
Takema/Tacoma, Leonard, 17 Mar 1901
Takema/Tacoma, Andrew, 4 Nov 1902
Takema/Tacoma, Andries, Dec 1909
Takema/Tacoma, Douwe, 30 Jan 1896
Takema/Tacoma, Grietje, 5 Aug 1899
Takema/Tacoma, Jakob, 30 Dec 1897
Takema/Tacoma, Liske, 3 Sep 1904
Talsma, Murk, 1885
Talsma, Rommert, 27 Oct 1894
VanderKreek, Matheus, 23 Sep 1902
**VanderMey, Anna, 1 Oct 1899*
**VanderMey, Clarence, 13 Jun 1910*
**VanderMey, Johanna, 6 Mar 1908*
**VanderMey, Nellie, 12 Jan 1904*
**VanderMey, Frank, 3 Feb 1906*
**VanderMey, Peter, 30 Sep 1898*
**VanderMey, Tina, 30 Jan 1902*
VanHaitsma, Andries, 1895
VanHaitsma, Gerrit, 1893
VanHaitsma, Ietsje, 28 Jan 1896
VanHaitsma, Jantje (Wopke), 12 Aug 1910
VanHaitsma, Lena, 1891
VanHaitsma, Maria (Titus), 20 Jan 1911

VanHaitsma, Maria (Wopke), 17 Apr 1909
VanHaitsma, Maria, 11 May 1910
VanHaitsma, Minnie (Peter), 25 Feb 1907
VanHaitsma, Millie, 1889
VanHaitsma, Sietse (Charley), 24 Dec 1906
VanHaitsma, Sietse, 18 Nov 1899
VanHaitsma, Sietske, 19 Dec 1904
VanHaitsma, Sietze (Charley), 4 Dec 1903
VanHaitsma, Theodorus (S), 28 Sep 1908
VanHaitsma, Trientje, 7 Feb 1898
VanHaitsma, Wopke, no date
Veen, Roelie, 11 Sep 1902
Veen/Feen, Peter, 4 Jun 1905
Veen/Feen, Roelof (David), 11 Aug 1906
Veldman, Geert, 3 Mar 1910
Veldman, Geertruida, 26 Mar 1906
Veldman, Minnie (Tom), 21 Jul 1907
Veltman, Henry, 3 Oct 1895
Veltman, Janie, no date
Vis, Lucy, 1890
Vis, Frederieka, 1894
Vis, Wilhelmina, 10 Apr 1899
Visser, Aart/Arthur, 7 Feb 1885
Werkman, John, 23 Apr 1900
Werkman, Harmke, 6 Oct 1898
**Zigter, Peter (Frank), 25 May 1908*
**Zigter, Tina (Frank), 11 Aug 1903*

Saturday that they could no longer practice here. This action came as a result of an examination conducted by the board for the purpose of ascertaining if the midwives were capable of handling their work. None of those who appeared passed the examination and failures of the others to appear was used as evidence against them. Only a short time ago, a mother lost her life through the ignorant criminality of a local midwife and the child also came near dying. Physicians became aroused and an ordinance providing that all midwives shall have a certificate from the board of health before practicing was revived.



On January 24, 1937, it pleased our heavenly Father to take unto himself our beloved old mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother,

MRS. THELMA ZIGTER,

at the age of 85 years, 5 months and 12 days.

An example she has been for us, showing through word and deed her faith in Jesus Christ, whom she faithfully served throughout her life. May we as children follow in her footsteps, to the honor and glory of our God.

The children:
Mrs. Jasper Vandermey
Mrs. Albert Comdure
Mrs. Lena Pluger
Mrs. A. Nieuwkoop
and step children:
Mrs. Otto Dieterman
Mr. Frank Zigter

Lucas, Mich.

From the Banner, *12 Feb 1937, 167. Mrs. Jasper Vandermey was Maggie; Mrs. Albert Comdure was Sena; Mrs. Harm Pluger was Lena; Mrs. Anthony Nieuwkoop was Jennie; and step-children Mrs. Otto Dieterman was Anna; and Frank Zigter was married to Lena Kruythof.*

Later Years

Shortly after 1910, Dr. Henry J. Masselink came from Muskegon to set up a practice in McBain, about nine miles from Falmouth. For the next fifty years he practiced in McBain and in the surrounding rural area. During that time he delivered more than 4,000 babies in Missaukee County—delivering his last baby in the spring of 1961 at the age of eighty-three.[25] After Masselink opened his practice in McBain, Thelma's services were no longer required.

Her husband, Pieter, died in the summer of 1916 from a stroke and was interred in the Prosper Cemetery. Thelma moved in with her step-daughter Anna and her husband, Herman Dieterman, who lived in Falmouth.[26] By 1910 there were ten children living in the home, making for a very busy household. When Anna and Thelma's relationship became untenable, Thelma moved in with her daughter and son-in-law, Lena and Harm Pluger. Harm built a room onto his house for Thelma, and she was a great help to Lena, who by 1925 had nine children. Lena was even more needed in 1931 when Harm died suddenly; their youngest child was only five years old. One of the granddaughters—Margaret, a teenager when Thelma lived with the family—wrote about her grandmother, "We loved having her live with us."[27]

Tiena, the daughter of Thelma's stepson, Frank, also fondly recalled Thelma. In a letter from October 1989

she wrote, "Thelma always took care of my dad when he was a child and was really good to him, maybe also because she felt sorry for him being crippled. She used to wrap him in a warm blanket and sit with him. I think she did this to her own children as well, and Dad would get a little jealous when the other children received her attention." Tiena described Thelma as "a tall, slender lady, very active, who didn't laugh very often. She was a midwife and she brought many, many babies into the world without a doctor [to assist]. She was not a person to fuss over children a lot, but she was always really good to me. Grandpa Pieter was a very jolly and a good natured man. He loved her a lot."[28]

Thelma died on 24 January 1937 at 7:30 pm of gastro-intestinal influenza, with Dr. Masselink attending her at death.[29] And, practical woman that she was, she told her daughters not to bother to bury her beside her husband who was buried in the Prosper Cemetery, but to bury her in the McBain Cemetery near where they lived. There were other instructions: "have the funeral in the house and not in the church; Pa did not want that either, and if there are some who still want to see me, just open the coffin in the cemetery; not that we have anything against the church, absolutely not, it was precious to us."[30] She penned these latest wishes on 28 July 1931.

What would Thelma have thought when she saw Dr. Masselink driving around the county in his automobile delivering children, while she had to make do with a horse and buggy, or in the winter with a horse and sleigh? Long after Thelma passed away and Dr. Masselink retired, he was lauded publicly for his achievement and deservedly so. No such recognitions are recorded for the Missaukee County midwives. Nevertheless, it is also important to appreciate the work of those valiant women who preceded the doctor, and who delivered an entire generation without much recognition or reward.

Endnotes

1. To date I have been able to track about two dozen Dutch immigrant women practicing midwifery in various Dutch settlements in the United States.

2. Charlotte G. Borst, "Wisconsin's Midwives as Working Women: Immigrant Midwives and the Limits of a Traditional Occupation, 1870-1920" *in Journal of American Ethnic History*, Spring 1989, 8. In the same article Frances Kobrin described turn-of-the-century midwives as being employed primarily by the foreign-born and their children, sharing "race, nationality, and language with their customers."

3. Thelma is an Americanization of her Dutch name, Teske.

4. Named after Pieter's deceased first wife, Grietje de Wind. It was customary to name the first child of a second marriage after the deceased spouse. Grietje, a derivative of Margriet, became Maggie in America.

5. Martje Hoogstra and her husband Hannes Jagers had immigrated a year before in 1880. When the Zigter family left the Netherlands, it also included Thelma's widowed half-sister, Aafke Hoogstra Tiemersma, with her four children. Aafke's brother-in-law, Andries Tiemersma, was also living in Roseland and Aafke and her children remained with the family there.

6. Dr. Morehouse's family may have suffered from consumption and therefore moved to California; Mrs. Morehouse died at age forty-two, and the two children died before the age of twenty. <www.findagrave.org>

7. Borst, "Wisconsin's Midwives," 8.

8. M. J. Van Lieburg and Hilary Marland, "Midwife Regulation, Education, and Practice in the Netherlands during the Nineteenth Century," *Medical History* (1989), 296-317.

9. Margaret Pluger, Thelma's granddaughter, wrote that her mother, Lena, would also help deliver babies and, when the two women had gone home, she (Margaret) would go to the new mother and help out for a few days.

10. Elizabeth Diemer Meyering (1860-1929), wife of Albert Meyering.

11. Doreen Nykamp, *Het Verbond* (self-published), 84. Hilda's husband, Berend Nakken, was away from home working in the lumber camp; he died twelve days later.

12. Written on 17 November 1848 by Andries N. Wormser, Burlington, Iowa, in Johan Stellingwerff, *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 249.

13. They were: Barbara De Zeeuw (55); Grietje Diepstra (69); Harmanna Hamming (66); Aagje Herweyer (62); Maria Hoekwater (69); Carolina Jagt (64); Aaltje Lutke (64); Jacoba Quist (66); Trijntje Staal (77); Ludina VanderHeide (57); Frederika Vis (66); and Geertruida Vogel (66).

14. Frank was remarried to Ida Smitter on 26 December 1901. The 1900 US Federal Census reports that Geertje Brander Sjaarda was illiterate and could not speak English.

15. Cornelia had married Kornelis Bos sometime around 1884 but divorced him a few years later and moved back in with her parents, the Hoogstras, in Falmouth.

16. Els Kloek, *Vrouw des huizes: Een cultuurgeschiedenis van de Hollandse huisvrouw* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2009) 162. By age twelve, girls of the laboring class were hired out. The often misspelled words reflect a very elementary education, so Thelma probably also went to work at age twelve or thirteen.

17. There may have been more children because several pages of the booklets are missing.

18. The mother, Marie Van Haitsma, was a Kruithof and a sister of Thelma's step-daughter-in-law, so the death affected the family as well.

19. Anna Nanninga's first husband, Jacob Hoogstra, was not a relative of her second husband, Jelke Hoogstra. He died on 11 December 1846 at age forty. Actually her son Jacob died in 1861 at four years of age.

20. Buffalo, NY, World's Dispensary Medical Association, 1900.

21. In 1870 Rev. Mannes Kiekentveld of the Reformed Church had preached at Vogel Center and administered baptism, but his labors were not fruitful. In 1890, a Reformed Church was organized and served by Rev. Sanders A. Venema until 1898; it was disbanded in 1907. The first Christian Reformed Church in Vogel Center was founded in 1872.

22. Borst, "Wisconsin Midwives," 48.

23. Lena's husband, Harm Pluger, had died in 1931, leaving her with nine children, so Thelma must have loaned Lena some money.

24. *Zeeland Record*, 13 December 1912, 9.

25. Masselink was born on 12 October 1879, in Ottawa County, Michigan, and attended high school in Allegan. He graduated from the Grand Rapids Medical College in 1906 and first settled in Muskegon before going to McBain.

26. Married on 19 June 1891 in Cadillac, Michigan. Otto died 11 December 1943 at age 77; Anna died 5 January 1962 at age 94. Both are buried in McBain.

27. Letter of Margaret Pluger Warsen to Angie Ploegstra.

28. Tiena Zigter Sands to Angie Ploegstra in a letter dated 3 October 1989.

29. From: www.seekingmichigan.org

30. This may have been in keeping with the fact that the early Dutch Christian Reformed members believed that a dead body should not be in the church sanctuary. Funerals usually took place out of the home of the deceased, and later from a funeral home.

Garrett Heyns: "We Don't Change Other People's Lives"[1]

Richard H. Harms

Garrett Heyns, educator and recognized authority in penal reform in the United States during the middle of the twentieth century. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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The third of nine children born to a Christian Reformed Church (CRC) minister, William W. Heyns, and wife Henrietta Tien,[2] Garrett Heyns lived and worked with a belief in fairness and justice rooted in his Christian faith and that it was the responsibility of adults to help shape, or reshape, the lives of young people. An accomplished educator and administrator early in his career, he later spent three decades as a respected innovator and leader in the area of penology, focusing on helping young and first-time offenders change the direction of their lives. He received national recognition for his dedication to improving and reforming the penal systems in Michigan and Washington. His life and work resulted in his alma mater, Calvin College, naming Heyns its first Distinguished Alumnus in 1966.

Heyns was born in the Allendale CRC parsonage on Monday, 21 September 1891. Shortly after, the family moved, having accepted a call to lead the forty-nine families of the Harrison, South Dakota, congregation, located near the Sioux Rosebud Reservation, sixteen miles from the nearest railroad depot. During their years in South Dakota, the entire country went through the second worst economic depression in the nation's history, exacerbated in the Harrison area by lengthy droughts. The lack of a market for the few farm products that could be raised caused a number of families from the congregation to begin leaving. But the minister and his family stayed, with the elder Heyns noting that since those who remained could survive on corn bread, so could his family.[3] By 1897, one-fourth of the families had left, and Heyns accepted a call to Prinsburg, Minnesota.

The experience of his early years in Harrison instilled in Garrett a concern for the poor and the neglected. His own education was in rural schools until the family moved to Grand Rapids in 1902. There he attended the academy (comparable to today's high school) and the two-year teacher training program in the Preparatory Department of John Calvin Junior College, which qualified him to teach elementary school in 1912. He spent the next year as a grade school teacher and principal in the Paterson, New Jersey, Christian school, and the year after that teaching in the Rock Valley, Iowa, Christian school.

The salaries from those two years

gave him sufficient funds to complete his college education. Since the first two years at Calvin mirrored those at the University of Michigan, he completed his undergraduate education in Ann Arbor in 1916 and earned a master's degree the next year at the university. His major fields were history and political science, with an emphasis on medieval history. With his degree, in 1916 Heyns accepted the position of junior high school principal in Royal Oak, Michigan. In 1917 he began two years as superintendent of schools in Blandinsville, Illinois (northeast of Keokuk), followed by eight years as principal of Western Academy in Hull, Iowa. In all of these locations his duties included teaching classes.

On Christmas Day, 1916, Heyns and Rosa Klooster (1895-1983) were married. Two children were born, Roger William[4] in 1918 and Jacqueline Joyce in 1924. During the summer months he returned to work in the doctoral program in Ann Arbor. His dissertation was on the origins of democratic institutions in France, focusing on the 1484 Estates General, which had little of its own power except to forward petitions from the citizenry and send advice to the monarch. He was awarded a doctorate in medieval history by the university in 1927 and accepted the position of superintendent of the Holland, Michigan, Christian schools. He continued teaching, including three summers as a history instructor at what is today Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

During these same years Heyns and a group of fellow Christian educators began working to discover how Christian beliefs should work practically in their lives. The educators concluded that Christian living required a direct involvement in societal problems as a step to improve the status of society's members, particularly those who were disadvantaged. For Heyns this included writing a regular column in the *Young Calvinist* during the first half of the 1930s, making young people aware of national and international events. For instance, during 1935 he wrote about the congressional agenda, the World Court, separation of powers in the United States, US neutrality and the war clouds on the European horizon, including the tension between Italy and Ethiopia, pacifism, and Christians and war.[5]

Just two years after he began the work in Holland, the Great Depression began to take its toll. Although enrollments remained steady, revenue declined so much that the teachers were owed $10,000 in back pay by 1933. The next year the family had a more personal problem when son Roger contracted polio.[6] Three years later, he had recovered and entered college. Also in 1936 Garrett made his first of two attempts to run as a Democrat for elected office in what was then Michigan's Fifth District. The 1936 effort against Carl Mapes, the Republican incumbent since 1913, failed in the conservative district comprised mainly of Kent and Ottawa counties. But the campaign brought him to the attention of the state Democratic Party leadership.[7]

From the Civil War to the Great Depression, Michigan had been overwhelmingly Republican. In 1936, the state's voters elected Frank Murphy as governor, only the fifth Democratic governor out of twenty-three. The governor (then serving two-year terms) had extensive authority, including appointment of most administrative positions. During the 1930s the state elected a different governor in each election, alternating between the Republican and Democratic candidates. This led to changes in office holders every second year, and the lack of leadership continuity caused significant problems in state agencies, including its prison system. The Ionia Reformatory, for instance, had four wardens in five years. In 1936, Murphy, who would become well known for mediating the Flint Sit-Down Strike in 1937, had been an attorney, judge, and mayor before his

The Ionia (MI) Reformatory in 1938 when Heyns joined the staff of the Michigan penal system. Image from the collections in Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

election and later served as a justice of the US Supreme Court. His reputation was in championing the causes of the common person, over those of special interests.

Inefficiencies and complaints from staff and the growing number of inmates, combined with a system where paroles were commodities that could be purchased, forced the legislature to take the parole process from elected officials, establish independent boards for parole, and begin the slow process of changing from using political appointees to using those deemed qualified via a civil service system. Further, because so many of the new inmates during the Great Depression were young, first-time offenders, generally considered to be "reformable," and incarcerated for crimes resulting from the hardships of the Depression years, in 1937 the state passed the Model Corrections Act that created a state Department of Corrections, which attempted to correct some of the more glaring deficiencies in the penal system, including establishing a program to rehabilitate young and first-time offenders by separating them from older inmates and providing the education and training needed once they were released.[8] The locations of the state's reception point for prisoners were expanded from Jackson and Marquette (where older males were still sent) to Ionia where young (average age 21) and first-time offenders, regardless of crimes committed, were processed into the system.

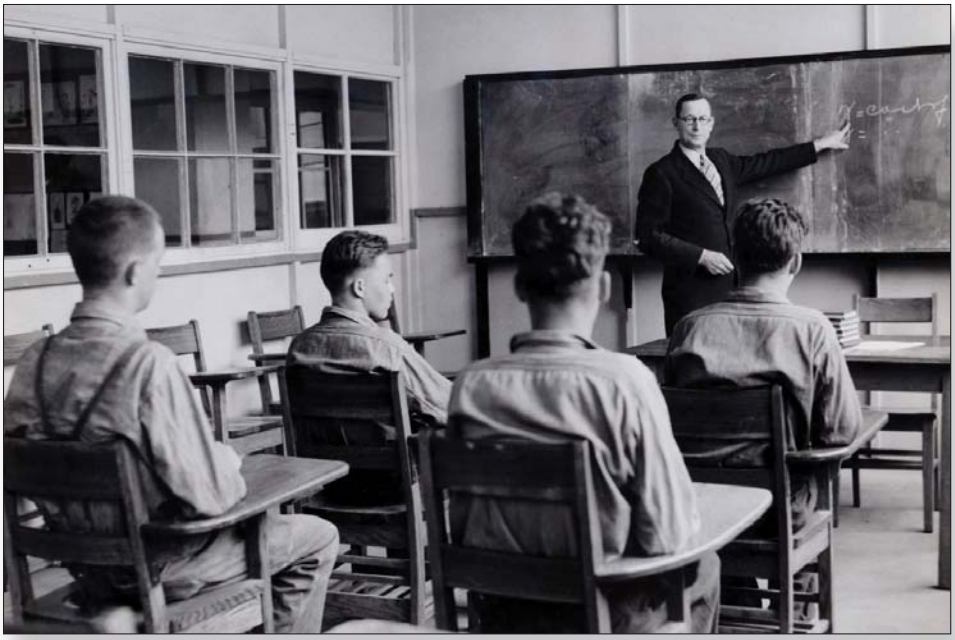
When Murphy set about appointing those he saw as qualified to positions for the prisons,[9] he thought Heyns was the person to take charge of the new program at the Reformatory. Heyns was an experienced educator with demonstrated administrative skills focused in guiding young people to productive lives. On 1 August 1937 Heyns began a second career as the warden of the Ionia Reformatory. The salary was $4000 per year and his wife, Rosa, earned an additional $1000 as the Reformatory's matron.

Heyns summarized his philosophy on incarceration as follows: "In connection with treating our charges in correctional institutions, we speak often of rehabilitating men, of changing their lives. As a matter of fact we don't change other people's lives; we can only help them to do so themselves. In this process of so assisting men, we lay stress on academic and vocational training."[10]

Michigan's prison system had begun with statehood in 1837, when a facility was built on sixty acres of donated land near Jackson, Michigan. Women received their own facility in 1867, with the construction of the Detroit House of Corrections. Boys ten to sixteen were sent to the Reform School opened in Lansing in 1869. Four years later, Michigan set up a three-tiered system for those convicted. All women and young men went to the Detroit House of Corrections, while adult men went to the state prison. This was done in the hope that separating first-time young offenders from the older more "hardened criminals" would prevent the latter from passing along their illegal skills and experiences to the former in mentor-like relationships. In 1881 the State Vocation School was opened in Adrian for young girls; the prison in Marquette, to serve the Upper Peninsula and house long-term or particularly violent inmates or those requiring close supervision, opened in 1885.

The rapid growth of the state necessitated a new facility, and, since all the existing institutions were in southeastern Michigan, politics determined that new construction occur on the west side, and Ionia sought to have it placed there. Local officials from Ionia lobbied to have the facility built in their community, and the discovery of a fresh water spring about a mile west of the city on high ground near the Grand River secured the site selection. Fifty-three acres were purchased, of which 13½ acres were enclosed within an 18-foot-high wall.[11] Until the 1870s, prisons were seen as punishment, when the idea of reforming inmates to prepare them for society after release began to grow. With this in mind, Michigan decided to open a reformatory for young offenders on the west side of the state. The first such reformatory was opened in Elmira, New York, in 1877; the second such institution opened in Ionia a few months later.

Before Heyns arrived, Ionia Reformatory offered intramural baseball. On occasion, semi-professional teams from the area were brought in to play against prison all-stars. Players on good behavior were also known to travel to games away from the facility. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Classroom instruction for young first-time offenders in Ionia. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The notion behind a reformatory was that the younger offenders would never have contact with older inmates. Unfortunately, Michigan maintained the reception point for all new male inmates at Jackson, and the rapidly expanding population of the state led to a corresponding increase in the inmate population, so that older inmates were sent to Ionia from the start. Except for evening classes to teach reading and writing, the idea of reforming was soon set aside as the inmate population grew to eight hundred within a few years, to deal with crowding in Jackson Prison, and the Ionia facility quickly became the counterpart of Jackson State Prison for the western portion of Michigan. Trusted inmates could work on the farm, in the dairy barn, or in the power plant outside the walls during the day; the rest worked making shoes and boots, rolling cigars, or knitting woolen socks and stockings. Later chair caning, shirt making, furniture manufacturing, and auto license plate stamping were added to labor options.

By 1900, in spite of repeated staff effort to focus on reforming young offenders by having Ionia become the reception point for such men, courts continued to send first-time offenders to Jackson, rather than Ionia. By the 1920s, conditions and the treatment of inmates had deteriorated to the point that an investigation into conditions at Ionia led to the warden's resignation. By 1935 a director of education was finally appointed, work previously done by chaplains, and a director of a trade school was established. During the 1930s at Ionia, emphasis was placed on training and education. Grade and high school completion courses and also extension classes for college credit were added. But training for various trades—carpentry, painting, electrical, business machine repair, radio and television repair, auto mechanics, tool and die, etc.—were the most utilized. Food was served as much as was desired, save for meats, and men wore regular clothing, not distinctive prison clothing. The day was from 6 am to 10 pm (radio off at 11pm), with breakfast at 6:45, lunch at 11:45, and supper at 5:15.

The Heyns family lived on the Reformatory's campus in the "front house." For Heyns, the work day

Heyns and his wife with an inmate in the garden behind their home on the Ionia grounds. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

began at 8 am listening to inmate inquiries, typically involving requests for new job assignments, opportunities to appear before the parole board, answering for rule infractions, requesting medical service, and the like. According to notes, typically only the medical and dental requests were dealt with immediately. During the remainder of the day, there were meetings with staff, during which Heyns emphasized the importance of just treatment and of using segregation only as a last resort. There were budgets to prepare and monitor, dealing with disciplinary cases (whose specific punishments or remedies were already codified), and seeing to the training needs of the staff. Then there were speeches to prepare and give, typically as many as three a week to groups across the lower half of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. He wrote articles for professional journals and other periodicals that would provide positive public relations and generate support for the Reformatory's attempts to re-incorporate parolees into society.

In addition, Heyns dealt with voluminous correspondence that required him to balance the need for adherence to regulations and occasionally be willing to be somewhat flexible and even show kindness. Correspondence was censored, and letters not delivered were filed by Heyns. A letter blaming an inmate for his mother's health problems that resulted in blindness in one eye and required surgery was not delivered. Neither was the letter delivered from a wife assuring her husband that his parole was imminent. No reasons for censorship were recorded, but presumably letters were not delivered if the contents were considered to be potentially upsetting to the inmate. A number of letters asked for favors or special treatment for incarcerated family members, generally written by mothers. Heyns carefully considered such requests and when appropriate could be flexible. In 1939 he received a letter from a mother grateful that her daughter was allowed to marry an inmate, that the wedding could take place in the Heyns home, and that Heyns presented the couple with a gift of fresh flowers. The mother concluded by asking permission to visit her new son-in-law, in spite of the rule that only immediate family members could visit. And there were the difficult letters, such as from a mother asking if her son, who had committed suicide, had left behind a note and requesting to be able to read that note, since she was sure the guilt for what he had done was the cause. Or another letter from a parent pleading with Heyns to assist in breaking up the relationship between a daughter and an inmate. Some of the requests must have seemed unusual, such as the one from the mother who asked to take her son's place in prison since she considered herself responsible for what he had done.[12]

Vocational training on electrical motors. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Of course, there were also many letters from inmates. Some complained of perceived improper treatment from prison officials, including levying excessive penalties for minor offenses. Racism was also a problem, with complaints from Black inmates who were being allowed to do only menial tasks in the shops when they were fully capable and willing to do more skilled work. And there were letters of thanks for the warden's kindness, for his inspirational talks broadcast to the prisoners on Saturday nights, for the improved conditions and the quality of the food, even for allowing two ten-minute breaks in the shops for smoking. Rosa Heyns is also acknowledged for her support of inmates in the letter from a parolee indicating how well he had adapted to life outside the Reformatory. And inmates appealed to her to intercede with her husband, in one case to expand the inventory of items available in the prison store.[13]

In spite of the efforts of Heyns, changing a system and institutional

mindset with limited funds during the waning years of the Great Depression restricted what could be accomplished. During his first two years as warden, the absolute population of Ionia increased from 1,000 to 1,300, with at least 10 percent older inmates due to crowding at Jackson and Marquette.[14] In spite of the improved quality of food, inmates still rioted in 1939 because of the food.

Heyns did change the process of classifying newly arrived inmates. Previously, corrections staff determined the needs for education, training, or behavioral correction, and these decisions often were based only on the biases of the corrections staff. Heyns employed Dr. I. N. La Victoire, a psychiatrist, to oversee the classification process. La Victoire was assisted by a trained psychologist, the chaplain/welfare officers, the physician, the education director, and the vocation director when deciding a plan for the approximately 950 new arrivals each year.[15]

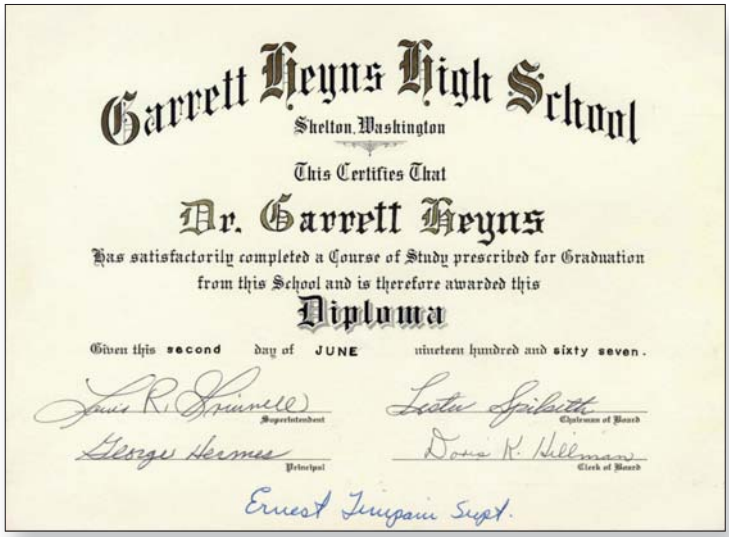
Further, Heyns focused on the most modern notion of a successful parole program. Following the most current notions about successful paroles, five elements were part of the process: 1) inmates needed education, training, and treatment; 2) each inmate needed a unique parole plan determined by his family, geographic, and employment environments; 3) parole review required an extensive case history on each inmate, including medical history; 4) parole decisions were to be made by skilled, trained, and politically independent people; and 5) parolees needed strict supervision by trained and competent personnel, with swift action for any infraction.[16]

Heyns (standing) with the three-member Michigan Parole Board; left to right: John Eliassohn, Ross Pascoe, and Gerald Bush. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Heyns began by focusing on making education, vocational training, counseling, and responsible mentorship available to all inmates. After a positive decision following a hearing before the parole board, inmates had

The Ionia Reformatory staff (Heyns at the far left) meeting with an inmate. The staff included medical, vocational, educational, and spiritual counselors. (Since the inmate pictured is in several photos, it may have been that some images in the collection were taken for public relations purposes.) Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

to demonstrate that they had a home and a job waiting. If there was no one in the inmate's circle of family or friends to help in finding a job and providing a residence, Parole Division staff provided assistance. Once released, younger parolees continued to receive counseling and mentoring from professional parole officers and family and friends to ensure successful re-entrance into society. It became standard that, once having completed their minimum sentence and records of good behavior, men were eligible for parole. This system showed remarkable success. Of those paroled, 89 percent met the parole requirements and subsequently left the system, 8 percent returned for violating a parole condition, and the recidivism rate was only 3 percent.[17]


Garrett Heyns High School
Shelton, Washington
This Certifies That
Dr. Garrett Heyns
Has satisfactorily completed a Course of Study prescribed for Graduation from this School and is therefore awarded this
Diploma
Given this second day of JUNE nineteen hundred and sixty seven.
Superintendent
Chairman of Board
Principal
Clerk of Board
Ernest Timpani Supt.

The diploma presented to Heyns from the high school that has his name and was part of the Washington penal system. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

After his two years as warden, because of his background and the success of the Reformatory's parole system, Heyns was appointed director of the state's Department of Corrections by the governor. He also became a consultant to the War Department on the treatment of military prisoners, which, during WW II, included the treatment of prisoners of war. A few months later, in December 1939, Carl Mapes died. Heyns initiated a second attempt to win election to Congress but lost again, this time to Bartel Jonkman, an attorney from Grand Rapids who had been a Kent County prosecutor from 1930 to 1936. The second experience convinced Heyns that his future was in penology rather than politics.

In 1940 the Civil Service, now in charge of appointments, re-appointed Heyns as head of the Department of Corrections, which had 7,797 prisoners in the facilities in Jackson (5,541 males), Ionia (1,342 males), Marquette (739 males), and Detroit (175 females).[18] Facilities in Jackson were old and crowded, but funds were limited as the nation moved from an economic depression to a war economy. Training, hiring, renovations, new construction, and reforms were most difficult to accomplish, due to the limited funds. Heyns continued his frequent public speaking and writing on behalf of the prison system, focusing on making the parole system more efficient.

Every year about 60 percent of the male prisoners were eligible for parole consideration. Case files, including criminal records, educational data, behavioral information, and medical data were assembled for each and presented to the three-member parole board, whose members were no longer political appointees but instead selected based on background and training. Reviewing and thoughtfully considering nearly 5,000 parole files annually was a heavy workload for three people, and Heyns repeatedly asked the state to expand the board's members, which did not happen until 1947. Heyns was particularly concerned about the fact that typically slightly less than half of those older inmates eligible for parole received them, leading to high levels of depression among those denied. Moreover, due to limited parole staff, which varied by county according to the funds that each contributed, about one-third of those on parole returned to prison for violating terms of their release and 10 percent returned later after committing another crime.[19]

Heyns was able to inaugurate a new program that had early success. From 1933 to 1942 the federal government fed and housed unemployed, unmarried men from families on relief in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Originally for those aged 18 to 23, and later expanded to those 17 to 28, the CCC provided unskilled manual labor for the conservation of natural resource development projects in rural areas. The CCC was always funded via emergency or temporary allocations, and by 1942 the war effort of these funds and the program ended. But in addition to the many projects across the country, the facilities erected to house the CCC workers were now vacant. One of these projects was near Cassidy Lake in what is today the Waterloo State Recreation Area, just fifteen miles east and a little north of Jackson, Michigan. In December 1943, Heyns obtained use of the Cassidy Lake facilities for the duration of the war, plus six months, to house first-time offenders, age 17-23, and worked on Michigan Department of Conservation projects, which saw to their transportation, meals, and equipment. The work was from Monday morning until Friday evening, outside the prison, and under minimal supervision in exchange for

good behavior. The program worked well and without problems, so that in 1947 the Department of Corrections built its own facilities to house fifty individuals.

Those who participated in the program were expected to complete their education in classes taught in the camp. In 1945 this educational program became the Cassidy Lake Technical School that provided both academic and vocational training (primarily carpentry, welding, and electrical) that met the standards of the Department of Education, which allowed the school to become independent of prison administration. In addition, Heyns became a lecturer on penology at the University of Michigan.

In 1948 the state legislature moved the directorship of the Department of Corrections from the Civil Service process back to a politically appointed position. Knowing the problems when this had been the case previously, Heyns moved instead[20] to the chairmanship of the parole board, which was still in the Civil Service system. It was at this point that the state expanded the size of the board from three to four, but its workload remained high as the number of prisoners increased, rising 10 percent in the first year after WW II ended, alone.[21]

Although his work during the 1940s was satisfying, Heyns did not have much opportunity to take a direct hand in rehabilitation. In 1950 he asked to be transferred back to the position as warden at Ionia. Based on the correspondence in his papers, the move was welcomed by Heyns, reformatory staff, and inmates alike. His concern for prisoners as individual people helped some to adapt to life in prison and many more to return to society with the education and skills needed to rebuild or build new lives.

During his years in Michigan, Garrett Heyns also was active in corrections work on a national level. He wrote articles for professional journals and spoke at regional, national, and international meetings on corrections-related subjects. During World War II, Heyns served as an adviser to the Secretary of War on military prisoners. He was also a member of the corrections task force of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice.

In 1957, at age sixty-five, Heyns retired as warden of the Ionia Reformatory, but not from his work as a penologist. He received a request from Governor Albert D. Rosellini of Washington to take charge of the state's Department of Institutions, which was in disarray and needed administrative expertise and ideas that the governor was certain Heyns could provide. The department oversaw twenty-one psychiatric hospitals, schools for children with special needs, veterans' homes, and correctional facilities for juveniles and adults, as well as twenty-three child guidance centers. The system suffered from a shortage of trained professional staff, largely because salaries did not attract the needed personnel and very few resources were dedicated to rehabilitation. Five directors in the previous six years had weathered public and official criticism, staff morale and salaries were low, and several prison riots had occurred.[22] With the governor's and legislature's support, Heyns saw the Washington offer as an opportunity to implement far more programs than had been possible during his year with the Michigan Department of Corrections.

In nine years as head of the Washington system, Heyns initiated thoroughgoing changes, so that it became one of the most respected in the nation. He moved the predominantly custodial programs for treatment of the mentally ill, the physically challenged, and juveniles to emphasize rehabilitation and education. The number of centers for juveniles was increased so that the average total population of each could be reduced. Receptions and diagnostic centers were opened specifically for young offenders. Working with the public school districts to provide staffing and funding, education programs were opened in these centers. In 1965 the Garrett Heyns High School was opened at the state's medium security correctional facility near Shelton,

Instead of stone walls, the Shelton, Washington, facility was surrounded by a double row of fencing, allowing views of the surrounding forest. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Washington, under contract with the local school system. At its peak, the school employed thirty faculty and staff.[23] As a result, the recidivism rate for young offenders declined from 47 to 19 percent.[24]

Institutions for those with special needs were also expanded. New facilities were opened, and all facilities for those with intellectual challenges were improved and brought up to national standards so that they quickly were rated among the best in the country. Staffing at the psychiatric hospitals was increased and the level of professionalism improved. Working with parents, who provided a portion of the funding, a new program was begun to provide day care and education for children with intellectual challenges, even though these children were not wards of the state. Within a few years, there were sixteen of these programs for four hundred children.[25]

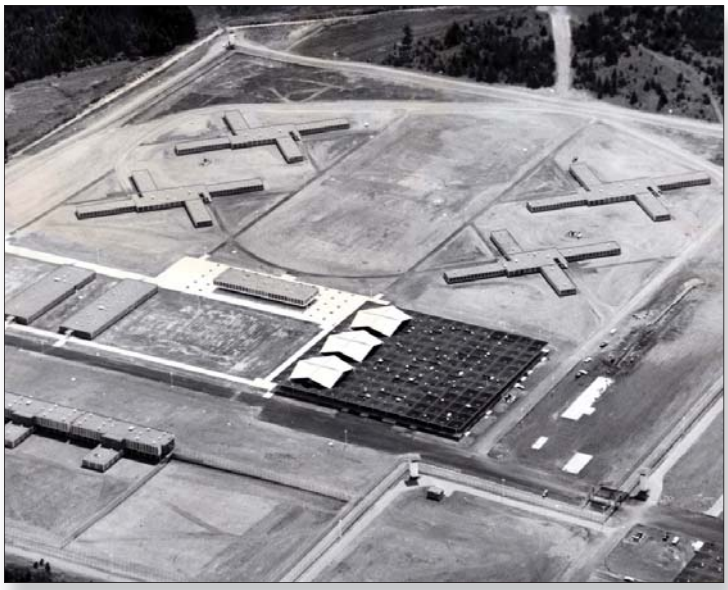
Heyns was well aware of the potential for violence among the prison population and did not hesitate to counter violence with force. In 1959 four inmates took twenty-nine adults and children hostage in the visitors' center in the Monroe, Washington, Correctional Center. Armed with knives and long-tined forks, the four (who had previously attempted to escape) threatened to kill the hostages unless their vague demands to be allowed to escape to Canada were met. Almost fourteen hours into the standoff, guards rushed the center after firing tear gas. The ensuing fight left the four inmates beaten, clubbed, and bloodied, all done with the approval of Heyns.[26]

Programs for adult offenders were also improved, but took more time. Heyns immediately improved and upgraded the opportunities for education and vocational training. The number of serious inmate disturbances were significantly reduced. In 1963 Heyns proposed a work-release program as part of the parole process. The state legislature balked at this innovative and untested program and did not fund it, but Heyns was not deterred.[27] But at age seventy-five, with health issues that came with age, Heyns decided it was time to retire, again. As before, he continued to work, accepting the executive directorship of the Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training in Washington, DC.

Through his career in penology, Heyns held memberships in professional organizations. He served on the Michigan Sociological Society, the Michigan Probation and Parole Association, the Michigan Welfare League, and on the Advisory Committee to the Secretary of War for Prisoners of War. He was also a member and served as president of the American Prison Association (president, 1944-1945), the American Parole Association (president, 1944-1947), the National Society of Correctional Administrators (president, 1962-1963), and the Central States Probation and Parole Association. From 1966 until his death in 1969, he served as executive director of the Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training.

To his children he was a wise and loving father and, in spite of his work load, an active member of and leader in the various church congregations of which he and his wife, Rosa, were members. In 1968 the two were part

The 1959 graduation ceremony at Washington State Department of Corrections featured 30 high school graduates, 22 grade school graduates, 10 typists, 52 with vocational certificates, and 912 with a high school general education degree; of these, 31 percent were already paroled. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



The women's facility (the four units to the rear of the image) and processing-in centers in Shelton, Washington, were on four hundred acres and cost $13.8 million to construct during Heyns's tenure. The design differed dramatically from that of typical prisons of the time. Image from the Garrett Heyns Collection, Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

of a small group that founded the Tacoma, Washington, Christian Reformed Church. Heyns suffered from heart disease, which caused his death on 3 November 1969 in Olympia, Washington. Rosa continued to live in Olympia until she died on 10 June 1983.

Endnotes

1. Conte, William R., ed. *Selected Writings of Garrett Heyns* (Olympia, Wash., Sherwood Press, 1975), introductory quotation, which Conte credited to about 1935, but a search of the periodical for the 1930s did not yield this quotation.

2. His father, originally named Willem Wijnand Heinse (1856-1930) and from Haarlemmermeer Polder, North Holland, the Netherlands, served four Christian Reformed congregations before joining the faculty of what is now called Calvin Theological Seminary in 1902. Garrett's older brother, Herman (1899-1921), also served as a CRC minister.

3. Garrett Heyns, "Autobiography," (1966), Garrett Heyns Papers, Heritage Hall, Calvin College (hereafter cited as Heyns Papers), box 19, folder 1.

4. Roger Heyns was Chancellor of the University of California Berkeley and received Calvin's Distinguished Alumnus award in 1969, making them the only father and son to have achieved the distinction.

5. *Young Calvinist*, February 1935, 4-5; March 1935, 9; April 1935, 9-10; May/June 1935, 6-7; September 1935, 5; October 1935, 13-14; and December 1935, 8-9.

6. Poliomyelitis, or infantile paralysis, was a frequent malady among urban populations, particularly during summers; beginning in 1916, an epidemic occurred every summer somewhere in the United States, peaking with the worst outbreak in 1952. Although initially affecting the very young, by the 1930s and 1940 children and young adults also were victims.

7. Robert Swierenga, *Holland Michigan From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014) 559 and 561.

8. "The story of the Michigan State Reformatory," *Public Employee Press* (31 May 1957) 2.

9. "1940 Survey of Michigan Penal Institutions," (New York: The Osborne Association Inc., undated) 9. In the Heyns Papers, box 20, folder 1.

10. Conte, William R., ed. *Selected Writings of Garrett Heyns* (Olympia, Wash., Sherwood Press, 1975), introductory quotation.

11. "History of the Michigan Reformatory," 1949, Heyns Papers, box 19, folder 1.

12. Letter from Mrs. John DeYoung, 3 May 1938; letter from Manuel Alveranz, 12 September 1938; letter from Mrs. M. Geyer to Garrett Heyns, 18 May 1939; letter from Hattie Bruinsma, undated but received 3 July 1939; letter from E. L. Carns, 24 July 1939; letters from Anna Berdish, 4 September, 1937 and 9 October 1939; all in the Heyns Papers, box 6, folder 4.

13. Letter from twelve inmates, undated; letter from the "boys on the second floor," undated; letter from Jerome, undated; letter from Albert J. Farr, undated; letter from M. S. Allen, 25 November 1938; letter from Ernest L. J. Brandt, 31 January 1939; and letter from Edward Freer and others, 16 January 1939; all in the Heyns Papers, box 6, folder 6.

14. Michigan Department of Corrections Newsletter, Sep-Oct, 1967 in Heyns Papers, box 19, folder 1; and "1940 Survey of Michigan Penal Institutions," (New York: The Osborne Association Inc., undated) 3. In the Heyns Papers, box 20, folder 1.

15. Approximately an equal number of inmates were released or paroled each year so that the total population remained fairly constant at 1350. It seems that the number of "transfers-in" was simply determined by the space available.

16. "1940 Survey of Michigan Penal Institutions," (New York: The Osborne Association Inc., undated) 12.

17. Ibid.

18. "1940 Survey of Michigan Penal Institutions," 2. The school for girls in Adrian and for boys in Lansing had been transferred from the Department of Corrections to the Department of Welfare.

19. Noel P. Fox, "A Survey of the Michigan Corrections System," (Lansing: Unpublished manuscript, June 1949), Heyns Papers, box 20, folder 5; and Vernon Fox "Michigan's Experiment in Minimum Security Penology" *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 1950 (vol 41, no 2) 157.

20. Heyns, "Autobiography," (1966), 2; Heyns Papers, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, box 19, folder 1.

21. Noel P. Fox, "A Survey of the Michigan Corrections System," 97-98.

22. Heyns, "Autobiography," (1966), 2; Heyns Papers, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, box 19, folder 1.

23. "Distinguished Alumni Award Presentation," 1966, Garrett Heyns vertical file, Heritage Hall, Calvin College.

24. Heyns, "Autobiography," (1966), 2; Heyns Papers, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, box 19, folder 1.

25. Ibid.

26. "Prison Riot Quelled by Using Tear Gas," *Daily Iowan* (8 July 1959) 1.

27. Heyns, "Autobiography," (1966), 2; Heyns Papers, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, box 19, folder 1.

The Promised Landing

Mins Reinsma

When my grandmother Hendrikje Reinsma lost her husband (Minze) in 1913, she was left with two children, Hinke (22), and Lourens (19). Although she continued to operate the family grocery store in a room of her house in Tjerkwerd, Friesland, she was not a good storekeeper. So Lourens, my dad, had taken over when still a boy. He became more involved in the grocery business and also became a cattle dealer. In 1919 his mother died. Single and needing help in the store, he placed an ad in a widely read newspaper: "Housekeeper needed by owner of grocery store located in Tjerkwerd, Friesland."

My mother, Maria (called Marie) Theresia Cupido, who was between jobs, responded by postcard, the "e-mail" of its day, asking for an interview. She, twenty-nine at that time, and her sister, Tante Fre, traveled to Tjerkwerd. They learned that my father was *Hervormde*, not the *Gereformeerd* as they were. They talked about the work in the house and the store, since it was all under one roof. Yes, there was a GKN church in town. Yes, there were other single ladies in the village. Salary was discussed and my father offered the job then and there. Tante Fre said they would let him know by "e-mail." Marie sent a postcard letting my father know that she accepted the job. When she arrived with her suitcase, my father looked surprised and said, "I thought I hired the other one." "Oh, no," my mother said, "I was the one wanting the job." The arrangement worked out fine. My mother liked the store work, and her time was divided between house and store work. She was a "people person," and, although raised in North Holland, she was soon accepted by the clientele. She learned to speak a sort of Friesian, but was never good at this.

Marie Theresia Cupido, the author's mother, as housekeeper in Friesland at the age of twenty-nine. Image courtesy of the author's family.

A year later they married. Did they fall in love? I never asked. They surely fell in need. Love is a strong or passionate affection for a person. Need is where want or necessity exists. Love is emotional and can fade. Need has

Ater immigrating to New Holland, Mins Reinsma (1923-2015) and family moved to Independence, Missouri, where he learned the jewelry trade. Eventually the family moved to Seattle where he was active in First Christian Reformed Church and Watson Groen Christian School.

presence, can be fulfilling and give substance. My parents needed each other. My father was thirty-seven; my mother, thirty-one. Both wanted a family; both were of age; they cared for each other. It was a good marriage.

Both wanted children, and to their great sorrow the firstborn, a girl, was stillborn in 1922. A year later, I was born. Many prayers were answered and all went well. My parents were overjoyed, delighted, and thankful. Two years later my brother Piet was born. My mother began to think about my education when I started on solid food. There was a good-sized public school in the village, but no "School with the Bible." For me to attend the public school would be unacceptable.

The wedding photograph of Marie Cupido and Lourens Reinsma, 4 May 1920. Image courtesy of the author's family.

But two of her sisters lived in Andijk, a village across the Zuider Zee in the province of North Holland. One was married to a tulip farmer, the other to a carpenter. Her own parents had retired to the same place, so she visited there at times. Andijk had a totally different environment than Tjerkwerd. It was a flower-bulb growing community. There was a large Gereformeerde Kerk (GKN) with a massive tower, a four-sided clock, and a church bell. There was seating for 1200, and it housed a fine pipe organ. Most importantly, there were two large Christian schools, each with some two hundred students. Andijk was in every respect the opposite from the place they now lived. On one of her visits my mother heard that one of the grocery stores was for sale. This was an answer to prayer. How

The first grocery store in Andijk, which burned down in 1939. From left to right: Lourens, Marie, a clerk, Piet; Mins is on the bakfiets (a tricycle for carrying cargo and used to make deliveries). Image courtesy of the author's family.

Marie (Cupido) Reinsma and her two sons, Piet (in the middle) and Mins (to the right). Image courtesy of the author's family.

she persuaded my father to at least have a look at the store in Andijk and eventually buy the business, I do not know, but she managed to do just that.

So, we moved from Friesland to Andijk, in North Holland. The village was divided by the *Middenweg* (Middle Road). On the east side, 90 percent were GKN; on the west, 90 percent were "non-believers" or, as we called them, *anderekanters* (other siders). Our church, on the middle road, was, more or less, the dividing beacon. As its name suggests, the village was protected from the Zuider Zee by a dike, and, since we lived below sea level, it was a wall of assurance. Our new store and living quarters under one roof were located below this dike. For me, the dike was a wonderful playground, and, walking to school, I always used the top of the dike rather than the road. On one side I could watch the fishing boats, on the other side the tulip fields. Our building, originally a typical Dutch dairy farm, had been remodeled and enlarged for a store and additional living space. It had three floors. My room on the top was called the owl's nest.

The second grocery store in Andijk, built on the same site as the first, 1940. From left to right: unknown, Mins, Marie, Tryni, unknown, and Piet. Image courtesy of the author's family.

The store did well. We lost some of the old customers since my father was a Friesian. Speaking a mixture of Friesian and Hollands was not popular, but my mother made up for it. My father attended the Gerformeerde Kerk and I was enrolled in the Christian school. My mother was overjoyed. My father pined for his beloved Friesland for the rest of his life.

I became more and more aware of how different my parents were. My father was quiet, a reader. He had no use for small talk. My mother was a people person. She loved animals, plants, and flowers. She always had chickens, rabbits, ducks, and a few goats to care for and talk to. She raised her own chickens. Several times when the hen walked off the nest with eggs, she would, early in the morning, put the eggs in bed with me, saying, "Keep these eggs warm until I calm down the brood hen."

Eventually we needed additional help, which prompted my father to place an ad in the *Andijker*, the local paper. Tryni Romkes, later my wife, applied and was promptly hired. Her father was a tulip grower with five girls and one boy in the family and lived about one mile from our place. She was fourteen at that time and had just finished grade school. Tryni had attended the same Christian school as I did, but since I was one grade ahead of her, we did not know each other well.

She had worked for us about six weeks when a fire, caused by a poorly installed electric system, totally destroyed our home and store. A new

store and home, again under one roof, was built on the same property. This building was centrally heated. The store was large and, for its time, modern. We saw the new building going up, brick by brick; it was a very slow process. The living quarters, with four bedrooms, were "designed" (not very well!) by my mother. When it was finished, Tryni became a member of the Reinsmas. She had her own bedroom and invited friends over to our house. We worked together in the store and attended night school together. Her grades were always better than mine, which was not surprising since she was a top student in grade school.

My parents came to love Tryni, especially my father. They had somewhat the same nature. She may have brought their first-born to my parents' minds, a daughter that they had lost. Tryni fit in well with my brother and me. She and I were great readers, and we had other shared interests. Both of us dated but never each other. We would, however, make comments on each other's choices. She would say, "Not your type!" I would warn her against certain boys. We never approved of the other's choice.

On 10 May 1940, the German army invaded Holland. I was seventeen. This turned our lives upside down. Those were years of plenty of excitement, of learning, of coping, of adapting, and getting out of the mindset and customs of our little village. After the war I served in the Dutch navy and worked as a dental technician in Indonesia. I came to love that country and the work, for which I was schooled in England. Tryni and I corresponded regularly, but our letters were not love letters; we kept each other informed of our lives. In 1947, after my father died, I was discharged from the navy and returned to Andijk to run the grocery store.

I had a difficult time adjusting. I did not fit in anymore. Everything,

The wedding photograph of Mins and Tryni (Romkes) Reinsma, 4 July 1947. Image courtesy of the author's family.

including the church, seemed narrow and small. My relationship with Tryni changed, however, from caring to loving. So, on 4 July 1947, we were married. My father would have been overjoyed. He never understood why I even looked at any girl other than Tryni. We lived with my mother and brother, Piet, which worked out all right. After all, we had lived together since we were teenagers.

The grocery business began to decline. More and more farmers were going to the neighboring town, Enkhuizen, to buy groceries in the large chain stores where prices were lower. Our store was the place to buy the few things forgotten. I could see the handwriting on the wall.

At that time, many farmers from our village were emigrating, mostly to Canada. I began to think and inquire about doing the same. America had a quota of four hundred families each year, so there was a waiting list of three years. I tried New Zealand and South Africa. Neither government was interested in a grocer, so we began to concentrate on America. Pete Lieuwen of New Holland, South Dakota, was willing to sponsor us. We applied and were put on the waiting list. In 1948 our son Luke was born. I was not worried about Tryni, but I wondered how my mother would take these emigration plans. To my great pleasure, she was all for it, but leaving her as a widow did bother me.

After we waited three years, our turn came. The store and living quarters were sold, and my mother and brother, Piet, moved into an apartment. We purchased a vegetable business for Piet. But my mother felt lost. About a week before our departure date, Dirk Dijkman came to me and said, "Your mother and I want to get married. What do you think about this?" A widower with seven children, he was fifty-nine years old at the time. They married and although the children were reluctant at first, they became a loving family and her only family, later, when Piet also emigrated.

We boarded *SS Edam*, a combined freighter/passenger ship, in Rotterdam harbor on 20 January 1950. Tryni and Luke were assigned to a cabin, which they shared with a young lady who was to stay in America for two years with the help of a study grant. She was a great help to Tryni in taking care of Luke and a pleasant person to be with. The next morning we entered Antwerp harbor for more freight. All of us had slept well. Luke slept until eight and from then stood on a stool at a porthole to watch the loading. On Sunday morning (the 22nd) we requested permission to visit Antwerp. We visited some markets and stores but this was not much fun since we did not have Flemish money and we were not willing to spend the few American dollars we had. We visited

the famous cathedral. On Monday morning we left Antwerp.

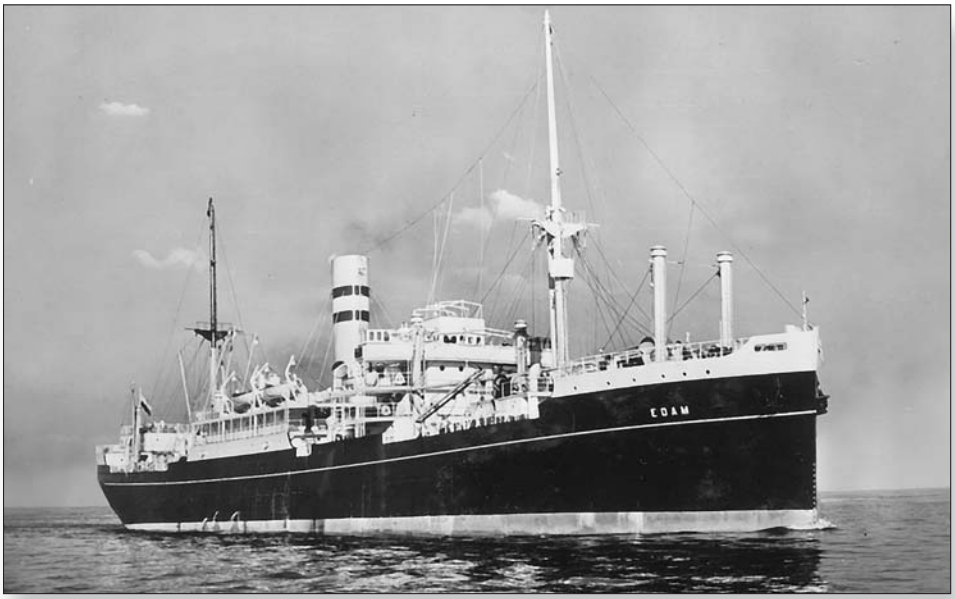
I had crossed the channel some eight times and had never seen it so still. We bought some cigarettes and chocolate at the Toko (the ship's store). It had been a long time since I bought American cigarettes. The rest of the day was spent in conversation with other emigrants. We received one more passenger in Antwerp. He was from Switzerland and spoke perfect English. I had long conversations with him in order to bolster my broken English. The girl who shared the cabin with Tryni also spoke good English. Tryni is a fast learner and was able to understand most of what the emigrants talked about. But we were unable to understand the speech of the five Americans on board. They were young men about twenty-five years of age. They did not believe in normal table manners. I asked them how they found their accommodations. They all found things fine but were surprised by the passengers who always asked for this or that and where things were located. Find things yourselves, they said. They also liked the prices in the ship's store.

On Tuesday the 25th we had the first change in weather. There was a noticeable movement of the ship. We had been sailing along the southern coast of England and in its protection. But now I had trouble writing because the typewriter moved too much on the table. We laughed seeing Luke walking the gangway. He moved with the ship and so kept his balance. The next day the weather card noted, "high seas." All three of us were still doing fine, just a little queasy. Tryni was about the only female passenger still walking around. Luke was still in good shape, eating and sleeping even better than at home. Each day we hoped for better weather. But there was so little forward movement that it seemed it might take two weeks to make the crossing. That Friday we made only 242 miles in twenty-four hours' time. The young people on board had a bet every day regarding the distance traveled. It was hard to believe the motion of the ship, made worse because the ship was carrying only about half of its freight capacity. There was netting everywhere to catch things and people.

We didn't have much trouble with boredom. There was a good selection of books on board, so we read a lot. On a regular day we got up at eight, took a shower and then breakfast. We walked on deck as much as possible until ten, then some reading and coffee, some more reading and lunch at one. We took a long nap, then more reading. We could also use a gramophone. We then often went on deck again. I could not get enough of the sight of the action of the waves; the changes all the time depended on the clouds, the sun, and the wind direction.

The bad weather continued. On Saturday we sailed only 108 miles. On Monday the afterdeck was mostly underwater and again little progress. We heard the weather would improve when we were close to the coast of Newfoundland. We were sailing the northern route, which is shorter but has notoriously bad weather, which made the trip longer. Why we sailed this route was a puzzle. On Tuesday, the 31st, we received forms to record the contents of our large crate in the hold and of our suitcase. We were a bit worried about the seed and tulip bulbs which we were taking to South Dakota for Tony Prins. Luckily we did not have to swear to the truthfulness of the form; I had heard that this was required at times. The next day the ship was making such wild movements that it was impossible to sit on a chair. We had to hold on to things to stay upright.

One of the seamen, who had been sailing this route for a long time, told me that this trip was the slowest he had ever made. We continued in good



SS Edam *was one of four ships built in 1921 for the Holland-America Line to carry passengers and freight, specifically summer laborers to Cuba and Central America, and had cabins for 14 first-class, 174 second-class, and 802 third-class passengers. In 1934 the ship was rebuilt primarily for freight and cabins for 90 first-class passengers, and the second non-functioning funnel was removed. In 1949 the ship was converted one more time to carry 911 passengers, and it was scrapped in 1954. Image courtesy of the Photo Collection, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

Tryni and Luke Reinsema, c.1950. Image courtesy of the author's family.

shape—no seasickness trouble, which was a blessing by itself. On Thursday some of the passengers organized a party! It was a change from the normal life on board. It was interesting to see the talents among the passengers, especially in music. Singing was most appreciated. The problem with the language from the mixture of the passengers was solved by singing in each language. The Germans performed best in solo performance. The Americans performed very poorly—no one had any idea regarding measure or melody. No change in the weather.

On Saturday, February 4, we were at least three days behind schedule, and I heard a lot of complaining. The captain came to see us in our cabin. I was typing and Tryni knitting. We talked on different subjects. He found America great and had lived there for several years. He told us that this trip had been the slowest in his career. On Monday, for the first time on this trip we had good weather. The water was almost flat and the sun was shining. We were all on deck and the children were playing outside. We saw more and more fishing boats around us. We packed our cabin suitcase. A doctor came on board the next day, and a few people checked our paper work, so we would not have to do this in New York.

On Tuesday, 7 February, Tryni (24), our son, Luke (2½), and I (26) landed in New York. The trip from Rotterdam on *SS Edam* had taken eighteen days under almost constant stormy weather. After paper work and customs were completed on board, we stepped on to solid ground in our new, adopted country. Our main household goods were packed in a large wooden crate, which was being shipped from Holland to New Holland in South Dakota, where our sponsor Pete Lieuwen lived. So we entered our new country carrying a suitcase and some hand luggage, a railway voucher for the trip to South Dakota, and twenty-five old issue dollar bills—twice the size of our modern ones. We stopped for a welcome cup of coffee in the Holland House, a sort of seaman's retreat. There I saw one of our passengers, one of two recently converted Mormons who had sailed with us, smoking a cigar. On the boat they had watched each other closely, for now that they were Mormons there was no smoking, of course! So this was his last chance, and he relished his big cigar with obvious enjoyment. What he was going to do in Salt Lake City would be a test of faith!

While we enjoyed our free cup of coffee in the Holland House, someone came to me and asked to see our railway voucher, which could be exchanged for a railway ticket to South Dakota. The printed instructions were written in typical government language that was difficult for me to understand, so the person, who looked somewhat official by way of cap and badge, was a welcome help. He explained that our voucher needed something—certification, I think he said—which he was going to do. He came up with a small ink pad and stamped our voucher. I thanked him for his service. We then moved ourselves and our belongings closer to the railway station. But the lady at the ticket station pointed to the stamp on our voucher, which indicated a different railway company at an entirely different location. On further questioning, we were told that our railway company and its station were located in the city of New York itself and could be reached by the subway. How to find our way was the question.

A man of middle age, poorly dressed and strongly smelling of alcohol, seemed to know what was going on. He asked to see our voucher and said, "I will help you." I was reluctant to follow him, but we had little choice. The man, obviously tipsy but

Mins and Tryni Reinsma aboard SS Edam. *The ship was 450 feet long, had a beam of 58 feet, and a speed of 13 knots. Image courtesy of the author's family.*

just as obviously not up to anything in particular, kept saying, "Never mind me!" He guided us to the subway station and paid for the turn gate, since we did not have a token. He entered the subway train with us, saying several times, "Never mind me!" and brought us all the way to the proper station. He waited until I had changed our voucher for the proper tickets. I thanked "Never mind me" with a

handshake and a dollar bill, which he did not want to take. I have no idea why he went out of his way to help us, but to this day I am grateful.

Our train was to leave in about two hours. Knowing that it would be a long trip, Tryni thought we should find some food to eat on the train. So I looked around the station and found a combination bakery/delicatessen where I bought some sliced bread, some cheese, and sausage. When I paid the man with my precious dollar bills, he noticed the large bills and asked if I had more. I told him I had twenty-five. Did I want to exchange the large bills for brand new ones? he asked. Thinking there must be a reason, I said, "Only if you give me what I bought for free." He agreed, and he even added some sliced ham and some rolls and a small container of butter. This was my first business transaction in America, and I felt rather good about it. When the time of our departure came close, we moved to our designated platform, where there unfolded the story of the doormat.

There were certain rules we had to follow regarding our household goods and our hand luggage. The household goods had already been sent in a large wooden crate with its destination stenciled on all sides. Our hand luggage was limited to one suitcase and two small bags for personal items. Tryni had very carefully selected which items to take in the suitcase since we did not know when our large box would arrive. But then Tryni came home with a doormat. This doormat was not an ordinary doormat. It was a very thick doormat made from coconut fiber. It weighed a ton. Surely, this was a mat that would be used by the next generation!

"You will not be able to take that with us," I said to Tryni.

"Yes I will," she answered.

I then said, "Don't you think that a country that can make an atomic bomb is able to make doormats?"

"No," she said. "Not like this."

"Well, it won't fit into the suitcase," I said.

"It will," she answered.

I will not further dwell on this, but sparks flew, at least from my side—Tryni does not spark very easily. Our suitcase was of fine quality, with two heavy leather straps to further secure its contents. So, by sitting on the lid and pulling on the straps, we finally managed to pack all that we had hoped to take. And on the very top, as if to protect the contents, lay the doormat. Tryni smiled.

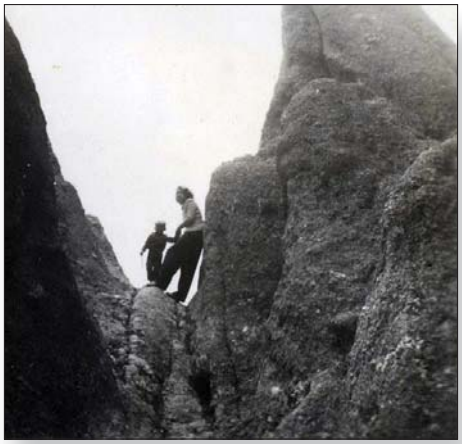
On board *Edam*, we had lived out of that suitcase, and coming into the harbor of New York we repacked it with a lot of effort. At customs, however, we needed to open the suitcase again. Due to the limited time and space, we were barely able to cram everything back—everything except the doormat. Since we could not very well leave it at that location, Tryni said we should put it under the straps of the suitcase. It will fit just fine, she said. We travelled the subway system, Tryni carrying Luke and a hand bag, I carrying the suitcase and another bag—and, of course, the doormat. It was hard going. When we finally arrived at the right station and at the right platform and we were waiting for our train to Chicago, I thought this would be the end of our suitcase trouble.

But I was greatly mistaken. A conductor walked over to us. He was very tall, very large, and very black. Having met many of our kind on his train, he must have noticed that we were immigrants. Not trusting us to understand him, he pointed a large finger at our suitcase and the attached doormat and slowly shook his head. We knew the meaning of his gestures. Now what? There was a large trash can close by. I was tempted to get rid of it, but then I thought, let's try to sell the thing. So I waited until the conductor was out of sight, held the doormat up for all the people to see and called out, "One dollar!" Within a minute a lady stopped, took a dollar from her purse, and the deal was made. I was happy. Tryni was in tears. So, two business transactions on our first day in America! However, even today, sixty-five years later, I have to admit that it still bothers me to have sold the mat—for only one dollar. The mat could easily have been sold for three dollars!

When we settled down on the train, dead tired and worn out, I said to Tryni, "This is a wonderful country. There is more excitement in one day in America than would be possible for twenty years in Andijk." We ate our free dinner or lunch and slept, more or less. We changed trains in Chicago, where we had enough time to look at the variety of food and drink. Having just come from Holland, where we still had rationing for some items, this was wonderful to see, but I became acquainted with the dollar sign real fast. What fascinated me most was a fully automated machine, in which corn was puffed up and people ate it as a snack—the very corn, which we called *mais* in Holland, which was strictly used to feed the animals. After some time we were back on the train on the way to Mitchell, South Dakota, where our sponsor Pete Lieuwen would pick us up with his car and drive us to New Holland, the town in which we would start our new life in America.

For the first time on this train trip I began to pay more attention to the landscape and the towns through which we traveled. The train stopped at several towns that all looked alike to me, each with a main street through the middle with businesses on each side, many parked cars, and also many gas stations. On the edge of the towns there were a few churches,

Left to right: Mins Reinsma and Piet Lieuwen, with Luke in the foreground. Image courtesy of the author's family.



Tryni and Luke Reinsma on vacation in the Black Hills, SD. Image courtesy of the author's family.

mostly without a tower. I found the towns unattractive and similar to each other—not at all like in Holland, where each town or village had a distinct look and layout.

The countryside, however, was more to my liking. The big skyline and the enormous flat spaces, interrupted by unending straight roads, gave me an idea of the huge size of the country. We were now looking forward to the end of our journey and to meeting with our sponsor. Finally, the train rolled into the Mitchell station, where Pete Lieuwen and one of his sons were waiting. After handshakes (the Dutch don't hug much) Oom Pete—Uncle Pete, although he was no uncle, but a cousin of my mother—suggested a cup of coffee at a nearby restaurant. Uncle Pete still spoke recognizable Dutch, his son Cornelius—Corny, as he was called—only a word here and there. The first thing I noticed was a sugar dispenser which one could freely use. We still had rationing in Holland, but even before the war a cup of coffee was always served with a measured amount of sugar. Why this free use of sugar so impressed me after all we had seen is hard to explain, but to this day, I still remember it. After coffee Uncle Pete, or rather his son, drove us in their car to New Holland.

When we arrived in New Holland, we met the rest of the family: Mrs. Lieuwen, and Marge, their daughter, and William. The fourth member of the family, John, was in the army and serving in Korea. We stayed with the family for a few days until a place could be found for us to stay. Oom Pete ran a garage and filling station with his son Corny. On the morning after our arrival, I walked through town. It was much like the many small towns we had seen during our railway trip—a main road running straight through town with about twenty houses on one side and businesses on the other.

There was Oom Pete's garage and single-pump gas station; next, a hardware store and creamery; then, in a large wooden building, a general store. A barbershop and a post office completed the business part of town. Next there was a large, white, painted wooden church with a tower and steeple that was way out of proportion with the rest of town. Together with a very large parsonage and parking lot, this church was clearly the center of town. A signboard identified the congregation as Christian Reformed; at that time it was still affiliated with the Gereformeerde Kerk in Holland. The dominee's name was T. Van Kooten. The door was open and, upon entering, I found the seating and pulpit familiar. Close to the front was a seat, clearly reserved for the minister's wife by way of a copper plate stating "The *Juffrouw*." In Holland her title would have been *Mevrouw*, a full step loftier in standing. This church and the little plate made me feel there was still a connection between Holland and this strange little town called New Holland. Here the same God was worshiped twice each Sunday and, according to the bulletin board, there was weekly instruction in the very familiar Heidelberg Catechism. It made me feel as if we belonged to het volk—to these people.

To complete my tour of the town, I stopped by the grocery store. But besides groceries, a variety of merchandise was also on display in the general store. I had never seen peanuts, pencils, shovels, soap, sugar, and shoes sold in one location. For me, who was raised in the grocery business, this was my first impression of a hands-off government. In Holland, where bread, meat, vegetables, and simple drugs were sold in separate stores, and where a diploma was required for the sale of each, this was to my liking. In front of the store, about a dozen old easy chairs were placed on a wooden platform. At any time of the day, some old men (never women) would gather there and discuss the latest news—the price of corn, the (lack of) rain, the heat, the condition of one tractor or another. I often listened in. The language spoken was neither Dutch nor English but a wonderful mixture of the two, called Yankee Dutch. Besides this, the whole town had a Dutch flavor. We were very fortunate to have landed there, for our English was limited, but we could talk Dutch to almost everyone. We were never overwhelmed with American life and living. Still, in many respects, New Holland was behind Andijk by a

Piet Lieuwen's garage in New Holland, SD. Although the photo was taken in 1988, little besides the gas pumps had changed since the Reinsmas arrived. Image courtesy of the author's family.

number of years. We were very careful not to mention this. One time, a farmer showed us his electric lights, which had been hooked up a few months before. I had no choice but to ooh! and aah!

Most of the people in New Holland had immigrated forty years before from Herwijnen. Because few, if any, had ever been back for a visit, they thought of Holland as they had left it. The very recent electric connection for the county made a huge impact on the farmers and especially for the missus. Coming for coffee or so, the electricity was always demonstrated, and as usual we had to ooh! and aah! when appliances and their uses were explained. I found it unwise to tell that I had been born under bright electric lights.

After living with the Lieuwens for about a week, Oom Pete found us a place to live. We rented a part of a large house from Mrs. Munneke, who lived all by herself. It had a mudroom, combination kitchen and pantry, which was a large closet for storing groceries, etc., a living room, and a bedroom upstairs. There was a sink with a hand pump and a large stove in which we burned corn cobs. This was new to us, and it had its pros and cons. One of the farmers supplied us with this free fuel—just as others in the community had donated food—but it took a lot of running from the corn shed to the stove. The upstairs was not heated, of course, and South Dakota is not known for its mild winters. But we, and especially Tryni, were thankful to finally be on our own. A few days after we moved in, it began to snow and snow and snow. It snows in Holland at times, but this . . . . We could just make it to the corn cob shed and back.

So, now it was time to give some thought to the future—how to make a living. My first job was very temporary since it involved snow. Mr. Tuininga asked me to dig trenches along the inside of his pig fences to keep the pigs from walking over the hills of hard snow to freedom. He paid me twenty-five cents per hour, but it included lunch, which was to my liking. The custom of giving lunch—dinner, really—to special job workers was always observed, and many times I was the beneficiary of this custom. The lunches were always very good—meat (lots of pork), potatoes, vegetables, pie, the works—and included food which we had not seen on our table for many years. I found it wise not to tell Tryni the particulars!

Our next-door neighbors, the family of Jan Hoekman, were not more than thirty feet away, which made our coming and going interesting news. You wonder why in a land with space from sea to shining sea, a little more room could not be found. One summer morning, with the windows left open all night, Dit, Jan's wife, remarked to Tryni, "So, Mins was coughing again last night." She couldn't believe that Tryni had slept through it all. Both of our families used outhouses. One day Jan announced that he was installing an indoor flush toilet. After the work was done, he invited us to have a look. We all stood together in and about the bathroom— Jan, Dit, his son Henky (a very big boy of about twenty who drove the school bus), and their daughter, Katherine, who was waiting for a husband, and then Tryni and I. Then Jan pushed a button and said, "Now look in the bowl!" We saw water being flushed and said our oohs! and aahs! But we still noticed the regular use of the outhouse. I asked Jan if there was anything wrong with the indoor facilities. "Oh, no!" said Jan. "There is nothing wrong. We will use the flush toilet only if we are sick."

Jan was the official gravedigger for the New Holland cemetery, and it was he who gave me one of my first jobs. Since he had a sore back, which seemed to happen most often during the winter, he asked me to dig a grave. I was glad to do this, since it paid ten dollars, which we badly needed. But I soon learned that frost penetrates deep into the ground—and in South Dakota, very deep. I have never worked so hard and so long for ten dollars!

Since most people in town spoke Dutch to us, I was afraid that our English would not improve, so we made an effort to teach ourselves. Both of us were avid readers. We missed our books. Several people

had given us some books that they had brought with them from Holland some forty years earlier, but they were syrupy love stories—not to our liking. Tryni found Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* at Oom Pete's, and, with a dictionary, looking up every word at first and slowly sticking to it, she was able to read it in six weeks. I became better at speaking, but looking at the pictures of merchandise with their lofty promises in the newspaper, my vocabulary— "everlasting," "unique," "durable," and so on—raised eyebrows at times.

Soon, and much to my surprise, I became a painter. The hardware store and creamery were owned by Clarence Timmer and his brother Albert. Both brothers were very helpful. A deacon at the time, Clarence asked me if I could repaint the lettering on the church bulletin board. Now, an American passenger on board *Edam* had once said to me, "If someone asks you if you can do this or that, always say, yes! You will find that you will be able to get the job done, one way or another." So I said yes. I brought the signboard home and removed the old paint, making sure that the lettering was vaguely visible. Since no changes were needed, it was an easy job. But the next job was not so simple. Clarence asked me to paint their name and business information on the wooden side boards of their pickup truck. This was a different matter. I planned to lay everything out on paper and give each letter the proper space in centimeters, but I soon found out that an "M" needed more space than an "I." After some struggle and learning, I finished the job. The next job in lettering brought a new challenge. I was asked to finish the large sign over the cemetery entrance. This put all my recently acquired knowledge as an artist to the test. Not only was there nothing visible from the old letters, but the board was cut into a graceful curve. With patience and paper trials this job was completed. By these and other small jobs, I noticed that the people in New Holland were trying to help. We had little money, never more than twenty dollars or so, but we could live on that for a month.

One Sunday morning after church, one of the elders came to me with some questions in regard to our church membership. Since it was common knowledge—especially among the people in New Holland—that their sister church in the Netherlands, the GKN, was sliding in doctrine and in life, he wanted to know where we stood. In Dutch, I answered that in body and soul we belonged to our Savior, Jesus Christ. Well, he said, that is a good start! And it was the start of our new life.

Our Ministry in Leighton, Iowa

Rev. Cornelius Witt, edited by Saramae Witt Vander Ark[1]

Early in September 1929 we[2] settled in Leighton[3] with our little son, John Edward. It was an enormous house in our eyes. From the south front wall of the parlor to the rear wall of the kitchen on the north it measured 75 feet, and it was a full two-story house. The front door opened upon a spacious hall where was footed a splendid stairway that curved to the second floor with its study, three bedrooms, and a bathroom. In addition there were two smaller rooms—one of which had served as a sewing room and opened up to a small balcony. On the main floor a narrow stairway led from the dining room to the rear of a hallway which ran all the way through the upper story. We used the parlor as a spare bedroom, and slept in a large bedroom on the east side of the house. In the living room we placed our piano against the closed double doors that led to the parlor. The dining room was 18 by 18 feet, equal in size to the kitchen, which had two small additions, with the water pump and sink in one and a dumbwaiter to the basement fruit storage room in the other. Shortly after we moved in, the pressure pump, which easily froze up in the winter, was relocated to the dumbwaiter room, and a new sink was installed—dishes could be washed while looking out through a double window. The first little auxiliary room now became the children's play room.

The basement consisted of two or three large rooms, and the house was heated with a soft coal furnace. You can imagine how dusty it was. Every Monday morning we had to carefully sweep the laundry room before we could sort the clothes for washing. A small glass-enclosed porch jutted out from the kitchen. Down the stairway, every Monday morning, we carried a boiler full of hot water, I on the lower end. This had been heated on a kerosene stove. It was a dreadfully dangerous procedure, but we were young and were careful and never thought

Leighton, Iowa, a small town south and east of Pella that still today has fewer than two hundred residents. Image courtesy of the author.

Cornelius Witt (1903-1983) was a minister in the Christian Reformed Church. After serving Leighton, he and his wife served Hull, ND; Harderwyk, Holland, MI; Ebenezer, Trenton, ON; Flint, MI; and East Palmyra, NY. During his entire career he was active in programming and ministry for young people.

much of it. I would light the two-burner oil stove early in the morning and would return to bed until seven, at which time the water was boiling and ready for use. One morning we awoke at 6:30 and could scarcely breathe. The burners had malfunctioned and had begun to create a nasty smoke that pervaded the house. Soot clung to the curtains and walls. You can imagine what a housecleaning task we had that day.

My study was at the head of the front stairway with a large double window. It had a fine bookcase, and in it I placed my young library. There was room to spare. Here I labored to produce sermons. Mr. and Mrs. A. Pousma of Denver sent us a check for $100 to purchase books. But, since I had no desk, we used the money to buy a beautiful walnut desk and two chairs which I have used all these years. We got them at wholesale through the mediation of another friend from an office furniture manufacturer in Grand Rapids.

Sermon-making required much of my time. On alternate Sundays I conducted two Dutch services and the intervening Sundays called for one sermon in English and the other Dutch. The people in the area had retained a knowledge of and love for the language of their fathers, although the original settlers had come to the area beginning in 1847. Leighton was the second congregation established outside of Pella in 1893. Business people in Pella were wise to employ personnel who could speak Dutch. Many young people were bilingual. But clinging to the language of the fathers in church services was detrimental to the congregation, for there were those who did not sufficiently understand it and had left our church to join the Reformed Church, which became all English in the 1930s. Early in that decade I proposed to preach an extra English sermon in the evening, every other week. This we did for a year, and in 1936 switched to fifty-fifty. That satisfied most of the people, but a few refused to come to the English service to the very end of their lives.

Cornelius Witt, pictured here as a candidate for the ministry in 1929, had come to the United States in 1912. Image courtesy of the author.

Our salary was set at $1600, plus $100 for auto expenses. On that basis we received something like $140 per month and that was sufficient to take care of all our needs. We were determined to start saving a few dollars each month and were indeed able to do so for a time. But in October of the same year that our ministry began the stock market crashed as the Great Depression set in. The results were widespread but did not immediately affect our salary. We were paid in full that year, and the next we were able to send $15.75 per month to Investors Savings, which was to return $25 for each of the monthly deposits after ten years. As time went on, money became even more scarce, and we lowered our salary to $1450 in 1932, and to $1000 in 1933. Saving money was out of the question for a long time. It took us ten years to complete our investment program.

Our household budget for 1933 included $18 per month for groceries, and we managed to operate our car for $8 per month. We owed money to classis for the $700 it had given while studying at Calvin. We were able to pay $50 the first year, whereupon classis decided to consider the rest a gift to us.[4] That was quite a relief. Shortly after Saramae's birth in 1930, we bought a refrigerator, since we had a lot of trouble with milk becoming sour. This cost about $260, and we promised to pay for this at the rate of $20 a month. This we managed to do until the balance due was $100. For a year we were unable to pay anything. The church owed me $100 on the reduced salary of the year before. I finally asked the consistory to come to my aid, which it did. I turned the $100 check over to Mr. Vanden Berg, and we vowed never to buy anything on time again.

Quite often the treasurer could not pay our monthly salary in one piece, and at one time he was three months behind. So we had difficulties paying our bills now and then. We will always remember with appreciation that Henry Kuperus, our grocer, was willing to give us credit. The people simply did not have much money during the Depression. Some lost their farms, and throughout the country millions were out of work. Our congregation counted about fifty families, but the regular offerings, separate from the budget, generally came to about five dollars. People put off paying the pledges to the budget in the hope that the crops in the fall would enable them to do so, but prices were often very low. Corn brought as little as ten cents a bushel at one time. Those were hard times, yet we never missed a meal. Quite often we received gifts in the form of meat and eggs, and that we appreciated very much.

While we were here in Leighton, two of our children were born.

Saramae came on 31 July 1930, without benefit of a doctor's services. I did not call Dr. Williams soon enough, and as a result the delivery was accomplished by her father and dear Mrs. Plate, who was always helpful to us. The doctor was kind enough to cut the bill by 50 percent. It was the custom of many people to use the Oskaloosa telephone of Henry Kuperus to avoid paying the toll charge. We also did so, and when the birth was imminent I ran to the store instead of using our Pella phone. I was so excited I sent out announcements dating her birth as 29 July instead of 31 July. Cornelius James, named after his father and grandfather, was also born in the parsonage, on the day before the glorious Fourth, in 1933. He had a ruddy countenance and black hair.

In January of 1934, the men of the congregation cut down a number of black oak trees on the farm of Peter Van Englenhoven for our benefit. So, for a while our salary of $1000 was supplemented with good fuel. The next year they did the same thing, but with elm wood. There was no time to season this wood, and we had a hard time warming the house that winter. Often I wore my overcoat and gloves while working in the study. As a result, in 1936 the salary was raised to $1200, and we had to pay for our own coal again. All in all we got along just fine and found no reason to complain.

But let me turn away from these matters to note certain events that occurred in those early years in our ministry in Leighton. They were good years despite poverty and discouraging experiences. I found it difficult to write sermons every week in addition to all the other work. The minister in those days had to lead every society in the study of God's Word, and we were involved in family visitation, which was held every fall, two days a week for about two months. And then there were catechism classes—two every

When Cornelius and Jeannette (Schoolland) Witt came to Leighton, they had a two-year-old son, John Edward. Image courtesy of the author.

Wednesday evening and three on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday there was a Sunday school class to teach after the afternoon service, as well as the Young People's Society in the evening. Moreover, we started a choral society soon after we came to Leighton.[5] We sang the songs found in a collection called *Winnowed Anthems*, with which we had become familiar in Denver.

The congregational singing was accompanied by a reed organ played by either of two young ladies, but there was no music prior to the service. After some months I persuaded the consistory to introduce that, and this was continued despite the protests of one of the elders, who insisted that the organ gave forth an "uncertain sound." This was in reference to I Corinthians 14:8 no doubt.[6] The girls received ten dollars per year for their faithful work.

This same elder was a stern man but well-versed in Scripture and the creeds. The first day we went on family visitation he assured me that he would take charge, and that was a great help to me, for I had received no instruction in this part of my task. As a matter of fact I had a very good and capable set of elders on whom I could depend to be of constant help in this responsible task.

Having been interested in the Young Men's Federation and involved in the operation of its board while still a student, I got several societies of young men started in our area. And in due time the Pella League of Young Men's Societies was organized, consisting of nine clubs. Until we left for Hull, in 1937, I had the privilege of heading that organization. The board arranged for two lecture meetings each year, at which prominent leaders in the church addressed large crowds of people, young and old. Hence we had the joy of entertaining in our home such men as professors Berkhof, Volbeda, and Bouma. Besides these lecture meetings for the public, there were membership meetings at the time of classical meetings so that we could ask ministerial delegates, such as Rev. Van Dellen, to address these.

A couple of years after the young men's league began, the young women organized in a similar fashion. My wife, Jeannette, had a hand in that, and became its president and remained such until we left the area.[7] Sometimes the two leagues met together, and every summer we had a combined picnic attended by hundreds of young people. Now and then we still meet people who recall with joy their participation in the meetings of the leagues as well as the Federation of Young People's Conventions. On New Year's Day 1932, Mr. Richard Postma, president of the Young Men's Federation, later the director, was in our area and spoke in several churches. I took him to Sully that evening. The road was muddy and the number present at the meeting was small. Enthusiasm for the broader organization was not great in our societies, but it was tops for the leagues.

At the Young Women's Convention in Chicago, Jeannette addressed the

hundreds of girls on "Loyalty in Our Vocations." It was so well received that she spoke it on several occasions, first of all at a combined meeting of our two youth leagues held in Pella with an attendance of over 360 young people. I had a similar experience, speaking at the Young Men's Federation Convention the previous year, which was held in Chicago. I visited the World's Fair held there at the same time, together with a couple of delegates who had come with me. Those were exciting events for us both.

On January 30 of that year our roof caught fire from a chimney spark. Jelte De Jong, walking by, saw the smoke and sounded the alarm. I climbed into the attic with a pail of water and tried to extinguish the fire from inside. In a few moments the men of the village came rushing toward the parsonage with ladders and pails, and soon the fire was put out. At the congregational meeting just a few weeks before, the decision had been taken not to re-shingle the parsonage roof—money being a scarce item. Another meeting after the fire, in August, reversed that decision unanimously! An indication of how scarce money was then is that it was months before the treasurer could pay the $100 for the new shingles. The carpenter spent four days laying the roof, and charged $16.

The parsonage of the Leighton, Iowa, Christian Reformed Church was built in 1910. Image courtesy of Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Leighton Christian Reformed Church, Christian School, and parsonage in 1930. The Christian school had been open only one year a decade before the Witts arrived, and it was used by the congregation for catechetical instruction. Image courtesy of Heritage Hall. Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

On 4 March 1933, all the banks in forty-four states were closed by order of our new president, F. D. Roosevelt. Our Leighton bank weathered the storm, but the main bank in Pella went broke. For some reason we had put a five-dollar birthday gift of Saramae in that bank and lost about half of it. This started also at our little bank, but the cashier, Mr. Vander Linden, to those who came to get their deposits, said that they could have their money, but he would not welcome their business when things got straightened out. The worried depositors by and large went home empty-handed. For a long while, many Pella business people came to Leighton to do their banking.

It was at this time that I had the experience of teaching the way of salvation to a young man who had come from the "outside" to marry one of our girls. Throughout that winter I also taught catechism on Tuesday afternoons in a school house, rather than in the church. The children were not all of our church but all the parents were happy to have them instructed by me because it was quite a chore to bring them to the church on Saturday afternoon. A few times the roads were so bad that I could not make the trip, and once I walked a couple of miles from the paved road to the school. In the spring, the parents surprised us by bringing chickens, eggs, butter, and meat.

In the fall of 1932 the Girls' Society was engaged to serve the noon luncheon at the Corn Husking Contest of the county, which occurred on Barney Memmelaar's farm. They were prepared to sell hundreds of meals, but alas the contest was over early and nearly all the people left before noon. Hence only 140 people stayed to eat, and the girls made no money, though they did break even. I brought many pies back to Vander Ploeg's Bakery, and happily the owner was willing to accept them since he could use them at a certain meeting that evening.

Never count your chickens before they are hatched!

Every week I had to prepare at least two sermons and was therefore always pleased when I had a classical appointment. That gave me a breathing spell. So it happened a couple of times that I had a sermon or even two prepared in advance. But I discovered that this caused confusion in my mind on the pulpit. I had a vague notion one time that I was preaching the wrong sermon, or at least portions of it, though this never actually happened.

Until the end of 1935 the offerings in the church were collected by means of pouches attached to a long pole. An argument in support of the use of pouches was that no one other than God and the giver knew the amount being given. The young people in the choral society had refused to use the pouches when they rendered a program in earlier years, and purchased two collection plates. The deacons were eager to use them in the services, and since the pouches were wearing out, Herm Meppelink's wife, Grace, who usually repaired them, cooperated by assuring the elders that they were completely worn out. So, against Willem De Witt's contention that the right hand should not know what the left was doing, the plates came in constant use. We never heard any further objections.

Both Jeannette and I were given abundant opportunities to write in the course of time. I was the correspondent for *De Wachter*, covering the congregations of Classis Pella. But more importantly, Rev. Martin Monsma, pastor of Second Pella Christian Reformed Church, invited me to join him in a new venture in 1936 of publishing a calendar (called Daily Manna) composed of meditations for each day of the year. Fifty-two ministers each wrote a series of seven, and I wrote such a group of meditations beginning in 1937 until the publication was discontinued in 1968 because of strong competition.[8]

Moreover I was responsible for a weekly page in *De Wachter* for thirteen years, at first giving an explanation of the Sunday school lesson, and in later years presenting a review of what was going on in the mission fields of the world. Articles for the youth page in the *Banner* kept me busy for four months a year for six years. In addition, for a couple of years I had the joy of writing the summer outlines for Bible study in The *Young Calvinist* magazine. A series of outlines in Dutch on I and II Peter was published in booklet form for use by ladies' organizations in Canada. Jeannette, too, became a contributor to the *Banner* and for seven years wrote three articles annually for the women's page.

As 1936 dawned, Jeannette did not feel well, and a trip to Dr. Williams revealed that she needed an operation for the removal of an ovarian cyst. This was on 4 February, a very stormy day. I had trouble getting to the hospital, and the surgery was held up for an hour on my account. Those were difficult days, for she was in the hospital for a total of twenty-seven days. The entire hospital bill came to $84 and was paid piecemeal. We were deeply grateful to the Lord for sparing her life.

Iowa was deluged with snow for weeks, and a group of men sallied forth from Leighton almost every day for a while to clear the two-mile road leading to the highway that connected us to Oskaloosa[9] and Pella. Every night the wind undid their efforts. Finally they decided to break down fences where necessary and blaze a more direct roadway through the fields. Just before this plan was to be executed the boisterous storm ceased and we could travel again.

We had often talked about the reestablishing of the Christian school in our area. We had a building which had been used in 1917, but the next year the board could not get a teacher. They had offered the position to Jeannette, who had just graduated from the teachers' course at Grundy College, but she accepted another

Rev. Cornelius Witt in the 1950s when he served the congregation in Trenton, Ontario, and was a contributor to the Young People's section of the Banner. *Always advocating for ministry to young people, he was active in the Young Calvinist Federation and the founding of Camp Roger in West Michigan. Image courtesy of the author.*

appointment tendered by the school in Denver. So the Leighton children returned to the public schools. She never dreamed that ten years later we would enter the ministry in Leighton and find there a closed Christian school building used for church functions, such as catechism classes and society meetings.

In the fall of 1936 we decided we could wait no longer for the school to open. John and Saramae were to attend the Christian school in Pella. This meant two trips to town five days a week. To help pay for the gas, I delivered a batch of bread from Sybenga's Bakery to the Kuperus grocery

store for twenty-seven cents, and received a quart of milk from the Vos family whose two children I picked up along the way and brought to school. What a struggle that was. But the children were delighted with their new teachers, and we felt that we were setting a good example. Though not immediately, in the course of time more and more people also sent their children to Pella.

In the summer of 1937 we opened a daily vacation Bible school which proved to be very successful. Both Jeannette and I taught three full days per week for nearly a month. Our curriculum consisted of singing, Bible, history, geography, and spelling, all of which was drawn from biblical material. It worked extremely well. The children learned eighteen songs from the *Psalter Hymnal* and were able to locate all the important features in the Holy Land. We had no books to help us, for the Bible school movement was still new, and we didn't know of any material that might guide us. Although we taught in subsequent locations, we believe our experience in Leighton was the most satisfactory of all. The parents and friends, who listened to the closing program, were most enthusiastic.

That summer brought the call to become the pastor of the Hull, North Dakota, congregation. We visited Hull, on the way to Colorado, arriving in the midst of a dust storm on the day that found the people in Haveman's grove, participating in a mission fest. We felt moved by the severe difficulties that the people were experiencing. They were mostly farmers and found it hard to make a living, since the drought continued for years. Quite a number of them had to depend on a small check they received from the government so they might not abandon their farms.

What were we to do? We had spent eight years in our first charge. Wasn't that long enough? Wouldn't it be wise to get a new start, both for ourselves and the congregation? We pondered deeply about God's will in this matter, but finally decided when in Colorado, after the visit to Hull, that we should make the move. After some weeks we left our dear friends in Leighton, preaching a farewell based on I Thessalonians 3:16: "The Lord be with you all," exactly eight years after our arrival.

We left behind many dear friends, chief among them Cornie and Martha Van Engelenhoven, the Bandstra family, Gerrit and Harriet Vander Wilt, Walter and Anna Steenhoek, and many others. Writing this account in 1983, it may be good to mention that we often return to Leighton and, when we are there, enjoy a party or picnic with the youth of yesteryear, and preach on Sunday.

Endnotes

1. Saramae Vander Ark is one of the five children of Cornelius and Jeannette Witt, and was born in Leighton, Iowa. Much of this article was also published online at http://www.thebanner.org/news/2013/02/church-history-wrapped-up-in-quilt and is used here with permission.

2. Witt was married to Jeannette Schoolland, who was a school teacher at the time of their marriage.

3. Leighton is about ten miles southwest of Pella, Iowa. When the Witts arrived, the congregation consisted of 254 individuals in fifty-three families, *Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930), 18.

4. Both Witts were members of Classis Pella when they married, as was the Leighton congregation.

5. In their first year, the choral society already had thirty members, *Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930), 88.

6. "For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war?" American Standard Version.

7. During their first year in Leighton, Jeannette was the president of the Young Women's Society (Work and Pray), *Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930), 88.

8. Some of the meditations were republished in booklet form organized by topic. A complete set of the calendars is available in the Martin Monsma Papers, Heritage Hall, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI.

9. Oskaloosa is about eighteen miles southwest of Pella, and Leighton is about two miles from the highway that connects Pella and Oskaloosa.

Hendrik Merckens to Albertus C. Van Raalte

Nella Kennedy

Recently, a descendant of the Rev. Albertus Christiaan Van Raalte allowed the staff of the A. C. Van Raalte Institute to peruse a number of previously unknown documents. Among these was a letter from the Netherlands written to Van Raalte by Hendrik Merckens (1837-1909). He had addressed it to Van Raalte at Union College in Holland, unaware that he had combined the names of Holland's Union School (a public elementary and high school) and nascent Hope College. Merckens asks about the possibility of a teaching job in Holland, Michigan.

He and Van Raalte had met in 1866, likely because of Merckens's need for employment, because his attempt to establish a Christian school for advanced elementary education (up to eighth grade) in Haarlem had failed the year before. A teaching job in the US did not materialize in 1868, so he remained in the Netherlands, becoming the head of a number of schools in subsequent years. He finished his career as principal of a relatively large Christian elementary school in Vlissingen, Zeeland, where he died.

In addition to suffering financially in these non-state-funded schools, he also had to endure censure from fellow Christian school teachers for his unorthodox methods of teaching the Bible in schools. Although in a letter to Abraham Kuyper he declares a distaste for "ecclesiastical battles,"[1] he was often in the thick of them. He had grown up in a non-sectarian milieu (his carpenter father was an evangelist) and held that the Bible speaks for itself. No human-engendered doctrine should be taught. Furthermore, his published exegeses deviated from traditionally held interpretations. He held, for example, that God does not speak audibly to a person or people, but does so through specific circumstances. His seeming lack of orthodoxy became a cause célèbre (*de zaak Merckens*) in the Christian teachers' association, and his convictions resulted in penalties, such as withdrawing privately-raised funds from his school in Vlissingen, although the organization continued to tolerate him as a member (1899).

Hendrik Merckens. Image courtesy of Piet Hein Merckens LL D.

By nature a man of strong opinions, he invited conflicts in other areas as well. Merckens's strong advocacy for homeopathy also brought opposition from the majority of the medical establishment. Although home pharmacies and practice were widespread in the Netherlands (especially among

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the orthodox), homeopathy was often viewed as quackery by university-trained physicians. Even among the medical establishment, however, there was some sympathy for homeopathy, and Abraham Kuyper himself was a proponent.[2] Merckens opposed quackery and promoted responsible homeopathy; his translations from renowned German homeopaths were printed and reprinted often during the years following his letter to Van Raalte in 1868. His own book, *Homoepatische Huisdokter*,[3] issued for the first time in 1895, was reprinted fourteen times, although the president of the society of homeopathic physicians encouraged pharmacies to cease or limit the sale of Merckens's book.[4]

The popularity of this book did not bring great financial rewards, however. Merckens told Kuyper that his life had been one of financial strain, but he could point with pride to his well-educated children. The question can be raised whether Merckens, as Van Raalte knew him seated around the Haarlem table in 1866, would have been a good fit in West Michigan. His pietism, and perhaps his Biblicism, may have pleased the dominie, but his non-doctrinal, unReformed position would have pleased neither him nor the Holland inhabitants. His educational qualifications could have been a great contribution to the emerging Hope College (he was a graduate of the first pedagogical institute in the Netherlands), but there already were teachers in place who were perhaps equally well-qualified. It is possible that with his knowledge of the homeopathic field he could have alerted readers about the fraudulent and incorrect content of medicines advertised in great numbers in the Holland newspapers. But it is doubtful that the *Kolonie*, with its own doctrinal battles and small-town suspicions, would have been just the right place for the forthright Merckens.

Letter from Hendrik Merckens 8 November 1868

The Honorable Dr. Van Raalte, Holland, Michigan[5]

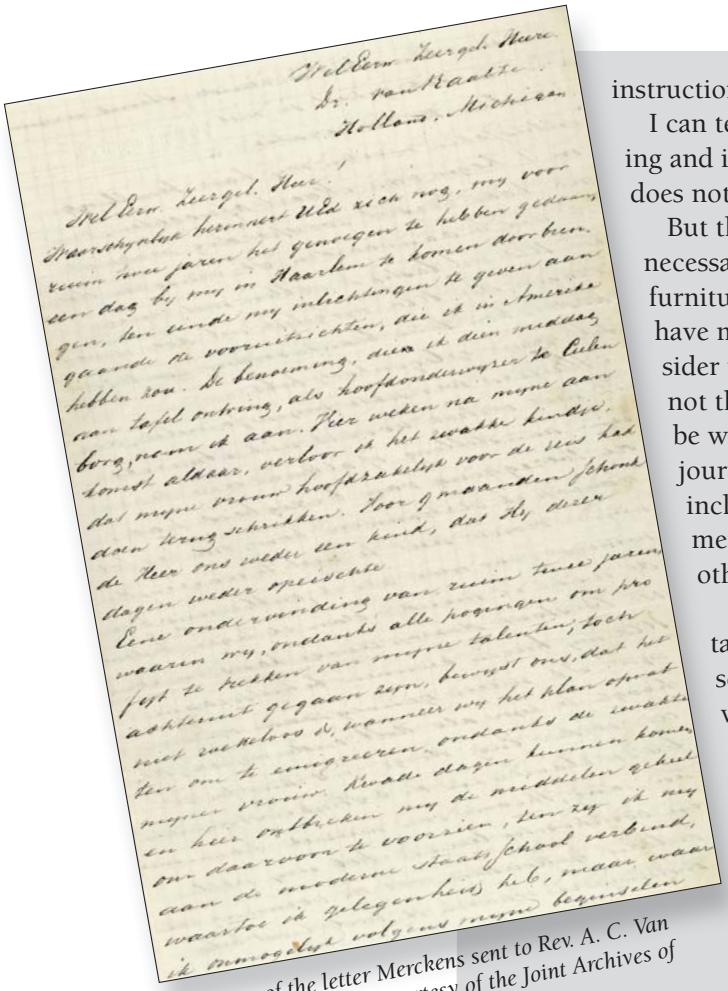
Dr. Van Raalte!

Perhaps you remember that more than two years ago you allowed me the pleasure of spending a day with you in Haarlem in order to give me information concerning the prospects that I might find in America. While we were seated at the table that afternoon, I received a letter about an appointment to become the head master in Culemborg. I accepted that appointment. Four weeks after my arrival there, I lost the fragile child which had been the main reason for my wife's[6] hesitancy about the journey. Nine months ago the Lord gave us another child, which he again called to Himself.[7]

This was our experience of more than two years during which we regressed, in spite of all efforts to benefit from my talents. It proves to us that it is not very reckless to consider emigrating, notwithstanding my wife's condition. Evil days may come, and I have no means to deal with these, unless I join the modern state school—the opportunity exists, but I cannot possibly work there due to my principles.

My wife and I are of one mind to plan for emigration. But we need to wait until her confinement ends in early March, and after her recovery will begin the journey as soon as possible.[8] Therefore I need to bother you[9] with a couple of questions, which perhaps could be answered by someone else if you yourself do not find the opportunity.

First of all my family would prefer that I not depart until I have a position, or at least a firm promise of a position on which I can rely, in order not to take risks for my wife. She has never known deprivations—and neither have I—but she would be much less able than I to bear them. Is there a chance, and would you be able to help me in this? I think that I am sufficiently educated as a teacher in Dutch. Furthermore I teach English, High German and French; I can give piano lessons, and also can give instructions for playing three string instruments, teach singing, theory of music, four-part harmony, and theory of composition. I also have spent time in the



First page of the letter Merckens sent to Rev. A. C. Van Raalte in 1868. Image courtesy of the Joint Archives of Holland.

instruction of teachers, which I have enjoyed very much.

I can teach Italian. I can give basic instruction in bookkeeping and in other subjects in both English as well as in Dutch, it does not matter to me which of these languages I use.[10]

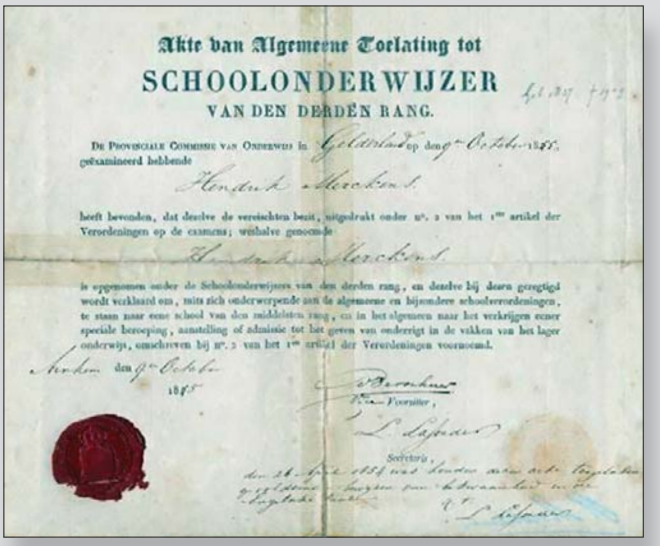
But the problem remains how to acquire funds for supplies necessary for the journey and settlement, since the sale of furniture will yield very little, and at the moment I do not have more at my disposal. If people at your end would consider my coming to their young colony important (if that is not the case, then of course I will not come), would they be willing to advance me some funds? For example, for the journey from New York? Or to offer me employment that includes passage, which I would prefer, if such employment would support me, or leave me sufficient time for other activities to take care of my needs.

I also have a few more questions of minor importance. I will mark each with a number, and make a copy so that in the response only mentioning the numbers would be sufficient.

Do I need to take: 1. Bedding; 2. Mattresses (or empty them here, and fill them there?); 3. Dishes (dinner service); 4. China; 5. Glassware; 6. Clock; 7. Instruments for natural science (I have these in my possession for teaching that subject matter); 8. An extensive homeopathic pharmacy (I have a small one with which I successfully help many, or is that practice as hated in your area as it is in Russia?); 9. Dutch arithmetic books (I have many) and books about natural science; 10. Would it be desirable to bring along examples of the best methods to teach various subjects—to translate or adapt according to the needs in America—or are there enough schoolbooks? You know that people are extraordinarily informed with that in the Netherlands, although the spirit of unbelief is pervasive in many of them, whereas the Christian [books] sometimes have more theology than the science about which they speak; 11. For beginners in music I have written down my own method, but of course for the advanced I use the works of good masters. Should I bring those last named, or can good or inexpensive ones be purchased in your town?[11] 12. Is it desirable to take along a set of four string instruments for a quartet if I can manage the money frugally, or can one purchase these—including a seraphine organ[12]—as easily in your town? 13. What is the least expensive, but still manageable, way for my wife to make

The seraphine organ is a keyboard wind instrument that produces sound via air being blown across metallic reeds. Merckens asked about purchasing such an organ for music instruction. Public domain image.

the journey? It is to be hoped that we will have a small child [on our journey] by then which she will probably not be able to nurse, at least that was the case with the two previous ones. And that would be a serious problem en route. Even so—with all the disappointment experienced in this land—if the Lord sees fit that I settle where I no longer need to bury my talents to be accepted in my surroundings, this merciful God will also ease all those concerns and ease my way there. If you still think favorably about my prospects, I pray that you answer this letter as soon as possible, or have it done by an authorized person on your behalf, so that I will be able to make my plans as quickly as possible. I ask of you to send your answer to:


Akte van Algemeene Toelating tot
SCHOOLONDERWIJZER
VAN DEN DERDEN RANG.

Merckens's 1855 teaching license, the note at the bottom (written in 1854?), reports his expertise in English. Image courtesy of Piet Hein Merckens LL D.

P. Nuveen, IJgracht near the Foeliestraat 32, Amsterdam

Having heard that you travel frequently, I will address this to "Union College," where of course they will know your address.

May the Lord bless your labors, and will thereby fill you with joy.

My wife sends her cordial greetings, to which I add mine. I remain, respectfully,

Your servant
H. Merckens
Culemborg, 8 Nov. 1868

Endnotes

1. Hendrik Merckens to Dr. A. Kuyper, 15 November 1897 (Amsterdam: UBVU Historisch Documentatie Centrum).

2. Abraham Kuyper was treated by a homeopath, and advocated a chair of homeopathy at the Free University in Amsterdam.

3. H. Merckens, *De Homeopathische Huisdokter bevattende de noodigsten aanwijzingen* (Leipzig, Dr. Wilmar Schwabe, 1895).

4. J.I.A.B. van Roijen, M.D. in *Handelingen van de Vereeniging van homoeopathische Geneesheren in Nederland*, No. 1, November 1900 (Zwolle: La Rivière & Voorhoeve, 1900), 22, 23.

5. Address on envelope fragment: Rev. Dr. Van Raalte, Union College, Holland (State of Michigan), North America.

6. Alida Nuveen and Merckens had married in 1861.

7. Their son, Hendrik Willem, died 28 October 1866 when six months old; and daughter Maria Petronella died 3 November 1868, at nine months.

8. Their son Pieter was born 26 March 1869; subsequent children were: Alida (1870-1872), Johanna Maria (1871-1871, lived three weeks), Johanna Maria (1873-), Wilhelmina Hendrika (1875-), Alida (1878-), and Hendrik (1887-).

9. Merckens uses the deferential Dutch term "your reverence" instead of the personal pronoun throughout.

10. The meaning of this sentence is not clear.

11. He uses *a costi* for "in your town."

12. A small-keyed wind organ, with sound produced when air is blown across brass reeds.

book review response

A response to a review of *Shades of White Flight* (*Origins*, Fall 2015)

In the last issue of *Origins*, Michael Douma offered a careful review of my book, *Shades of White Flight: Evangelical Congregations and Urban Departure* (Rutgers University Press, 2015). I am grateful that Douma sees it as an "important book" with arguments that "deserve to be heard." I also appreciate that he describes the research as "impressive." However, I would also like to respond to his criticism of the volume.

In some ways, I think the distinctive theoretical orientations of our respective disciplines, his history and mine sociology, elude Douma. As I explained in the book, much of the sociological understanding of cities has oriented around the theory of urban political economy. The primary argument of urban political economy is that cities do not naturally or organically develop. Instead, powerful economic and political actors shape urban places in ways that chiefly offer benefits to those already with clout and position. Within this framework, little to no attention has been given to the agency that congregations might have in urban spatial and demographic development. So, despite what Douma writes in his review, I was not addressing a "social scientific strawman," but, rather, a long legacy within my subfield of not accounting for the role of religion in cities. In short, my book suggests a more robust explanation of how cities and neighborhoods are shaped and the role that churches play in influencing that process of urban molding.

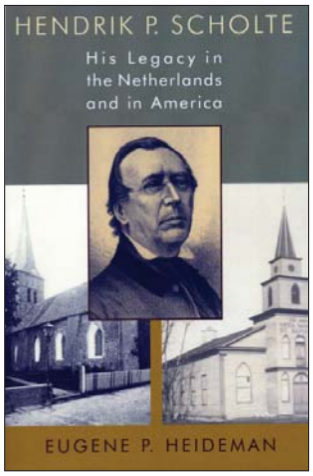
Douma also wonders about my intent to complicate notions of white flight and the role of religion therein. The evidence offered in my book clearly delineates the subtle differences in response to neighborhood demographic change within Christian Reformed Church congregations and Reformed Church in America congregations because of very slightly different institutional rules. In this way, my work is part of growing literature that urges restraint in implementing generalizing and sloppy terms like "white flight" when discussing the fluidity of the US city.

Finally, Douma seems to indicate in his last paragraph that I perhaps should have named names in an effort to enhance the argument. I think here we have a case of methodological disjuncture between the disciplines. Under the auspices of my Institutional Review Board protocol (an apparatus for protecting human subjects of research) I was precluded from revealing the identities of interviewees and the names that appeared in meeting minutes. And, as I noted throughout the book, I was more interested in the racialization of institutions than in the racism of individuals.

All this said, I am appreciative for Douma's serious engagement with my book. He raises a good number of provocative points. And if we were to discuss face-to-face, my guess is that the conversation would be quite cordial. My assessment here is that distinctive disciplinary frameworks and methodologies have led to discordant interpretations.

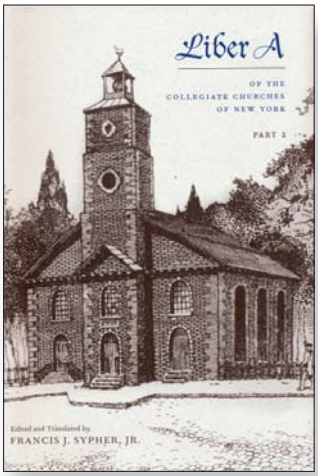
Mark T. Mulder
Professor, Sociology and Social Work, Calvin College

book notes



Hindrik P. Scholte
His Legacy in the Netherlands and in America
Eugene P. Heideman

Grand Rapids:
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015
ISBN: 978-0-8028-7352-1
$30.00 paperback, 314 pages



Liber A of the Collegiate Church of New York: Part 2
Francis J. Sypher Jr., ed. and trans.

Grand Rapids:
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015
ISBN: 978-0-8028-7341-5
$75.00 hardcover, 854 pages

for the future

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

Anton van Renssen tells the story of Johannes van 't Lindhout's efforts in the late nineteenth century to find North American homes for residents of the orphanage in Neerbosch, the Netherlands.

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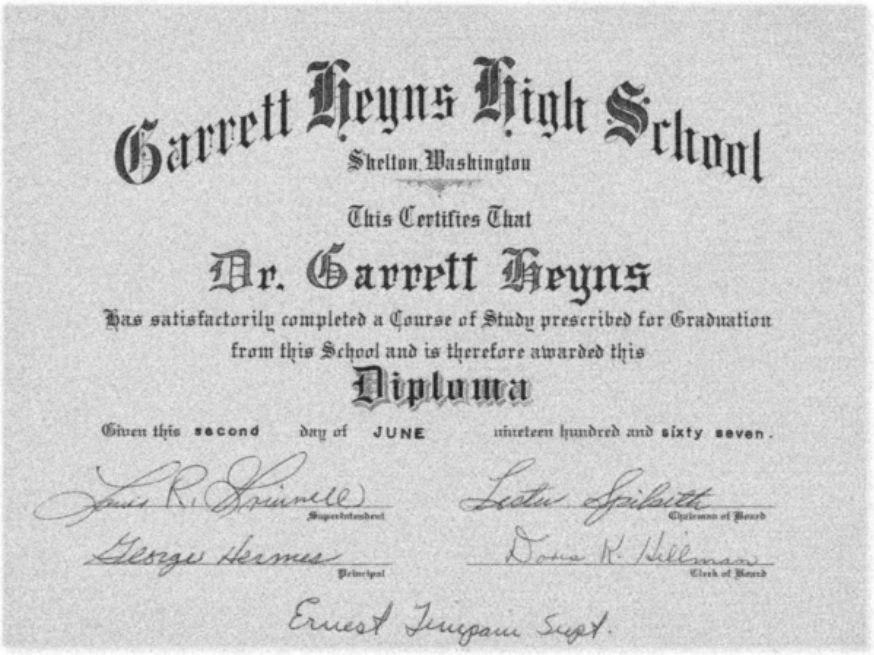
Historical Magazine of The Archives
Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary
Volume XXXIV • Number 1 • 2016



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Dr. Garrett Heyns

Has satisfactorily completed a Course of Study prescribed for Graduation from this School and is therefore awarded this

Diploma

Given this second day of JUNE nineteen hundred and sixty seven.

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