Origins

Historical Magazine of the Heritage Hall Archives

Christian Reformed Church in North America
Calvin Theological Seminary
Calvin University

Volume XXXVIII • Number 2 • 2020



Origins

Origins

Volume XXXVIII • Number 2 • 2020

Historical Magazine of the Heritage Hall Archives

Heritage Hall Archives is located in the Hekman Library at Calvin University. It is the archives of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, Calvin Theological Seminary, and Calvin University.

Heritage Hall, Calvin University
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546
(616) 526-6313

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

Robert Schoone-Jongen
Editor

Hendrina Van Spronsen
Circulation Manager

Tracey L. Gebbia
Designer

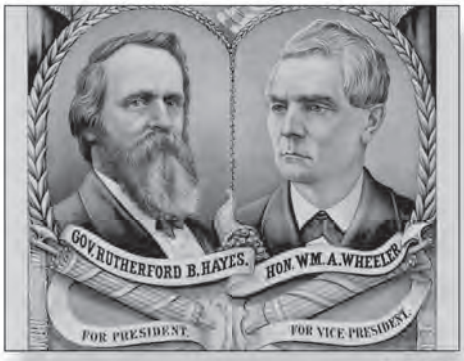
James C. Schaap
Robert P. Swierenga
Contributing Editors

InnerWorkings
Printer

Cover photo:
Governor George Romney of Michigan at the Tulip Time festival in Holland, Michigan, in 1967. Courtesy of MLIVE



page 7



page 20

2 From the Editor

5 The Dutch Immigrant Dilemma: Become One of Them, or Defeat Them?
Robert Schoone-Jongen

11 "Couldn't You Be Great Like Abraham Lincoln?" Congressman Drukker Versus the Suffragists
Robert Schoone-Jongen

19 Jacob Den Herder — Presidential Elector

22 "Trying to ride two horses at once." A. J. Muste: Dutch American Peace Activist
Michael Douma


EIGHT PAGES—PRICE FIVE CE

Council Defeat
Plan to Vacate
Twentieth Stree

Twentieth St. behind Christian high school will be paved this season, following action taken by Common Council Wednesday night at a public hearing on whether the street should be closed to allow expansion of the school system. Specifically, Council voted 8 to 4

Car, Dump Tru
Crash on Roa

page 34



page 39

30 White Hot Politics: Holland Christian's Bid to Close 20th Street Becomes a Political Fight over Christian Education
Robert P. Swierenga

38 Searching for Voters Amid the Tulips: Iowa and Michigan Governors Participating in Tulip Time (1936-2019)

44 Book Review

46 For the Future
upcoming Origins articles

47 Contributors

from the editor. . .



From the editor . . .

I have been a history teacher much longer than I have been an editor. In looking back at 40-plus years in a classroom, the one thing that I believe I learned about history is this: Beware of generalizations. You know, all those statements that begin with "all." The longer I study history the more I cringe at that word. And don't get me started on that word's appearances in online comments, Facebook postings, memes, and TV pundit commentaries.

Over the years *Origins* has frequently functioned as a corrective to that awful three-letter word. Dutch immigrants were heavily Republican; but not all of them. Most were Democratic before the Civil War. (In 1856, Pella, Iowa's founder, Rev. Hendrik P. Scholte, campaigned for the Democratic candidate for president, James Buchanan.) Only later did most become Republicans. (In 1860, Scholte attended the Republican convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln for president.) Even so, Dutch Americans could be found amid the ranks of Democrats, Socialists, and Anarchists. Or, Dutch immigrants supported private day schools; but only a minority of them did. Or, Dutch immigrants were psalm-singing Protestants; but Paterson and Grand Rapids among other localities supported Dutch Catholic parishes. And there were the Dutch Americans who never affiliated with any faith (see the previous list of political affiliations for evidence). Or, Dutch immigrants came with little and thrived through thrift; except there were those who crossed the Atlantic in first-class accommodations to expand their already prosperous business operations (think of the Holland-America Line). You get the picture—the more accurate, complicated one, as opposed to the simpler sketch.

This issue of *Origins* hopefully adds a few more brushstrokes to the Dutch American historical canvas. A presidential elector from Zeeland, Michigan; a member of Congress from Passaic, New Jersey; a protracted dispute in Holland, Michigan, over the fate of a street that bisected the Christian school campus; the life of an ardent social activist who opposed wars and promoted civil rights; and state governors who pushed brooms through the streets in Tulip Time parades. And there's more for future consideration: a Dutch American Catholic who was elected mayor of a major American city, as a Democrat, comes to mind.

The reason for this issue's political theme is two-fold: It is a presidential election year, and it is the centennial of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution which specified that women had the right to vote. During August 1920 Tennessee became the thirty-sixth state to ratify the amendment. That November, for the first time, women in every state could vote in a national election. The photo essay on governors and Tulip Time underscores one change the 19th Amendment caused—both Iowa and Michigan currently have women serving as governors, and from different political parties.

We tend to forget that the suffragists lost many electoral battles during their decades-long struggle. And prominent women were numbered among the vocal opponents. One faction of the suffragist movement believed the right to vote should be secured through amending the state constitutions. New Jersey held a special referendum on that question on 19 October 1915. During the campaign both sides used endorsements from prominent people to win support for their side. New Jersey's most prominent citizen, President Woodrow Wilson, endorsed the amendment. Former First Lady Frances Folsom Cleveland opposed it. Wilson even made a special trip to Princeton to cast his vote that day, at a polling station very near Mrs. Cleveland's home. In the city of Passaic, local clergy were prominent endorsees, including Rev. Gerrit Westenberg "formerly of Hope Avenue Christian Reformed." Even though Westenberg had left New Jersey for Michigan in August 1914, he allowed his name to remain on the list. In a note sent from his new parsonage to his former clerical colleagues in Passaic, Westenberg expressed his personal reservations about the "wisdom" of woman's suffrage. "Nevertheless . . . [w]e have no right to deny the vote to the women if

they want it." He concluded that voting was the "moral right" of women.



Gerrit Westenberg (1867-1945). Courtesy of Heritage Hall.

Rev. Karel Wilhelm Fortuin, Westenberg's successor at Hope Avenue, took great umbrage at his predecessor's statement. In a blistering letter to the editor Fortuin pitted the "solid foundation" of the Bible against Westenberg's "moral right." The letter, which appeared one day before the male voters went to the polls to decide the question, stated, "I



Karel Wilhelm Fortuin (1883-1960). Courtesy of Heritage Hall.

wish to admonish our women of today: Do not clamor for equal rights with men outside of your womanly sphere but be satisfied with the position Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and earth, has assigned to you and in that position let your light shine. Dissatisfaction is a root of many evils." Men, the pastor proclaimed, had a "God-given duty" to oppose the amendment. "Even if women will hate you or despise you for it, rest assured, God will bless you for it." Fortuin chastised the suffragist leaders' failure to solicit his opinion on the subject and prayed, "Lord let thy light shine! Amen." On Tuesday, 19 October 1915, the New Jersey suffrage amendment went down to defeat by a margin of ten percentage points, failing in twenty of the state's twenty-one counties.

It's easy to look back at this exchange between Westenberg and Fortuin and imagine being solidly on Westenberg's camp. But we can find the dispute between biblical literalism and human reason echoed in more recent debates—creation vs. evolution, ordination of women in the church, human sexuality, creation keeping. As William Faulkner remarked, "The past isn't dead. It's not even past."

Dutch Americans, both naturalized citizens and native-born, had then, and yet today, one thing every politician wanted and still needs—a vote. So, politicians still come a-courtin' for votes. donning ethnic garb if need be.

In 1914 Professor John Dyneley Prince of New York's Columbia College did not wear wooden shoes but used his language skills to attract ethnic voters. A noteworthy philologist, Prince could speak approximately eighteen languages. As the Republican candidate for New Jersey's Sixth Congressional District, Prince toured the country crossroads, mill towns, and mining settlements of Sussex, Bergen, and Passaic counties. At each stop he delivered his stump speech, preaching the Republican orthodoxy of free competition and protective tariffs. One day he descended from his home in the highlands to breathe the chemical and slaughterhouse smells wafting through Garfield and Lodi. At each stop he encountered listeners who spoke any number of Slavic or Germanic languages. He first delivered his speech in English, before providing a translated summary extemporaneously, without notes. At a stop in Lodi, English gave way to Polish before he switched to "pure Holland," after which ". . . without a moment's hesitation he electrified the Italians by addressing them in Italian" on the historical origins of Columbus Day. In Garfield, English preceded Russian. Five languages in one day was just another day on the campaign trail for the professor.

Despite Prince's remarkable ability to be understood—or perhaps because of it—he lost in November. That same day in the district on the other side of the Passaic River the Republican candidate, a Dutch immigrant who campaigned almost exclusively in English, won a congressional seat by a substantial margin.

In the end, politicians and voters need each other. A sense of commonality creates the links between voters and officeholders. Policy is important, but genuine personal connection is equally crucial. And for Dutch Americans and every other demographic group, those connections will lead to votes for "one of ours" when those kinds of candidates are available. But when they are not, some other politician will try to create that connection symbolically, hence the brooms and wooden shoes, and traditional hats worn by the descendants of those whose roots reach back to the British Isles, or Scandinavia, or West Africa, or somewhere else in the world.

Robert Schoone-Jongen

From the curator . . .

As you might imagine, 2020 has been an eventful year for Heritage Hall—just not in the way we expected. In mid-March COVID-19 shut down the campuses of Calvin University,

Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Christian Reformed Church. You probably experienced the same with local schools, churches, and businesses. Some work continued online, of course. I quickly learned the basics of teaching online, for example, and taught my environmental history course that way in March, April, and May.

In Heritage Hall, the Spring 2020 issue of *Origins* came out a bit late because of COVID-19. If you did not get your copy, please let us know. We anticipated that there might have be a gap between subscriptions that came in late in 2019 or early in 2020 and the mailing list that sends the magazine out to you all.

The shutdown also meant that the only work we could do was from home. From March to June, we could only come in with special permission to pick up or drop off material. No new collections came into Heritage Hall from March to July. We have had some new material come in since then and are catching up on work. All the staff are back in. We are scheduling staff in ways that minimize the amount of time people are working together. If you try to contact us by phone, please leave us a message and be patient. No one is in the office full time for the moment.

There have been no staff changes in Heritage Hall in the past year, but we do need to note some transitions. The first one is sad. Dr. Robert Bolt, who worked in the archives for 22 years, retired in 2019. In late March 2020 he passed away. He was one of my teachers at Calvin and I got to know him better as a person after I joined the history department as a faculty member in 1999. We all miss Bob's presence. And we wish peace and grace for his family and friends.

The other transition is that I have been appointed as curator of Heritage Hall. I've taught in the history department at Calvin since 1999 and served as a department chair and associate dean. I edited *Fides et Historia*, the journal of the Conference on Faith and History, from 2006-2011. And I've written about American and Canadian religious and political history, immigration history, environmental history, the history of the American West, and the history of science fiction. My latest book is *Immigration Debates in America* (2020), published by Calvin Press.

I will begin editing *Origins* with the Spring 2021 issue. Janet Sheeres has retired as editor of *Origins*. She has my thanks for doing this work so ably for the past few years. I've enjoyed getting to know her during my time as interim curator, and she has helped me think through the process of me taking over as editor. In the meantime, Robert Schoone-Jongen agreed to edit the Fall 2020 issue. My thanks to him as well, as we work to make a smooth transition from Janet retiring and me beginning as editor. Some of you have been reading *Origins* from its first issues in the 1980s, when Herb Brinks was editor. I took a class with him in 1988 and remember him as a teacher. When I started working at Calvin, I got to know him as a colleague. I also got to know Richard Harms, his successor. So, I'm honored and excited to be the next editor of *Origins*.

Finally, as curator, I'm delighted to continue to work with great staff and volunteers. Hendrina Van Spronsen is our office coordinator. She processes material related to the CRCNA and manages and copy edits *Origins*. Laurie Haan works on material related to the seminary and university. Emily Koelzer works on our manuscript collections and specializes in digital work for Heritage Hall. One of our volunteers, Phil Erffmeyer, serves as our denominational field agent, processing the minutes and other records of local congregations.

Heritage Hall continues to be challenged by COVID-19. We can welcome patrons who want to do research in our collections. But we can only do so by appointment and only three people at a time. We hope to welcome back more volunteers soon. But space restrictions make that difficult for the moment.

Remember that you can see stories and images from Heritage Hall at *Origins Online*. You also can find back issues of *Origins* the print magazine there. And if you're on Facebook, check out our page there.

https://origins.calvin.edu/
https://www.facebook.com/heritagehallarchives

William Katerberg, Curator

Renew Your Subscription

Origins: Historical Magazine of The Archives continues to be one of the best bargains out there at only $10 a year for two issues. Don't forget to renew your subscription!

The Dutch Immigrant Dilemma: Become One of Them, or Defeat Them?

Robert Schoone-Jongen

Almost from the moment Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte came down the gangplank from the barque (a sailing ship with three or more masts) *Southerner* into the embrace of Rev. Thomas DeWitt of New York's prestigious Collegiate Church, the term "Dutch American" acquired a second meaning. Originally referring to the descendants of the New Netherland settlers of the seventeenth century, as of 19 November 1846, the term applied to a separate group—the thousands of immigrants who followed in Van Raalte's wake. In time this new group would far outnumber the older one. But the older one (the Knickerbockers) saw themselves as the authentic Holland Americans. Their prominence rested on two pillars, the leadership of the Dutch Reformed Church and a family network that dominated New York's politics and commerce.

The liturgical use of the Dutch language had been extinguished by the old guard only a few years before the newcomers arrived. And as the shiploads of new immigrants began docking, the denomination debated whether to expunge Dutch from its official name. De Witt and his colleague in Albany, Rev. Isaac N. Wyckoff, had enticed Van Raalte and his colleague, Rev. Hendrik P. Scholte, to lead an exodus of religious dissenters across the Atlantic. The Knickerbocker leaders hoped virtuous Hollanders would swell the ranks of their waning denomination and infuse virtues of thrift and probity into the American body politic. Van Raalte and Scholte believed those virtues could best be infused into their new homeland intravenously, in measured doses dispensed from isolated settlements in the West rather than being swallowed in the old settlements in the East.

This tension between the newcomers and their Knickerbocker benefactors (and their New England Yankee cousins) would present the new Dutch immigrants with a stark dilemma.

Should the newcomers join the old guard or go their own way, even if that meant fighting with their patrons?

Becoming One of Them?

Between 1850 and 1900 the Knickerbockers of New York and their kinsmen who edited the Reformed Church's weekly *Christian Intelligencer* had the chance to tout three national figures as emblems of Dutch American greatness—Martin Van Buren, Garret A. Hobart, and Theodore Roosevelt. All three served as vice president. Two of them became president. All of them had been cradled in the Reformed Church. Two of them remained affiliated with the denomination for life. Albertus Van Raalte actually met the first one.

The Dutch Reformed Church's most famous attender often occupied a pew in the Hudson Valley village of

Robert Schoone-Jongen is Emeritus Professor of History at Calvin University.

Kinderhook. Martin Van Buren had been baptized in the village church as Maarten in 1782. He grew up



Martin Van Buren, 8th President of the United States (1837-1841), was baptized in the Kinderhook (NY) Dutch Reformed Church in 1782 and buried in the congregation's cemetery. This photograph was taken circa 1856, about the time he met Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

speaking Dutch and attending services conducted in that language. He won his first election in 1812 and climbed the political ladder from the state legislature to state attorney general to United States senator to governor to secretary of state and to vice president, on the way to winning the presidency in 1836. While he may have been one of America's first professional politicians, by 1858 he was retired and living the life of a country squire on the southern outskirts of Kinderhook. Albertus Van Raalte came a-calling at Van Buren's door during a fundraising tour for his recently opened academy among the new Dutch immigrants in Michigan.[1] Van Buren heard Van Raalte's plea but apparently contributed nothing to the cause. "Little Van" preferred to invest in Rutgers College, where he served as a trustee along with Rev. Thomas DeWitt. Despite Van Buren's connections to the Democratic Party, he remained a Dutch Reformed icon long after his death, and long after the new immigrants—led by Van Raalte in Michigan and Rev. Scholte in Iowa—had largely transferred their partisan allegiance from the Democrats to the Republicans. In 1890, Theodore Roosevelt cited Van Buren as one example of his assertion that Hollanders made first-rate Americans.[2]

Roosevelt made that claim as an after-dinner speaker for the annual banquet of the Holland Society of New York, a club founded in 1885 of, by, and for Knickerbockers—"any gentleman . . . of Huguenot or of other former nationality but came here as a Dutch settler, speaking Dutch as his native tongue"—people like Teddy.[3] His uncle Robert B. Roosevelt was the society's first president. In 1896, when the Society opened its rolls to more recent immigrants, at least three individuals (two Reformed ministers and a local politician from Passaic County, New Jersey) accepted the offer.[4] Old Dutch immigrant descendants and new Dutch immigrants dined together. Roosevelts and Schuylers accepted Vennemas, Flipses, and Van Noordts as fellow Dutch Americans.

This grafting onto the family tree had been going on for as long as the New Netherlanders had been marrying into non-Dutch families. On 30 August 1841, a schoolteacher from Massachusetts (Addison Hobart) married Sophia Vanderveer at a Dutch Reformed church in Monmouth County, New Jersey. Their second son, Garret Augustus Hobart, was baptized at the Middletown Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, attended the denominational college (Rutgers), and moved to Paterson to study law with his father's friend and Garret's future father-in-law.[5] Hobart rose through the ranks of the Republican Party and was elected Vice President of the United States in 1896, alongside President William McKinley. By then he had long belonged to a Presbyterian congregation in Paterson, but leaders in



Garret A. Hobart, 24th Vice President of the United States (1897-1899), was baptized in the Middletown (NJ) Dutch Reformed Church in 1844. While Hobart affiliated with the Presbyterian Church as an adult, leaders of the Reformed Church in America embraced him as one of their own. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

the Reformed Church embraced him, nonetheless, as one of "theirs." At least one of his Vanderveer relatives served as an officer of the Holland Society.[6] Garret Hobart died from heart failure a few days before Thanksgiving 1899. At the funeral it was stressed, "The blood which flowed in his veins was from good English stock, and was mingled with the martyr blood of Dutch and Huguenot ancestors."[7] While he may be a largely forgotten historical figure today, his memory did not immediately fade among his contemporaries. When President McKinley died from an assassin's bullet in 1901, his successor was none other than Hobart's fellow Knickerbocker (and a Holland Society member), Theodore Roosevelt.

Teddy held a special place in Dutch hearts, whether Knickerbocker or naturalized. He never hid his abiding interest in his family's history. He regarded that pedigree as a major source

of his success in life. He remembered hearing his grandfather praying in Dutch at mealtimes. While Teddy rarely attended Reformed Church services as president, he nonetheless regarded the denomination as his religious home. That people of Reformed



Theodore Roosevelt, 26th President of the United States (1901-1909), considered the Reformed Church his religious home and publicly supported the Holland Society of New York's efforts to highlight America's Dutch colonial legacy. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

persuasion reciprocated that affection was most clearly shone at the ballot box. Those Dutch immigrants who routinely trooped to the polls to vote Republican cast their ballots for Roosevelt (the Progressive Party nominee) over President Taft (the Republican nominee) in the Bull Moose election of 1912.[8]

The Reformed troika of Van Buren, Hobart, and Roosevelt inspired "A True Friend of the Church" to address a letter to the editors of the weekly *Christian Intelligencer* in June 1902. The letter pressed for an ambitious mission outreach with the goal of establishing twenty-eight new congregations in each of the regional bodies by 1928, the tri-centennial of the denomination's birth in New Amsterdam. He believed a good first step would be planting a congregation in Washington, DC. With a Reformed Church president sitting in the White House (as a successor to fellow churchmen Van Buren and Hobart), now was the time for the denomination to take its rightful place among the other great denominations in the nation's capital. Such a church should exist to serve more Reformed national leaders who were sure to follow. The author's name for the would-be congregation: Hobart Memorial Reformed Church.[9]

If You Can't Join 'Em, Beat 'Em

While some of the new Dutch immigrants found their way into the ranks of the Holland Society or became prominent in the Reformed Church in America, for many others the political inside remained outside. They were not seeking approval from people who regarded Hollanders as "good immigrants"; they dealt with people who viewed them as just immigrants. This played out on the local level, where municipal and county officials held sway. For Dutch immigrants who ventured beyond the major enclaves in Michigan and Iowa, political life could be very hard. When the United States entered the First World War, matters became worse, especially in Minnesota and Iowa. There, state governments harshly enforced an official definition of "loyalty" that persecuted public expressions of ethnicity, including foreign-language public meetings (including church services) and church related schools.

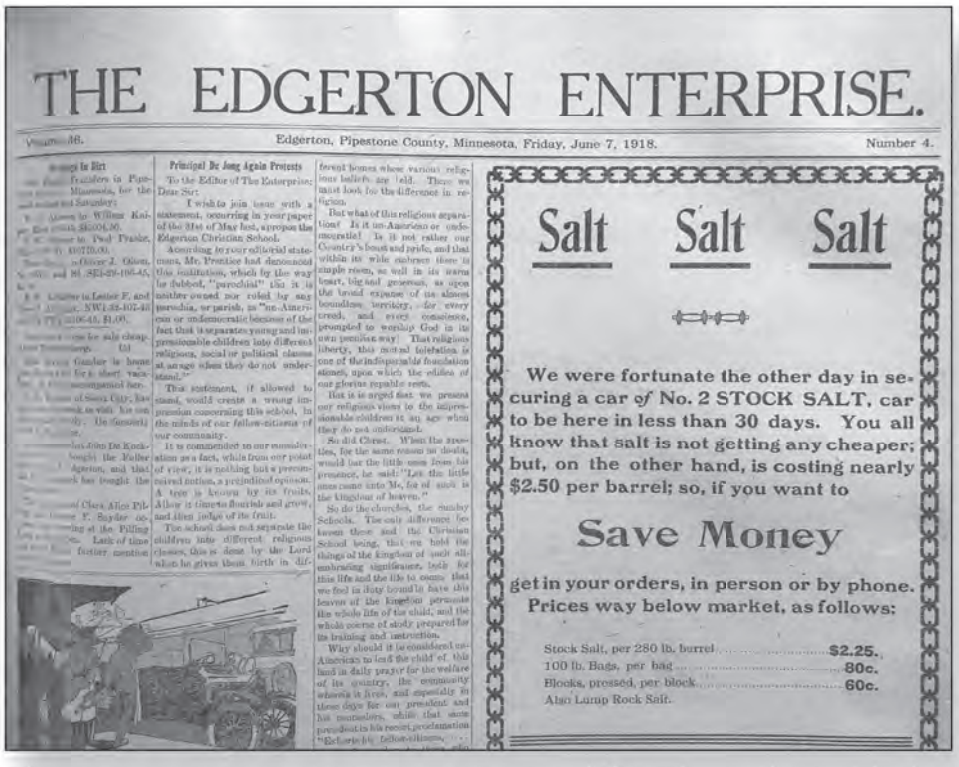
The normal settlement pattern on the prairies pitted immigrant farmers against Yankee town dwellers.[10] A typical example could be found in Pipestone County, Minnesota. The village of Edgerton had been founded in 1879 by a group of Civil War veterans with family trees rooted in Upstate New York and New England. During the latter half of the 1880s land speculators lured Dutch immigrant farmers, largely from Iowa and Wisconsin, onto the open prairies that surrounded the town.[11] The



Main Street, Edgerton, Minnesota (1907). The badly neglected building on the far left underscores some of the economic strains rural towns experienced during the first decades of the twentieth century. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

immigrants organized Dutch-speaking churches built on the outer edge of town in 1902 and 1906. By 1910 the village with a Yankee majority was surrounded by a township of immigrants, with more of them occupying more farmsteads each year.[12] Then in about 1912, one of the Dutch immigrants opened a butcher shop on Main Street. When the United States entered the First World War in 1917, all the local merchants, save the one, posted signs demanding patrons to speak "Uncle Sam's Language." When some of the rural Dutch immigrants failed to purchase their quota of Liberty Bonds to finance the war, the local newspaper editor denounced their infidelity. Even worse, some of the Dutch immigrants banded together to organize a separate day school that opened in September 1917. And another school opened in a nearby hamlet the following fall.

The local postmaster contacted state authorities in St. Paul about the local nest of subversives. The newspaper editor ominously wrote that when the veterans returned from France, they would need farms. Disloyal immigrants, he said, should lose their farms so the veterans could have them. Using Theodore Roosevelt's admonition against the Dutch immigrants, the editor proclaimed that a church that hoisted the cross over



THE EDGERTON ENTERPRISE.

Edgerton, Pipestone County, Minnesota, Friday, June 7, 1918. Number 4.

Principal De Jong Again Protests

To the Editor of The Enterprise:
Dear Sir:

I wish to join issue with a statement, occurring in your paper of the 31st of May last, apropos the Edgerton Christian School.

According to your editorial statement, Mr. Prentice had denounced this institution, which by the way he dubbed, "parochial" tho it is neither owned nor ruled by any parochia, or parish, as "un-American or undemocratic because of the fact that it separates young and impressionable children into different religious, social or political classes at an age when they do not understand."

That statement, if allowed to stand, would create a wrong impression concerning this school, in the minds of our fellow-citizens of our community.

It is commended on our curriculum as a fact, while from our point of view, it is nothing but a preconceived notion, a prejudiced opinion.

A tree is known by its fruits. Allow it time to flourish and grow, and then judge of its fruit.

The school does not separate the children into different religious classes, this is done by the Lord when he gives them birth in different homes whose various religious beliefs are told. There we must look for the difference in religion.

But what of this religious separation? Is it un-American or undemocratic? Is it not rather our Country's boast and pride, and that within its wide embrace there is ample room, as well in its warm heart, big and generous, as upon the broad expanse of its almost boundless territory, - for every creed, and every conscience, prompted to worship God in its own peculiar way? That religious liberty, this mental toleration is one of the indispensable foundation stones, upon which the edifice of our glorious republic rests.

But it is urged that we present our religious views to the impressionable children at an age when they do not understand.

So did Christ. When the apostles, for the same reason as theirs, would bar the little ones from his presence, he said: "Let the little ones come into Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

So do the churches, the Sunday Schools. The only difference between these and the Christian School being, that we hold the things of the kingdom of such all-embracing significance, both for this life and the life to come, that we feel in duty bound to have this heaven of the kingdom pervade the whole life of the child, and the whole course of study prepared for its training and instruction.

Why should it be considered un-American to lead the child of this land in daily prayer for the welfare of its country, the community wherein it lives, and especially at these days for our president and his counselors, while that same president in his recent proclamation "Get up for fellowship, ..."

Salt Salt Salt

We were fortunate the other day in securing a car of No. 2 STOCK SALT, car to be here in less than 30 days. You all know that salt is not getting any cheaper; but, on the other hand, is costing nearly $2.50 per barrel; so, if you want to

Save Money

get in your orders, in person or by phone. Prices way below market, as follows:

Stock Salt, per 280 lb. barrel ..... $2.25.
100 lb. Bags, per bag ..... 80c.
Blocks, pressed, per block ..... 60c.
Also Lump Rock Salt.

Edgerton Enterprise, 7 June 1918. A. S. De Jong, the principal of the Edgerton Christian School, publishes a front-page rebuttal of the newspaper editor's charge that the school was un-American and subversive. Courtesy of Jill Gunnink Fennema.

the flag should be closed.[13] When county agents visited each household to determine the loyalty level present in each home, they duly noted which Dutch immigrants supported the separate school, which of them had purchased a fitting number of bonds, and who among them expressed any reservations about the nation's crusade to save the world for democracy. The immigrants did not forget these confrontations. Twenty-five years later, during the Second World War, when nearby Leota Christian Reformed Church observed its fiftieth anniversary, its printed history included the statement, "Those were not good years."[14]

Three months after the Armistice ended the fighting in Europe, the Edgerton Christian School burned to the ground on a cold February



Main Street, Edgerton, Minnesota, c. 1915. The buildings belonged to the town's first elite, all descendants of New Englanders. Barely visible by the bank is the sign "B. C. Blom-Real Estate." A Dutch immigrant, his office was in the basement. Courtesy of the LakesnWoods.com Postcard and Postcard Image Collection.

night. While the fire marshal cited the chimney as the cause, the school's supporters suspected foul play. They rebuilt their school in a matter of months. In a matter of a few years, they transformed the town's economy and politics. In 1923 one of the immigrants, a medical doctor, was elected mayor. Over the next few years, the immigrants gained control of the council seats.[15] During the 1920s the Main Street business community came under the control of the Dutch immigrants and their descendants. The Yankee families largely moved away, and their Congregational church closed. The local cemetery still bears witness to the divide that sundered the community just over a century ago. The oldest stones, in the oldest section, all carry the names of the town's founders. They are few in number but prominent in placement. Surrounding them are the graves of the immigrant families that did not join the town's first establishment but beat them at the polls and in the marketplace.

Here are two paths immigrants followed to social acceptance. One of them accepted inclusion; the other took power. The Holland Society still promotes interest in the New Netherland branch of the Dutch American family tree. Out on the prairies, the town founded by sons of New England and named in honor of Union Army general features a Dutch windmill on the welcome sign at the edge of town, a replica of the one standing in the city park—testaments to the other branch of the Dutch American family tree.



Edgerton, Minnesota, residential area, 1908. The Congregational Church stands in the center on Main Street. The church in the background to the left is the First Christian Reformed Church, on what was then the very edge of town. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Endnotes

1. Elton J. Bruins and Karen G. Schakel, eds., *Envisioning Hope College: Letters Written by Albertus C. Van Raalte to Philip Phelps Jr., 1857–1875.* Holland: Van Raalte Institute Press, 2011, 50n9.

2. *New York Times* 11 January 1890, 5.

3. A summary of the Holland Society by-laws. *New York Times* 19 November 1885, 8.

4. *Passaic Daily News* 10 December 1896, 1. Three locally prominent "new" immigrants promptly joined the Society: Reformed Church ministers Ane Vennema and Martin Flipse and Christian Reformed layman and local politician Jacob J. Van Noordt.

5. It is worth a mention that when Hobart enrolled at Rutgers in 1860, Martin Van Buren was serving on the Board of Trustees.

6. *New York Times* 13 January 1898, 1. At least one of Martin Van Buren's descendants also served an officer of the Society. New York Times 7 April 1896, 3.

7. *Paterson Evening News* 25 November 1899, 1.

8. A prime example of this can be found in Passaic County, New Jersey, where Dutch immigrants formed an overwhelming majority of the voters in the Borough of Prospect Park. The 1912 results were: for President: Roosevelt 338, Wilson 31, Taft 20; for Congress: Republican 114, Progressive 75, Democratic 32; for County Sheriff: Republican 199, Progressive 115, Democratic 44. (The Democratic candidate was a Dutch Catholic Dr. Frank Van Noord.) The results in heavily Dutch precincts in the City of Paterson were similar. *Paterson Morning Call* 12 November 1912, 10; 13 November 1912, 13.

9. *Christian Intelligencer* 2 June 1902, 366. The author anticipated that a fourth Reformed Church member would soon join the presidential ranks, New York's then governor, Benjamin Odell, Jr. In fact, the next two Reformed Church members elected to federal office would be members of the House of Representatives: Gerrit J. Diekema of Michigan (1907–1911) and Dow H. Drukker of New Jersey (1914–1919).

10. John Hudson, *Plains County Towns.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985. Jon Gjerde, *The Minds of the Midwest: Ethnocultural*

Evolution in the Rural Middle West, 1830–1917. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1997.

11. https://dutchamericans.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/2003_08_schoone_jongen.pdf

12. Edgerton included sixty-nine households, twenty-three of which had a foreign-born head of household (eleven of them Dutch). Osborn Township's ninety-three households included thirty-five Dutch and eleven other heads of households. Twelfth Census of the United States, manuscript schedules for Village of Edgerton and Township of Osborn, County of Pipestone, State of Minnesota. By 1920 approximately two-thirds of the households in Osborn would be Dutch, with several more headed by Ostfriesians—German speakers who belonged to the same churches as the Dutch speakers.

13. *Edgerton Enterprise*.

14. Robert P. Schoone-Jongen, "Patriotic Pressure WWI: The Dutch Experience in Southwest Minnesota During World War One." *Origins* VII.2 (1989), 2-9.

15. Since 1923 eleven of the town's thirteen mayors were either Dutch immigrants or the descendants of those immigrants. The two non-Dutch mayors served a total of three years. (My deep thanks to Jill Gunnink Fennema, the current publisher and editor of the *Edgerton Enterprise*, for providing me with the list of mayors.)

"Couldn't You Be Great Like Abraham Lincoln?" Congressman Drukker Versus the Suffragists

Robert Schoone-Jongen

Wednesday, 15 November 1915, was an overcast fall day in Passaic, with a threat of rain or snow showers. Despite the chill, women by the dozens converged on the Erie Railroad's Main Avenue Station. Some came from Paterson to the north, or Montclair to the west; mostly they were local women. Several of them were the sort of people whose names graced the society pages. Others were housewives, domestics, or factory workers. At least one of them was African American; a few of them were German or Polish Jews; one of their leaders was a Mayflower descendent. At 1:45 p.m., precisely, they set off on a two-block march to the Hobart Trust Building at the corner of Main Avenue and Prospect Street. At 2:00 p.m., precisely, twenty of them entered the office of their congressman, Dow H. Drukker.[1] No matter the distinctions that divided them, all the women sought one answer to a burning question—Why had Drukker abruptly abandoned his public pledge to support a woman's suffrage amendment to the United States Constitution? Since he knew they were coming, Drukker had an answer, but it would not be a popular one with the women.

Drukker was a slight man, with a high forehead and piercing eyes, and, at forty-three years old, he was a major figure in Passaic. He sat on bank boards, belonged to the right clubs, and owned a construction company that built roads, sewers, and bridges throughout the region. Union Building and Construction owned quarries and employed hundreds. He attended the city's prestigious Old Acquackanonk Reformed Church, Passaic's oldest institution—founded by New Netherland settlers in 1693. It stood in the neighborhood where the city's elite lived, right next door to the Drukker home. One thing people who knew him remembered long after he died was his ability to hold an audience.[2] On that November afternoon, Drukker needed his gift for persuasion to defuse this potentially tense

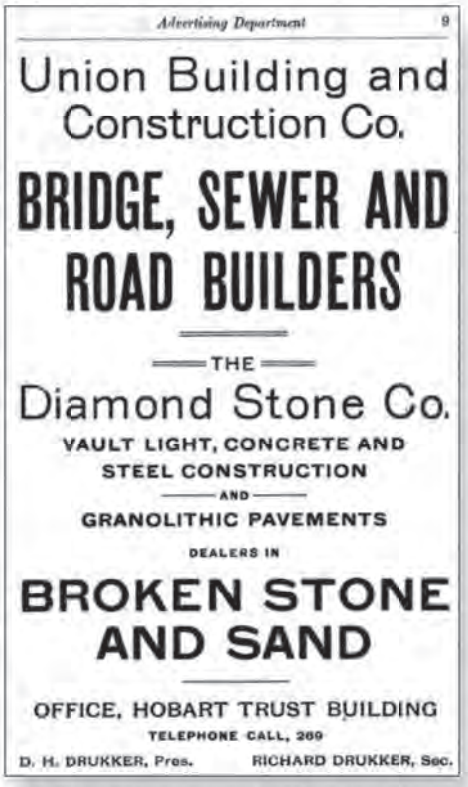


Dow H. Drukker c. 1914. This picture appeared on campaign materials during his tenure as the Representative from New Jersey's 7th Congressional District. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

encounter with very disappointed constituents.

Born Douwe Hendrik Drukker on 7 February 1872, in Sneek, Friesland, he was an immigrant without first-hand knowledge of his native land. His father, Hendrik, was a successful baker who unsuccessfully tried his hand at grain trading. That failure prompted him to move to America in 1873 to join his father and a brother in Grand Rapids, Michigan. There Dow, with his four brothers and two sisters, grew up going to school and working in their father's bakery—baking, packaging, and selling the bread Dutch immigrants called "rusks." While Grand Rapids was justly known as the urban center of Dutch immigration to the United States, the Drukkers inhabited a less homogenized sliver of that insular Dutch society. Theirs was a bilingual world. Home life, church services, and religious instruction were in Dutch, as was much of the education provided in the private Christian school. But English prevailed on the streets of the Drukkers' neighborhood. Their immediate neighbors were mostly of British and Scottish background, punctuated by a few German immigrants and African Americans from the South.

The Drukkers were an independent-minded, entrepreneurial clan who believed in education. Dow's grandfather operated a general store in Grand Rapids. Uncle Reinder was an ordained minister who served churches in Michigan and New Jersey. Uncle Lucas variously worked as a salesman, house painter, and freight hauler. Dow's mother (Wybrigje Terpsma) was the daughter of a village cooper. As for being independent thinkers, a Drukker relative had been a leader in the schism that fractured the state church during the 1830s. Dow and his six siblings all completed elementary school in Grand Rapids. The youngest three graduated from



A full-page advertisement for Drukker's Union Building and Construction Company in the *Passaic City Directory* (1907).

high school. None of the Drukkers worked in the furniture factories—a rarity among the city's Hollanders.[3]

When Wybrigje died, and Hendrik soon remarried, five more children joined the Drukker household and ended Dow's formal education. At fourteen he found work as a "cash boy" in a downtown dry goods store. In a few years he was promoted to bookkeeper and then manager. He met Helena Deunhouwer at the Dutch-speaking Commerce Street Christian Reformed Church. They married on 23 August 1893, and set up housekeeping in a neighborhood of downtown shopkeepers, managers, and clerks, nonimmigrants.[4] Dow and Helena's first child, Winifred, was baptized in a Dutch-speaking congregation; their second, Nella, in an English-speaking one.[5] As they moved from under the Dutch social shadow, Dow began spreading his entrepreneurial wings, going into the wood and coal business with a colleague from the dry goods store.

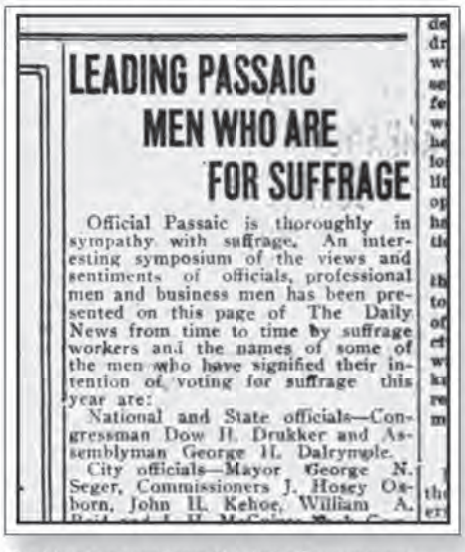
During 1897 Dow and Helena visited with Uncle Reinder Drukker, the minister, in Paterson, New Jersey. Rev. Drukker's son-in-law, Jacob J. Van Noordt, earned a good living installing cement streets, gutters, and sidewalks, doing business as Union Building and Construction Company. He also sat on the Passaic Board of Chosen Freeholders and was the Republican candidate for county sheriff. Van Noordt knew how to work cement; Cousin Dow knew how to keep books. Van Noordt made an offer—half interest in the company with the title of secretary-treasurer. Drukker accepted it and moved to Passaic in that fall. When Van Noordt succumbed to tuberculosis in 1901, Drukker secured the other half of the business.[6]

In short order Drukker hired his four brothers and a cousin to manage the day-to-day operations of the construction business while he became the company's face—in the newspapers; at municipal council and zoning meetings; and, at the local bastions of businessmen and professionals, notably the Acquackanonk Club in Passaic and the Hamilton Club in Paterson. His contacts in these male preserves led to weekend road trips to football games in the fall and extended annual southern hunting trips with his pals from the clubs. He polished a politician's skill set: networking, negotiating, and persuading. In 1903 he parlayed those contacts into a successful campaign for the board of freeholders.[7] Infrastructure dominated the board's agenda: roads, sewers, trolley franchises, and electric power.

Helena Deunhouwer Drukker kept their home operating, with an assist from hired help. The Drukkers raised seven children, born over a span of twenty years. An eighth died in infancy. Helena played a prominent role

in the Old First Reformed Church Ladies' Aid Society, in garden club events, and fundraising for the Passaic General Hospital.[8] There never was any doubt that all the Drukker children would receive the formal education their parents had missed. They all graduated from high school, and six of them graduated from colleges: three from Mount Holyoke and one each from Maryland College for Women, MIT, and Amherst. Yet the Drukker daughters also were raised in traditional ways, the oldest one even being introduced into society at the 1914 debutantes' ball in Washington, DC.[9]

Clearly the Drukkers were aware of the women's movement and the other social/political trends of their day. As a congressman, first chosen in a special election in April 1914, Dow publicly expressed his support for woman's suffrage and opposition to prohibition. He pledged that, if elected, he would listen to the voice of his constituents. He would be a consensus builder, as witnessed by his winning endorsements from both business leaders and the head of the local carpenters' union. This was a winning formula at the polls, where he won both the special and the general election in 1914, the second time with the widest majority any Republican congressional candidate had won in the seventh district.[10]



LEADING PASSAIC MEN WHO ARE FOR SUFFRAGE

Official Passaic is thoroughly in sympathy with suffrage. An interesting symposium of the views and sentiments of officials, professional men and business men has been presented on this page of The Daily News from time to time by suffrage workers and the names of some of the men who have signified their intention of voting for suffrage this year are:

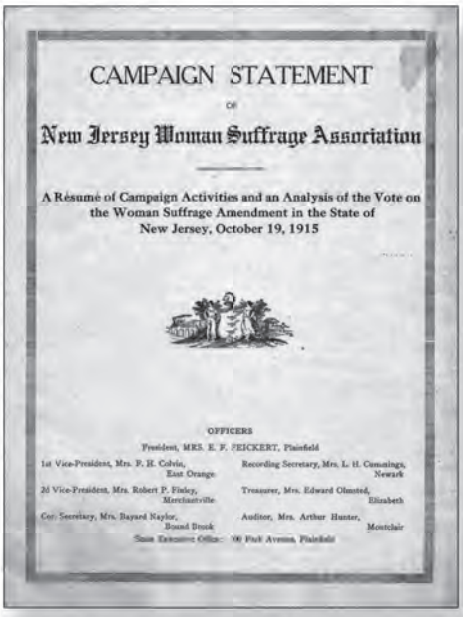
National and State officials—Congressman Dow H. Drukker and Assemblyman George H. Dalrymple.

City officials—Mayor George N. Seger, Commissioners J. Hosey Osborn, John H. Kehoe, William A.

Drukker's name tops the list of prominent local leaders who publicly supported a woman's suffrage amendment to the New Jersey state constitution during the 1915 referendum campaign. *Passaic Daily News*, 14 October 1915 (newspapers.com)

Drukker entered Congress as a ray of hope for the badly depleted Republican ranks—a man of progressive leanings who enjoyed solid support back home; a politician who had flipped a seat, beating one opponent who enjoyed the President's endorsement (in the President's home state), and another for whom Eugene V. Debs personally campaigned. Drukker, who had managed to dodge the Republican Party's self-inflicted bloodletting during the Bull Moose schism in 1912, won the votes of many who had abandoned the GOP in that election. His victory was widely seen as a harbinger of Republican reunification, and an ill omen for President Wilson. The newest member of the House had a well-earned reputation for integrity. During his tenure as the county freeholders' director, there had been no scandals connected to the contracts and franchises the board awarded. Dow Drukker was that rarest of birds in the Garden State—a clean politician. He believed in both public works and public thrift. That is what he hoped to continue doing as the junior member of the House Committee on Rivers and Harbors. He immediately discovered that his vocal constituents demanded him to do something about liquor. Petitions arrived regularly both for and against national prohibition, including one in favor from Drukker's home church in Passaic. He consistently voted against prohibition. Then, when war broke out in Europe, his constituents' demands shifted to keeping the United States out of the conflict. When the suffrage issue came to the floor of the house, Drukker supported the women's cause.[11]

During 1915 woman's suffrage became New Jersey's number one political topic. The legislature called a special election on the question of amending the state constitution to allow women to vote. The opposition headlined two prominent women: former First Lady Frances Folsom Cleveland (the President's near neighbor in Princeton) and Jenny Tuttle Hobart, the widow of Vice President Garret A. Hobart and grand dame of Paterson's elite. The state Republican Party endorsed woman's suffrage. New Jersey's most famous politician, President Woodrow Wilson, endorsed the measure and very publicly traveled to Princeton to cast his vote in favor of the amendment. When one Passaic newspaper named the prominent local men who favored the amendment, Dow H. Drukker topped the list.



CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

OF

New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association

A Résumé of Campaign Activities and an Analysis of the Vote on the Woman Suffrage Amendment in the State of New Jersey, October 19, 1915

OFFICERS

President, MRS. E. F. FEICKERT, Plainfield

1st Vice-President, Mrs. F. H. Colvin, East Orange — Recording Secretary, Mrs. L. H. Cummings, Newark

2d Vice-President, Mrs. Robert P. Finley, Morristown — Treasurer, Mrs. Edward Olmsted, Elizabeth

Cor. Secretary, Mrs. Bayard Naylor, Bound Brook — Auditor, Mrs. Arthur Hunter, Montclair

State Executive Office: 90 Park Avenue, Plainfield

The New Jersey Woman's Suffrage Association led the failed 1915 campaign to amend the state constitution. Several of its leaders joined the delegation that visited Dow Drukker in his Passaic office. Courtesy of lewissuffragecollection.omeka.net.

When the votes were counted on 19 October, Drukker's home precinct voted yes. But the opposition carried Passaic County with a 54 percent majority. Statewide, the amendment



PASSAIC DAILY HERALD

PASSAIC'S LEADING AND MOST LARGELY CIRCULATED PAPER

CRIME CALLED MOST BRUTAL IN THE COUNTY

Assistant Prosecutor, Conducting Trial of Tony Harounovich for Murder Here, Demands First Degree Murder

JURY SECURED

Henry Prall Chosen Foreman—County Physician Says Murdered Woman Was First Strangled, Then Her Throat Cut—Prisoner Unmoved

SAYS CIVILIANS WERE SHOT BY BULGARIANS

DENIED VOTE SAYS HE'LL SUE

STIP IS CAPTURED

CITY REFUSES TO SETTLE OLD ROAD DISPUTE

LAW WAS VIOLATED

SUFFRAGE BEATEN; COUNTY VOTES "NO"

Latest Returns from State, With 200 Districts Missing, Indicate Defeat of "Votes for Women" by 54,000

WIN IN OCEAN

Gives Suffrage Majority of 210—National Suffrage Workers Fear Effect of New Jersey Vote on Other States

Passaic County's Detailed Vote on the Three Amendments

County Swamps Suffrage by 6,200 or More, Passaic City by 342—Other Amendments Lost With It in State

WIN 2 WARDS

Suffrage Leads in Second and Third of Passaic—Political Union Leader Says "Antis" Circulars Were Distributed in Silks

CLOSE TROUGHS TO STOP CLAMDERS

NEW HOLLAND PASTOR ARRIVES

The front-page headline announcing the defeat of the New Jersey suffrage amendment. Drukker's home ward in Passaic voted 'yes' on the question. *Passaic Daily Herald*, 20 October 1915 Courtesy of newspapers.com.

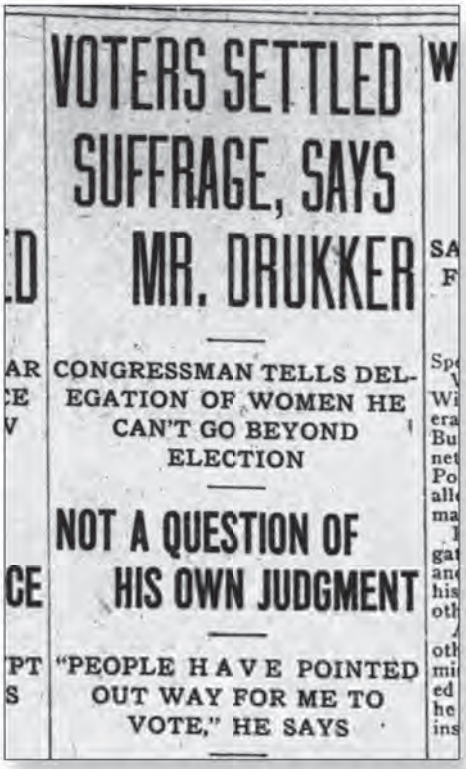
failed in all but one of the twenty-one counties. The opposition's state leader, Mrs. Edward Yarde Breese, confidently stated, "I doubt if there will ever come a time when the women will have a vote or that the majority will want it." As for the suffragists, Mrs. Breese advised, "Perhaps now they will turn their energies and their executive ability to a nonpartisan effort toward solving some of the great social, civic and economic problems of the day."[12] Within days Drukker let it be known that his priority for the upcoming session of Congress would be winning approval for a new post office for the City of Passaic, not a suffrage amendment.[13] When the suffragists decided to ask for an audience, Dow agreed.

The women who walked into his office in the Hobart Trust Building that November afternoon had believed his pledges of support. On average they were about forty-five years old. Most were married or widowed. Most belonged to a religious congregation: Reformed, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Unitarian, or Jewish. Several were college graduates from Smith, Mount Holyoke, Northwestern, or Vassar. One was a medical doctor. Another was a leader of New Jersey's National Woman's Party, and a confidante of the party's national leader, Alice Paul. At least one was an abused housewife. Three were immigrants from Galicia. One was African American.[14] The delegation was united by one goal—their determination to restore the franchise New Jersey had revoked in 1807.

When the women arrived, Drukker cordially greeted them. Clearly, he was prepared for the meeting, armed as he was with a formal statement. But the meeting included more than just this formality. There was an exchange of questions and answers, reportedly both spirited and courteous. Drukker did not evade the issue or hide his shifting stance.

To the congressman, the male voters had settled the suffrage question. With the defeat of the state constitutional amendment, "It is no longer a question of my own judgment; the people in the district have pointed out the way for me to vote on national legislation in this matter. In order to represent my constituency properly I would be amiss in my duty if I did not carry out the expressed wish of the majority."[15] There it was, on paper. Drukker had reversed course. It did not matter what he personally thought; he was bound by "the will of the people."

Drukker's guests came armed with rejoinders. Dr. Mary Gamble Cummins, MD, chair of the Passaic County Woman's Suffrage League, was their leader. A graduate of both Vassar College and Hahnemann Medical College in Chicago, Dr. Cummins had been active in the suffrage movement for several years. In the campaign for the state constitutional amendment, she had been a very vocal and public voice in the area, leading outdoor rallies in every municipality in Passaic County. When Dr. Cummins sought to hold a suffrage rally in a recently vacated tabernacle specially built for a Billy Sunday crusade, Mrs. Hobart publicly denounced the idea as sacrilege. Now, having heard Drukker's statement, Dr. Cummins and her



VOTERS SETTLED SUFFRAGE, SAYS MR. DRUKKER

CONGRESSMAN TELLS DELEGATION OF WOMEN HE CAN'T GO BEYOND ELECTION

NOT A QUESTION OF HIS OWN JUDGMENT

"PEOPLE HAVE POINTED OUT WAY FOR ME TO VOTE," HE SAYS

Drukker announces his political reversal on the suffrage issue to the women who visited his office one month after the New Jersey suffrage amendment was defeated. *Passaic Daily News*, 16 November 1915. Courtesy of newspapers.com.

colleagues "hurled questions at him in rapid-fire manner."[16]

Dorothy Weisman Loeb hurled one. Born in Austrian Galicia in May 1886, she came to the United States in 1892, settling in the Bronx. Her wed-

ding to lawyer Harry Loeb in 1910 merited the front page of the Passaic newspapers.[17] Upon arriving in Passaic, Dorothy began actively working for the Passaic County Equal Suffrage League, helping to attract high-profile speakers—Rabbi Stephen Wise among them—to support the cause.[18] Having heard the congressman say that he could not place himself above the people, Mrs. Loeb asked, "But, Congressman Drukker, why couldn't you be great like Abraham Lincoln and rise above your party?"[19] One immigrant standing before another immigrant (both of them loyal Republicans) invoked the greatest Republican of them all on behalf of the cause of equality. The press account labelled this "one of the tense moments one reads about." At least outwardly, Drukker remained unflappable and unmoved.



The Hobart Trust Company Building at the corner of Main and Bloomfield in Passaic, where Drukker maintained his office in the suite his Union Building and Construction Company occupied. Courtesy of greenerpasture.com.

Maggie Byrd Cooke stepped forward as the representative of the local chapter of the Colored People's Suffrage League. The wife of an insurance agent and daughter of parents born into slavery, she had experienced that profound inequality only a female of color could fully understand. To Drukker's assertion "I cannot place myself above the people," Mrs. Cooke asked, "Are not women people? If they are people, who represents them?"[20] There is no record of Drukker's response. After half an hour, the audience ended. "There is no getting away from it, Congressman Drukker displayed his ability as a diplomat, a gentleman and a voter getter while he was interviewed," one reporter opined.

Upon leaving the meeting, several of the women spoke to reporters. Retired Passaic kindergarten teacher Lillian Rusling described Drukker as she might have spoken of one of her five-year-old pupils: "He is a dear. I know he gave us his honest opinion, but he forgets that the women must have representation as well as the men. He certainly was kind and we have hopes of having him change his mind." Dr. Cummins stated, "But I have high hopes for him. He is intelligent enough to consider our arguments and kind enough to promise to do so." While the women agreed Drukker might be persuadable, they also thought his stand resulted from ignorance. They believed Passaic County's "more intelligent voters" (the minority) were on the right side of the suffrage question.

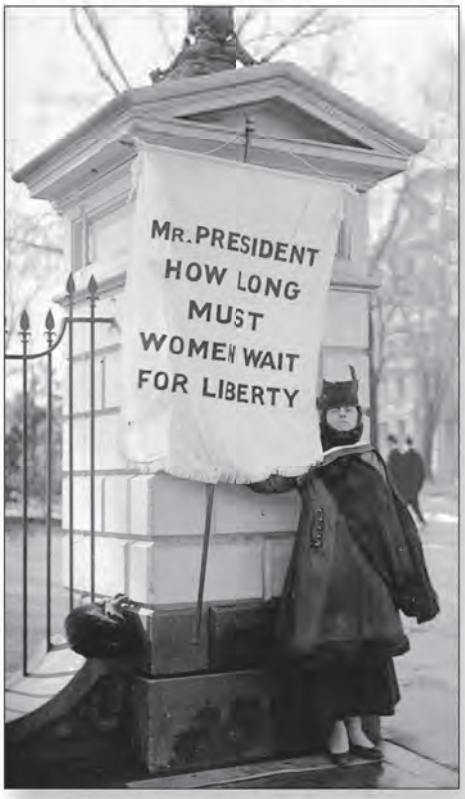
But Dr. Cummins also expressed a darker complaint. She knew the congressman's background, and the backgrounds of some of the women in the room with her. A reporter heard her remark that "she detested the thought that she, a woman of nine generations in this country, and a descendent of Mayflower stock, had to appeal to new citizens, those who have come from other lands, and are unused to American ways for support in obtaining what she felt was rightfully hers." Back out on Main Avenue, she rubbed shoulders with Hungarians, Hollanders, Poles (both Catholic and Jewish), and Italians—in her mind backward people who hindered the march of progress.

Women throughout the country had visited their congressmen that day. Dow Drukker was only one of the representatives to be lobbied in twenty-two different states. The suffragists were looking ahead to success in the next session of Congress, set to start in early December 1915. Drukker's abrupt reversal on the suffrage question, and his explanations, raised eyebrows in the usually friendly editorial rooms of the local newspapers. The *Passaic Daily News*, which had supported him since his days as a freeholder and boosted his runs for Congress, published a bit of doggerel, "What the Ladies Say," that included the stanza:

> Also discussed Dow Drukker
> And some of his funny tricks
> Which he of course resorted to
> When he dodged the suffragettes,
> But I will put you wise my Editor,
> They're not through with him yet.[21]

Another New Jersey paper acidly asked, "He was elected by Republicans. How dos [sic] he know that a majority of Republicans opposed suffrage?" If the Democrats won an election in Passaic County, would Drukker then switch parties?[22] But his stand against the women, and his making good on his pledge to oppose the suffrage amendment, did not hurt Drukker in the next election in 1916. His majority rose to 63 percent as he outpaced the Republican presidential standard bearer, Charles Evans Hughes, among Passaic County's male voters.[23]

While the suffragists continued to court Congressman Drukker, his



Alison Trumbull Hopkins of New Jersey picketing at the east gate to the White House grounds, 30 January 1917. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

focus turned to the war in Europe. From its outbreak in August 1914, he had received pleas on behalf of constituents trapped in Europe, especially Jews caught unawares while visiting relatives in Poland, Austria, and Russia. Drukker worked with the State Department to get them repatriated. Literally days after meeting with the suffragists, he endorsed a program to improve the nation's military preparedness through summer camps for teenagers and mandating military drilling in physical education classes. In April 1917 he voted for the declaration of war on Germany. He announced that only programs advancing victory in the war should continue. When Passaic's business leaders persisted in lobbying for federal funds to dredge the river and construct a new post office, Drukker publicly opposed them. He also refused to jump on the bandwagon to prohibit liquor as a wartime measure, no matter the opinions of the clergy in Passaic and Paterson.[24]

His plea for patriotic austerity led to an unholy alliance pitting Passaic's businessmen and the Republican Party's congressional leadership against Drukker. Secretly, the chair of the party's national congressional campaign committee hired a Passaic businessman as a paid solicitor for the national party war chest in Drukker's own district. When the scheme came to light, Drukker exploded in a rare glimpse of public anger at what he saw as a political stab in the back.[25]

Drukker also began experiencing serious health issues, the exact nature of which has been lost. The records show that on 4 January 1918, Speaker Clark and the full House granted Drukker a leave of absence due to illness. Because of this he missed the House's final vote on woman's suffrage. During February he underwent an operation at the Manhattan Eye and Ear Infirmary, during which "part of the head bone under his eye was removed in the operation which lasted over one hour." He did not resume public activities until April, when he returned to Washington and personally welcomed former President Taft to Passaic. While the congressman remained silent about his political future, Passaic County's Republicans began lining up behind potential successors. In August Drukker returned from a monthlong, doctor-ordered rest in the Adirondacks to announce his political retirement.[26] During his final months in office, the war ended. With that Drukker returned to the Passaic River project and the Passaic post office proposal and won their approval during his final days as a member of the House.[27]

As for the suffragist delegation that visited him in 1915, their disappointment did not stop their activism. Maggie Byrd Cook spent many years in Passaic, actively involved in the work of the local Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church and tirelessly promoting both African American rights and an inclusive patriotism. In 1917 she wrote, "The negro has fought bravely through all our wars, . . . although he has not received the merit of a soldier and a man—still when duty calls him to the colors, he has, and always will show his willingness 'to do and to die.'"[28] Dr. Mary Gamble Cummins remained active in the suffrage movement, the Republican Party, and the New Jersey Medical Association until she retired to Martha's Vineyard (nearer to her *Mayflower* ancestors) in 1927. In 1920 she became the first woman to sit on the Paterson Board of Education.[29] Lillian A. Rusling, the retired kindergarten teacher, became a leader in the League of Women Voters and a nationally known lecturer for the Daughters of the American Revolution.[30] Dorothy Weisman Loeb rose to national leadership in the Jewish women's organizations to which she belonged for decades.[31] Phoebe Persons Scott, who met with Drukker as a state leader of the National Woman's Party, was confined to

Virginia's Occoquan Workhouse in November 1917, when she was arrested for picketing in front of the White House. There she joined Alice Paul in a hunger strike that made national headlines and resulted in their release. For that, Phoebe received one of the National Woman's Party's "prison pins" to commemorate her "sacrifice of individual liberty to the liberty of all women."[32]

While Dow Drukker never held elective office again, he did leave a memorable imprint on both Passaic and the United States. Union Building and Construction Company grew into the largest contracting firm east of the Mississippi River, counting Andrews Air Force Base, McGuire Air Force Base, Newark Airport, and a substantial segment of the Indiana Toll Road among its better-known projects. He owned both of Passaic's newspapers and generously patronized the Boy Scouts of America. When the Netherlands sustained devastating flood damage in 1952, he led a major fundraising effort to help his homeland rebuild. For that he received the personal thanks of Queen Juliana. While his reversal on the suffrage question never seemed to faze him, he did eventually express regret for supporting the declaration of war against Germany in 1917. When he died on 11 January 1963, plaudits came from men in high places in Washington, Trenton, and Passaic County. The City of Passaic erected a stone monument to him that concluded, "This man shunned evil. Labored at good works. And walked humbly with his God. This man passed this way and now is gone. And although these hearts are heavy, this place is better for having had this man."[33]

Dorothy Weisman Loeb was still active when Drukker died. The newspaper eulogies never mentioned his encounter with her in the long-demolished Hobart Trust Company Building in 1915. Amid the kind obituaries and the epitaph etched into the stone Drukker's company ordinarily processed into pavement, we are left to wonder what she most remembered about their encounter. When she heard and saw his praises, did she first recall his diplomacy or his stand against her cause? Or both?

Endnotes

1. *New York Times* 15 November 1915, 1; *Passaic Daily News* 15 November 1915, 1, 5.

2. Author's telephone interview with Amos Neal Prescott Jr. and Neal Prescott, 16 February 2020.

3. William W. Scott, *History of Passaic and Its Environs (Vol. 2)* New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1922, 24-25. *Passaic Herald-News*, 12 January 1963, 1, 3. "Life Sketch Written by Rev. Henry Beets, LL.D., in Rev. Raymond B. Drukker (ed.), *The Beauty of the Lord and Other Sermons*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1927, 11-21. Author's compilation of materials from the United States Federal Census, Grand Rapids City Directory, and membership records of the First Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan. On the rusk baking: John Drukker to E. R. Post, 13 January 1977 in Derk Douwe Drukker family history file, Heritage Hall Archives, Hekman Library, Calvin University, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

4. Grand Rapids City Directory 1890, 1891, 1893. Membership records of First Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Grandville Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Michigan Marriage Records, Kent County, pp. 494-95.

5. It's worth noting that the first Drukker children were named in the traditional manner after the couple's parents, but with anglicized versions of their names (Wybrigje=Winifred, Neeltje=Nella). When the couple moved to Passaic, their children received non-family names, except for a son named Dow Henry Jr. and a daughter named Helena.

6. Passaic *Daily News*, 16 May 1901, 1, 4; *Passaic Evening News*, 4 June 1901, 1. Scott, *Passaic*, 24-25.

7. Passaic *Daily News* 22 October 1903, 1. *Passaic Daily Herald* 13 January 1904, 1, *Passaic Herald-News* 12 January 1963, 1, 3. It must be noted that among the Hamilton Club's founders were Vice President Garret A. Hobart and United States Attorney General John W. Griggs.

8. *Passaic Daily News* 29 November 1909, 2. *Passaic Daily Herald* 21 September 1918, 2.

9. *Washington Post* 25 October 1914, 6; 1 November 1914, 24.

10. *Passaic Daily News* 8 April 1914, 1; 4 November 1914, 1; *Paterson Morning Call* 8 April 1914, 11; 4 November 1914, 1.

11. *Passaic Daily Herald* 15 November 1915, 1.

12. *New York Times* 20 October 1915, 2.

13. *Passaic Daily Herald*, 12 November 1915, 1.

14. Lists of those in attendance from local newspaper accounts (see *Paterson Morning Call* 17 November 1915, 5; *Passaic Daily News* 15 November 1915, 1; 16 November 1915, 1, 5) plus the author's compilation of online sources about each of the women mentioned.

15. *Passaic Daily News* 16 November 1915, 1.

16. *Passaic Daily News* 17 November 1915, 1.

17. *Passaic Daily News* 16 June 1915, 1; 30 June 1910, 1.

18. *Passaic Daily News* 10 April 1915, 6.

19. *Passaic Daily News*, 16 November 1, 5; 17 November 1915, 1.

20. *Paterson Evening News* 17 November 1915, 2; *Passaic Daily News* 17 November 1915, 1.

21. *Passaic Daily News* 27 November 1915, 8.

22. *Elizabeth Journal* quoted in *Passaic Daily News* 23 November 1915, 8.

23. In his three successful elections Drukker's percentage of the vote increased each time, from 48 percent to 54 percent to 63 percent. *Paterson Evening News* 8 April 1914, 1; *Paterson Morning Call* 4 November 1914, 1; *Passaic Daily News* 4 November 1914, 1; 9 November 1916, 5.

24. *Passaic Daily Herald* 27 November 1915, 1. *Congressional Record*, 17 December 1914, 330; 17 December 1917, 469. His stand of that issue inspired a Baptist minister to challenge his own on the Prohibition Party line in the 1916 election. The minister finished fourth in the five-candidate field. *Passaic Daily News* 14 November 1916, 1.

25. *Passaic Daily Herald* 26 May 1917, 1; 29 May 1917, 2; *Passaic Daily News* 29 May 1917, 1.

26. *Congressional Record*, 4 January 1918, 585 (65th Congress, 2nd Session Vol. 56); *Paterson Morning Call* 11 January 1918, 1, 9; *Passaic Daily News* 12 January 1918, 11; 18 February 1918, 1; *Passaic Daily Herald* 20 February 1918, 6; *Passaic Daily News* 18 April 1918, 1, 14; 13 July 1918, 1; 30 July 1918, 2; 28 August 1918, 1; *Paterson Morning Call* 13 November 1918, 13.

27. *Congressional Record* 65th Congress, 3rd Session, Part 2 1258, 2030, Part 3 2258, 2934. *Passaic Daily Herald* 8 January 1919, 1 (Drukker's daughter Nella served as his secretary during the final weeks of his term). 13 January 1919, 1; 27 January 1919, 2; 28 January 1919, 1; *Paterson Evening News* 29 January 1919, 11; *Passaic Daily News* 31 January 1919, 1, 16; *Passaic Daily Herald* 12 February 1919, 8; *Passaic Daily News* 17 January 1919, 1; 18 March 1919, 8.

28. *Passaic Daily News* 11 April 1917, 8.

29. *Paterson Morning Call* 18 June 1920, 12; 10 September 1920, 1; *Paterson Evening News* 21 August 1943, 1, 2; *Paterson Morning Call* 23 August 1943, 13.

30. *Passaic Daily News* 14 November 1929, 6; 27 March 1930, 10; *Asbury Park Press* 10 October 1931, 13; *Passaic Herald-News* 23 August 1943, 8.

31. *Bergen Record* 24 October 1979, 35; *Passaic Herald-News* 23 October 1979, 27.

32. *Montclair Times* 3 November 1917, 1; 24 November 1917, 12; *Washington Herald* 14 November 1917, 3; *Washington Post* 28 November 1917, 5; *Orlando Sentinel* 3 May 1959, 30, https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1009755076 <June 4, 2020>.

33. *Passaic Herald-News* 12 January 1963, 1, 3; 13 June 1963, 1, 21.

Jacob Den Herder — Presidential Elector

While he will not be mentioned in the history books, Jacob Den Herder made history. On 6 December 1876, he traveled from his home in Zeeland, Michigan, to the state capitol in Lansing to serve as one of the state's presidential electors. As expected, he voted for



Jacob Den Herder. Date unknown. Courtesy of the Zeeland Historical Society.

Rutherford B. Hayes and William A. Wheeler, the Republican candidates for president and vice president. His one vote became a piece of the knottiest presidential election puzzle in American history. For this Den Herder, an immigrant from the Netherlands, found himself pilloried in the nation's newspapers as Michigan's "Ineligible Elector," and subpoenaed to testify before a congressional committee.[1] He stood accused of casting an illegal ballot in a contest that would ultimately be decided by a single vote.

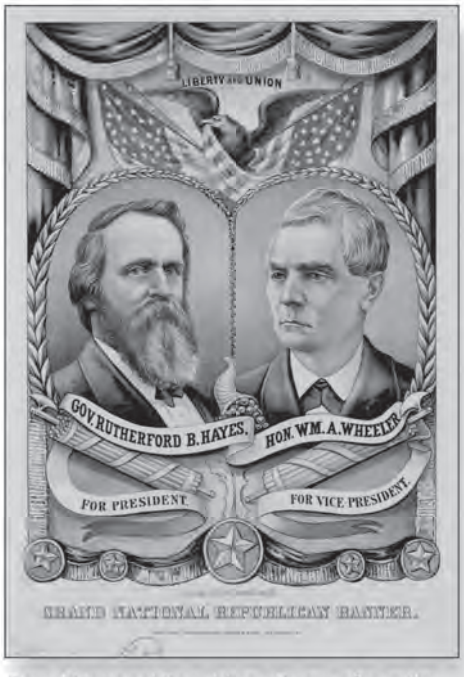
As a thirteen-year-old, Den Herder had arrived in Michigan from Borselle, Zeeland, in 1847 with his parents and three siblings. His father soon filed for naturalization in Kent County. Unfortunately, the relevant records vanished in a courthouse fire. Fortunately, Jacob had filed his own citizenship petition when he turned twenty-one. Those records survived.[2]

Michigan's Republican Party leaders chose Den Herder as an elector as part of a campaign to draw Dutch voters to the GOP ticket. Jacob was well known in Ottawa County as a businessman and loyal Republican. His work for the party had earned him an appointment as postmaster of rural Vriesland. He held that job for a few years, until he resigned to pursue a career as a merchant and mill operator.[3] His party colleagues in the county included United States Senator Thomas W. Ferry of Grand Haven, who in 1876 presided over the Senate as its President pro Tempore.[4]

When the popular votes cast on 2 November 1876 were tabulated, Samuel J. Tilden, the Democratic governor of New York, had clearly garnered the most votes nationally. Of course, under the Constitution presidential elections are decided by the electors chosen by the individual states. In three states (Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina) the choice of electors fell under clouds of fraud in the popular vote. In addition, one electoral vote in Oregon also was disputed. If Hayes won the votes of all these states, he would win the White House by an electoral vote of 185-184, despite his second-place finish in the popular vote.[5]

Democratic Party operatives scoured the country to deny Hayes the electoral majority. The senator's own brother, Grand Rapids Mayor

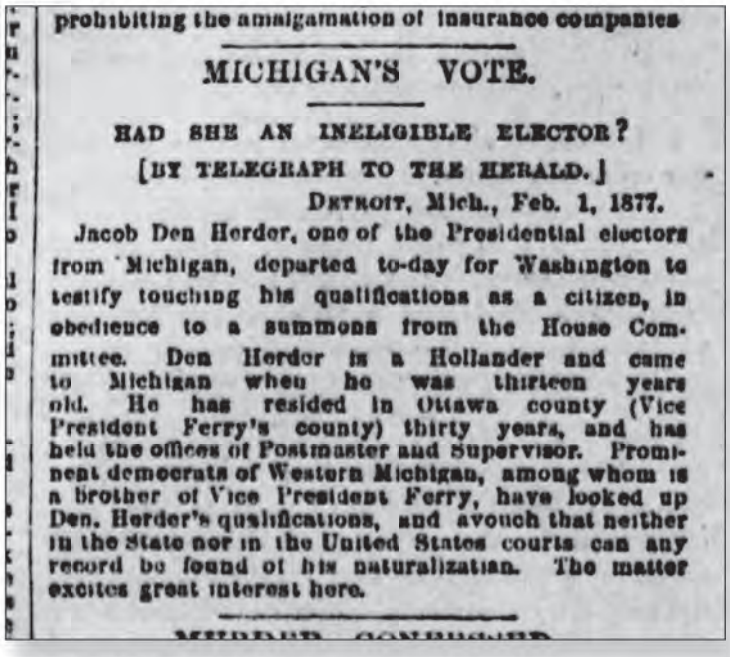
William Montague Ferry Jr., searched for evidence to disallow Jacob Den Herder's vote on two constitutional counts: he was not a citizen, and as a postmaster—a federal employee—he could not serve as an elector. If true, Den Herder's vote would be void.



Grand National Republican Banner from the election of 1876. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

William Ferry actually found proof of Den Herder's citizenship in the Grand Rapids courthouse but kept the fact to himself.[6]

As Congress wrestled with both the disputed results and charges of illegality, Den Herder received a subpoena to appear before the House Committee on Powers and Privileges on 10 February 1877.[7] He traveled to Washington armed with a certified copy of his citizenship declaration. What he lacked was proof of his resignation as postmaster. On the appointed day Senator Ferry produced the 3rd Assistant Postmaster General who produced the post office's official record of Den Herder's resignation, dated two years previous. The committee never bothered to place Den Herder under oath. He was free to go home.



prohibiting the amalgamation of insurance companies

MICHIGAN'S VOTE.

HAD SHE AN INELIGIBLE ELECTOR?

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.]

DETROIT, Mich., Feb. 1, 1877.

Jacob Den Herder, one of the Presidential electors from Michigan, departed to-day for Washington to testify touching his qualifications as a citizen, in obedience to a summons from the House Committee. Den Herder is a Hollander and came to Michigan when he was thirteen years old. He has resided in Ottawa county (Vice President Ferry's county) thirty years, and has held the offices of Postmaster and Supervisor. Prominent democrats of Western Michigan, among whom is a brother of Vice President Ferry, have looked up Den. Herder's qualifications, and avouch that neither in the State nor in the United States courts can any record be found of his naturalization. The matter excites great interest here.

New York Daily Herald, February 2, 1877. Courtesy of Newspapers.com.



Laying the cornerstone at the Zeeland State Bank, 101 E. Main Street, ca. 1909. Jacob Den Herder at the stone. Courtesy of the Zeeland Historical Society.

However, Den Herder opted to enjoy his stay in Washington—including staying in a fine hotel, meeting with President Ulysses S. Grant in the White House, sightseeing, and attending a Presbyterian church with another of Senator Ferry's brothers (the Republican Party chair of Ottawa County, Edward Ferry). The sojourn lasted until the day the special commission Congress appointed to resolve the electoral dispute voted 8-7 to declare Rutherford B. Hayes president by the electoral vote of 185-184. Den Herder went home "fully pleased and satisfied."

Jacob spent the rest of his days in Zeeland. His active political days were largely behind him, except for a single term in the Michigan State Senate. When sharing his reminiscences, years later, he recalled his moment in the national spotlight as a positive experience. For ". . . a person who is not too bigoted [it created] a wider and more charitable idea and feeling to our fellow Christians. . . .That was the very best paying political office I ever had, not from a financial point of view, but otherwise; and I still thank God for that experience."[8]

Endnotes

1. *New York Daily Herald,* 3 February 1877, 5.
2. "Life Sketch of Myself" by Jacob Den Herder (typed & donated by Susan Conde) <www.macatawa.org/~devries/Jacob Den Herder.html> accessed 14 May 2020.
3. Ibid.
4. Until 1886 the presidential succession legislation made the President pro Tempore second in line. For almost two years Sen. Ferry was first in line to the president, following the death of Vice President Henry Wilson on 22 November 1875. The press often referred to Ferry as "Vice President" (see *New York Daily Herald,* 2 February 1877, 3.)
5. South Carolina provided the most egregious evidence of fraud; 101 percent of the eligible voters voted.
6. Den Herder. *Hillsdale Standard* 13 February 1877, 2.
7. Den Herder. *New York Daily Herald* 3 February 1877, 5. As a side note, a Republican elector from Kansas was summoned to prove he was a legal resident of Kansas, not Pennsylvania. He produced proof. See *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* 8 February 1877, 1.
8. Den Herder.

"Trying to ride two horses at once" A. J. Muste: Dutch American Peace Activist

Michael Douma

Abraham J. (A. J.) Muste (1885–1967) was a first-generation Dutch American who was born into Calvinism but became alternately a Congregationalist, a pacifist, a Quaker, a Marxist-Leninist, an anti-Communist socialist, a labor movement organizer, and a well-known peace activist. He participated in the major radical and progressive movements in American politics from the 1910s to the 1960s, from labor organizing to socialism, pacifism, and civil rights. As a pacifist, Muste opposed every American war during his lifetime and even preached nonviolent resistance in the face of Nazi Germany's aggression. Muste was associated with pro-Communist American intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s. He struggled to reconcile Marxism with Christian Pacifism, an unstable marriage that one of Muste's biographers characterized as "[t]rying to ride two horses at once—a conservative steed and a radical charger."[1]



A. J. Muste, American labor leader and pacifist activist, ca. 1930. Image published in *Labor Age* in January 1930. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.

Because radical leftists like Muste have formed a small minority in Dutch American circles, the important part they played in Dutch American history, as voices of dissent, has been generally neglected. A few Dutch immigrants, Hendrick Meijer among them, were committed socialists when they arrived in the United States. Meijer, in the 1910s, wrote that Dutch Americans equated socialists with bomb-throwing anarchists.[2] He saw little hope for socialism in West Michigan and in time became one of the area's most prominent capitalists. Leaving the silk mills of Paterson, New Jersey, Dutch immigrant Lini De Vries joined the Communist Party in 1935 and served as a nurse for the communist element in the Spanish Civil War. Eventually she settled in Mexico, far from her Dutch American roots. The Dutch American writer Arnold Mulder, who mixed his own cocktail of socialism and progressivism, wrote that the typical Dutch American knew as much about communism as a cow knows about Spanish. None of these left-leaning Dutch Americans rose to political prominence like Muste, perhaps the best-known example of a left-wing political figure produced in a Dutch American environment.

Michael Douma is an Assistant Research Professor at the McDonough School of Business and an affiliate faculty in the history department at Georgetown University.

It might be tempting to cite a single inspiration or a consistent direction to Muste's drift away from his conservative roots. But there are too many possible reasons, from his personality to the struggles he encountered, that might have led him to push for radical change. Instead, we can ask questions like "Where does Muste fit in the history of Dutch Americans?" and "How did his cultural background shape his views?" We should recognize that while radical politics was uncommon among Dutch Americans, it was not unnatural. His Dutch Reformed heritage had incubated religious dissent and social upheaval for centuries. Although Muste took that religious passion and penchant for schism in a different direction, his personal journey tapped that heritage's streak of dissidence.

Born in Zeeland, the Netherlands, Muste came to the United States with his family when he was six. He grew up in Grand Rapids, then attended Hope Preparatory School and Hope College, where as a student in 1903 he won a state oratory contest.[3] At the time, oratory was a popular, competitive sport, and when Muste returned home from the contest by train he was met by 300 supportive students who had learned of the result by telegraph. After Hope, where he graduated as valedictorian, Muste taught Latin and Greek at Northwestern Classical Academy (now Northwestern College) for the 1905–1906 year. He then attended New Brunswick Theological Seminary. This trajectory placed Muste squarely in line with the Dutch American Calvinist tradition, giving him a thorough education in the Reformed Church in America.

In the 1910s, Muste struggled to remain in agreement with the Reformed Church. He left it in 1914 for a Congregational church. He left that church over his opposition to the war in 1917 and left organized religion altogether in 1919. Muste's natural inclinations and constant search for outside ideas pulled him toward a life characterized by acting on a variety of radical views about peace, labor, war, and society. In his East Coast environment, Muste had plenty of opportunity to investigate labor struggles and poverty. He also had the chance to learn from American progressives and Marxists. It was internal struggle and external influences that drew him in a new direction.

An essential text for understanding Muste's early thought is his 1928 "Pacifism and the Class War," an article that was informed by his experience as a labor organizer. In the article, Muste switched the blame for violence away from strikers—a typical target of suspicion in American thought—and toward the society that forced the workers to strike. A common error, Muste argued, "is that the oppressed, the radicals, are the ones who are creating the disturbance." Now a self-identified Marxist, he linked American labor with the international class struggle. Muste saw an analogy between Jesus "upsetting the people" of the Roman world and the Kuomintang in China having overcome centuries of poor government. He explained with a touch of sarcasm that "society may permit an utterly impossible situation to develop in an industry like coal, but the workers who finally in desperation put down tools and fold their arms, are 'the strikers,' the cause of the breach of peace." To remedy the situation, Muste proposed, "We need to get our thinking focused right and see the selfish employers or a negligent society, not striking workers, as the cause of disturbance in the social order."[4]

Muste, however, did not absolve the strikers or revolutionaries of their violent acts. He explained that the system itself is based on violence, and only revolutionary nonviolent resistance could break the chain. Pacifists who were willing to compromise with the evils of the system, or pacifists who would use violent means, would perpetuate the mentality of violence. In Muste's words, "Violence begets violence by whomever used" and "like produces like." When he spoke of society or "the system," he primarily identified capitalism. In capitalism, Muste argued, "violence inheres," and those who would "suffer from social revolt in the main reap what by positive evil-doing or indifference they have sown." In his zeal for pacifism, he yearned for a revolution and identified communism as a possible system in which pacifism would have a chance to succeed. Indeed, revolution was one of Muste's chief aims. He reasoned that "In a world built on violence, one must be a revolutionary before one can be a pacifist; in such a world a non-revolutionary pacifist is a contradiction in terms, a monstrosity."[5]

Muste was a key figure in twentieth-century Marxist-Pacifism, but he wasn't the founder of this school of thought. He agreed with the philosopher Bertrand Russell, who in 1917 wrote, "The Communist revolution is shedding the institutionalized violence which keeps the poor and rich as they are and convinces the poor to serve in armies that keep the world unjust." And like Russell, Muste agreed that violence was essential to the system of capitalism, but that violence was not necessary "in order to bring the reign of violence to an end."[6] During World War II, however, Russell adopted a position of relative pacifism, claiming that certain circumstances like the rise of Hitler needed to be opposed. But Muste rejected the "mad dog" theory, the political idea that the proper response to a "mad dog" dictator is to shoot him. One nation needed to lead by example, he thought. Muste predicted

a revolutionary response, a "spiritual atom bomb" that would topple the ideologies of war.[7] Like his religious forebears, perhaps, he refused in this case to compromise principle for the sake of practicality.

As the dreams of communism, seemingly reachable in 1917, became the nightmare of Stalinist violence, intellectuals like Muste questioned whether pacifism was possible in communism. Distraught and alienated with the course of events in Stalinist Russia and hit with a moment of religious epiphany while on vacation in Europe in 1936, Muste rediscovered that evil is not only inherent in the capitalist system but in humanity. Perhaps this insight came from his Calvinist background and set him on a different path from the atheist Russell, who hoped for salvation in a political system. Too often, Muste thought, the communists and union leaders believed that the ends justified the means, that "violence [is] the only way to achieve fundamental social change."[8] A vital something was missing in international communism and in the domestic labor movement, and Muste put his finger on it: both were lacking morality and spirit. In "Return to Pacifism" in 1936, Muste declared that, above all, "Pacifism must be, is, religious—is religion."[9]

In 1939, Muste clarified his position in an article titled "The True International." He wrote, "In 1929, I believed that the way to bring in a new world was basically—virtually exclusively a matter of 'social engineering,' changing 'the system,' economic, political, social. Today I recognize that we neglected too much the problem of what happens inside the human being."[10] Clearly, he still believed that society could be engineered for humanity's benefit, but that this could be done only through changing minds. With this position, Muste took a *via media*, a compromise between two commonplace ideals: the nineteenth-century Methodist temperance movement and similar efforts to reform the individual and the large-scale social reform projects of the Progressive Era.

Muste was inspired by, but altered, the message of the social gospel, the belief that improved social conditions were a prerequisite for proper Christian behavior. Walter Rauschenbusch, whose *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) was one of the defining tracts of the social gospel, argued that evangelism required an emphasis on both moral and institutional reform.[11] Muste, like Rauschenbusch, argued that while Christian behavior would improve social conditions, the two had to work in tandem to be successful. For Muste, like the proponents of the social gospel, Christianity was a social philosophy.



A. J. Muste and Norman Thomas (an American Presbyterian minister and Socialist Party candidate for president) at the 1959 War Resisters League dinner. Muste received the WRL's second annual Peace Award. Photograph by David McReynolds; courtesy of mcreynoldsphotos.org.

As war descended on Europe and Asia in 1940, Muste elaborated on both his turn from communism and his philosophy of Christian pacifism. In *Non-Violence in an Aggressive World* (1940), Muste emphasized reforming the system and the individual. "It was shallow to think that a 'good system' under which man should automatically become good could be achieved. and still more, shallow to think that the character of the man who worked for the new system and the means they employed were matters of no importance."[12] To synthesize social and individual reforms, Muste developed an alternative worldview combining three forces: democracy, workers, and the church—what he also called the Judeo-Christian tradition. He argued that these forces had no essential incompatibility. He pointed out that democracy relies on faith in humanity, which must come from a faith in God and a religious morality. In essence, "Jewish-Christian religion, social advance, and democracy stand or fall."[13] In this philosophy, Christian nonviolence was not an impractical ideal but an essential force operating in the world. Muste opposed Christians who believed that since the world could only become perfect with the Messiah's return, humanity should not endeavor to ameliorate human relations on earth.

Abraham Muste's intellectual journey put him at odds with his well-known contemporary Reinhold Niebuhr, Union Theological Seminary's professor of Christian ethics and a leading proponent of just war theory. Like Muste, Niebuhr had turned away from Marxism in the face of Stalin's policies. The young Niebuhr also had been influenced by the social gospel movement, only to reject it later. The central prem-

ise of Niebuhr's developing thought was that humanity is imperfect and incapable of creating or organizing a social utopia. Niebuhr argued that, until Christ returned, people required pragmatic ethics and morality that recognized the realities of an imperfect world. In Niebuhr's thought, violence was acceptable as a necessary evil for combating potentially greater evils. He therefore opposed radical pacifism because he felt it left no room for moral judgment. The disavowal of responsibilities as a nation or as individuals could lead to greater guilt, Niebuhr worried.

Niebuhr's philosophy, called Christian realism, was based on his reading of Christianity's gospel message. He established the core of this philosophy in his book *Nature and the Destiny of Man* (1940), and its message continued in his later works. Niebuhr emphasized that no system would be able to overcome human sin and guilt. Communists, for example, preached that excessive self-interest bound up in the possession of private property prevented mankind from good actions. The abolition of private property would produce people willing to work for the benefit of society. Muste thought that putting Christian principles into practice would solve social ills. But the idea that if only Christianity were practiced properly there would be no war, Niebuhr thought, ran counter to experience and expressed the same faith in man as had communism.[14] Niebuhr was a socialist, ever concerned with relieving human suffering, but he remained a pragmatist, testing the waters in each circumstance to see how Christians could use power as "an instrument of justice and a servant of interests broader than our own."[15]

In *The Irony of American History,* Niebuhr reasoned that even when countries do good, there is tragedy in their actions. Tragically, and ironically, when Americans traded isolationism for world leadership, they bit the apple of power and lost their innocence. While power had to be used, that meant using it cautiously to preserve civilization. According to Niebuhr, Muste had been misled by a rationalism and modernism that put too much faith in humanity. Radical pacifism, Niebuhr argued, rejects original sin and relies on humanity to overcome evil. Muste countered that the ability and desire for people to do good is a natural result of faith in God and in no way absolves humanity's need for grace.[16]

Muste and Niebuhr frequently jousted. Muste thought Niebuhr was a theologian of despair; Niebuhr thought Muste was a naïve idealist. For Niebuhr, Muste's pacifism was heretical and contrary to the gospel. The general Christian pacifism that seeks to avoid wars is not heretical, he noted, but the modern-day Christian pacifism that does so at all costs, is. "The good news of the gospel is not the law that we ought to love one another." Niebuhr wrote. "The good news of the gospel is that there is a resource of divine mercy which is able to overcome a contradiction within our souls, which we cannot overcome ourselves."[17] In "Christianity and Power Politics," Niebuhr continued his attack on radical pacifism. Not only was Muste's pacifism a perversion of the Christian message, he argued, but it was also a poor political creed bound to erode civilization. It was also too cynical for its own good: "It is unable to make significant distinctions between tyranny and freedom because it can find no democracy pure enough to deserve its devotion; and in any case it can find none which is not involved in conflict, in its effort to defend itself against tyranny."[18]

Niebuhr's most direct attack on radical pacifism came in the chapter titled, "Why the Christian Church Is Not Pacifist." Radical pacifists, he again contended, were confounding Jesus's nonresistance, his stance of "turn the other cheek" with nonviolent resistance. Niebuhr rejected the division between a violent and nonviolent act. Even nonviolent resistance is coercion and is not nonresistance, he thought. According to Niebuhr, the radical pacifist took a position of moral self-righteousness, thinking that one was absolved from culpability for the evil of war and of the world by refusing to participate. In Niebuhr's Christian realism, it is a virtue to avoid conflict and violence, but all relationships are tainted by sin. Likewise, all nations are guilty. "The Christian faith ought to persuade us," Niebuhr wrote, "that political controversies are always conflicts between sinners and not between righteous men and sinners."[19] This meant that all nations were capable of atrocities and that one's enemies should not be demonized. Muste made a career by disagreeing with Niebuhr. But even if the two men disagreed on the Second World War, Cold War, and development of nuclear weapons, they agreed in their opposition to the war in Vietnam.

Muste's philosophical musings resulted in concrete actions. These two aspects of his life cannot be separated. While a student at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, Muste traveled frequently to New York City, where he took classes at Columbia and New York University. In the city, he learned to see social and political causes to attend to. He also earned a second seminary degree as a student at Union Theological Seminary, an experience that pushed him in a left-liberal direction. Muste learned to take a strong form of Christian idealism and mix it with pragmatic activism.

Muste could be found as a leader in the 1919 textile strikes in Lawrence,

Massachusetts, and in this early phase of his activism he was active in labor causes more than peace issues. He was especially prolific in organizing and leading organizations dedicated to labor, peace, and civil rights issues. For example, he was the founding president of the Brookwood Labor College in the 1920s. He helped found the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (later known as the American Workers Party), the Congress of Racial Equality, and the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. He also served as general secretary of the Amalgamated Textile Workers of America and as national secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.



Main building of Brookwood Labor College, on a former estate in Westchester County, New York. Published in *Labor Age* in October 1930. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.

Perhaps because of his numerous ideological shifts in his adult life, Muste found himself connected to various leftist movements where he was well known and well respected. He was also well connected. He met Leon Trotsky in Norway in 1936 and Ho Chi Minh in 1966. With Dorothy Day, the Roman Catholic convert and radical social activist, he promoted resistance to the draft and criticized civil defense activities in New York City in the 1950s and 1960s. And, he once gave a seminary lecture to an audience including Martin Luther King Jr. and became an advisor to civil rights activists.

While Muste never abandoned his interests in labor and civil rights, he became increasingly focused on nonviolent pacificism in his later years. Muste had been a pacifist before the First World War, when pacifism was a common and socially respected position in the United States. Against all opposition, he maintained his radical pacificism through both world wars, which he saw not as battles between good and evil but as outgrowths of capitalism, with nations fighting for greater economic power. During the Cold War, Muste continued writing, debating, and protesting the spread of nuclear weapons and the posture the US took against the Soviet Union. Christian pacifism, Muste thought, was a prophetic message, and he relished the role of prophet.[20]

Muste was perhaps best known, however, as a central figure in protests against the war in Vietnam. Muste began protesting the war as soon as the United States became involved, and long before American liberals were united in opposition to it. Muste challenged US policy, particularly George Kennan's "containment" ideas, which he felt had turned the United States into an imperialist power. With his affiliations with so many organizations and his extensive network of friends and acquaintances, Muste became a central figure in the anti-war coalition that emerged in 1964–1965. He led anti-war demonstrations in Times Square but felt a need to do something bigger, to attract even more attention, so in 1966 he traveled to Saigon and was arrested for protest-



A. J. Muste and Dorothy Day at a meeting at the United Nations in 1959. Photograph by David McReynolds; courtesy of mcreynoldsphotos.org.



A. J. Muste (left), Yvonne Klein, Brad Lyttle, Tony Brown, David Dellinger (second from right), and Edie Snyder. Image from a peace walk organized by the Committee for Nonviolent Action in 1963-1964. Courtesy of www.genekeyes.com.

ing the war there. In 1967, he traveled to North Vietnam and met with Ho Chi Minh to encourage peace talks. The trip had been exhausting, and within months of returning to the US Muste died.

Muste's consistent pacifism won him few plaudits from his leftist compatriots. Sidney Hook, an influential activist and intellectual, dismissed Muste as someone who:

> rarely thought through a position but would adopt one on moral grounds that was rarely affected by the facts in the case. He had been an ardent pacifist. When he became a revolutionary Marxist, he publicly abandoned his pacifism and, among us, his belief in Christianity. He could not have been very well versed in either one or the other, despite his religious training, for when he finally vomited up his hastily swallowed Marxism, he returned to his earlier beliefs with the passion of someone newly converted. In Muste's case, his early abandonment of pacifism and Christianity could not have been very reflective.[21]

It also is possible to see constancy in Muste's life—in his passion for justice and his unwillingness to compromise principle. This passion and principle led him to pacifism in times of war, the defense of the needs of laborers in the context of industrial capitalism and the Great Depression, and civil rights and pacifism during the Cold War and Civil Rights era.

While Muste may have roamed far from his West Michigan, Dutch Calvinist beginnings, he did return there, now and then, to expound on his enthusiasms. In November 1941, just days before the attack on Pearl Harbor, he joined Dr. Fred Olert of Detroit in speaking to a peace forum held at Hope College. Olert preached that the Christian church should promote world peace through liberating individual souls. War, he said, could lead to the collapse of civilization. Muste's remarks reflected both his Christian and his Marxist phases. He said that all wars had economic causes that arose from the competition between the production of nations and inherent global inequalities. Echoing de Tocqueville from a century earlier, Muste believed that America's social conditions could promote peace as long as the nation avoided the class distinctions that dominated the Old World. As a Marxist, Muste saw a warring world of haves and have nots. The haves fought to keep what they possessed, while the have nots fought for a piece of the pie. Accordingly, Muste saw the capitalist system, and all its competitive transactions, as a type of war. Capitalism, he said, made everyone strive for only their own self-interest.

Near the end of his life, Muste still categorically rejected all acts of violence and militarism as unjust. Both the Soviet Union and the United States were in the wrong, he said. But he then wavered, stating that American violence in Vietnam was worse than the violence of the Vietnamese liberation movement. In echoes of his younger days as a labor organizer, when he blamed society for the violence strikers used, Muste now blamed the United States for precipitating the carnage that befell Vietnam. When pressed on the question of whether a pacifist could support violence to further a morally superior end, Muste replied, "I think you have to be for the defeat of the United States in this war. I just don't see how anybody can be for anything except withdrawal or defeat."[22] Pacifism did not mean that Muste had no interest in who won the war or identify which side had a just cause.

When Abraham Muste died in



Mural by Christopher Cardinale at 339 Lafayette Street in New York. Nicknamed "The Peace Pentagon," the building was the headquarters of the War Resisters League, A. J. Muste Institute, Granny Peace Brigade, Socialist Party USA, Catholic Peace Fellowship, and other leftist and pacifist organizations. Source Unknown.

1967, Hope College, his alma mater, hailed him as "an outstanding alumnus." Clearly Muste earned those laurels for the influence he had wielded on the American political scene. For



A. J. Muste in November 1964 at the Gethsemani Abbey Peacemakers Retreat organized by the Trappist monk Thomas Merton. Other participants included John Howard Yoder and Daniel and Philip Berrigan. Photograph by Jim Forest; courtesy of www.flickr.com/photos/jimforest/.

over fifty years he had been an often-lonely prophet preaching peace to a troubled age.

Muste was correct when he identified evil in both society and the individual, but he was on shakier ground to think that perfection could be attained in either one. Muste's philosophy of nonviolence is applicable only in a world without totalitarianism, without terrorism, and without excessive human selfishness. Radical pacifism avoids a course toward peace and offers peace as a premise for peace. This is a tautology only in logical form, not in reality. Radical pacifism is a solution without an equation, while Christian realism is by definition an equation without a solution. The latter copes with the problem that war is inevitable but can do nothing to convince the mind of the enemy to put away its murderous plans. The danger in Christian realism, Muste would have pointed out, is that it easily leads, step by step, into morasses like the war in Vietnam.

A. J. Muste and other twentieth-century radical pacifists argued against participating in this type of reciprocal violence. Muste famously said, "There is no way to peace—peace is the way." Muste hoped that by demilitarizing and refusing to fight another war the United States would set an example for the world to follow, and one by one all nations would give up the will to fight. He maintained that pacifism was applicable in all circumstances, and he held this view despite its unpopularity in World War II and despite the threat of Cold War communism.

Fifty years later A. J. Muste's critiques of American power can still be heard in the chants of protesters and read in the editorial columns of newspapers. Maybe people did not listen to him as much as he had hoped, but Muste did speak to the nation about matters that still command our attention.

Endnotes

1. Jo Ann Ooiman Robinson, *Abraham Went Out: A Biography of A. J. Muste.* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981), 40.
2. Hendrik G. Meijer, *Thrifty Years: The Life of Hendrik Meijer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984).
3. *De Grondwet*, March 31, 1903.
4. A. J. Muste, "Pacifism and Class War, The World Tomorrow," Sept. 1928. In Nat Hentoff, editor *The Essays of A. J. Muste* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1967) 179-185.
5. A. J. Muste, "Pacifism and Class War, The World Tomorrow," Sept. 1928. In Hentoff, *The Essays of A. J. Muste*, 181-83.
6. Bertrand Russell, "Pacifism and Revolution in The Tribunal" (1917) in Louis Greenspan, editor. *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell* (New York: Routledge, 1999. The McMaster University Edition, Vol 14. Pacifism and Revolution, 1916-1918), 202-205.
7. Jo Ann Robinson, "A. J. Muste: Prophet in the Wilderness of the Modern World," in Charles DeBenedetti, ed. *Peace Heroes in Twentieth Century America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 147-59.
8. A. J. Muste, "Return to Pacifism," in Nat Hentoff, *The Essays of A. J. Muste*, 197.
9. Ibid., 200.
10. A. J. Muste, "The True International" in Nat Hentoff, *The Essays of A. J. Muste*, 208.
11. Paul M. Minus, *Walter Rauschenbusch: American Reformer* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1988).
12. A. J. Muste, *Non-Violence in An Aggressive World* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940), 4.
13. Ibid., 7.
14. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), 7.
15. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), 38.
16. A. J. Muste, "Pacifism and Perfectionism" (1948) in Nat Hentoff, *The Essays of A. J. Muste*, 308-21.
17. Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, 2.
18. Ibid., x.
19. Reinhold Niebuhr, "Why the Christian Church is Not Pacifist" in *Christianity and Power Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), 23.
20. Leilah Danielson, *American Gandhi: A. J. Muste and the History of Radicalism in the Twentieth Century* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).
21. Sidney Hook. *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 199.
22. James Finn, *Protest: Pacifism and Politics* (New York: Random House, 1967), 200-201.

White Hot Politics: Holland Christian's Bid to Close 20th Street Becomes a Political Fight over Christian Education

Robert P. Swierenga

Closing a city street permanently is often a controversial issue. Safety forces object to blocked access, and neighbors decry the inconvenience. But seldom does a decision to vacate a street become a full-blown political crusade pitting public school advocates against Christian school defenders. But that is what happened in Holland, Michigan, in the immediate post-World War II years. The turnout of 84 percent in the 1948 local election that included the street closing proposal was the highest ever in the history of the city.[1]

Holland Christian Schools in the 1940s was a mature K-12 school system entering its second half-century with more than 1,000 students, about 30 percent of total enrollment in city schools. Holland Public Schools had 2,500 students, or 70 percent. Public schools served only city residents, while Holland Christian buses collected students from Zeeland and other surrounding communities.

A major characteristic of Holland, then a city of 14,000 residents, was the church divide between members of Christian Reformed (CRC) and Reformed (RCA) churches. The CRC in 1948 had six congregations within the city limits with 4,100 confessing members, and the RCA had eight congregations with 5,060 confessing members. Not all were registered voters.

RCA churches, by synodical edicts since the 1870s, were totally committed to public education. Their children would be educated in the mainstream American culture, but as "salt and light" Christians. CRC synods from the 1870s insisted that infant baptismal vows of parents to raise their children "in the fear and knowledge of the Lord" required Christian day schools, whenever possible. The favorite



Holland Christian School classroom, Benjamin Stegink (first principal) on left, teacher Christina "Tena" Holkeboer on right, ca. 1902. Image courtesy of Holland Museum Archives.

Robert P. Swierenga taught at Calvin University and Kent State University. Currently he is a research professor in the A.C. Van Raalte Institute at Hope College. His most recent book is His Faithfulness Continues: A History of Timothy Christian Schools in Chicagoland *(Van Raalte Press, 2020).*

image was the three-legged stool—church, home, and school. Holland Christian elementary began in 1901, with a high school added in 1921. By 1946 the Holland Christian system had three elementary schools (South Side, West Side, and East Side), with junior and senior high buildings facing each other across 20th Street.



Holland School for Christian Instruction, Central Avenue at 15th Street, opened 1902, closed 1949, and torched by an arsonist in 1973. Image courtesy Myron Van Ark.

Antecedents

Every significant historical event has antecedents. The fight to close 20th Street after the Second World War had two antecedents. During the First World War, hyper-patriots took aim at ethnic churches and parochial schools to force them to Americanize completely. In 1920 the Michigan Public School Defense League succeeded in a petition drive to place on the ballot in the presidential election a state constitutional amendment to abolish parochial schools, including society-owned schools like Holland Christian. Specifically, the amendment would require all students between ages seven and sixteen to attend a public school until they graduated from the eighth grade. The amendment failed in the city and statewide, by a 71-29 percent margin. Both sides in the Holland dispute opposed it.[2]

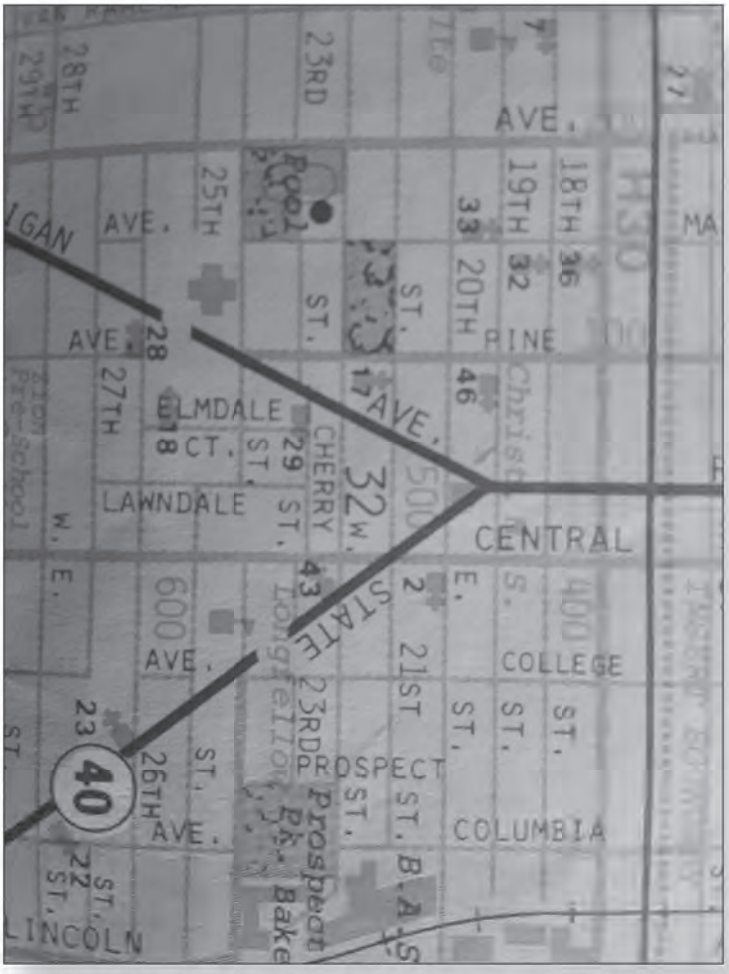
Holland Christian leaders and parents breathed a sigh of relief at the failed killer constitutional amendment. The thriving school was growing fast, and the board decided to build a new high school on choice property acquired in 1921, the former Westerhof farm. The farm stood above the "Y" intersection of River Avenue, the major north-south thoroughfare in the growing city. The triangle-shaped property at the "Y" intersection of River Avenue was bounded by two state highways—Michigan Avenue (US-31) and State Street (US-40), and two city residential streets, 19th and 21st streets. In the middle was 20th Street, one of the few east-west thoroughfares to traverse the entire city. The two highways were clogged with vehicles, especially trucks passing through the city. US-31 was part of the Dixie Highway that stretched from New Orleans via Chicago to Mackinaw City, and US-40 connected Holland with Allegan and Kalamazoo. The high school, designed for 375 students, was completed in 1924 on the northern half of the property, fronting 20th Street.

Round One

During the Second World War, in late 1944, the school board announced plans for a $150,000, twelve-room elementary school on the south side



Holland Christian Junior High School (originally Holland School for Advanced Christian Instruction), 15th Street west of Central Avenue, dedicated 1916. Many students rode bicycles to school in the era before extensive busing. Image courtesy Donald van Reken Collection, Herrick District Library.



The disputed section of 20th Street was located just to the left of the confluence of Central Avenue, State Street, and Michigan Avenue. (Holland City Map, courtesy Robert P. Swierenga).

of 20th Street, facing the high school on the north side. The main feature would be a 600-seat auditorium large enough for the entire student body. The new building would replace the original wooden structure, a major fire hazard, and consolidate all twelve grades on one campus. Enrollment was projected soon to reach 1,000 students, most of whom lived within walking distance of the Y site.

The school board sent a letter to the Holland common council, signed by President George Gritter, pastor of Ninth Street (now Pillar) CRC, which requested the city to vacate the unpaved 20th Street between State Street and Michigan Avenue. The purpose was to allow students safely to exit the building, board school buses, or walk or bike home.[3]

The innocent request set off a replay of the hostility against Holland Christian Schools that was as bitter as the 1920 state amendment bid. Three city aldermen voiced concerns about creating traffic congestion and the council referred the request to the street committee for further study. The committee found "many differences of opinion" and scheduled an informal public hearing at city hall. This meeting saw the public fight begin. Holland Christian Superintendent Dr. Walter De Kock presented maps of the site and explained the need to expand to the south.

A resident living at the corner of 20th and State Street spoke for a group opposing the action, using the typical "nimby" (not in my back yard) argument. City officials were positive. They noted that the state department of transportation had already announced bypass routes for M-40 and US-31 due to serious traffic congestion. De Kock emphasized the point that Holland Christian Schools saved city taxpayers about $100,000 a year, so the community should be accommodating.

In June 1945, the city council voted seven to five to approve the request and close 20th Street. However, because opponents had announced their intent to appeal, the council set a mandatory public hearing date for mid-July. One hundred citizens packed the room. Following a lengthy discussion, Superintendent De Kock and the school board saw that they lacked the necessary two-thirds vote in council (required whenever appeals are filed) and that the issue was stirring much ill will.

After the hearing, the board asked the common council to table the matter indefinitely, which the aldermen did, all the while expressing their goodwill toward Holland Christian Schools. The board then changed plans and decided to build a new grade school fifteen blocks south on Central Avenue in the new Maplewood residential district. South Side Christian School opened in 1948. This ended round one of the five-round controversy. Meanwhile, in 1946, De Kock left Holland for calmer climes at Bellflower (CA) Christian Schools, and Dr. Bert Bos replaced him as Holland Christian superintendent.

Round Two

Round two in the "street fight" opened in 1947, when Rev. John Vander Beek, who for eighteen years had served two RCA congregations in Holland, published a booklet, "Our Public School under Fire." He ostensibly analyzed an article of Mark Fakkema, executive director of the National Union of Christian Schools (NUCS), which characterized public schools as godless, Bible-less, and without moral standards. Holland Christian Schools were affiliated with Fakkema's association, but the superintendent and trustees were not responsible for his writings. In a typical ploy of guilt by association, Vander Beek pinned what he called Fakkema's "rash, indiscrete



First faculty, Holland Christian High School, left to right: John J. Jellema, Edward Wolters, principal Albert Muyskens, Clarence De Graaf, Cornelius Van Andel. Image courtesy Holland Museum Archives.

diatribe hurled at our public schools" on their lapel. The Dutch Christian schools, Vander Beek fumed, reflect "foreign national idealisms." While parent-operated, they still violated the American creed of separation of church and state, because ministers and their flocks essentially control them. Vander Beek closed with a rousing defense of American public schools as "schools with the Bible," imbued with "true patriotism" and "vital to our nation."

What may have set off the irate cleric was the fact that three times in a row, city voters had turned down public school bond issues for new buildings or additions. He obviously blamed CRC congregants for the defeats, although they had traditionally supported public school bond issues. As for the Bible in school, what the cleric could not imagine was that within eighteen years federal judges would ban the Bible and devotional exercises in all public schools in a controversial dictum that appealed to separation of church and state. This decision sparked a "Bible fight" in Michigan and nationwide for a constitutional amendment to overrule the judiciary, but to no avail.[4]

Vander Beek's pamphlet risked opening an education war in Holland between public and Christian school constituencies that would harm the city's image. So, community leaders organized an "Our Town" forum on the topic: "The Place of the Parochial School in a System of Public Education." Hope College Professor Harold Haverkamp moderated the two-hour discussion among four speakers for an audience of seventy-five. Hope professor Clarence De Graaf, who had previously taught at Holland Christian High, explained the history of Protestant parochial education; Superintendent Bert Bos described the Holland Christian program; John F. Donnelly of the Donnelly-Kelley Glass Company spoke about Catholic schools generally and specifically about Holland's St. Francis de Sales Catholic School; and Hope College English Professor John Hollenbach noted the purposes of the Christian college. De Graaf explained the three types of schools: public, "free" Protestant, and parochial (church-owned). Bos was careful to state that forming the Holland Christian system was "not a protest against the public schools" but simply an acknowledgement that parents "cannot expect any public institution to promote the religious life of the children." Christian parents need Bible-centered schools for their children. The informational forum served its limited purpose, but it hardly resolved the sharply differing views, as countless letters to the editor in the *Holland Sentinel* attest.[5]

Round Three

About the time of the Our Town discussion, at the urging of the city's street committee, armed with an inflated traffic count, the common council resolved to pave 20th Street and assess the property owners. Ben Staal, secretary of the Holland Christian board, came to complain about the assessment, 90 percent of which would fall on the school society. He also noted the traffic hazard for pupils, especially during recess times, because vehicles would speed over the smooth surface. Staal also complained that paving the street was an ipso facto decision not to close the street to traffic, as the board had requested. He urged the city to wait on the paving. The council tabled the decision to the next month's meeting, when Staal again came personally. He rehearsed the controversy and reiterated the school board's plan to build a high school annex on the present street area. "Becoming almost belligerent at times," according to a city newspaper, Staal "pleaded" with the council to delay the project. They refused and voted eight to three to accept bids.[6]

Holland Christian had one hero, their own US history and government teacher at Holland Christian High, Alderman Raymond Holwerda. He cast one of the nay votes. While



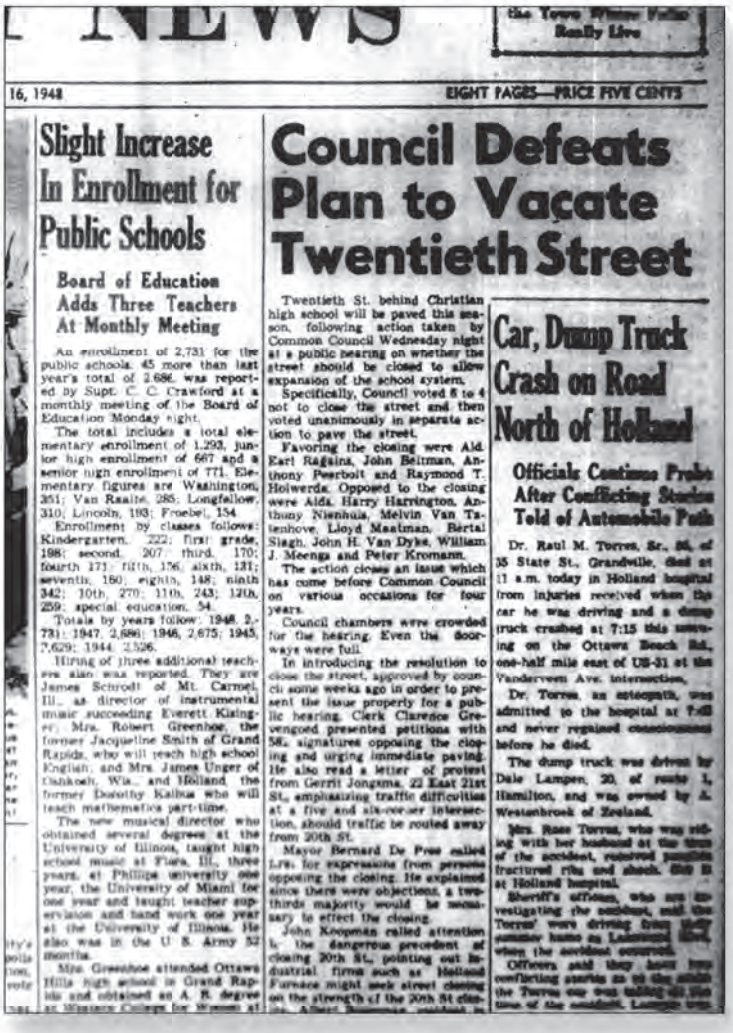
Holland Christian High School, West 20th Street, dedicated 1924. In 1985, the building was incorporated into Evergreen Commons Senior Center. Image courtesy Myron Van Ark.

supporting the school's position, Holwerda had to wear his aldermanic hat. Rather than "quibble," he urged colleagues to decide the issue "on its present merits," and he then led the fight for delay. Paving that street was not a necessity that very summer, he argued, and many constituents supported the school. After his "spirited arguments," Holwerda moved to postpone the bid indefinitely, but lost. He then moved a two-week delay and won by a bare majority. A fortnight later, the council agreed to delay again for two weeks. By this time, the council was taking heat from those who wanted action, including a petition with fifty-eight signatures. In September 1948, after five months of discussion, the council by an eight to four tally (the required two-thirds majority) voted not to close the street. Then they unanimously decided to pave it at a cost of $5,700, of which Holland Christian's assessment was $5,130. After four years, Holland Christian had lost the fight. However, the ballot box was still open! Round Four was about to begin.[7]

Round Four

Christian school board president Louis Voskuil, pastor of the Montello Park CRC, called an emergency board meeting to mount a petition drive to place on the November 1948 ballot a 20th Street Closing initiative. Plans were already underway to build the junior high on the south side of 20th Street, and the board felt "duty bound to do everything in its power" to protect students from traffic hazards in crossing between the two buildings. Within two weeks, society members had gathered 1,278 signatures, 338 more than the 950 required (25 percent of voters in the preceding mayoral election). "People Will Vote on 20th St. Issue," declared the bold headline of the *Holland City News*. The city attorney advised rejecting the petition, on the legal technicality that the right of petition did not apply to "administrative" issues such as vacating streets. But cooler heads on council prevailed. Alderman Harry Harrington, whose grandfather a century earlier had assisted Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, the Holland colony founder, declared the petition was "in line with democratic principles for the people to express their views on matters of this type." Council agreed, and it voted unanimously to "set aside its powers" and let the people speak.[8]

Both sides geared up for a fight to the finish. Amazingly, 820 unregistered citizens filed to vote, as did several hundred who had changed ad-



NEWS

16, 1948 EIGHT PAGES—PRICE FIVE CENTS

Slight Increase In Enrollment for Public Schools

Board of Education Adds Three Teachers At Monthly Meeting

An enrollment of 2,731 for the public schools, 45 more than last year's total of 2,686, was reported by Supt. C. C. Crawford at a monthly meeting of the Board of Education Monday night.

The total includes a total elementary enrollment of 1,293, junior high enrollment of 667 and a senior high enrollment of 771. Elementary figures are Washington, 251; Van Raalte, 285; Longfellow, 310; Lincoln, 193; Froebel, 154.

Enrollment by classes follows: Kindergarten, 222; first grade, 198; second, 207; third, 170; fourth 171; fifth, 156; sixth, 131; seventh, 150; eighth, 148; ninth 342; 10th, 270; 11th, 243; 12th, 259; special education, 54.

Totals by years follow: 1948, 2,731; 1947, 2,686; 1946, 2,675; 1945, 2,629; 1944, 2,526.

Hiring of three additional teachers also was reported. They are James Schrodt of Mt. Carmel, Ill., as director of instrumental music succeeding Everett Klinger; Mrs. Robert Greenhoe, the former Jacqueline Smith of Grand Rapids, who will teach high school English; and Mrs. James Unger of Oshkosh, Wis., and Holland, the former Dorothy Kalkus who will teach mathematics part-time.

The new musical director who obtained several degrees at the University of Illinois, taught high school music at Flora, Ill., three years, at Phillips university one year, the University of Miami for one year and taught teacher supervision and band work one year at the University of Illinois. He also was in the U. S. Army 32 months.

Mrs. Greenhoe attended Ottawa Hills high school in Grand Rapids and obtained an A. B. degree at Western College for Women at

Council Defeats Plan to Vacate Twentieth Street

Twentieth St. behind Christian high school will be paved this season, following action taken by Common Council Wednesday night at a public hearing on whether the street should be closed to allow expansion of the school system.

Specifically, Council voted 8 to 4 not to close the street and then voted unanimously in separate action to pave the street.

Favoring the closing were Ald. Earl Ragains, John Beltman, Anthony Peerbolt and Raymond T. Holwerda. Opposed to the closing were Alds. Harry Harrington, Anthony Nienhuis, Melvin Van Tatenhove, Lloyd Maatman, Bertal Slagh, John H. Van Dyke, William J. Meenga and Peter Kromann.

The action closes an issue which has come before Common Council on various occasions for four years.

Council chambers were crowded for the hearing. Even the doorways were full.

In introducing the resolution to close the street, approved by council some weeks ago in order to present the issue properly for a public hearing, Clerk Clarence Grevengoed presented petitions with 58 signatures opposing the closing and urging immediate paving. He also read a letter of protest from Gerrit Jongsma, 22 East 21st St., emphasizing traffic difficulties at a five and six-corner intersection, should traffic be routed away from 20th St.

Mayor Bernard De Free called Mrs. for expressions from persons opposing the closing. He explained since there were objections, a two-thirds majority would be necessary to effect the closing.

John Koopman called attention t. the dangerous precedent of closing 20th St., pointing out industrial firms such as Holland Furnace might seek street closing on the strength of the 20th St closing. Albert Bosman, resident in

Car, Dump Truck Crash on Road North of Holland

Officials Continue Probe After Conflicting Stories Told of Automobile Path

Dr. Raul M. Torres, Sr., 56, of 35 State St., Grandville, died at 11 a.m. today in Holland hospital from injuries received when the car he was driving and a dump truck crashed at 7:15 this morning on the Ottawa Beach Rd., one-half mile east of US-31 at the Vandervere Ave. intersection.

Dr. Torres, an osteopath, was admitted to the hospital at 7:45 and never regained consciousness before he died.

The dump truck was driven by Dale Lampen, 20, of route 1, Hamilton, and was owned by A. Westenbroek of Zeeland.

Mrs. Rose Torres, who was riding with her husband at the time of the accident, received possible fractured ribs and shock. She is at Holland hospital.

Sheriff's officers, who are investigating the accident, said the Torres' were driving from their summer home on Lakewood Blvd. when the accident occurred.

Officers said they have two conflicting stories as to the action the Torres car was taking at the time of the accident. Lampen was

Front page headline *Holland City News*, 16 September 1948. Courtesy of Hope College Digital Commons.

dresses. Hundreds more whose names the clerk had purged for not voting in the last two elections re-registered. The clerk's office could hardly keep up with the rush. On the last day to register, the clerk extended office hours to 8 p.m., and 305 citizens signed up. Total registration surpassed 8,700, a record, and the clerk estimated that 90 percent would vote in the election. A record number of 350 requests for absentee ballots swelled the turnout. The street proposal, Issue Seven, was the only local issue on the ballot. It read: "That 20th Street be forever vacated, discontinued and abolished in order to permit the expansion of the Holland Christian high school southward, and to eliminate future traffic hazards to school students."[9]



Holland Christian High "A" building on right and Holland Junior High "B" building on left (looking west), with students crossing 20th Street changing classes. Image courtesy Holland Christian High *Footprints*, 1954.

The 20th Street Citizens Committee published a broadside in the *Holland Sentinel* with a street map of the area that urged a No vote in bold letters: "Citizens Wake Up! If You Lose 20th Street It's Gone Forever." Thirty-six "patriotic" Holland individuals and businesses sponsored the American Bible Society to run a series of full-page ads in the *Sentinel* that declared, "Religious education is a task for our churches." The obvious intent was to undercut the main argument for Christian day schools. Two weeks before the 1948 presidential election, the Christian School Society bought an ad in the *Sentinel* to set forth its case. The headline read: "Why we ask you to vote 'Yes' on letting Christian High School use a small part of 20th St." The three-column appeal ran again eleven days later, began with an apologia for Christian education and provided "the facts" about why a separate building across the street was not only feasible but absolutely necessary. "We work together as a Society, but as individuals we are, first of all, your neighbors and fellow Hollanders," the text declared. "We are not tax supported; we pay our own way. We are not a burden to the community; we feel we are an asset."[10]

The school society's public appeal caused an immediate backlash and unleashed raw emotions against the CRC "parochial" school. The *Sentinel* editor allowed citizens to vent their feelings in a new "Public Opinion" column. During the month of October, the *Sentinel* carried forty-six Letters to the Editor, fairly divided between pro and con views. Eighteen missives were run in a single issue. Several came from residents of the block in question, notably one family who submitted three letters strongly opposed to closing their street. The issue was the "talk of the town" on local radio station WHTC; everyone had a firm opinion. Three community leaders with no connection to Holland Christian wrote in favor of closing the street—ex-mayor Earnest Brooks, a Democratic Party heavy-weight, prominent businessman, and member of Hope RCA; Roman Catholic industrialist John F. Donnelly; and Col. Henry A. Geerds, a businessman, public official, and commander of Holland National Guard Company D.[11]

Those in favor of the initiative appealed as good neighbors who practiced the Golden Rule, were concerned about the safety of five hundred students, were fair to fellow citizens, and only wanted to help a deserving school. To give up one short street for a much-needed school was worth it, said one. Give the school a break, said another, since Holland Christian saves city taxpayers $500,000 a year.

Reasons for voting No ranged from the *practical*—20th Street is an arterial street; the *unnecessary*—students can easily cross the street safely between classes; the *democratic*—the common council must have the last word; the *constitutional*—a city cannot donate public property to a religious entity; and, the *emotional*—it will benefit a minority at the expense of the majority. Some claimed to read between the lines. One decried a "spirit of intolerance and spite." Another saw

blind hate against a minority group, which he asserted was beneath Holland. Could he shame the naysayers into silence?[12]

Dark skies on election morning gave way to sunshine in the early afternoon. The hottest issue in years was on the ballot, Issue Seven, the closing of a one-block stretch of 20th Street. The voters finally spoke, and the tally was 3,871 no and 3,195 yes. After four years of heated discussion, Holland Christian had lost by 678 votes. The turnout of 84 percent was six points below the clerk's prediction, but a record that still stands. Issue Seven at the bottom of the ballot garnered 242 votes fewer than at the top of the ticket, a "drop-off" much less than normal. The school had an uphill battle from the outset; its CRC constituency was a minority, and to win it had to attract other sympathetic citizens.[13]

Round Five—No Contest

A year after the emotional defeat in closing 20th Street, the Holland Christian School Board in 1949 decided to build a new junior high school anyway, *without* closing the street. The common council could not stop that; the school owned the property, and all they needed was a pro forma building permit. The plan called for constructing a $210,000 "B" junior high building, to include a library and a study hall; it would be on the south side of the street, across from the existing high school "A" building. The junior high, erected in 1916 on 15th Street behind the original elementary school, Central Street Christian School, was also overcrowded and outdated. Relocating the junior high across the street from the high school made perfect sense; it would allow for synergy of programs, sharing teachers, and holding joint assemblies and interscholastic athletic contests in the high school auditorium/gymnasium.

A fund drive quickly raised $168,000 in cash and pledges, and Holland Christian Junior High was dedicated in 1953. Hardly a year later eight additional classrooms were added to the building, plus a choir room. Meanwhile, the high school built in 1924 for 375 students was crammed with 550 students, with another 100 expected within two years. So, in 1955, to balance available space with enrollment needs, the board switched the schools, giving the high school the new "B" building and the junior high the old "A" building. No one asked the junior high students their opinion in giving up the new building. With the two buildings fronting each other across 20th Street, students had to brave traffic in order to change classes or share in joint activities. Amazingly, they dodged the cars, trucks, and buses so adroitly that none were seriously injured or killed. The stairways in the schools were so crowded during class changes that the administration made them one-way, and woe to the one who tried to go against the flow.[14]

Round Six—Closing 20th Street with Barely a Whimper

In early 1955 the city planning commission drew up a comprehensive street master plan that included a section on the "principles of street closings," which permitted the common council to close a street by two-thirds vote, without the right of appeal by citizens, when it "would be to the advantage of the city as a whole." Recently, the common council had twice vacated streets for public schools at the behest of the Holland Board of Education. Incoming Mayor Robert Visscher, owner of a dry-cleaning company and member of Hope RCA, in his acceptance speech named implementation of the master plan as one of his three objectives, especially as it regarded 20th Street. The council voted to vacate the street in mid-June and scheduled a public hearing for September. Sixty people, mostly opposed, crowded the chamber for the one-hour hearing, and fourteen gained the floor to rehash the old arguments. The aldermen listened patiently, but the die was cast. A week later, they voted six to three to vacate the street. At the mayor's request, the body adopted the reverse order of voting, and Visscher cast the first "Yes" vote. After ten years of controversy, akin to a six-round match, the city fathers finally granted Holland Christian its request. The drama had ended, fittingly, with the



Holland residents line up to tour the newly opened Evergreen Commons. The two-story structure on the left once housed Holland Christian High School. (Reprinted in Robert P. Swierenga, *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City.* Grand Rapids, Holland: William B. Eerdmans and Van Raalte Press, 2015, p. 2134. Courtesy Randall Vande Water.)

magnanimous actions of a Reformed Church layman.

Conclusion

Today RCA-CRC animosity has largely faded, and two Holland congregations are affiliated with both denominations—Maple Avenue Ministries and Pillar Church. Holland Christian Schools and Holland Public Schools in 2009 agreed to partner in a "shared-time" faculty arrangement in non-core subjects. The Christian High and Junior High schools share a large campus on the southwest side of the city. Together with two elementary buildings, enrollment had dropped from 2,000 in 1955–56, and a high of 2,863 in 1968–69, to 739 in 2020. Maintaining Christian schools is a struggle well worth waging in an increasingly hostile culture for Christians. And the site that over seventy years ago sparked the fight between the Holland community's educational factions now holds a community center. The abandoned 20th Street right of way bisects the building.

Endnotes

1. This article is adapted from "Holland Christian Day Schools," chapter 9, in Swierenga's *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City 3 vols.* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, and Holland, Van Raalte Press, 2014).
2. In Holland, Christian and public school supporters both opposed the amendment, but for different reasons. For Christian schools, the amendment was a death sentence. Public school advocates stood opposed solely to protect their pocketbooks. Holland Christian Schools saved taxpayers $70 million per year. Turnout of 4,000 votes was the highest in the city's history to that point. A second anti-parochial schools amendment in 1924 by the same Defense League pressure group also failed.
3. For this section, see *Holland City News*. 7, 21 Dec 1944; 4 Jan; 1, 8 Mar; 7 Jun; 19 Jul 1945; 1 Jul 1948.
4. John Vander Beek, "Our Public School Under Fire: A Critical Study" (ca. 1948), pamphlet collection, Western Theological Seminary, Joint Archives of Holland; *Holland City News*, 22 Apr 1948; Holland Sentinel, 12 Oct 1965; 24 Mar 1966.
5. *Holland City News*, 4 Mar 1945.
6. Ibid., 8, 22 Apr 1948; *Holland Sentinel*, 8 Apr 1948.
7. *Holland City News*, 1, 8 Jul; 5, 22 Aug; 16 Sep 1948; *Holland Sentinel*, 24 Sep 1948.
8. *Holland City News*, 23, 30 Sep; 7, 14 Oct 1948.
9. *Holland Sentinel*, 11 Sep; 11, 12, 14, 18, 22, 23, 27 Oct 1948.
10. Ibid., 11 Sep; 19, 27, 28, 30 Oct 1948.
11. Ibid., 5, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 Oct 1948.
12. *Holland Sentinel*, 29 (quotes), 30, 15 Oct 1948; 6 Jan 1949.
13. Ibid., 2 Nov 1948; *Holland City News*, 4 Nov 1948; *Christian Reformed Church Yearbook*, 1948.
14. *Holland City News*, 12 Dec 1949; 14 Feb, 13 Mar 1952; 1 Oct 1953; 26 Aug 1954.

Searching for Voters Amid the Tulips: Iowa and Michigan Governors Participating in Tulip Time (1936-2019)

Nothing seems to attract public officeholders, or candidates for office, like a big crowd. And some of the biggest crowds to be found annually have been the Pella and Holland tulip festivals in Iowa and Michigan. The largest crowds gather to watch the "Volksparade," which begins with a street cleaning ritual. Local dignitaries wielding buckets wet down the pavement while lesser dignitaries dutifully trail behind pushing their brooms. And all are clad in Dutch costumes—usually.[1]





above Gov. George A. Wilson greets the Tulip Queen in Des Moines, April 1939, while sporting a string of Pella bologna draped around his neck. Courtesy of the Pella Museum.

right Gov. Harold E. Hughes walked the 1968 Pella parade route in a business suit. Courtesy of the Pella Museum.

There were harbingers of these Dutch American celebrations as early as 1907, when the "old settlers" gathering commemorated the 60th anniversary of the Dutch settlements of West Michigan. For the descendants of the New Netherland colony, the Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909 marked the 300th anniversary of Henry Hudson's discovery of the river that bears his name. It also was the centennial of Robert Fulton's successful launch of his steamboat on the same river, a venture financed by New Netherland descendants; both were one-time events.

Annual festivals celebrating Dutch ethnicity date to 1929 when Holland, Michigan, staged its first Tulip Time; Pella followed suit in 1935. These two festivals inspired about two dozen other Dutch-themed festivals from Clymer, New York, in the east to Lynden, Washington, in the west. They combine commerce with culture, enticing visitors to spend afternoons browsing in shops and eating in restaurants in anticipation of a parade with floats and bands—and Dutch-costumed dancers. Especially

after the Second World War these annual get togethers could attract literally busloads of tourists. Where there are festive crowds, there will be politicians.[2]

Governors of Iowa have participated in Pella's celebrations at least since the late 1930s. There are photographs of Michigan governors in Dutch dress going back to at least 1947. Both cities try to keep the festivals non-partisan by inviting both Republican and Democratic officeholders to klomp along for a few blocks. Holland has succeeded in attracting governors of both parties, Pella not so much.

Clyde L. Herring, a Democrat, was numbered among the "distinguished visitors" who came to Pella on 12 May 1936. He "donned a funny colored cap and helped the women scrub the streets" before climbing into a car to lead the parade through town.[3] From this point on, most governors would make the pilgrimage to Pella for the parade, especially in election years. Herring's successor not only visited the 1938 festival with his wife, but she very publicly "placed a large order for Pella tulip bulbs during her visit."[4]

At least as far back as 1939 a Pella delegation journeyed to Des Moines to personally invite the governor to attend the festival. In May of that year Governor George A. Wilson stood on the capitol steps to receive the invitation, a pair of klompen (wooden shoes), and a string of Pella bolognas, which he gamely draped around his neck. On parade day, he dutifully donned a Dutch hat and the klompen, as accessories to his suit and tie. He then pushed a broom "with evident enjoyment and plenty of good sportsmanship."[5]

For decades Iowa governors trod the parade route wearing some combination of traditional Dutch regalia and conventional Brooks Brothers suits. Some opted for a hat, others for klompen, or both. It is not clear whether they all pushed brooms. The most stolid looking was Governor Harold E. Hughes in 1968 who walked the parade route, and wielded a broom to scrub the street, in a business suit.[6]

Iowa's two most durable governors, Robert Ray and Terry Branstad (who held the office for a total of thirty-six



Gov. G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams joined the Dutch Dancers during one of his many appearances at Holland's Tulip Time. Courtesy of the Holland Museum.



below In 1952 Gov. William S. Beardsley (in the Dutch hat) pushed a broom while wearing a Dutch hat and street shoes. Courtesy of the Pella Museum.



Michigan's longest serving governor, William G. Milliken, donned a full costume and wooden shoes during one of his visits in the 1970s. Courtesy of the Holland Museum.



Gov. Leo Hoegh marched in the Pella parade in wooden shoes, accompanied by his wife and daughter, in 1955. Courtesy of the Pella Museum.

years between them), became fixtures, beginning with Ray's first visit in 1969 and concluding with Branstad's final appearance almost five decades later. Branstad seemed the most engaged, bringing his family with him, with all of them wearing Dutch costumes for the parade.

The visitors to Holland's festivals did not wait nearly as long to witness gubernatorial exuberance. When G. Mennen "Soapy" Williams arrived in 1950, he pushed a broom, walked the parade route, and even raised his klompen in the air with the Dutch dancers. No Michigan governor since Soapy has failed to appear in Holland in full Dutch costume, at least once during their tenures. The surviving pictures of those visits generally captured the governors having a good time, even the irascible ones. The decidedly non-irascible George Romney put a full effort behind his broom work (see the cover photo of this issue). Thirty years later John Engler would wield both broom and water bucket during his parade-route walks along Eighth Avenue. Engler brought his wife and their triplet daughters along on at least two occasions. The people who annually lined the parade could literally watch the Engler girls grow up during their father's twelve years in office.

The nature of party politics in the two states even touched the Tulip Time participation in the two cities. Obviously, the governors participate in the festivals, in part, as politicians looking for votes. But the governors also symbolize the fusion of various groups beneath the umbrella of the state government. Courting the favor of various ethnic groups to make them feel socially included is as old as the republic. Identifying with the Dutch histories of Pella and Holland is both

good policy and good politics. Holland's decidedly Republican political leanings has not deterred Democratic governors from coming to town and dressing the part. The state's two most recent Democratic governors, Jennifer Granholm and Gretchen Whitmer, both participated in the ritual and in costume. In Whitmer's case, she did it during her first year in office.

In Pella, the bipartisan tradition that prevailed since the days of Governor Herring ended when Terry Branstad, a Republican, vacated the office (for the first time) in 1999. The next two governors (Democrats Tom Vilsack and James "Chet" Culver) stayed away from Pella's festival. Vilsack's wife substituted for him in 1999.[7] But there would be no gubernatorial presence in the Pella parade until Terry Branstad won the governorship for a second time, by defeating Culver in 2010. Branstad returned to Pella in full Dutch costume. His successor continues the tradition.[8]

The ceremonial facet of these visits may be more important than the political one. Tulip Time exists in both Pella and Holland to do at least two things: celebrate the local ethnic heritage and highlight that heritage's place in the American cultural mosaic. Woe to the political leader who fails to understand the importance these regional rituals play in creating a state's broader identity. There is no guarantee that a governor's wielding of a broom and the wearing of the klompen in the spring will translate into loyal voters trooping to the polls in fall elections. But these gestures from governors (of various ethnic and cultural strands) do help create the sense of oneness that allows a political system to live and breathe, even for people who will vote against the governor in November.



In 1985 Gov. Terry Branstad rode in the parade in full Dutch costume, accompanied by his son and daughter. Courtesy of the Pella Museum.



Gov. James Blanchard and his wife both participated during one of their visits to the Holland festival. Courtesy of MLIVE.



Gov. John Engler walked the parade route accompanied by his wife and their triplets. Courtesy of MLIVE.





far right Jennifer Granholm makes Michigan's first female governor in 2003. Courtesy of the Holland Museum.

right Current Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, Iowa's first woman governor, and her husband both joined the street cleaning event in Pella. Courtesy of the Pella Museum.





top Michigan Governor Rick Snyder pushed a broom along with Lt. Gov. Brian Calley. Courtesy of the *Holland Sentinel*.

above Current Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer joined the 2019 parade in Holland with Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist. Courtesy of the Tulip Time Committee.

Endnotes

1. Terence G. Schoone-Jongen, *The Dutch American Identity: Staging Memory and Ethnicity in Community Celebrations*. Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2008, 120-1, 136-38, 175-6, 223-4, 255-63. https://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/2016/05/tulip_time_parades_rick_snyder.html <August 17, 2020>

2. Schoone-Jongen, 1-18. Dennis P. Weller, "Old Masters in the New World: The Hudson-Fulton Exhibition of 1909 and Its Legacy," in Joyce D. Goodfriend, Benjamin Schmidt, and Annette Stott, *Going Dutch: The Dutch Presence in America, 1609-2009*. Leiden: Brill, 2008, 237-68. "Theodore De Veer's 'Our Hollanders in Michigan'" in Henry S. Lucas, *Dutch Immigrant Memoirs and Related Writings* ii, 505. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1997, ii 505.

3. *Pella Chronicle* 14 May 1936, 1. It is worth noting that Gov. Herring was running for a seat in the United States Senate in the fall election. He won the election and carried Pella and surrounding Lake Prairie Township with 61 percent of the votes. (*Pella Chronicle* 5 November 1936, 1.)

4. *Pella Chronicle* 19 May 1938, 5. Kraschel lost the fall election to George A. Wilson, who carried Pella. Lake Prairie Township gave Kraschel resounding 76 percent majority.

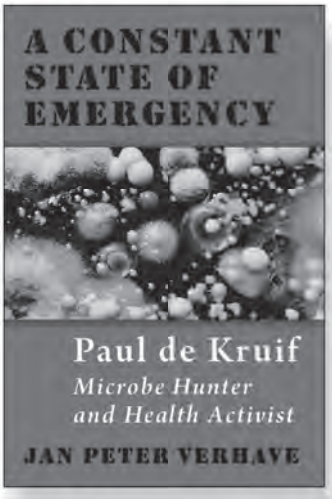
5. *Pella Chronicle* 18 May 1939, 1, 10.

6. *Pella Chronicle-Advertiser* 14 May 1968, 2.

7. Governor Vilsack did accept the traditional invitation to attend the festival from the Tulip Queen for that year. *Pella Chronicle* 6 May 1999, 28. On Christine Vilsack's visit to Tulip Time see *Pella Chronicle* 13 May 1999, 1.

8. My special thanks to Jessi Vos, Assistant Director of the Pella Historical Society and Museums, for her help in securing pictures of Iowa governors participating in Pella Tulip Time activities.

book review



A Constant State of Emergency: Paul de Kruif—Microbe Hunter and Health Activist

Jan Peter Verhave

Holland, MI: A. C. Van Raalte Institute, 2020, 655 pages

I have a PhD in microbiology and have taught the subject for fourteen years at Calvin University. In class I have elaborated on the history of microbiology, epidemiology, public health, social welfare, and the medical profession. Yet in the textbooks and literature I had never read the name Paul de Kruif. Hence, I assumed that the biography of de Kruif, written by Jan Peter Verhave, would be about a West Michigan "celebrity" of minor importance. I could not have been more wrong.

De Kruif was born in Zeeland, Michigan, in March 1890 to Hendrik and Hendrika Kremer de Kruif. His father hoped he would become a lawyer or doctor. He did indeed start the pre-medicine track at the University of Michigan. But he was inspired by a story about the bacteriologist Paul Ehrlich and decided to become a scientist, specifically a microbiologist. During World War I he served in the US Army Sanitary Corps. In the 1920s, he turned to writing about medicine and science. Though he never became a physician, he wrote widely about medicine and promoted public health.

De Kruif wrote over 300 articles, most published in *Readers Digest*, as well as 13 books that made scientific topics accessible to the general public. He was a bastion for scientific truth, an expert science historian, a champion of affordable public health care, and a destroyer of the scientist/nonscientist divide who is as relevant today as he was in the early twentieth century. Verhave's biography of de Kruif is a brilliantly written, funny, heartbreaking, and honest account of someone I, and everyone else, should know.

Verhave presents de Kruif in extremely approachable prose, from his roots in West Michigan through his advocacy of affordable health care and disease prevention. Each chapter portrays de Kruif in rigorously researched detail, pulling from correspondence; interviews with friends, family, and colleagues; reviews of de Kruif's work; and his personal notes and autobiography. Throughout the book I would gasp in wonder that this kid from Holland, Michigan, repeatedly finds himself in the company of Nobel laureates, Pulitzer prize winners, influential scientists, and American "royalty." Verhave takes us through how these interactions shaped de Kruif, his writings, and his beliefs. In intimate, but never dull, detail we see how de Kruif came to be an author for the people and an advocate for the poor. We see clearly how his romanticization of the pioneers of microbiology, disease hunters, plant breeders, mental health advocates and others brought forgotten but remarkable science and scientists into the average American family room. Only through a complete view of de Kruif do we understand why he wrote with such "contagious ardor" that brought him public acclaim but severe admonition from the scientific establishment. Throughout, Verhave gives us de Kruif in unfiltered honesty—his drinking, womanizing, and egocentrism are laid bare. But so too his indignation for the American healthcare system and utter devotion

to the downtrodden, poor, and diseased.

As all great biographers should, Verhave writes in a way that makes it clear that de Kruif is relevant today, right now. The current political polarity over the availability of healthcare, the treatment of disease, and the rights of the poor are exactly the space that de Kruif's work speaks into—then and now. In a time when humans caring for other humans seems to be the exception rather than the rule, de Kruif's dedication to being a voice for the voiceless is inspirational. As de Kruif brought the forgotten luminaries of science out of historical obscurity, Verhave should bring Paul de Kruif back to where he belongs—in textbooks, family rooms, the social welfare reform conversation, and the minds of anyone seeking hope.

Dr. John Wertz
Associate Professor of Biology,
Calvin University

for the future

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

In Dutch Reformed communities in the United States and Canada, how did immigrants, their children, and later generations learn about and make sense of their world, whether within their ethnic and religious communities or their larger nation and wider world?

Articles will explore the roles of Christian schools, churches, magazines, and the habits of day to day life in these communities.



Calvinist

MacDonald seeks larger role for Canada in human rights

Polish Church survives martial law

Don't leave us in the lurch!

Christian schools prepare themselves for the computer

Calvinist Contact issue from March 1982. Courtesy of Heritage Hall.

PLEASE NOTE
The Calvin University Financial Department requests that from now on all checks be made out to "**Calvin University**" rather than to "*Origins*," and that the word "*Origins*" be written on the memo line. Thank you so much!

☐ **Yes, I wish to join the "Friends of the Archives."**

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Subscriber $10.00 ☐
Contributing Member $50.00 ☐
Contributing Sponsor $100.00 ☐
Contributing Founder $500.00 ☐

Send to: *Origins*, Heritage Hall, Calvin University,
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

☐ **Yes, I would also like a gift subscription for:**

Name _____

Address _____

_____

My Name _____

Address _____

_____

Send to: *Origins*, Heritage Hall, Calvin University,
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

contributors

Origins is designed to publicize and advance the objectives of the Calvin University and Seminary 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. We invite you to support the continued publication of *Origins* by becoming "Friends of the Archives."

Enabling Contributor

Mr. and Mrs. John Meyer, Palos Park, IL

Friends of the Archives Endowment Fund Builders

AEGON Insurance Group, Cedar Rapids, IA

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth J. Baas, Grand Rapids, MI

Robert and Jane Baker Foundation, Kalamazoo, MI

Mr. Duane D. Birns, Oak Park, IL

Mr. and Mrs. Roger W. Boer, Grand Rapids, MI

Dr. and Mrs. James A. De Jong, Grand Rapids, MI

Lester Hoogland, Zeeland, MI

Holland American Wafer Company, Grand Rapids, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Huizenga, Oak Brook, IL

Dr. William Huizingh, Scottsdale, AZ

Estate of Dick and Dena Kortenhoeven, Highland, IN

Meijer, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI

Mr. Gerald W. Meyering, Denver, CO

Drs. Kornelis J. Storm, Aerdenhout, the Netherlands

Jay and Betty Van Andel Foundation, Grand Rapids, MI

David and Sheryl Vander Ploeg, St. Joseph, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Claude J. Venema, Jackson, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Gary J. Vermeer, Pella, IA

Contributing Founders

Mr. and Mrs. Richard T. Dykema, New York, NY

Mr. and Mrs. Bastian A. Knoppers, Oak Brook, IL

Peters Import Marketplace, Grandville, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Peters, Grand Rapids, MI

Clara and Leonard Sweetman, Kentwood, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Max B. Van Wyk, Grand Rapids, MI

Mr. and Mrs. John Zonneveld Sr., Laton, CA

Contributing Sponsors

David and Rene Baatenburg, Jenison, MI

James H. and Diane Bloem, Louisville, KY

Mrs. Peter Borgdorff, Kentwood, MI

David and Mary Bosscher, Zeeland, MI

John and Sharon Bouma, Holland, MI

Lester Brouwer, Holland, MI

Connie and Roger Brummel, Holland, MI

Jan and Jeannie de Vries, Berkeley, CA

Mark and Ginny Dykstra, South Holland, IL

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth D. Engelsman, Centennial, CO

Phil and Trudy Erffmeyer, Grand Rapids, MI

John H. and Marcia R. Evenhouse, Westmont, IL

David and Connie Fennema, Durham, NC

Ginny Geldof, Grand Rapids, MI

Kay Hoitenga, Grand Rapids, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth A. Hoving, Oak Brook, IL

Harold and Esther Huizenga, Grand Rapids, MI

Rich and Carla Huizenga, Seattle, WA

Hessel and Alice Kielstra, Calgary, AB

Mr. John E. King, Wyckoff, NJ

Rev. John M. V. Koole, Strathroy, ON

Herb and Bernace Korthuis, Lynden WA

Ms. Annette LaMaire, Bradenton, FL

Mr. and Mrs. Graydon M. Meints, Kalamazoo, MI

Ms. Evelyn A. Pastoor, Grand Rapids, MI

Roger Riewald, Thousand Oaks, CA

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Scheeres, Grand Rapids, MI

Dr. and Mrs. Richard D. Sjoerdsma, Racine, WI

LeRoy and Anjean Stegink, Grand Rapids, MI

Steven and Barbara Timmermans, Grand Rapids, MI

Benjamin and Debrah Vander Kooi, Luverne, MN

Jan and Gary Vander Meer, DeKalb, IL

Dr. John E. Van Domelen, College Station, TX

Mr. and Mrs. Allan J. Van Popering, Grand Rapids, MI

Sam and Judy Van Til, Crown Point, IN

Max and Carol Van Wyk, Grand Rapids, MI

Dr. and Mrs. Daniel R. Vellenga, Waco, TX

Bill and Pat Waanders, Grand Rapids, MI

Wilbert and Berendina Wichers, Bradenton, FL

Dave and Brenda Wiersma, Tucson, AZ

Mr. and Mrs. Henry I. Witte, Ada, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Teunis Witte, Byron Center, MI

Mary E. Zwaanstra, Grand Rapids, MI

Contributing Members

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Bajema, Grand Rapids, MI

John and Maria Bajema, Rockford, MI

Ms. Jennifer Baker, Grandville, MI

Audrey and Frank Berkenpas, Grandville, MI

Ron Bielema, Fremont, MI

Ron and Wendy Blankespoor, Grand Rapids, MI

Dr. Harmon S. Boertien, Houston, TX

Carl A. Botting, Ada, MI

Linda L. Bouterse, Moline, MI

Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Bratt, Lynden, WA

Ms. Carol Bredeweg, Hudsonville, MI

Ruth E. Brinks, Grand Rapids, MI

Ralph A. Bruxvoort, Bloomer, WI

Peter Buma, Grand Rapids, MI

Wayne and Greta Clousing, Shoreline, WA

Stuart E. Cok, Sparta, MI

Ron and Cathie Corstange, Hudsonville, MI

Ms. Mary Cremer, Grand Rapids, MI

Marv and Merrie Lou De Boer, Grand Rapids, MI

Ronald De Valois, Lynden, WA

Henry and Shirley De Witt, Chino, CA

Mr. David Eisen, Mishawaka, IN

Dave and Trudy Boerema Fetters, Holland, MI

Harold and Nancy Gazan, Holland, MI

Carl and Sandy Gronsman, Grand Rapids, MI

Dr. and Mrs. Richard Harms, Caledonia, MI

George and Audrey Hiskes, Munster, IN

Dr. and Mrs. Henry Hoeks, Ada, MI

Ralph and Jane Hoekstra, Huntington Beach, CA

Mr. and Mrs. James Holkeboer, Grand Rapids, MI

Mrs. Alyce Houskamp, Grand Rapids, MI

Robert and Joan Houskamp, Grand Rapids, MI

Mrs. Marjorie K. Huiner, Lynchburg, VA

Harold and Esther Huizenga, Grand Rapids, MI

Cornie and Marcia Huizinga, Jenison, MI

Rich and Jane Iwema, Grand Rapids, MI

Miss Rita Jager, Edmonton, AB

Mary E. Jellema, Holland, MI

Rev. Harvey A. Kiekover, Grand Rapids, MI
Mr. Lawrence R. Koster, Hudsonville, MI
Ms. Ardene Lambers, Grand Rapids, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Land, Lowell, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Loren J. Lemmen, Ada, MI
Steve and Dawn Lewis, Grand Rapids, MI
Roland and Polly S. Lindh, Grand Rapids, MI
Rev. Gene and Shirley Los, Zeeland, MI
Rev. and Mrs. Peter Mans, Blaine, WA
William and Shirley Van Baak Martinus, West Olive, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Mast, Jenison, MI
Mr. Gerald Meyer, Holland, MI
Drs. George and Ellen Monsma, Grand Rapids, MI
James E. and Janice S. Monsma, Medford, MA
Tom and Greta Newhof, Grand Rapids, MI
Miss Janice Overzet, Fremont, MI
Mrs. Carol Peters, Grand Rapids, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Neal Peters, Hudsonville, MI
Mrs. Sarah Vaags Polet, Oakbank, MB
Mr. and Mrs. Hendrik Porte, Byron Center, MI
Mr. and Mrs. William Post, Grand Rapids, MI
David and Pamela Reitsema, Castle Rock, CO
Dr. Joan Ringerwole, Hudsonville, MI
Al and Rika Scheenstra, Visalia, CA
Dr. Jake and Dot Scheeres, Venice, FL
Robert and Francine Schippers, Wayland, MI
Ben and Henny Senneker, Lethbridge, AB
Mr. and Mrs. P. John Shooks, Grand Rapids, MI
Mrs. Freda Snippe, Owen Sound, ON
Mrs. Florence Sterk, Colorado Springs, CO
Richard and Joyce Stienstra, Oro Valley, AZ
Elizabeth Vanden Berg, Edgerton, MN
Nolan and Joey Vander Ark, Denver, CO
Mrs. Agatha Vander Kooi, Portage, MI
John and Donna Vander Meer, Grand Rapids, MI
Ron and Phyllis Vander Molen, Modesto, CA
Mr. Douglas B. Vander Wall, Grand Rapids, MI
Dr. and Mrs. Eugene Vander Wall, Citrus Heights, CA
Gerald and Jessica Vander Wall, Grand Rapids, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Van Dokkenburg, West Lafayette, IN
Dr. and Mrs. James Y. Van Dyk, Grand Rapids, MI
Ruth and Martin Van Dyke, Denver, CO
Catherine Van Eck, Crete, IL
Dr. and Mrs. Larry Van Genderen, Jackson, WY
Lambert and Kathryn Van Poolen, Grand Rapids, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Van Tuinen, Longmont, CO
Mr. Donald Van Vuren, Orland Park, IL
Mr. Maurice Veenstra, Lynden, WA
Evert Volkersz, Stony Brook, NY
Alvin and Joyce Vos, Endwell, NY
Rev. Homer and Betty Wigboldy, Lynden, WA
Rev. and Mrs. Donald Wisse, North Haledon, NJ
Nicholas and Claire Kingma Wolterstorff, Grand Rapids, MI
Robert and Joanne Yonker, Grand Rapids, MI
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard H. Zandstra, Holt, MI
Kenneth and Elaine Zimmerman, Woodstock, MD
Mr. and Mrs. John Zomer, Peterborough, ON
Henry and Verla Zuiderveen, Hudsonville, MI

Origins

Heritage Hall Archives
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546

Heritage Hall Archives contains the historical records of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, Calvin Theological Seminary, Calvin University, and other institutions related to the Reformed tradition in the Netherlands and North America. The Archives also contains a wide range of personal and family manuscripts.