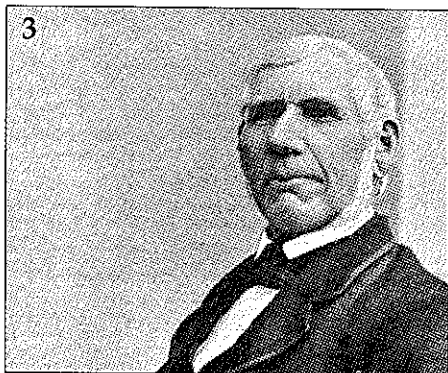


ORIGINS



3 Bastiaan Broere:
Pioneer on the Eastern
Seaboard 1822-1887
by H.J.B.

19 Father Budding 1810-1870
by H.J.B.

24 Two Letters from Pella
by H.P. Scholte



28 Lynden
by Rev. Arnold Brink

40 Terra Ceia: A Dutch
Settlement in
North Carolina
by John Yzenbaard

44 The Calumet Region
by David Zandstra



57 Candian Calvinist
by C.J. Bult

55 For the Future

60 Books
by C.J. Bult

62 Contributors

Cover: Gathering oysters in West Sayville, L.I. See page 3 story on Bastiaan Broere.

Origins, Volume IV, Number 2
Calvin College Library, The Archives,
3233 Burton, Grand Rapids, Michi-
gan, 49506. Phone (616) 957-6313.

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.

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BASTIAAN BROERE

Pioneer on the Eastern Seaboard 1822-1887

During the 1880s, a Mr. H. De Vries convinced Bastiaan Broere to write his autobiography, but when he saw that Bastiaan could not write well, De Vries himself wrote and prepared the account for publication. Thereafter, every serious student of Dutch-American history has consulted Bastiaan's story. His life was not only exceptionally interesting, but also intensely religious. Broere's simple but profound piety demonstrated the deep spiritual resources which were frequently evident among Dutch immigrants who came to the United States before the 1860s.

Over the last hundred years, secularization, which explains most day-to-day occurrences by natural causation, has blunted or entirely replaced a wide range of our spiritual sensitivities. Consequently, Broere's pious exhortations and exclamations will seem outdated and even foreign to most contemporary readers. But we should not judge the reality of Bastiaan's experiences by our own standards of credibility. He wrote what he knew, and we are impoverished in not being able to know more as he knew.

Broere's original sixty-five-page booklet was published by J. A. Wormser of Amsterdam in 1887. Since then at least two English translations have been available, but they have not been published. The translation below, by Mr. E. R. Post, has been edited to about half of its original size for publication in *Origins*. Still, all the main lines of Broere's story have been included, together with evidence of the author's pious motivations.

Immigrating in 1849, this fisherman from Yerseke in Zeeland traveled as far as Michigan but returned quickly to the eastern seaboard. There he moved about from New York City to Newark and then to Sayville on Long Island. In 1860 he settled in Norfolk, Virginia, where he became entangled in the Civil War. There his dramatic escape from behind Southern battle lines in 1862

provides a tense episode. When both he and his family were finally reunited in Sayville, Bastiaan pursued his occupation as oysterman. His *Short Account of the Life of Bastiaan Broere and of God's Wonderful Guidance in the Netherlands and America* was addressed to his seven children and many grandchildren. —H.J.B.

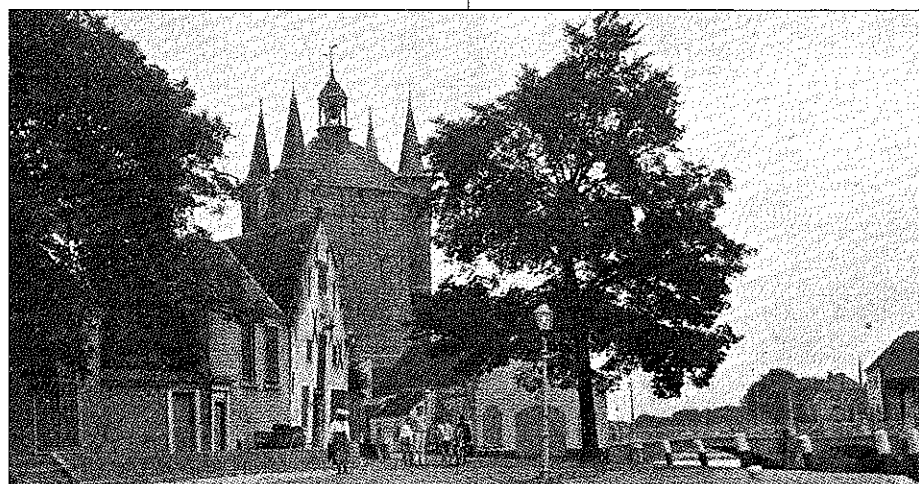
Youth and Conversion

It was in the year 1822, on April 16, that I was born at Yerseke in the province of Zeeland. I was the youngest of twelve children. Although they had a good living, my parents felt keenly the responsibilities of caring for such a large family. I will never fully appreciate, though, the condition in which my dear mother found herself when my worthy and pious father was taken from her by death. I was not yet eight years old. But, young as I was, I realized that I had lost a great deal in the death of my father. Nonetheless, I did benefit from his conversion and his life of service to the Lord.

Oh, how my soul leaps with joy as I think back to those never-to-be-forgotten times when the Merciful One slew me spiritually and granted me a new life, so that my mind was enlightened, my eyes were opened, and my will was bent. I became an entirely new person. Although still a child, the seeds of sin and evil had already begun to develop strongly within me. I vividly recall the day when another boy and I decided to steal some fruit. Coming to the orchard, I took a stone and threw it into one of the trees. Some apples fell down, and, contrary to my expectations, the other boy ran away with them. I became very angry, and I uttered a terrible curse. This had not passed my lips before I felt severe pain, as if a sharp dagger had pierced

my side. I immediately became overwhelmed by guilt such as I had never experienced before. I felt the pain of an awakened and accusing conscience.

I found myself in a desperate situation. Up to that time I lived unworried, without God, drifting without knowing where. I saw this clearly but did not know how to begin or what way to go. After a long period of deliberation, I decided to improve my life by doing what God commanded and



by not doing what he had forbidden. But at first I could not find rest for my soul. For I saw God to be a wrathful judge, and the fear of death was constantly with me. This prompted me to obey the commandments of the Lord more consistently. I zealously applied myself to do so, to such an extent that, when I was busy helping a farmer with his threshing and a kernel of grain popped into my mouth, I spit it out for fear of sinning. I enjoyed this kind of life, for to the extent that I progressed in virtue and obedience, my peace of mind gradually returned. I flattered myself that if I continued in this manner I would certainly go to heaven.

After I had lived for five or six years with this attitude, a completely unexpected storm broke out against the structure of my trust. The words of

Romans 3:20, "By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified," were cast as lead in my soul. Suddenly I saw myself bereft of all the covering with which I had sought to shield my poor and guilty soul. Gone was all my false peace. All my hope of salvation disappeared. Condemned by my conscience and damned by God's broken law, I did not know where to turn or go. I was like a madman.

After having lived as one driven by a stormy wind for fourteen days, it



(above) Zieriksee in Zeeland, The Netherlands; (below) Oysterman with horse and wagon by the seashore in Zeeland, The Netherlands; (facing page) Map of the Netherlands, circa 1850, showing Zeeland villages.

was as if a voice cried out to me, "Turn unto me all ye ends of the earth and be saved, for I am God." Though unacquainted with the Holy Scripture, I answered and said, "Who art thou?" And again I heard, "I am the fulfill-

ment of the law for whosoever believes." Oh, what grace was granted unto me then, because with that word the light of faith began to shine in my soul. I beheld boundless beauty and glory in the Son of God who became man, who came into the world to fulfill the complete council of God, who by his obedience even unto death merited an eternal righteousness for lost sinners. That righteousness, accepted by faith, affords the right to eternal life to the sinner—as though

he had in his own person paid for all of his sins. I then enjoyed real happiness and comfort. I thought that the victory had been won and that from henceforth I could delight myself in the Lord. And truly for a length of time I did rejoice in the light of God's presence.

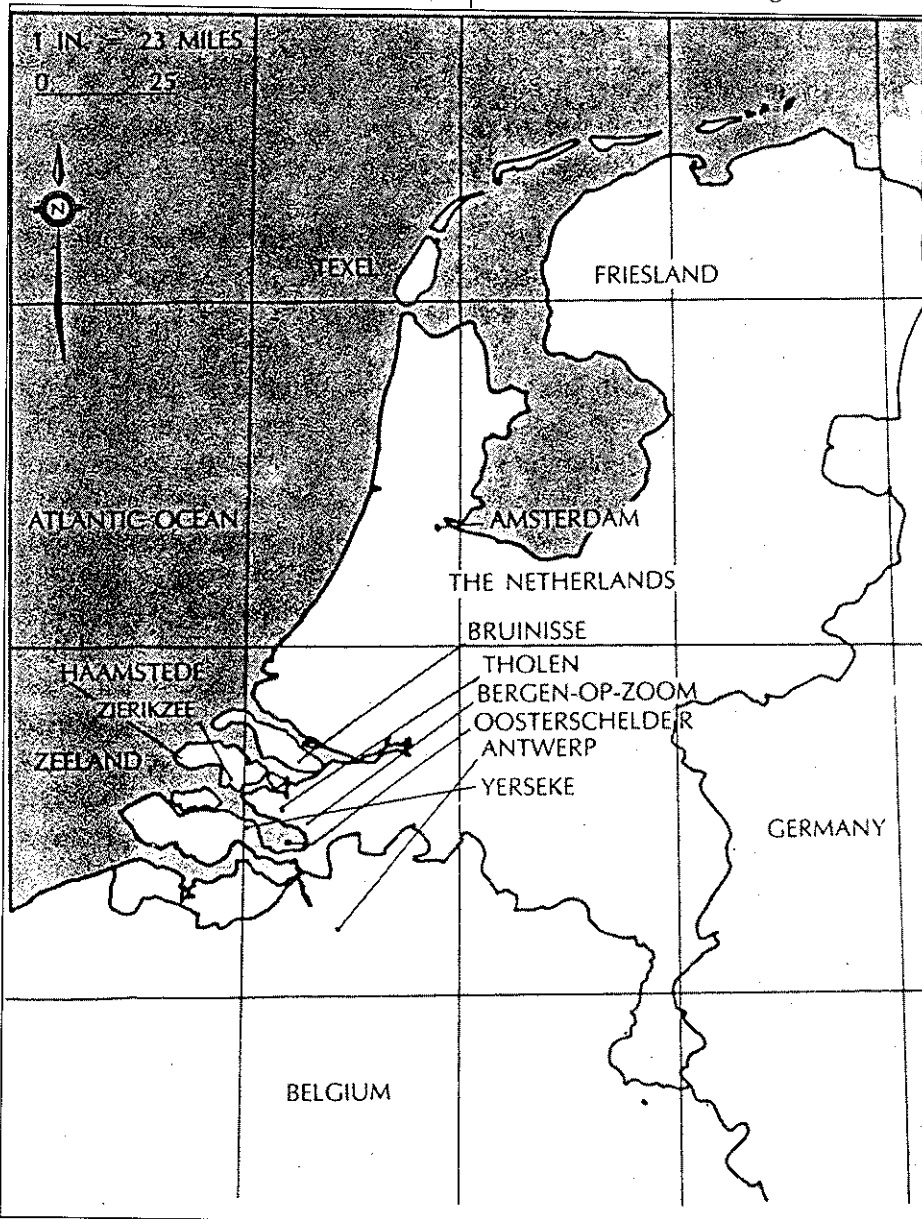
Up to this time I had traveled alone, but now the welcome presence of God's people began to be revealed, and by a wonderful power I felt myself attracted to them. I recognized an un-

usual excellence in them, so that they stood out in my estimation above all creatures. I felt compelled to join them, to follow them as they went from place to place, and to hear Rev. Budding, Vander Meulen, Klyn,* and others preach. I did not feel free to mingle with them further because I felt how insufficient my knowledge of Holy Writ was. I was not able to harmonize my experiences and discoveries with God's Word.

Up to this time I could not read, but in early childhood I did hear the Bible read frequently, and I heard many sermons. Since I always had great respect and regard for the Holy Scriptures and because I was a good listener, a number of texts were deeply impressed upon my memory. With these the Lord had been pleased to guide me on the pathway thus far covered. Still, I needed much more to pray with David, "Teach me thy way, Lord."

Finally, I decided to secretly take my mother's Bible. I was ashamed to ask for it. If I could only read the Bible, I thought, I would be able to study for myself. I brought the Bible aboard my brother's ship, and the next evening I began to read or, rather, to look at the words. How I was to learn to read had simply not occurred to me. I had gone to school two winters and had learned a few words which were written on the board, but the Bible's gothic print was unfamiliar. But I did not lose courage. To be able to read that Word was such a considerable accomplishment that evening after evening I spent time staring at those words, praying and sighing that I might be able to understand them. Finally, after prolonged prodding and much effort, I acquired the ability to read. How it

*These ministers from Zeeland all came to the U.S.A.—Klyn to Grand Rapids in 1851 and Vander Meulen to Zeeland, Michigan, in 1847. Budding spent five years in the States. See pages 18–22 for this story.



was done I did not know, but this I did know: what I did not have had been given to me. Oh, how happy I was and how fortunate it was that I had undertaken this difficult task.

With undiminished zeal I now studied God's Word and also a few old authors, for whom I still have a special affection. Before long I could speak with God's people more freely, and I soon found opportunity to be taught from the Heidelberg Catechism. I made good use of that so that I soon became known as a zealous student. After two years of instruction my teacher urged me to become a confessing member. That suggestion appealed to me, and I seriously considered following it; but, alas, once again I became the victim of the devil's attacks, who, I believe, could not accept the fact that I was to openly confess the Lord Jesus as my Savior. To prevent this, he caused me to doubt whether I was a child of God.

Now again it became a matter of prayer for grace, a seeking for light day and night. It was with me when I arose and when I lay down, until, in my mind's eye, I saw plainly and clearly the entire way in which the Lord desired to fulfill his promise to me, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." I did not wish to delay further, and in a short time I became a member of the Christian Seceded Church of Kruingen (a village in Zeeland), of which Rev. W. Gardener* was pastor. I keenly experienced God's approval of my decision and the enjoyment of the sanctifying gifts granted by God to his church.

After two quiet years I again became involved in difficulty. Up to that time the seceder congregation in the Netherlands had not been recognized as legal by the government. To enjoy the right to exist, the congregation was obliged to appeal to the king for permission to worship as a separate body. But I could not agree with this

action. It seemed to dishonor the Lord Jesus, who was anointed as King by his Father, to receive all power in heaven and on earth. Love for the church leaders cooled off to such an extent that even my zeal for public worship waned, and I frequently refrained from attending. I had always esteemed these men highly. I regarded them as my fathers in Christ, who deserved my respect and confidence as they performed their duties. And now I could not understand how such men could stoop to ask an earthly king for permission to worship God as their consciences dictated. I had read of Ezra that he was ashamed to call on the king for help in order to lead the Israelites to Jerusalem in safety. Reading this made a lasting impression upon me, and I have never been able to surrender my conviction that Christ was dishonored by the church leaders' asking permission to worship.**

Immigration

Most likely it was this situation which influenced me to cast my eye upon America. For there, according to reports, there was complete freedom of religion, and many pious folk had already gone there. Among others, Rev. H. Budding wrote a letter from America with such favorable contents that my heart rejoiced in the flourishing condition of the church there. In the Netherlands, it seemed to me, the church was departing more and more from the truth and from God. This and this alone was the reason that I was inclined to leave. In other respects I feared going to America, where I would have to make a living by farming. This I hated, because since my

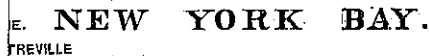
childhood I had been on the water. Still, my desire to be associated with God's people in America outweighed all other concerns.

On April 1, 1849, we left the Netherlands, and after a prosperous voyage we arrived in the New York harbor. As soon as possible we left for the state of Michigan. The railroads had not been built in that direction, so we had to travel by steamboat. After traveling for a month, we arrived in Zeeland, Michigan, where Rev. Vander Meulen was the pastor. We were received cordially and treated kindly. Following a couple days of rest, our first concern was to find lodging and work—one here and another there—so that the party was soon scattered. That did not exactly coincide with my expectations. A job was offered to me, too, but I was to receive wages consisting of pork and flour. Because I was unmarried and had no dependents, I turned this down. There was no prospect of earning a monetary wage in the colony, so I went to Grand Rapids, where I was more successful. Not far from the city I hired out to a farmer, where I earned some money and room and board.

Soon I won the good will of these people, as they noticed that I was religious and that, as was my custom, I prayed before and after each meal. Except for that, they knew nothing about me, because I understood no English and they understood no Dutch. We communicated by pointing, and that was very bothersome to me. But how can I describe the distress which overmastered me when, after having been there for some time, I began to miss my countrymen and friends. The memory of my happy days in the

*Rev. Wynand Gardener served the Kalamazoo, Michigan, community between 1854 and 1856.

**This same interpretation led Rev. H. Budding to leave the seceded church. See page 20 in this issue of Origins.



Wanderings

The following Monday I bargained with a canal-boat captain to travel at one and a half cents a mile. I carried my own bread, while the river quenched my thirst. After eight days I reached Albany, which was entirely strange to me. Though it contained thousands of inhabitants, I knew no one. I directed my steps to a steamer going to New York, because my intention to return to Holland strengthened during the canal ride.

I knew very well I did not have the money for the long sea journey, but I longed to be in New York. I arrived in New York with the clothes I was wearing and two dollars in my pocket. Never will I forget my quandary

when I arrived in the enormously large city, where again I was a complete stranger—unacquainted with both the language and the people. I really did not know which way to turn. Mechanically I went in the direction of the river, the Hudson, on which I had come from Albany. After walking for a couple of hours, I came to a park, The Battery. There I used benches for pedestrians as a bed for many nights. By morning my clothes were soaked by the dew from heaven and were dried by the welcomed sun as I resumed my walk through the city.

After loafing for a few days—walking from street to street—I came to Greenwich Street. There I saw quite a large sign with a clear inscription in the Dutch language: "Mr. Spaan. Agent of the Holland Navigation Company." I did not hesitate for a moment but went into the office to meet Mr. Spaan in person. The unusual friendliness with which he treated me and which I ascribed to his good will toward a fellow countryman led me to tell of my desire to return to my fatherland. I had not the slightest idea that I was dealing with a wolf in sheep's clothing.

With a tongue smoother than butter he answered me with fine-sounding words and agreed to get me a place on a Dutch ship, with very acceptable stipulations. Oh, how slyly that snake hid his poison from me under the guise of human kindness. Instead of getting me a job with a Dutch captain, he sold me, without my knowing it, to an English captain who was sailing for California in a few days.

What happened? On the day set for departure, I went to the office of Mr. Spaan. There another man came to me. He introduced himself as Mr. De Jong, and, as soon as I was alone with him, he told me of the scheme in which I had become involved. Mr. De

Jong indicated that he was prepared to help me in any way he could. He explained that I could not return to Holland without a ticket. Earning it with my own hands was the only path for me to follow.

After looking for work for two weeks without success, I was fortunate to find a job with a skipper who sailed a cargo ship to Philadelphia. Very happy about this development, I bade Mr. De Jong farewell. In the meantime he had given me lodging without charge. I could not have paid him anyway, as the two dollars with which I had arrived was nearly spent.

I was fortunate to find this new employer because he spoke only low German, which I could understand quite well, and also because he was an exceptionally kind and honest man. He paid me a fair wage, so that in three months I was able to plan my trip to Holland. The captain was very sorry when I asked him for a release, but he did not refuse to pay what he owed me. After a hearty farewell I left that fine man and hurried back to New York with the money I had saved to fulfill my long-cherished wish.

In a happy mood I made my way to the dock early in the morning. It was not long before I saw the ship; I would soon set my foot on a Dutch vessel. But suddenly I was brought to a stop. A seemingly audible voice asked, "Do you know what you are doing?" I stopped as if nailed to the ground and trembled with fear and emotion. It was as if God had spoken to me. Immediately I saw in my mind's eye my whole life sketched on a chart. A finger pointed out that I had consulted the Lord about going to America and that I had received peace of mind and assurance that it was his will. I had even testified to this publicly, and very likely I would be branded as a quitter or a fortune-seeker back at home.

I stood there in the greatest per-

plexity, filled with awe before the sovereignty of the Lord. My love for the Netherlands was entirely changed into dislike and aversion. If someone had offered me all the treasures of earth to go back to Holland, I would have flatly refused, because I had no power to oppose the sovereignty of God! For a little while I remained sunk in deep and earnest thoughts, until, without any hesitation, I cast myself anew into the arms of my God, surrendering to his all-wise will and direction.

Having heard that there was plenty of work in New Jersey, I went there with some other people. Among them I met a fellow countryman who had been living for some time in Newark. I stayed with that man for a night, but it became a night of great importance to me.

Courtship and Marriage

I went to bed early and slept refreshingly for a few hours, but then I awoke without any outward disturbance. After a short time, the vision of a young woman came to my mind. I had met her at the home of Mr. De Jong a couple of times. She had treated me with the greatest indifference, and I had not the least interest in her. Now, however, it was different; now I could say with Samson, "Give me that woman, for she is desirable in my eyes." I considered myself fortunate because I had taken enough notice of her circumstance to remember her address. The next day I called on her and suggested a regular acquaintance. After a short hesitation she accepted my offer, and we agreed to correspond. I returned to New Jersey, where I had a job clearing woods. It did not take long, however, before I began to have some regrets

about my courtship. Not that my affection for her had cooled, but I feared I had not made a good choice. I had always, when thinking about marriage, thought that a union between a believer and an unbeliever was not permissible. It was surely a ticklish position, and I considered myself to have been too hasty in this important matter.

I longed to meet my intended and to share all of my thoughts and reservations with her. Could she be satisfied with my manner of living, on purely religious grounds, without participating in worldly entertainments? To my great joy she gave me her complete consent. It did not take long before we, Bastiaan Broere and Geertruide Johanna de Groot, were united in matrimony by Rev. W. C. Wust* in the Dutch Reformed Church of New York.

Before I proceed, allow me to acquaint the reader with my wife more fully. Born in Varseveld, in the province of Gelderland, she lost her parents at the age of eight and was raised by her uncle until her fourteenth year. Thereafter she was employed by a God-fearing woman. Reaching a marriageable age, she became acquainted with a young man, and after their marriage she came to America, because there was little prospect for her husband to make a decent living in Leerdam as a tailor. But after the ship left the coast of Holland, her young husband was stricken with a serious illness. She nursed her patient with great care during the forty-two-day trip to New York. There an American doctor came aboard and ordered the sick to a hospital on Staten Island. Geertruide was brought ashore in New York with friends who were traveling to Pella. Leaving her sick husband was impossible for her, so she allowed her friends to leave and imagined she would soon follow them after her husband's recovery.

There the poor woman sat, deserted by everyone and unable to help herself, for no one could understand her. She sat for a few hours on one of her trunks with all her baggage. Her increasing sadness attracted the attention of many. They spoke to her, but always in English. Finally someone came by who seemed to know her, and, looking at him, she recognized him as someone from her home town. "Are you De Jong?" she asked. "As you see," he answered. Her face lit up at once, for now she could unburden her heart. In a few words she told him about her sad situation, and he suggested that she accompany him to his home. Relieved, she accepted his friendly offer and moved in with Mr. De Jong and his wife. But in the recovery of her husband she was disappointed. She was permitted to visit him every other day, but within fourteen days she was told that he had died. The only thing for her to do was to stay with Mr. De Jong. There, at least she was safe with fellow countrymen who showed much good will toward her. Fortunately they found employment for her in Bergen Hill with a Dutch family.

After she had been working there satisfactorily for four months, she developed a pain in her finger, which made work impossible. She decided to go to her friend's in New York until the finger was cured. It was during this time, while she was staying with De Jong, that our meeting took place.

Before she went back to her job, I left Mr. De Jong to sail with the German skipper. Later, with my savings, I returned to Mr. De Jong and met her for the second time. Another infection, but this time in another finger, had necessitated her return to New York. This meeting also left no impression upon me. All that happened later, and I came to the inevitable conclusion that the bond between me and my wife was laid by the Lord. Was it

not by his high and wonderful providence that, when we were each in great difficulty in a city of a million people, we were helped by one and the same person?*

I now had a faithful companion who would share my joys and sorrows. About three months after our marriage we decided to settle in Sayville, a village on Long Island. I had heard from some Hollanders that there in South Bay were many and good oysters. Being familiar with that business, I did not doubt about being able to make a living, and I was not disappointed. I found many oysters, but I did not find friends with whom I could talk, sing, and pray. I had need of them, and my heart yearned for them. But there was no one. There were two Dutch families a short distance from my home, but I soon learned from their language and loud abuse of the Lord's name that I could not associate with them on a friendly basis. The warning "Whosoever would be a friend of the world, will become an enemy of God" remained in my mind vividly, so I decided not to associate with them.

The longer I was there, the more unhappy I felt. The memory of former days, when I enjoyed feasting with the happy throng of God's people, caused my soul to melt in sadness. I spent many sleepless hours shedding tears. At last, overcome by grief, I did not feel capable of doing my daily work. I lay under the blankets, bringing my needs to the Lord.

My wife, who had little knowledge of spiritual matters, suffered in bitter silence. As soon as I noticed her con-

*For more about Rev. W. C. Wust, see *Origins*, Volume III, no. 1, pages 32-37.

**I have always been sorry that I have not been able to show that man my respect and good will, because his greed prompted him to be unwilling to return the small amount of money saved by my wife and her first husband, a sum between 200 and 300 florin, which had been given to him for safekeeping.

fusion, I told her what caused my sadness. Feeling sorry for me, since she loved me, she advised me to go to New York for a few days, where I had some very dear friends in the Dutch Reformed Church. That suggestion surprised me, but following it gave great relief. After a few days I came home encouraged and refreshed, secretly hoping that the Lord would send one or more of his people to Sayville sometime.

After more than two years, this wish was realized, and a God-fearing Dutch family arrived. Oh, how I rejoiced to find a friend and a companion on the road to the heavenly Canaan. Soon we agreed to meet on the Lord's day according to the apostolic admonition "Do not neglect the assembly of the saints."

During a period of about ten years in Sayville (1850-1860), we had, as far as temporal needs are concerned, no cause for complaint. Income always covered expenses. But gradually this began to change. My family was growing, and I considered it my duty to improve my means of livelihood. After long deliberation it seemed right to make a trip to the southern part of America and see how things were going there. I did seek the Lord's assurance that my plan was in accordance with his will, but I remained in the dark. I received no answers. But instead of waiting in submission, I decided to make the trip, assuring myself of a favorable result.

Norfolk, Virginia 1860-1862

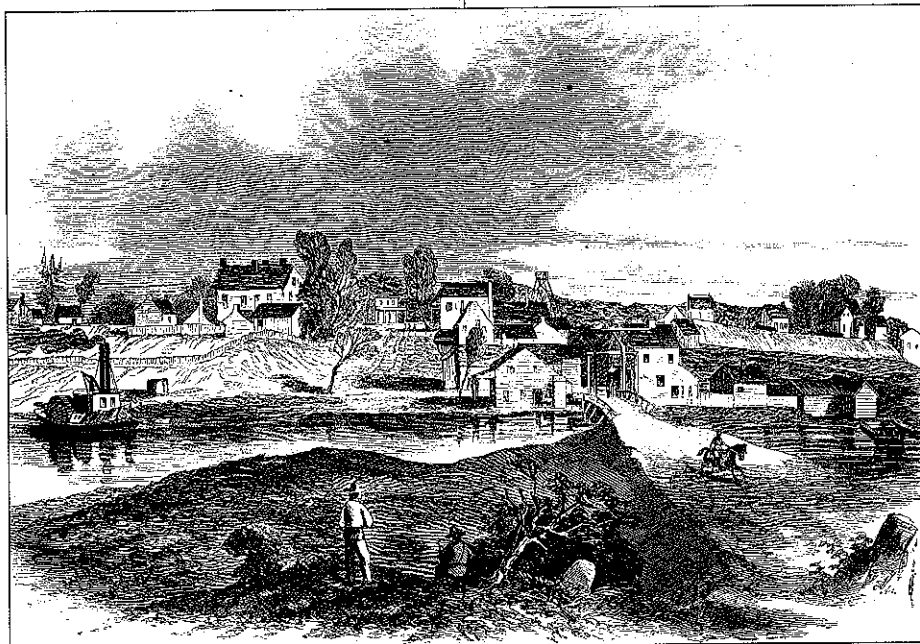
I left for the state of Virginia all alone and arrived safely in a few days. It impressed me as a very suitable place, so I did not hesitate to rent a house in the city of Norfolk for me and my family. I had been away for four weeks

and found my wife and children in good health. We made several arrangements and bade farewell to our fellow countrymen and acquaintances in Sayville. We left in good spirits and arrived safely in Norfolk.

I was immediately disappointed with some of my fellow Dutch-Americans in Norfolk. Their beliefs as well as their conduct were in direct conflict with my precious Reformed confession. There could be no thought of joining them in divine worship. Six

whole city was in an uproar. Men, women, and children were running like maniacs in the street. At first we did not understand what caused this terrible tumult. However, upon careful investigation, we learned that the state of Virginia had declared its independence and had broken ties with the northern states.

War was declared between the northern and southern states. The excitement of the people was terrible. They raved like released devils, and



(above) Seaside village like Leanhaven Bay; (right) Map of Norfolk area, including "Ripraps" mentioned in Broere's account.

people came to our house on Sundays, where it was our custom to pray, read, and sing. The latter was an offense to our Dutch neighbors, who became so angry they threatened to burn down our home. But the Lord, who rules over us, prevented them.

After we had lived in Norfolk for about four months, a second but more terrible disappointment awaited us. One morning before dawn we heard an unusual commotion in the street. Not knowing what was going on, we went outdoors. Oh, what a scene. The



the bitterness against the Yankees, as the people of the North were called, knew no bounds. We, who had come from the North a few months before, were considered to be of that party. We were in great fear, for there was no possibility of going back. All vessels were confiscated or sunk. Everyone was pressed into service to assist in building entrenchments and fortifications. After brief consideration, I and another Hollander decided to flee to Leanhaven Bay, a village twenty-six miles to the south.

A short time later we received letters from our wives, who had to remain behind temporarily with the children. They told us that the authorities in Norfolk had ordered our immediate return. That news was like lead on our hearts. What were we to do? Our wives and children were under their control. We soon decided to return to the city but not without great dislike.

We hid our boat in a place of safety and returned on foot. Our path led us along a wide stream which reminded me of the Israelites when they wept by the river of Babel. Truly, my situation was very similar to that of the Jewish exiles. Sighing to God, I was encouraged and strengthened by the words of Psalm 33: "For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name."

The sun had set a long time when we reached our destination. Under cover of darkness we quietly sneaked into the city and were soon with our dear ones. We found them in good health, and the children were already asleep. A look at their calm little faces filled me with deep joy. What would their future be? How much grief would interrupt their childish happiness? Is it any wonder that we did not sleep a wink? There was no other choice but to report to the authorities.

At the break of day the activity on the street also began. The eagerness

to hear the news was at a high pitch. Early in the morning newspapers were in the hands of old and young, rich and poor. My companion found one which contained a proclamation announcing that every resident was free to make a choice—either to go about his own business or to make himself available to the government. No citizen nor stranger was to be treated with violence. This good news gave us some relief.

Without delay we made use of that freedom and moved to Leanhaven Bay with our wives and children. We thought we would be able to breathe more freely there than among the unruly and boisterous people in the city. Arriving safely at our destination, we first arranged for our housing and then dry-docked our boat.

There was little opportunity to make a living in this hostile territory, and all living expenses increased rapidly. All provisions, including clothing for ourselves and for our children, were scarce. It was so serious that my wife cut up three blankets in order to make clothes for the children. Bread was not to be had, nor wheat or rye flour. We had to get along with ground corn, which was mixed with water and baked like bread. It was very coarse food for the children and detrimental to their health.

I still think back upon those days with trembling. When I think of my wife and children my heart shrinks. Our little daughter, Geertruida, was especially weakened by the hard, unleavened cornbread and beans. Fortunately we were able to buy some sweet potatoes. My wife ground them to make a liquid, but it did not help the sick and weakened child much. Oh, how our parental hearts suffered to see our darling languishing for lack of good food. This caused me to look up to the Lord, who hears the young ravens when they cry and whose power I did not doubt.

In a very simple but very remarkable manner, the Lord provided for us in our need. For some weeks we had been in possession of a very gentle housecat. Although she seldom went outside, one day she came into the house with a rabbit in her mouth. What a wonderful treat, and what proper food for our dear child. I clearly recognized the good hand of the Lord in this. And, although our puss was not in possession of her prey very long, she hunted again and again, always coming back with her game. Our child, receiving nourishing food regularly, began to improve with the Lord's blessing. In that way the Lord showed that he knows what we need and, in his own way, provided.

In a remarkable way this was proven to me some months later. The winter was past. We were poverty stricken. Meanwhile, a man who knew about our situation offered me a couple bushels of sweet apples. I had to cross a small bay to reach him, and, after placing the apples in the boat, I shoved off and left to go home. Within a short time the Lord allowed a fierce storm to break so that I could not control the boat and landed on a sand bank. But, as the storm continued, the water drove me to a place where I saw a wide sandy bottom. Looking around, I discovered a large number of oysters. I took careful note of the latitude, and, being an oysterman from my youth, I had no problem finding the place later. After I had lain there two or three hours, the Lord caused the storm to abate. The receded waters returned to their place, and the oysters were covered again. My boat floated once more, and in a short time I was back home.

The next day I headed for the secret treasure, which I found with no trouble. Upon my return I asked a farmer in the neighborhood for the use of his cart and donkey, whereupon I loaded

up my oysters and followed the road to the city of Norfolk. I had hardly reached the Southern military camp when I was surrounded by soldiers, and all of them wanted to buy oysters. I was sold out in a short time, and I made a tidy sum of money. Immediately I bought three barrels of wheat flour, a large quantity of vegetables, and some clothing. Shoes and boots I did not have to buy. I found plenty along the way. The soldiers had probably thrown them away as excess baggage.

After having loaded all these purchases on the cart, I drove home in a happy and grateful mood. My wife awaited me anxiously, and she stared in surprise at all the things the oysters had provided. We ate and drank that evening with joy and gratitude in our hearts and breathed more freely than we had done for a long time. But, alas, that did not last long. The miserable war continued on, and, although unable to read the news myself, I did hear from time to time how matters stood. It was mostly unfavorable for the Southern army. I was afraid I would receive a call into service, and we were also forced to learn about weapons in a local militia.

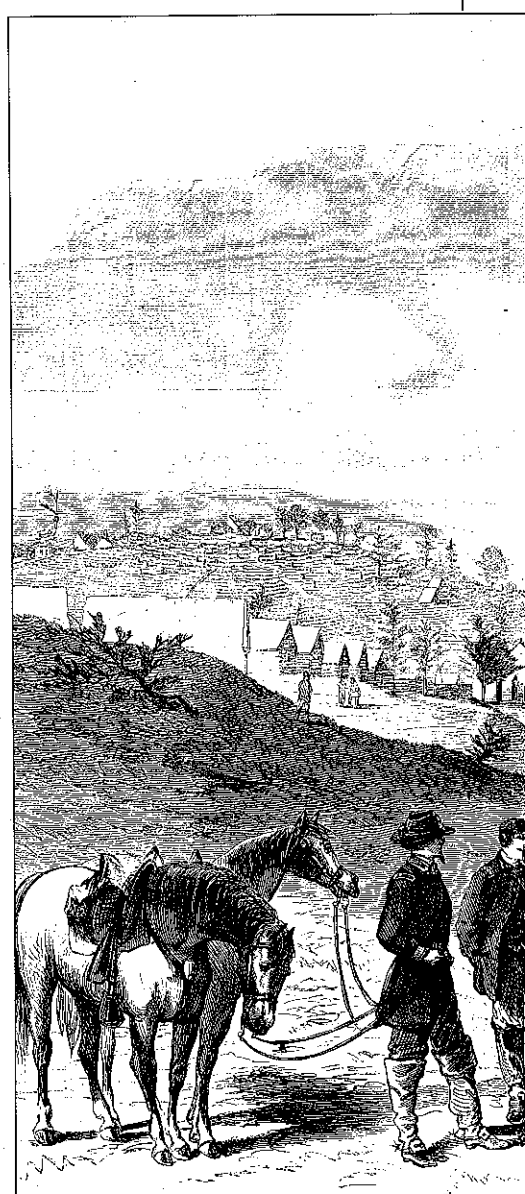
Sixteen months after our arrival the government of the South announced that all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-six would henceforth be drafted. The following day I was assigned a day and place where I was to report, with an order to take a blanket and a two-day supply of food. This was, although not unexpected, disturbing. After reporting for duty, I came home, and the following words came to my mind: "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." Coming inside, I gave my wife the news. "Oh, my dear Bastiaan," she cried, "what shall we do now?" We began to plan together. I began by assuring her that I would submit entirely to her wishes and advice. "Well," she an-

swered, "if you go to war, maybe you will be killed, or you will be severely wounded, and you may die. Maybe I will never see or hear from you again. Listen, this is my idea: if you find an opportunity to desert, do it. Then I could hope to see you again. . . ." "But," I answered, "what will happen to you and the children? Where will you get food? We do not know how long the war will last." "Come, come," she replied. "I will not allow my children to starve from lack of food. When our supply is exhausted, I will go out and beg." Now that supply was not so limited. She and our little children would be able to get along for seven months, according to my estimate. Oh, how I again thanked the faithful and benevolent God, who had shown me the bed of oysters which purchased all those provisions.

Captivity and Escape

The time had come to say goodbye—the parting of man and wife, of father and children. I trust the reader will not ask me to describe the scene. Those who by God's grace have been blessed with a faithful and loving spouse can readily understand how hard it was for us to part in this way. Deeply disturbed in my soul, I left my home toward noon. Now I had to be careful, but also sly. The place where we lived was next to a bay. Along the coast was a garrison of sixty men. I had to pass this garrison in a rowboat which I took without permission. The soldiers who had been there a long time had seen me off and on, so I aroused no suspicion when I rowed near the shore to pick up a piece of driftwood or broken barrels and old boards. Gradually I moved farther, until their shots could not reach me. Then I left the shore and

rowed so hard it almost overtaxed my strength. I headed for a ship anchored some four or five miles from shore. Judging by the flag, it was in the service of the North. This seemed to me an excellent opportunity to escape. Arriving at the side of the vessel, I asked them if they would take me aboard. They did so at once, and not only me but my boat. I was soaked when I arrived on board. The captain and the entire crew treated me with unusual friendliness. I did not sus-



pect any trouble. They told me they had been sent out to Baltimore. When they asked me about this and that, I answered them freely, and they soon gathered that I had Northern sympathies. At their invitation and because I was very tired in soul and body, I went to the crew's quarters to rest in one of the cabins.

After I had been lying down for half an hour, they stopped playing cards and were carrying on a conversation. Although I could not read

English and could speak it only a little, I could understand it quite well. I soon gathered what they were talking about. Thinking I was asleep, they were planning how they were to kill this Yankee (as the Northerners were called). After some discussion they decided to throw me overboard that night, but not before midnight, because the two negroes who were on guard until that time were not to be trusted. When the negroes were off duty and asleep, then I would be

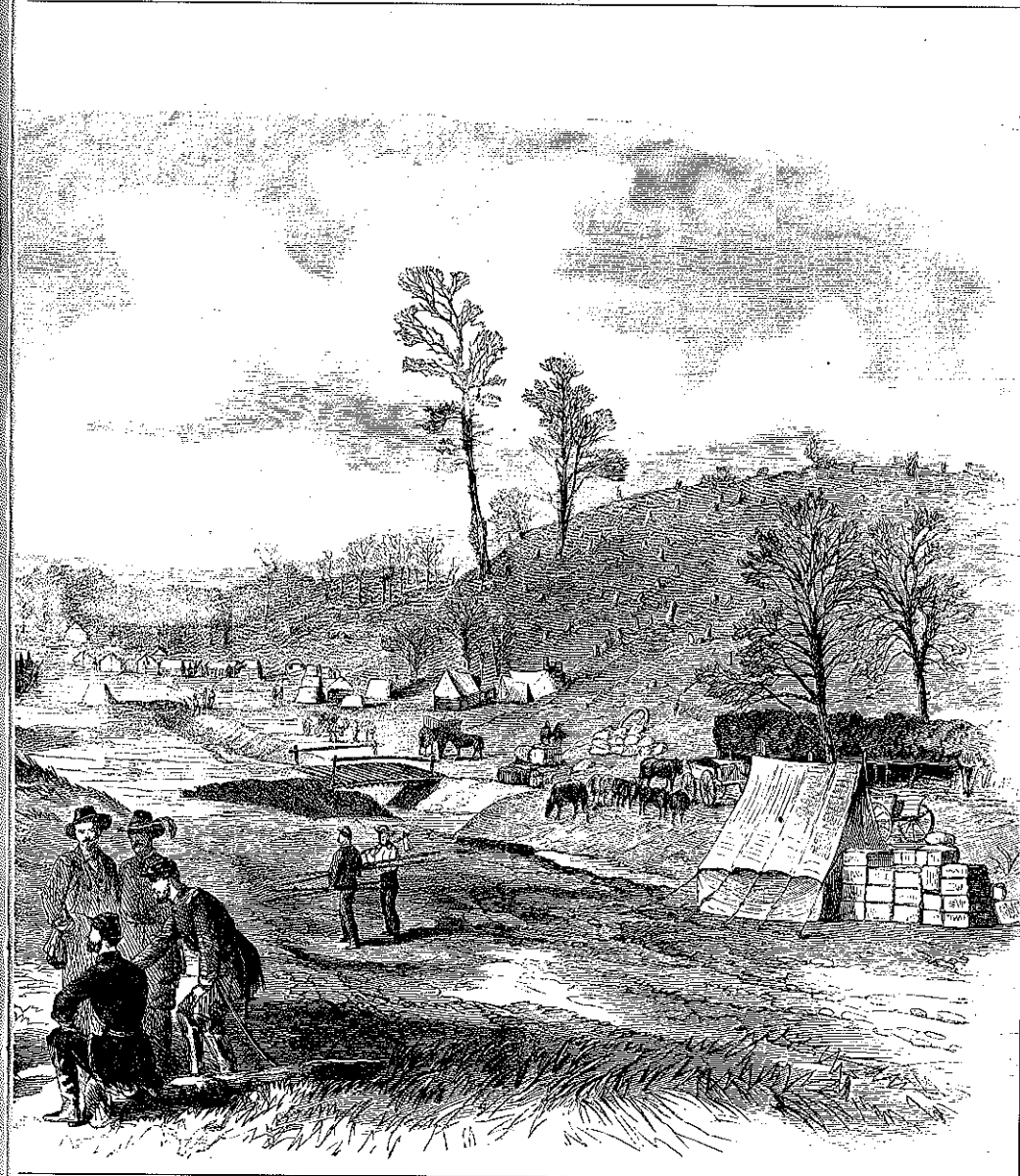
thrown overboard. I walked back and forth on deck, for as soon as I had heard my death sentence, I could no longer endure being in the cabin with that den of murderers.

I cried, "Oh Lord, thou art truly my God." Fear of death did not concern me as much as thoughts of my wife and children. Their situation weighed heavily upon my heart. I thought they would never see me again, would never know what had happened to me. That caused my hair to stand on end, and my heart was breaking for those defenseless sheep. How could I escape? It would be a miracle, I thought, which was far beyond my ability to imagine. I strongly believed my God was able to perform a miracle, but how!

Meanwhile, time did not stand still. Another hour had passed, and I still paced the deck. A beautiful calm reigned all about me. Nature was indescribably beautiful. Millions of stars sparkled like jewels, while a friendly fall moon caused its bright light to fall upon the mirror of the sea. No ripple was to be seen. I don't think I have ever spent such a quiet evening on the water. It was wonderful. That external calm, that beautiful and worship-encouraging nature had a favorable effect upon my mind. My prayer became childlike: "Oh Lord, if you allowed a storm to come up so that no one could sleep, that would defeat the plan of the enemy." I was thinking of the two negroes whom they did not trust. My sighing was not hidden from God.

Shedding tears and looking to God, I remained on deck. It was after eleven o'clock. Then I saw a small cloud to the northwest. That cloud became larger and larger, and all at once it spread in all directions. The sky became overcast and dark, and then there was a short period of cooler tem-

(left) Northern army encamped in Virginia.



perature. This was followed by wind, and within a half hour a storm burst which forced the entire crew to busy themselves with the ship. No one slept that night. Oh, my friends, if I had ever beheld the almighty power of God, it was then.

When the storm abated somewhat by morning, the captain gave orders to lift the anchor and to set out upon the ocean. I asked myself, "What must I do now?" I decided to ask the captain in a decent way to put me overboard with my boat, for I would rather take a chance in a rowboat than to be murdered on board. With a face flushed with pride and devilish intent, he answered, "No, no, sir. We will kill a Yankee today anyhow." Hesitatingly, but not discouraged, I went to the cabin where the crew was playing cards and asked them the same question. "No, no," was their answer. "We won't let you go." That *you* was emphasized with special meaning. "oh," I said in my heart, "Oh, God, will no one then speak a word for Joseph?" And God heard my sigh. One of them shouted, "What do we care? He will surely drown himself anyway." They threw down their cards, hurried topside, put my boat overboard, and I jumped in.

When I had shoved off, I saw the captain shouting like the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel to the heavens: "Away with you! Away with you!" He ended his raving with a few terrible curses. But his rage could no longer reach me. I was rescued from those devils in human form and felt like David when he said, "It is better to fall into the hands of the Lord than into those of men." Although the storm had abated by morning, the sea was still rough and turbulent, but, when I was about a mile away, the sea became more calm. Soon I saw another ship. I immediately set course toward it and had the good fortune of being seen, so that they sailed toward me. Coming

alongside, I threw a rope on board and soon I was on deck.

This was a Northern ship loaded with forage for the cavalry at Fort Monroe. Now, sure of my safety, I could have shouted with joy and thanks to him who had shown his saving and wonder-working power in such a marvelous manner. My soul overflowed; one psalm after another arose as so many streams from my overflowing heart.

Arriving on shore, I reported to General Wool, who received me cordially. After I showed him evidence of my citizenship, he gave me a passport to Sayville. Through the services of an old friend I obtained free passage on board a schooner to the city of New York, and here also I found a vessel going to Sayville.

It was not long before I began to worry about my wife and children. Not being able to send them news of my safe arrival and not being able to receive information about how they were faring were disturbing and unbearable. By day and by night, yea, moment by moment, I was thinking of my sad wife and children.

After I had spent five weeks in this dire situation, the happy time when God would dry my tears and answer my prayers came closer. It was on a lovely spring morning, long before sunrise, while I was taking the shortest route to my vessel. All at once something came to my mind which brought about a great relief to my burdened and faint heart. It seemed I heard a whisper: "The city's fallen," but it was not long before my high spirit was tempered. Satan, the sworn enemy of all God's children argued with me and tried to convince me that this expression was not in Holy Scripture, and I just could not recall where it was found. Still, I did not give in completely, and, oddly enough, that expression "the city is fallen" was on my mind the whole day.

In the afternoon, returning home from work, I met a neighbor who came up to me and called out joyfully, "Norfolk has been taken. Now hurry up. Put on your shoes and go to get your wife!" What news! I could not refrain from lifting up my eyes to heaven and saying, "Is this Lord, what thou hast been telling me early this morning?" And how ashamed I was about my doubts. Leanhaven Bay, which was only seven hours away, was also occupied by Northern troops. I could reach my wife and children. But, in thinking it over more fully and calmly, I realized that I had considered the matter too lightly. Regardless of how much I wanted to see my family again, there was great danger in being seen near my home where everyone knew that I had deserted. The hatred and bitterness which I had seen before my flight would certainly not have been diminished by the Southern defeat.

This made me so fearful that I could not decide what I should do for fourteen days. My inner conflict was terrible. The uncertainty about the situation of my dear family on the one hand and of the great danger to myself on the other drove me constantly to the Lord.

It pleased the Lord to give me such a measure of his grace and assurance that all fear and oppression vanished. The words of Psalm 91:5—"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day"—impressed me with such emphasis and penetrating power that all doubts disappeared and gave place to a trusting faith which caused me to cry out, "I shall not be afraid of ten thousands." And I said to my neighbors, "I am leaving alone, but you will see me return with my wife and children," for I firmly believed that I would get them back.

Returning to Sayville

The next morning I left for New York in a relieved mood and joyful in my God. I went by schooner to Yorktown and on foot to Fort Monroe. The day ended, and, not being able to find lodging for less than three dollars, I spent the night beside the river. It was

living in the city, I first went to General Vule, who greeted me cordially. I asked him to give me a guide through the dangerous woods, but this request he could or would not grant. He gave me a so-called safeguard for travel which read, "Department of Virginia, city or Norfolk, May 29, 1862. This pass is given to Bastiaan Broere. All officers and soldiers, belonging to the army of the United States, are hereby ordered to honor this pass and in case of necessity to

a keen interest in us and our affairs when we first settled on the bay. He found that we were religious people and informed me that he had a great desire to learn so that he could study God's precious Word. Since my ten-year-old daughter, Mina, knew the English language fairly well, she took upon herself the role of teacher, and by the end of two months the man could read the Bible. His gratitude was full repayment. In passing, it should be stated that it was risky to

teach a slave how to read, because everyone, slave and free, knew there was a strict law against teaching slaves. For that reason he never came to our house until after dark. He sneaked in with his textbooks carefully hidden under his clothes. Now I met this man again.

When he recognized me, his face



Escape!

not long before I was disturbed by a night watchman who would not permit me to stay there. Later a guard approached me with a bayonet and placed me under arrest. Thinking he was dealing with a spy, he sounded the alarm. A sergeant and four armed men appeared. They put me in a nearby guardhouse until the following morning. I could not have landed in a cheaper and safer place. I laid down my head in peace and enjoyed a refreshing sleep. The next morning I was brought to appear before General Wool, who immediately recognized me as the same person to whom he had given a pass to Sayville. He gave orders to release me at once.

Now I had almost reached my destination, and with doubled speed I hurried on to the city of Norfolk. Ar-

give protection to Bastiaan Broere. By order of E. L. Vule, Brigadier General."

Now I was completely prepared to continue the rest of my seven-hour journey. But it was just this part of the trip which had caused me so much anxiety and stress. Although I felt no fear, I did realize that great care was advisable. Therefore, I wrote to my wife that I was in Norfolk and asked her, if possible, to come to me. But, because the regular postal service in the South was discontinued, the letter could not be sent.

Going through the city, I came to a large fish market, where many fish from Leanhaven Bay were sold. Among many acquaintances, all still slaves, there was one who not only knew me but had become my friend. This poor slave, who harbored a pious soul under his black skin, had shown

brightened with joy at seeing me still alive. He knew about my dangerous flight. Without hesitation he assumed the responsibility of delivering the letter. After a short but hearty farewell he joined his companions and returned to the empty wagons. After supper, which is usually eaten at six o'clock, he was at liberty. But he had to be very careful in delivering the letter because all the slave owners in the area had sworn to kill me. For that reason he waited until it was very dark. He took a rowboat secretly and at two o'clock knocked at my wife's door. She recognized his voice and soon received my letter. He spoke a few words and then left hastily, to be back at daybreak and not arouse suspicion.

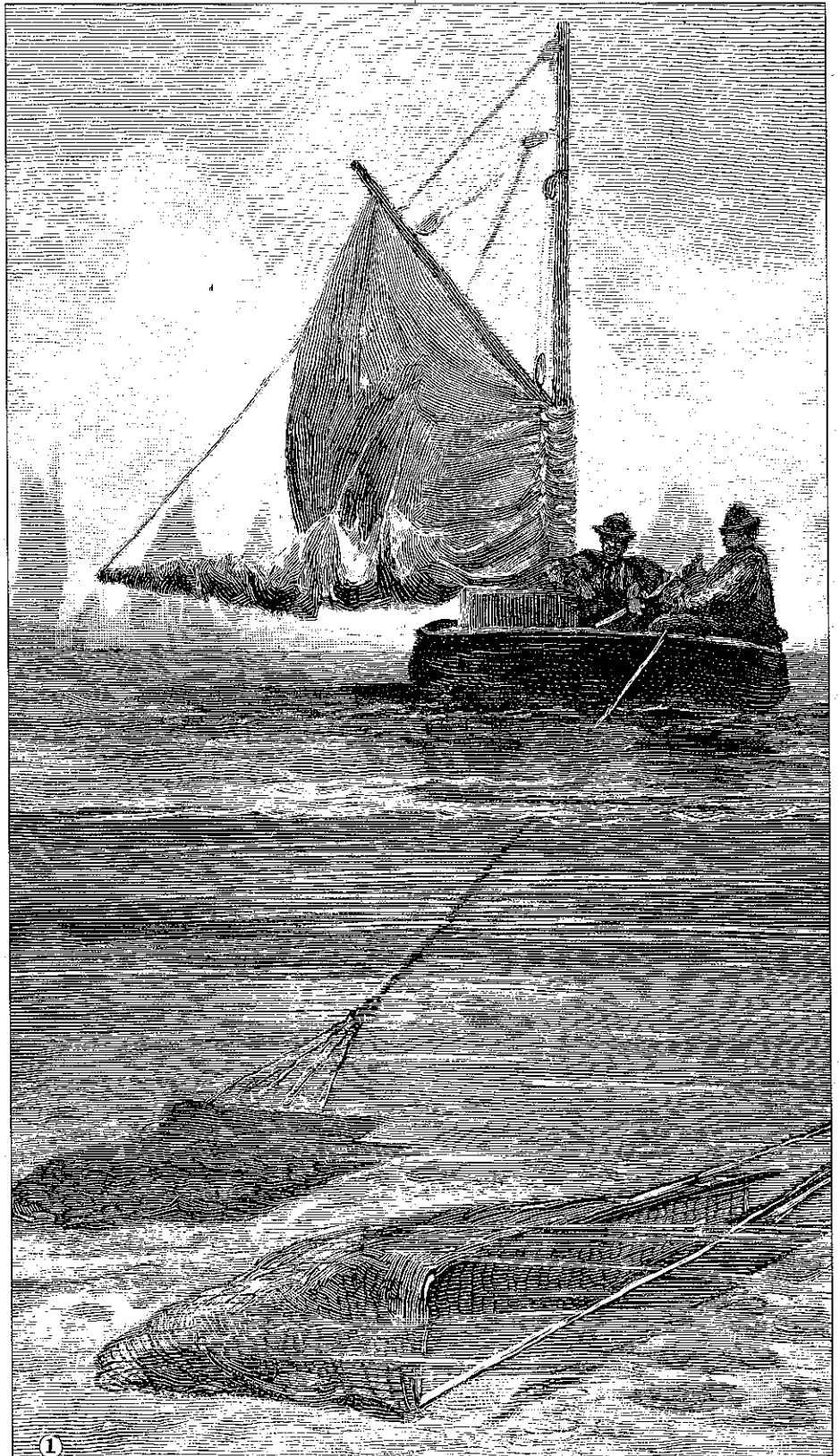
Naturally, my wife was overjoyed at the good news. She did not sleep the rest of the night but spent the remain-

ing hours in thought and planning. But no matter how she weighed the pros and cons, it was an impossible task to travel on foot with five children for seven miles. It was out of the question to depend on local farmers, because they all hated me.

After giving my letter to my black friend, each day I went outside of the city to an abandoned house on the main highway, awaiting my wife's arrival. At night I returned to the camp, where I was provided with blankets for protection against the cold.

After three days of waiting, I realized that my wife was unable to come, and I decided to go home. After committing my ways to the Almighty, I started out in the morning, and by eight or nine o'clock in the evening I reached the shore of Leanhaven Bay without meeting one pedestrian in the dense woods. But, when I approached the beach, the person from whom I had learned drill exercises as a recruit saw me and snarled, "The dead has come to life." I answered briefly, "I have never been dead," and went on toward a few slaves who were just getting into a rowboat. I asked them if they would take me to my wife, for they knew me very well. They said, "We do not dare, because our masters would make us pay dearly." But when I showed them a dollar bill, their faces lit up. "Jump in," they said, and I was all set. A little more than a half hour later I entered my home.

I will not try to describe the boundless joy which filled our hearts to see each other after such a dreadful three-month separation. I can only say that we were speechless in our happiness. My good wife was looking well. Our dear children were all abed, but I could not refrain from kissing their fresh rosy cheeks. Calming down a bit, I noticed my wife was uneasy and worried. She feared for my life because the plantation owners had said



publicly, "Hanging is too good in his case. He must be burned." All these and other threats I heard very calmly. I was not in the least disturbed because of my inner peace and faith. In a firm tone I said, "Oh wife, he who is for us is greater than they who are against us. Be sure that no harm will befall us." These few words had the desired effect on her, and she calmed down.

Now we considered how we could escape from the enemy with our five children. To cover that distance on

foot was impossible. We gave up the idea of going by land with horse and wagon due to the danger of being attacked in the woods.* We decided to plan our escape by rowboat, but it would be a hazardous undertaking in such a small craft. The waterway was rough, and it would be a trip of twelve miles. There was no alternative, but we had to wait for better weather.

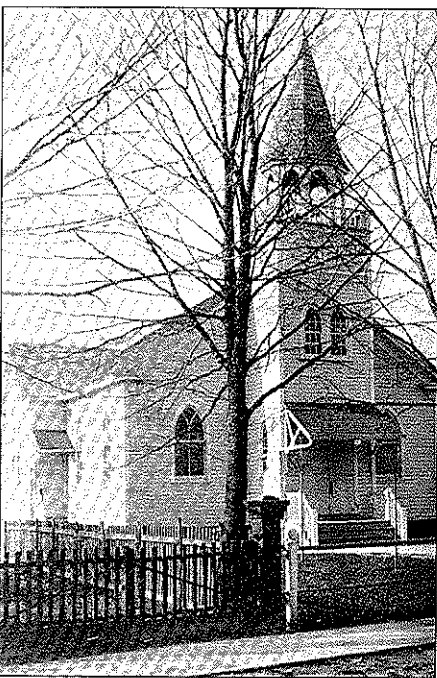
Thirteen days passed. Oh, how painful the waiting was. My home became too cramped for me, and I began

But, oh, how my lack of faith was put to shame. Hardly had the sun disappeared before the wind was less of a problem, and finally it died down. The tide changed from ebb to flow, and under these favorable conditions we made smooth progress. I headed for a fort called Ripraps, which was surrounded by water, and at about ten o'clock we attracted the attention of the soldiers quartered there. The moon shone brightly, and they could see that we were poor refugees. They waited for us, and in a short time they took my wife and children aboard a warship and gave them a warm and roomy cabin. The ship began to move, and in a short time we were at Fort Monroe. When we stepped ashore, some soldiers took us to a large hotel, which looked like a palace to us. They assigned us to a large bedroom equipped with all we needed. Then I felt completely safe with my wife and children.

There was no reason to delay further. We took the first steamship leaving for Baltimore, and, after a short layover, we went by train to Philadelphia, where we arrived at about eleven o'clock. This long trip was very tiring for the children, and they could hardly stand as we led them through that large city to the railroad station. Looking at my purse, I found that it was nearly empty. The fare from there to New York was twelve dollars. We stood in the waiting room, my wife with our youngest child at her breast, while the other four stood barefoot in poor but clean clothing. In deep thought, I wondered how to overcome this serious situation.

A well-dressed gentleman approached us. His attention had been drawn to the bare feet. He asked a few questions, which I answered openheartedly and freely. Then he gave me

**That probably happened to my friend Veen, who some time later went that way and has never been heard from since.*



(above) Gathering oysters, West Sayville, L.I.; (facing page) Oyster fishing; (left) Christian Reformed Church, West Sayville, L.I.

to think of it as my prison. But the hour of our escape finally arrived. One morning the weather was favorable, with a beautiful sunrise, a clear sky, a fresh and purified atmosphere.

It did not take us long to put our provisions aboard. We left our pets and all our furniture behind, except for a black-walnut table, which was as good as new. We still have it. We left shore, and gradually the wind increased so that I wondered if we could complete our trip. It was a long one, but we moved along steadily but slowly. By sundown I estimated we had covered two-thirds of the distance, but now we still had to pass through the most dangerous part.

a half dollar and invited other curious passengers to follow his example. Many did, and I was again helped out of a difficulty. The conductor, who had come into the waiting room, also showed an interest and took fares only from me and my wife. Arriving in Jersey City, I looked for a boot-and-shoe store first of all. Thanks to generous donors I could buy shoes for my four little children. The merchant, seeing our little group, could not conceal his curiosity. After hearing our story, he would take only the whole-sale price for the shoes.

After crossing the Hudson, I met the captain of a ship which had brought a load of oysters to New York. He immediately agreed to take us aboard to go to Sayville. When we reached Sayville, I was heartily welcomed by my fellow countrymen. The village officials came that same evening to congratulate us on our escape and our safe arrival. Our little house was soon prepared for use, but that was our sole possession. We had hardly enough money to buy food, let alone clothes, bedding, or furniture. I could not ask for it. I had already seen and received too much from the wonder-working hand of my covenant God. I dared not complain to anyone about the needs we had.

Still, the hearts of some Samaritans were touched to show compassion. Oh, how the Lord sends help from a direction from which we least expect it. He says to the North: give, and to the South: do not withhold, and that was my experience. On one hand, I was offered a vessel with which to make a living, and, on the other hand, money at a reasonable rate of interest. Soon we were no longer in need but had a surplus. The memory of those first days back in my home, more precious now than ever, often causes me to shed tears of gratitude and humble joy. The Lord had provided generously in our time of need and also

during our escape. Oh, dear friends, who can express the blessed comfort which the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of God's children.

With this I could end my account, but so much more has happened during my life and in the lives of my seven children. Six are married, and most of them are blessed with many children. It is the prayer of my soul that all of my children, their spouses, and my grandchildren may always submit to the Lord and say, "Not my will but thine be done." Further, dear friends in the Lord, allow me to end these pages with the words of God (1 Peter 5:10-11): "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

H. J. Budding.



FATHER BUDDING 1810–1870

by H. J. Brinks

Huibert Budding lived for just sixty years, but he became a legendary figure in the Netherlands, and he was also well-known in the United States. In Holland, stories of his eccentric behavior still attract bemused attention, and a biographer is currently at work on Budding's life. His brief four-year sojourn in the States stretched from New York to the Midwest and terminated in Baltimore, but his intellectual path was even more varied. Among the 1834 seceders, his voice was rigidly conservative, and even Hendrik De Cock or Simon Van Velzen seemed tolerant compared to Budding. But by the 1860s he embraced both Unitarian and Arminian views.¹

Curiously, the heresies of his later years did not erase the admiration of his followers. His independent congregation in Goes flourished, and twenty-seven years after his death, the 1897 *Yearbook* of the CRC printed a glowing account of Budding's career.

Rev. Jan M. Remein wrote, "In his last years, Budding wandered from the truth, but he never denied its essence. The particular views of his last 10 years must be attributed to a reaction against dead orthodoxy."² That so tolerant a judgment could appear in a publication of the unyieldingly orthodox CRC of 1897 surely requires explanation. Perhaps it can be found in Budding's astonishing behavior and personality.

He was born and raised in Rhenen, a city just inside the southern border of Utrecht. His father, a well-to-do brewer, noted his son's exceptional piety but also his total disinclination toward business. So, with private tutors, Huibert prepared to study theology at the University of Utrecht. After graduation in 1834, he pastored the Biggekerk congregation, near Zeeland's provincial capital, Middelburg. That same year he proclaimed sympathy with the views of Hendrik P. Scholte, who had seceded from the Netherlands Reformed Church.

The issue of hymn singing drove Budding to separate, but unlike his seceder cohorts, he rejected both the hymns and the new rhyming of the Psalms. Budding declared that only the 1566 rhyming of Peter Dathenus was legitimate and that the newer version of 1733 was heretical. An apocryphal tale reports that Budding took the new book into the pulpit and slammed it to the floor of the church. When a parishioner tried to retrieve it, the pastor scolded, "Let it be." After the service he buried the offending songbook in a public ceremony.

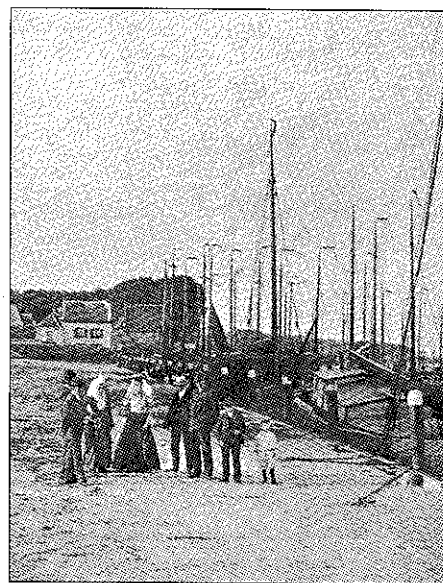
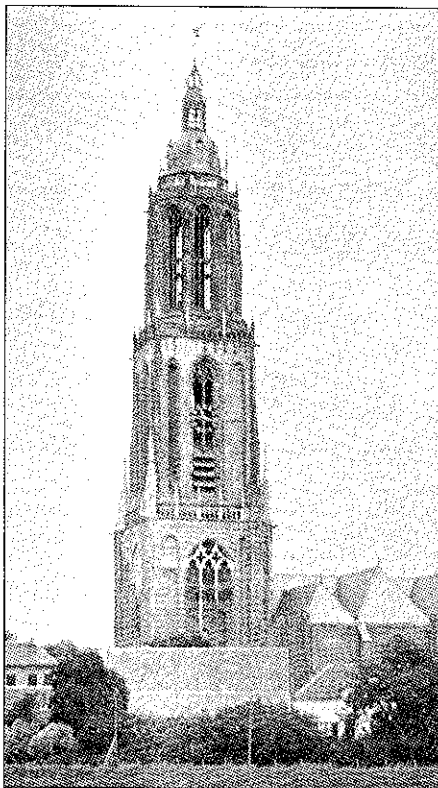
Though this story cannot be verified, its retelling persists because it accurately dramatizes Budding's flamboyant and unpredictable behavior.

For example, he joined and supported the seceders in 1836, but by 1839 he declared the movement false because its leaders sanctioned the 1733 version of the Psalter. Still, he continued to attract a large following among the

seceders in Zeeland and elsewhere.

Conducting worship services in the bakery of Johannes De Jonge, Budding violated laws requiring a permit for such gatherings. But he preached regularly in Goes without permission, and his fines mounted to thousands of guilders.* His faithful elder J. De Jonge was also fined, and, since neither he nor Budding would

**Some authors, Dunning for example, estimate that Budding's fines accumulated to over forty thousand dollars.*



(above left) Rhenen Church tower; View of church; (above right) View of harbor; (below) Typical Zeeland village scene, mid-nineteenth century.

pay, they were both imprisoned. During a seven-month prison term one of Budding's wealthy followers attempted to pay the fine, but Budding refused the offer and declared, "Give the money to the poor; I will not buy off the punishment which I must endure for Christ's sake." Ultimately, by appealing to the monarch, both men were released.

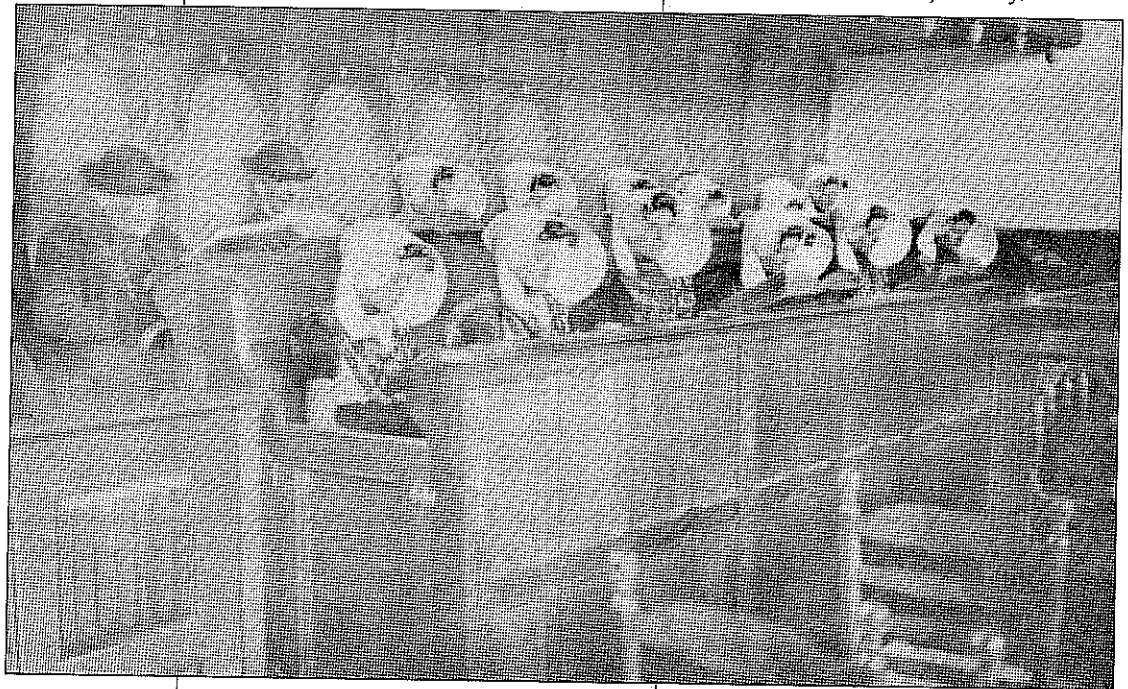
Most other seceders had solved their legal conflicts by gaining official recognition as new churches. Budding, however, scorned their behavior as a subterfuge, because he did not regard himself or the other seceders as founders of a new denomination. Instead, they were the remnant of the original Dutch Reformed Church organized by the Synod of Dordrecht in 1618. Accepting a new name and identity only denied the purpose and character of the secession. Consequently, Budding, with his congregation in Goes, persisted in an independent and technically illegal status.

From Goes he also functioned as an itinerant, accepting invitations to preach in Utrecht, Drenthe, Zeeland, and South Holland. In 1844 he became the pastor of Groningen's original seceded congregation.* And, with that, Budding reaffiliated with the denomination he had so roundly condemned five years earlier. His congregation in Goes complained that he had deserted them without notification, and he probably did, because he also left the Groningen congregation without classical approval in 1848.³

That year Budding immigrated to

the United States with a contingent of twenty-seven impoverished followers. He paid the passage for most of them, and during their forty-five-day voyage he conducted worship services aboard the ship. One of Budding's disciples, Adrian Pleune, kept a diary of that voyage, and on September 1, 1848, he wrote: "Wind S.W. The waves are worse, but we have a nice clear sky. Heard sermon this A.M.—II Cor. 12:9. In the afternoon Budding was unable to preach, be-

Budding, Pleune, Cornelius Van Sliedregt, and others trekked eastward to Ravenna, Michigan, where they joined a colony which had been established earlier by land developers from New York and Grand Rapids.** A local land agent, Edmond P. Bostwick, had settled several families in Ravenna before the Budding party arrived, but they were living in ox stables with little food for the approaching winter. Pleune had only six cents to his name after the journey, and the



cause of the worsening storm, but we did pray together. The ropes holding the trunks broke and we had to go below deck to end the evening by lantern light. We prayed together again and ended the Lord's day in that way."⁴

After arriving in New York on September 26, the Budding party traveled together through Albany, Rochester, and Buffalo. There they boarded a Great Lakes ship and sailed on the well-established course around the Straits of Mackinac to Milwaukee and then across Lake Michigan to Grand Haven. From that west Michigan port,

(above) In church; (next page) Preaching on-board ship.

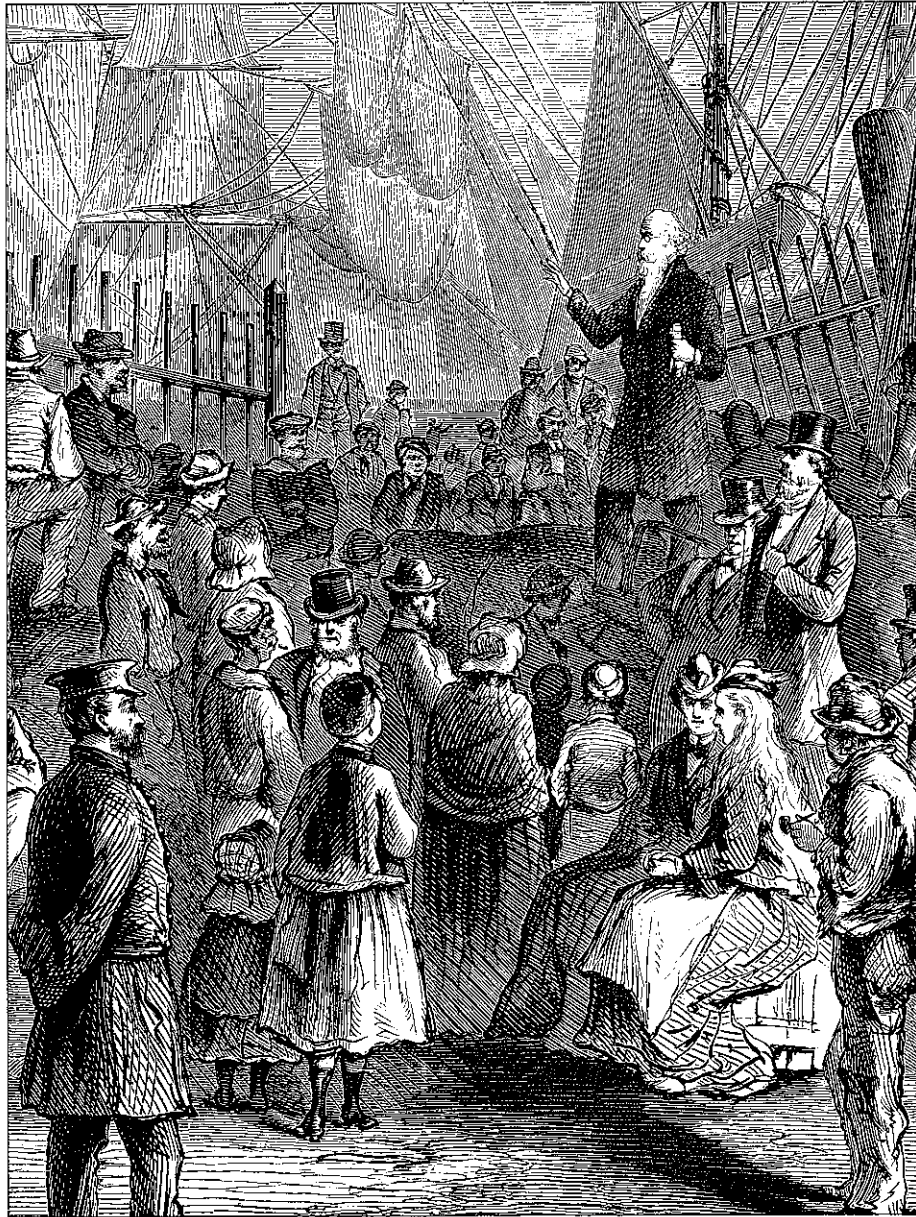
others were equally poor. They could not purchase stores for winter and subsisted on turnips while they crouched in drafty huts. Subsequent

*The first Christian seceded congregation in the city of Groningen, served by Hendrik De Cock from 1837 until his death in 1842.

**Information in Henry Lucas's *Netherlanders in America* (p. 268) connects one of the investors, a Mr. Spaan, with the Ravenna colony. This same fellow, with an office on Greenwich Street in New York, attempted to ship Bastiaan Broere to California instead of to the Netherlands. (See *Origins*, p. 8 in this issue).

conditions did not improve, and by 1851, when the whole effort collapsed, the colonists moved to Grand Rapids. Long before then Budding had drifted off to visit the scattered Dutch-Amer-

he did assist a small group which settled in Town Eight, a village near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1851 he drifted back to the East Coast with stops in Buffalo and New York City, but by



ican colonies of Michigan, Wisconsin, and elsewhere.⁵

When Harm Scheepers debarked at Grand Haven in 1849, Budding was preaching there,* but he refused calls from newly forming congregations in Pella, Iowa, and west Michigan. Still,

1852 he had purchased a farm near Baltimore, where he preached for a cluster of German immigrants. Then, without warning, he abandoned both the farm and his followers to return to the Netherlands. Upon his arrival there he declared, "I never thanked

God more earnestly than when I saw the Dutch coast."⁶

During his four-year sojourn in the New World, Budding penned a number of his American impressions in correspondence with J. De Jonge, his devoted disciple in Goes. Budding noted, for example, that there were some devout people among the descendants of New Amsterdam's founders (now, of course, New York), but for the most part he found them deficient.

They all preach in English, and most of the preachers read their sermons in a dry and lifeless manner. A good part of the people are asleep. Still, they do observe the day of rest strictly, and if it does not rain, they attend church regularly. I can discern only an outward form and custom on the part of most of them. The choir sings their psalms and orthodox hymns with an organ, but only a few of the congregation sing along. At the end of the service they take up an offering in open plates, but most people give only an American penny. Very seldom do you see a silver coin in the plate. Even the devout people do not speak of profound spiritual experiences, except for an occasional individual. Still, many do meet once or twice for mid-week prayer.⁷

Budding also encountered the True Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, which had seceded from the Dutch Reformed Church (RCA) in 1822. Of this group he declared, "They have their own minister, and there are more devout people among them. Their minister also has experiential knowledge of the gospel, but in general this group has too much of a party spirit, and they are too much bound by their experience. I preached once in their church and on another occasion in the basement of their church."⁸

Since he was a noted practitioner of

*See Origins, Volume I, no. 2, page 17.

extemporaneous sermons, Budding's criticism of those who read sermons can be no surprise. When Budding lacked inspiration, he took a seat in the pews and sang psalms. On some occasions his elders read printed sermons for several successive Sundays while their pastor sought inspiration. In this, as in other matters, Budding adhered to biblical literalism, and, if the Spirit gave him no utterance, he uttered nothing. Ultimately biblical literalism drove him to a completely independent status, for after his return to the Netherlands in 1851, he again disaffiliated with the Christian Seceded Church and settled into the Goes pastorate as a free evangelical. In that capacity he advocated a number of peculiar views, including the denial of the Trinity because, he asserted, the word *Trinity* does not appear in the Bible. Even more curious, this long-time advocate of election and reprobation, of soul searching, and of experiential preaching suddenly announced that faith was not a gift of God, but an available reality which everyone should simply acquire. Reconciliation remained the gift of Christ's grace, but faith could be acquired by human means. In the end, then, this once radical Calvinist adopted Unitarian views together with a peculiar form of Arminianism. He stood well beyond the borders of Calvinism.

In any case, Budding made a lasting impression on religious life in the Netherlands. He is the acknowledged founder of the Organization of Free Evangelical Congregations, and his personal witness has survived in both printed sources and oral traditions. Even in death he startled his countrymen. For his funeral he required representatives from three church groups (Roman Catholic, Christian Reformed, and Free Evangelical) to head up the entourage. His pall bearers, twenty-four of the poorest

folk in Goes, took turns bearing the casket. Each of these received six guilders, which equalled several days' wages. Such dazzling generosity helps explain Budding's legendary stature, and his reputation as a fatherly pastor.⁹

Despite his erratic and capricious behavior, Budding retained his popularity among his own parishioners and among many of the seceders whom he abandoned. His preaching, which everyone described as inspired and eloquent, contributed much to his popularity, but his identity with the poor certainly cemented their loyalty to this strange and often lonely bachelor. He founded an orphanage and a Christian school, and he publicly berated the wealthy when they paid stingy wages. His own piety and self-sacrifice probably overshadowed the doctrinal vagaries of his last years. It seems clear, too, that his deeds spoke more eloquently than his words, for Rev. Remein memorialized Budding in the CRC's 1897 *Yearbook* as "Father Budding," who "always honored and served the Lord."¹⁰

Footnotes

¹J. H. Gunning, H. J. Budding: *Leven en Arbeid* (Goes: Bolland, 1883), provides a 252-page account of Budding's life together with selected documents and correspondence.

²J. M. Remein, "Iets over Ds. H. J. Budding," C.R.C. Jaarboek of 1897, pp. 53-73. The quotation is from page 72.

³Gunning, pp. 48-115; J. Wesseling, *Afscheiding en Doleantie in de Stad Groningen* (Groningen: Niemeijer, 1961) pp. 53-63; C. Smits, *De Afscheiding van 1834* (Dordrecht: J. P. van den Tol, 1977) 3:193, 325, 334-5.

⁴Adrian Pleune, *Diary*, in Calvin College Library Archives, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

⁵Henry Lucas, *Netherlanders in America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1955) pp. 117-9, 198, 240, 269. Among the stateside stories about Budding, one cited by Lucas (p. 501) asserts that Budding scolded his host in Grand Haven because the housemaid was not seated with the family for dinner.

⁶Wesseling, p. 61.

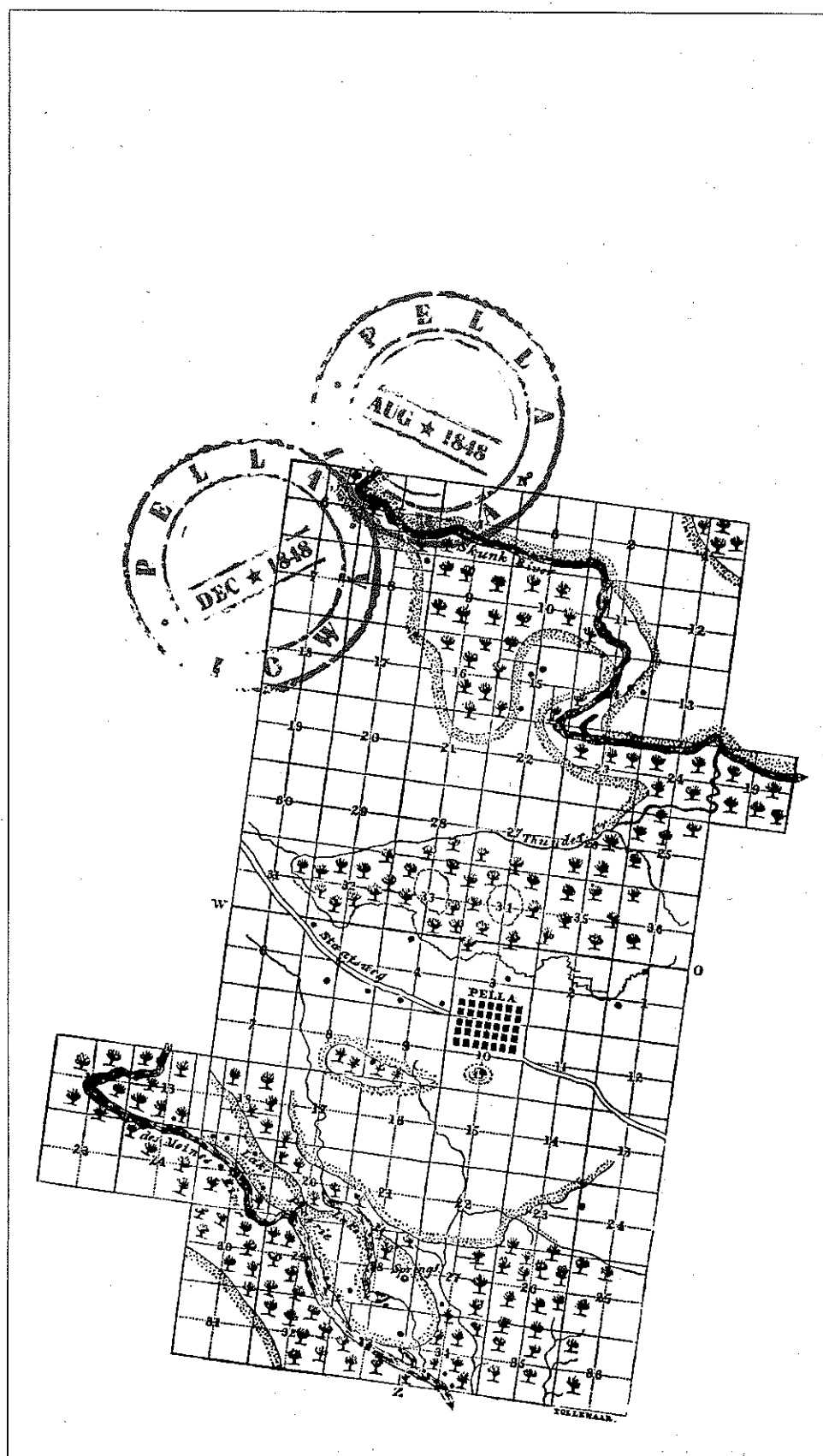
⁷Gunning, pp. 128-30, quoting a letter from

Budding to Johannes De Jonge of October 20, 1848.

⁸Gunning, pp. 128-30.

⁹Gunning, pp. 243-7; Remein, p. 71.

¹⁰Remein, pp. 53, 73.



TWO LETTERS FROM PELLA

by H. P. Scholte

Two pastors, Hendrik Peter Scholte and Albertus C. Van Raalte, directed large groups of immigrants from the Netherlands to the U.S.A. in 1847. Of the two, Scholte was by far the more prominent. In 1834 he, with Hendrik De Cock, spearheaded the Afscheiding. Van Raalte joined that movement two years later, and even then, somewhat reluctantly. Throughout their lives Scholte thought daringly and acted impulsively, whereas Van Raalte preferred safer paths. In Pella, H. P. Scholte joined hands immediately with his American neighbors and himself became a banker, politician, land developer, and publisher—all in addition to his pastoral work. His first newspaper, *The Pella Gazette* of 1855, was published in English. By contrast,

Van Raalte sought seclusion in the uninhabited woodlands of Michigan, and he quickly (1850) linked his followers with the long-established Dutch Reformed Church on the East Coast. Scholte spurned all denominational affiliations and organized an independent church. The sanctuary was his private property. In almost every way H. P. Scholte was more compatible with the American spirit of individualism than A. C. Van Raalte was.

It is at least curious, then, that Van Raalte's career in the United States has attracted attention from two authors of book-length biographies, while no book has been devoted to Scholte's career in the New World.* Historical distortions of this sort arise most often when a lack of documents and personal papers prevents effective research, but Scholte's personal papers, located in the archives of Pella's Central College, are voluminous and rich in content. His correspondence contains letters from prominent people in Holland and the States.** In addition, J. Stellingwerff's *Amsterdam's Emigrants: Onbekende Brieven uit de Prairie van Iowa* contains several informative Scholte letters to J. A. Wormser in 1848. This correspondence, translated for *Origins* by E. R. Post, tells much about Pella's early history. It is no substitute, though, for a much-needed biography of Hendrik Peter Scholte.

Stellingwerff's book, containing over eighty letters from the Pella area between 1847 and 1873, should be translated in its entirety into English. Letters in it from Diedrich Christiaan Budde, Andries Nicolaas Wormser, and others provide a great wealth of historical information, and some of this will appear in future issues of *Origins*.
—H. J. B.

Pella, Iowa
August 4, 1848

Dearly beloved friend and brother in Jesus Christ our Lord,

I have been looking for a letter from you for a long time, since sending you my last two with the article and the maps. Later I sent a newly published map of Iowa to Bosch in Utrecht, asking him to see that you received it.

Since I wrote to you in April, we have had elections of township of-



ficials. I have been elected to be Justice of the Peace and also School Inspector. Up to this time I have been fortunate enough to settle minor problems without being obliged to sit as a judge. One time it was necessary for me to issue a summons, but that was settled in the meantime. Most of my activity as Justice of the Peace is to officiate at weddings. Tomorrow I am scheduled to marry two couples.

As School Inspector I have organized our township into districts, and two of these districts are also organized by law. The school in the Pella district is already in operation on that basis. In the Skunk district the people are busy building a home and school for Munting. Munting is going

to Skunk. Overkamp, with Hespers as assistant teacher, remains here in Pella. For the Amsterdam district, which is not yet organized, there is not a good teacher, but there are not yet many children in that district. Then there are two districts under my jurisdiction which are largely inhabited by Americans. My communication in English is going well of late, and I intend to conduct a worship service in that language for Americans.

Overkamp was elected as Town-



Portraits of Sara M. Scholte-Brandt and Hendrik Pieter Scholte, 1832.

ship Clerk and as such is also clerk of the School Inspector. Betten and Welle and an American are trustees, etc. So we are organized, as far as our immediate neighborhood is concerned, according to an entirely American plan.

*The excellent book of Lubbertus Oostendorp, H. P. Scholte . . . (Franeker: Wever, 1964) deals primarily with Scholte's career in the Netherlands.

**Many of these letters have been published in C. Smits, *De Afscheiding van 1834: Documenten uit het Archief Ds. H. P. Scholte, Bewaard te Pella, Iowa, U.S.A.* (Dordrecht: J. P. van den Tol, 1977), Vol. III. But, again, this collection focuses on the correspondence written before immigration in 1847.

Building of houses, agriculture, and cattle raising continue. Production of butter and cheese is successful. The brickyard is doing well. At present there are two kilns in operation. The lime burner I run entirely with Hollanders. The sawmill is also running and works very well. The Hollanders are also famous for their cheese. Three shipments have been made to St. Louis. The first two were evidently sold out for one and a half times more per pound than American cheese. There is as yet no report about the third shipment. This speaks well for temporal prospects.

The harvesting of crops is being carried on busily at present, and the farmers are very well pleased with the yield. We have also experimented with a little flax and hemp, and that has been successful beyond our expectation. It is a joy to see the fields.

If now a few factories could be added, that would be fine. We are situated in about the middle of the state and have waterpower for the machinery and coal for the steam engines. The Des Moines River is being made navigable for steamships, and it is almost certain that within a few years we will have a railroad running through this area to the Mississippi. The factories which could be profitable immediately are tannery, wool carding, oil mill, flour mill, flax mill, rope yard, brewery, for which the raw materials are all produced here and for which there is a good market in America. Other occupations are connected with these. A brush maker could do good business here. With the increase in population and business, a furniture factory would also be profitable. And there is still no pottery nor tileworker to supply necessities for daily living.

On the whole American farmers are better mannered than those from Gelderland or Overijsel. You will always hear when someone speaks

about another person: "the gentleman" or "Mr. . . .," and in addressing one another it is always "Sir." It has often made my wife laugh when she heard an American talking about one of our farmers say "gentleman." Our farmers are as yet not gentlemen. They are farmers through and through. The Americans are easy-going but well-mannered. I enjoy associating with them. They express their opinions as it is proper for people to do.

In our domestic life we are comfortable and still adhering to Dutch customs. It is difficult to keep maids because they soon marry and everyone makes a living here. We have hired two new maids again, but one is already engaged. Health conditions here are so favorable that we hear of no special ailments. The climate is about like that in Holland but drier and cooler because of our higher altitude. We can have strong winds and heavy thunder, but the soil is of such a nature that if it has rained hard, the surface is soon dry. There is no stuffy air here. In the winter there is a frequent change in the cold weather. It has not frozen for more than two or three days in succession, so that as a rule it is possible to work outdoors in the woods or elsewhere.

Our colony grows from time to time as new residents arrive from Holland. However, in New York and in other places, all kinds of attempts are made by agents to bring incoming Hollanders to Michigan. Van Raalte is not altogether innocent of this. I have had requests from New York to send an agent there also, but you will understand that I will not recruit in that way. I would rather wait to see whom the Lord sends. Land speculators in the eastern states have no interest in Iowa, as they own no land here. This is quite different in Michigan, where different companies have land which they have not yet been able to sell and

therefore in one way or another wish to have settled and to have an opportunity to dispose of. In this state a great deal of land is lived upon while it still belongs to the state. When this is sold to settlers, the government's price is always \$1.25 per acre. The government cannot increase the price when the land is under cultivation. This is not the case when land is in the possession of speculators.

My family is well. My wife is expecting a son or daughter. My wife's sister who is married to Kambroek recently gave birth to a son. From Zwolle and Kampen I received letters lately from a few wealthy Christians requesting information about our colony. I think circumstances in Europe will influence some people to come here. In early October about forty will arrive from Vuren. If there is something to be sent to me, this would be a good opportunity. K. Vande Linden will probably ask you about that. My wife and children send hearty greetings to you and yours.

Greet your wife for me and all the brothers and sisters. May God be with all of you. Remember in the prayer of faith

Your loving friend and brother
H. P. Scholte

If there is no earlier opportunity, then send the copies of "De Stem uit Pella" [a voice from Pella] with K. Vande Linden and have them well bound for me. And I request your wife to send along some chamois. Roelofs will pay for them. Ask him why it is that I received no letters from him at all. After his last one I have already written him twice, but no answer. How is Bousquet? If he were only here. Be sure to learn English. That will be handy if you in the future become Justice of the Peace here. Up to now it does not pay well, but that will improve with development, as a

Justice of the Peace can perform many civic services in day-by-day affairs. Send future letters by way of La Havre. That is the best service.

Pella, Iowa
December 20, 1848

Dearly beloved friend and brother in Christ,

I have received your letter. Berkhout is still in St. Louis, where he will very likely stay for the winter. I am sorry, because he has some Dutch winter clothing with him which the people here are eager to have. I feel that he is too cautious and will later regret it.

Your brother is in Burlington. The family of Budde, according to latest reports, is well. I recommended to Mrs. Zeelt that she invest in land. She will very likely consult you and allow you to read the letter, and you will easily understand it. The acquaintances here are all well. On December 1, I received a fine son from the Lord. We now feel entirely at home here.

The population of this state is growing rapidly due to the moving in of people from the older states. This is increasing steadily since there is the assurance that the Des Moines River will be made navigable. One half has been contracted, and work has begun. The other half is now being surveyed, and the head engineer told us that work will begin next summer. This is the reason why the river land has to be paid for sooner than we expected, and that is why I made my suggestion to Mrs. Zeelt.

The spiritual awakening continues, and that makes our being here encouraging. How I wish you were here.

Greet your wife for my wife. Saartje also sends her greetings but is too busy to write just now. May the Lord our God be with you and bring you, if

it is his will, to this blessed country.

I am eager to hear who was elected as president of France. We usually hear the news from Europe quite soon. The telegraph reaches this state.

Greet all the brothers and sisters heartily for me. I commend myself and my family to your prayers.

Your loving brother in Christ,
H. P. Scholte

LYN



My father and mother came to Lynden as a home-missionary couple in 1899 and returned there in 1914 to make their permanent home. I was a year and a half old at that time and destined to spend my formative years in Lynden, until I enrolled in Calvin College in 1931. My mother, who lived

to a venerable ninety-two years, was mentally alert to the last, and her reminiscences were extremely interesting and informative. To her, to the remembrances of my own youth, and to a number of literary records, most of them in Heritage Hall of Calvin College, I owe my perceptions of Lynden, Washington.'

Lynden is situated in Whatcom County, the most northwesterly county in the United States. Its northern border is the Canadian border. Its western shores are washed by the

Rev. Arnold Brink is an emeritated minister of the CRC with experience as the Educational Secretary at Calvin College from 1943-47 and as the pastor of churches in Chicago and Grand Rapids. Shown above are his parents, Abel J. Brink and Hattie Mulder Brink at the time of their marriage in 1899.



D E N

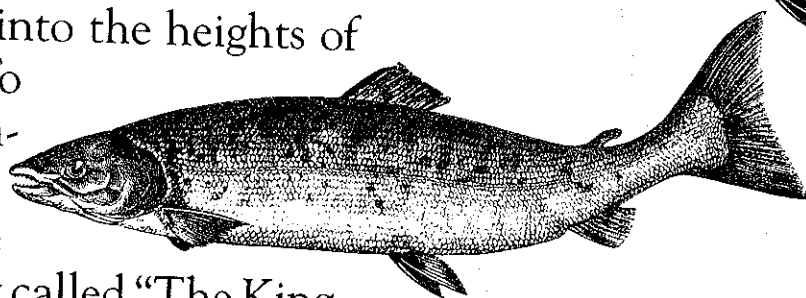
tides of the Pacific Ocean, specifically, Puget Sound, and are almost miraculously warmed by the Japan Current.

Consequently, although Lynden lies further north than northern Maine, its climate is like that of northern California. The eastern bounds of Whatcom County climb into the heights of the Cascade Mountains. To

the north, just beyond the Canadian border, rise the Selkirks, a portion of the

Canadian Rockies commonly called "The King Brothers" by Lyndenites. "The Twin Sisters," two majestic peaks of the Cascades, lie to the southeast of Lynden.

Whatcom County contains within its borders the entire length of the Nooksack River. The rise and fall of this little river spell both wealth and disaster for many of the homes built in its fertile valley. Thousands of families, my own among them, feasted on the great Chinook salmon dipnetted from its swollen waters. I remember a washtub full of large fish brought to us by a kindly farmer in the river bottom. Over the years, Nooksack and other Siwash Indians were allowed to fish the river. According to my mother, in the early days of my parents' sojourn in Lynden, an



Indian came around to the houses selling fish. His knowledge of the English language was limited to "two bits" (twenty-five cents). If anyone asked "How much?" his stock answer was "two bits." My mother soon learned to look into his basket before she asked. Twenty-five cents might pay for the better part of a fish—or only the head or tail.

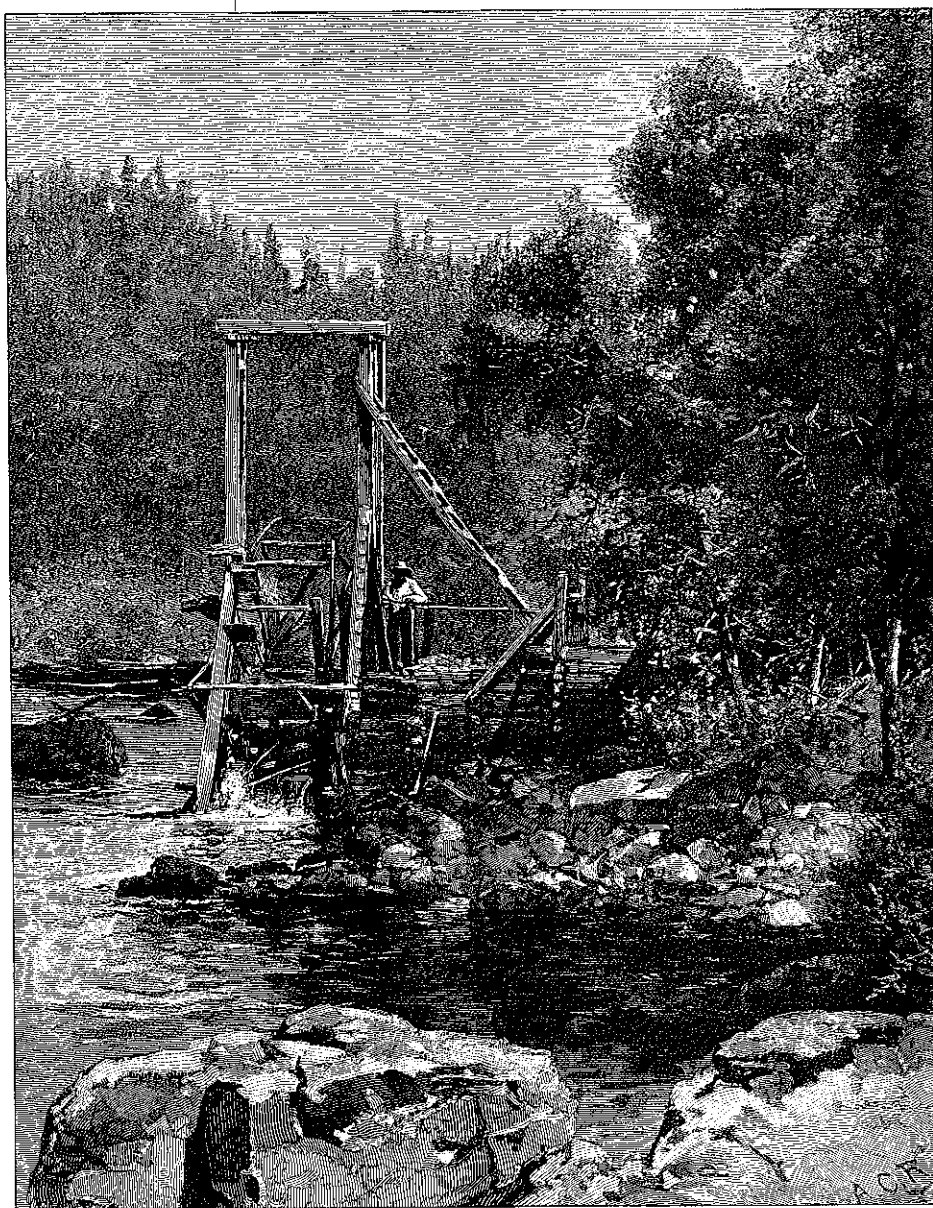
On the plateau above the Nooksack River, a squatter named Patterson built the first house in the Lynden area. It was a rude but sturdy log cabin, which later served as the temporary home of the Judsons, the first family to truly establish Lynden. Later still, a similar cabin served as the first school in the area. It was Phoebe Judson who gave Lynden its name, in 1871. As she and her family made their way painfully along the Nooksack River in search, as she said, of her ideal home, she saw the site of the Patterson cabin and was reminded of a line of poetry, "On linden, when the sun is low." She changed the *i* to *y* because it seemed prettier and called the place "Lynden." Eventually, after spending a precarious year in the abandoned Patterson cabin, the Judsons built a substantial two-story house, which was still standing in 1931, when I left to go to college. Lynden was incorporated in 1891 under the leadership of the Judsons, who continued to be leading citizens.

The beginning of the Dutch settlement in Lynden can be traced to the visit of Gerrit Veleke, who had been in Oak Harbor, a little Dutch settlement on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound. Henry S. Lucas writes that Veleke came to the mainland in 1896 and found "a little lumbering town," almost abandoned. The depression of 1893 had caused many of the first settlers to move on to something better, leaving houses empty and open, odds and ends of furniture still in them. The shingle mills, on which Lynden depended, had closed down, but Veleke judged the soil to be good, and it was available for twenty to twenty-five dollars an acre. The following year Veleke returned to Lynden and

(right) Salmon wheel.

brought with him Herman Oordt and Douwe J. Zylstra.² A *Grondwet* article written by Zylstra describes the opportunities in Lynden: good soil cheap, an equable climate, no crop failures, no grasshoppers, no violent storms, no bitter sub-zero temperature. Records indicate, however, that in 1893 the temperature had dropped to 10 or 12 degrees below zero. If true (our family never reported a temperature even as low as zero), the extreme cold may have finally forced the already depressed early settlers to leave Lynden. Zylstra's article in *De Grondwet* precipitated the trek of Hollanders to Lynden.

To homesick Hollanders in the prairie lands of Iowa, Dakota, Nebraska, and Alberta, Lynden sounded like a



home, however far from home. And land was still cheap. Jacob Van Hinte writes (p. 755) that Sioux County land was already climbing beyond the price that impoverished immigrants could pay. Others, like Klaas De Vries, found that the free land of Alberta was purchased at the price of an almost unbearably severe climate.³ From articles like that of Zylstra in *De Grondwet* and others in the *Volksvriend*, Dutch immigrants heard of a land with light, fertile soil, a land near the sea, where it rained abundantly and seldom snowed, where small farmers could make a good living and enterprising souls could do even better. In short, Lynden and Oak Harbor sounded very much like Holland—like “home.”

Dorothy Koert gives 1897 as the first year of the great Dutch migration to Lynden. Her own forebears, however, came later, in 1912, and they became well-known in the Lynden area. Next to the little farm which was my boyhood home there was an uncleared tract that must have belonged to the Koerts. At least I recall that a gate a quarter-mile west of our own gate was always known as “Koerts hek.”

The Dutch are known throughout the States and Canada as people who build and maintain their own churches and schools. During the time of the great migration out of war-torn Europe in the 1940s, I visited an official of the Canadian government in Winnipeg who told me that Hollanders were the ideal ethnic group to settle the vast areas of Canada because they were self-sufficient. They could, he said, be placed in some remote valley far from any other inhabitants, where most people become lonely and will not stay. Hollanders need no one else. They bring their church with them. They are not dependent on public schools; they build their own schools.

That Canadian official might have had his education in Dutch immigrant culture in Lynden, for with the Dutch immigration to Lynden began the history of the Christian Reformed churches in Lynden. The First Christian Reformed Church of Lynden was the first church of Reformed persuasion west of the Rocky Mountains, the first Protestant church in Lynden, which, before the Dutch came, had had only a tiny Roman Catholic mission to the Indians dating back to the 1870s.⁴

The impetus for beginning the Christian Reformed Church in Lynden came from Henry Beets, then serving his first charge, the Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center. When he traveled to Lynden in May 1899, he found a number of Dutch families there. As a result of a petition he circulated among them, Classis Iowa called my father, Abel J. Brink, to become the first home missionary in the far Northwest. He had just graduated from the theological school and was recently married to Hattie Mulder, a com-

panion-housekeeper for the aged Mr. and Mrs. William A. Berkey, founders of the Berkey Furniture Company. The newlyweds set off for the West with little more than their commission and idealism to sustain them. For most of the long train trip, with no dining facilities on the train and few lunch rooms at stops along the way, they lived on a loaf of bread, which, no doubt, Hattie had baked herself, and three lemons. The lemons, perhaps, were intended to prevent train sickness.

The train came to the end of the line at what must have seemed like the end of civilization—the New Whatcom station (later, Bellingham). They traveled the remaining twenty miles by horse-drawn stage, which followed a “corduroy” road through trackless forests. A corduroy road consisted of fence rails laid across a mud roadbed to give the vehicle some traction. My mother remembered jouncing over these rails for several hours, their feet cocked on their luggage and their backs against a hard wooden seat. When they pulled up in front of D. J. Zylstra’s general store in Lynden on a Saturday afternoon in September 1899, the stage driver set their meager luggage on the boardwalk, thrust his head into the store door, and shouted, “Here’s your preacher!” This was my parents’ introduction to their first charge.

They probably spent the night as house guests of the Zylstras. Sunday morning the little congregation gathered at the Odd Fellows lodge hall, which was their meeting place. My father, all his life a stickler for punctuality, was already standing before the group when Fred Bierling, who alternated with Zylstra in reading the sermon, came in with his *preekboek* under his arm. The surprised look on Bierling’s face was my father’s first reward for his ministry in Lynden.

Because the preacher had arrived before the congregation had really made adequate preparation for him and his wife, they housed them in a log cabin, probably one of those that had been abandoned in 1893. Their first furniture, since their own had not yet arrived by slow freight, was rude stuff improvised by my father from the trees and undergrowth that spread all around them. My mother jokingly recalled that she needed no dustpan. “If I swept the dirt around a little, it fell through the cracks in the floor.” In time, however, they were able to rent a reasonably comfortable frame house for a dollar a month, and their own furniture arrived by freight. They served in Lynden as home missionaries for the rest of 1899 and through most of the next two years.

Immigrant families came apace. Often they came, as had the preacher himself, unheralded and unknown, with no place to go. In such cases, they usually landed at the preacher’s house. My mother recalled times when they

bedded down whole families on their living room floor on an armload of hay from the horse barn. She fed them kettles of pea soup and homemade bread. In later years she often fed her own growing brood on the same simple, hearty fare. When I was a boy, and I was the seventh child, my mother baked no fewer than twenty-six large loaves of bread every week.

Life in the frontier days of Lynden was rugged for Missionary Brink and his wife. There were few roads, and they were almost always muddy. My father said, in jest, that the Lynden mud was not as sticky as the mud of Iowa. "If you wanted an eight-acre farm in Iowa, he said, "all you had to do was set your foot down in the mud. When you lifted it up, there it was!" But Lynden mud was hard to get around in. In their first days in Lynden, both of my parents donned high boots and walked to the farms and homes to visit their people. Later my father had a horse and rode horseback through the woods. He told me that often, coming home in the dark, he had no way of finding his way through the trackless forest. When the horse stopped, he knew he was at home and would jump off. In the forest he would lie flat on the horse's back so that he would not be brushed off by low-hanging tree branches.

The main street of Lynden was a broad expanse of rutted mud dotted with stumps that hadn't been removed yet. Removing stumps that were left from the lumbering operations was a task that occupied the spare time of farmers for decades. Often the stumps were blasted with dynamite before the shattered roots were pulled out by horses, oxen, or "donkey-engines" and piled high around a still-standing tree to be set afire when the weather permitted. Those were bonfires wonderful to behold!

Traveling in and around Lynden in those days was comparatively safe, but sometimes chancy. My mother told of a time when she was coming home from the general store after dark. She was picking her way along the boardwalk that ended near home. As she stepped off the end of the walk, she stepped on a sleeping pig that roused with a snort and ran off, nearly upsetting her and her groceries and scaring her quite properly.

Credit was a way of life. It had to be. Farmers' crops came in slowly. Meanwhile families had to be fed and provided for. My father received a check from the Home Mission Board once in three months. He had to make a trip to New Whatcom to cash it, a trip that took from seven in the morning to six at night. He received his cash in twenty-dollar gold pieces. People simply trusted each other, and the trust sometimes had to stretch out for years.

It was still in effect when, fifteen years later, our family returned to Lynden to live. My father had meanwhile spent fourteen years as an itinerant preacher, traveling the

prairies of the mid- and far west on horseback, until he became known as the "cowboy preacher." When his frail health failed entirely, he and my mother decided they would make their future amid the trust and faith of Lynden.

In those days there was virtually no income available for retired ministers. The "emeritus kas" was almost nil, and there was no other source of help. Our family arrived in Lynden with just one dollar. We paid this dollar down on a piece of uncleared timber-land of ten acres, to the east of Lynden. All that was needed to clear that land, to build some buildings on it, and to provide for a family of nine souls was credit. William H. Waples, affectionately known



(above) Rev. Brink; Lynden, Wash., Aug. 2, 1900; (facing page) Filbert J. Kok farm circa 1910, with family and neighbors.

as "Billy" Waples, an Irishman who owned a store, mill, acres of land, and sundry other enterprises, had never lost a cent by trusting "those Hollanders." Later owners of the business lost it because they did not trust the Hollanders. It was to Waples that my parents turned for help. As a result, they owed him a huge debt, which they took years to pay off.

That trust system was built into the very warp and woof of the Dutch community in Lynden. In the first year that my parents arrived in Lynden as home missionaries, a twelve-year-old girl in the little congregation died. The family had no money. The nearest undertaker was in New Whatcom, nearly twenty miles away, so my father made a

a number of Christian Reformed ministers who have organized the Christian Reformed Ministers Fund. At present this group numbers 850 ministers, who contribute \$3.40 each time one of their number dies. From these many small contributions the widow or family receives \$2,550.00 toward the cost of the member's funeral.

During the first year in Lynden, my mother sometimes chided my father, "Why don't you make work of organizing a church?" His reply was, "If you're building a tall building, you have to lay a deep foundation. He may have been thinking of the abortive attempt to start a church in Oak Harbor. Van Hinte reports that J. W. Brink had started a small church in Oak Harbor which was lost later to the

United Presbyterian Church. At that time there was some talk of merging the two denominations, but my father was ever loyal to the Christian Reformed Church and would resist any attempt to lose that identity.

However, on July 11, 1900, the organizational meeting was held, entirely under the leadership of my father. Today the organization of a new congregation is supervised by a classical committee, but the distance between Iowa and Lynden made such an

arrangement impractical in those early days. Thus, four consistory members were chosen, and they decided to call a minister. The little group scarcely knew of any minister other than their home missionary, and so it was almost inevitable that they would call my father. The following conversation is said to have taken place:

"Nu, wie kan een beroep-brief schrijven?" (Now, who can write a call letter?) To that question, there was silence!

"Zoo, dat kan ik wel" (All right, I can), said Dominie Brink.

And so, the unprecedented took place—the minister wrote his own call letter! The stipulated salary was to be five hundred dollars per year, plus a parsonage, which was rented for twelve dollars per year, and free fuel, wood which was abundant all around. The dominie also wrote



casket, and my mother lined it with white sheeting. She washed the little girl's body and dressed it for burial. So their first funeral took place. Then and there my father vowed this would not happen again. He persuaded everyone to pledge to contribute a small amount, perhaps no more than ten cents, each time there was a death among them. The money collected was then given to the bereaved family to make possible a suitable funeral. This was the origin of the Monumenta Society, which is still in existence.

Years later this society purchased a graveyard west of Lynden, opposite the public cemetery. It has not often been appreciated that Christian charity lay behind this interesting phenomenon. Even a recent article in *The Banner* misrepresented this "Dutch" cemetery as an example of Lynden's provincialism.

The principle of this burial society has been adopted by

out the Form of Subscription, which he and all the consistory members had to sign. Imagine my happy surprise seventy-five years later to find in the archives of Calvin's Heritage Hall that very form in the familiar handwriting of my father!

Although it was so simple, so primitive, and so much a foregone conclusion, my father insisted that the appropriate procedures be followed. The call had to be sent to Iowa to be approved and signed by the nearest Christian Reformed minister, who would serve as counselor, or moderator.

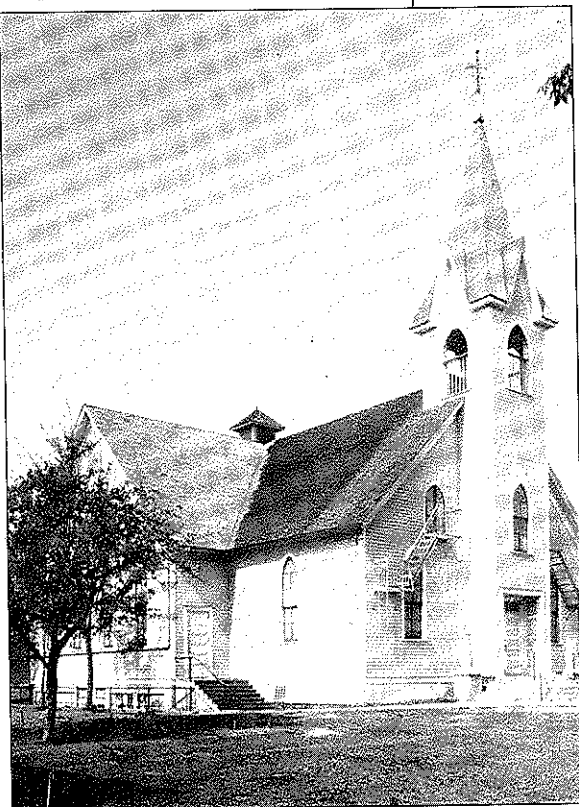
Meanwhile, a human-interest story from my mother: On the grounds of their rented parsonage there was a cherry tree. The cherries were ready for picking. My mother wanted them picked so that she could preserve them. My father was not eager to pick cherries, so he took refuge in technically exact procedure. "We may not stay here," he said. "I haven't been called, and I haven't accepted the call." So, in spite of my mother's exasperated protests, he simply invited the youngsters of the congregation to come and help themselves to cherries. The cherries got "canned," but not quite as my mother had intended!

Finally, on July 29, 1900, the glad Sunday arrived when my father announced he was accepting the call. The Lord's Supper took place, there were baptisms and confessions of faith, and so the first Christian Reformed Church west of the Rocky Mountains was established.⁵ There were thirteen families and one single man. It is interesting that, although a few families had come from states to the east—Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, and even Michigan—the majority had come from nearby Oak Harbor. Apparently, many of the Dutch had discovered that, though its climate is much like that of the Netherlands, Oak Harbor's limited opportunities forced them to look elsewhere. Perhaps also the abortive attempt to start a

church there in 1896 led them to find a place where church leadership was more assured.

In any case, the church was organized, though not without some difficulty. Still, the Dutch settlers in Lynden were used to overcoming almost insurmountable difficulties. Historians nonchalantly refer to Lynden as "a lumbering town." But that says very little about what lumbering meant in that day, nor of the difficulties such lumbering meant for Hollanders, who were small farmers, tradesmen, and artisans, who had known only the low plains and polders of Holland. Suddenly they were confronted with a world of gigantic trees. There were cedar trees up to sixteen feet in diameter. On our small farm were tree stumps which were six or eight feet in diameter, the underpinnings of trunks which once towered a hundred feet or more into the sky. These trees had to be felled, not with the aid of machinery, but with strong backs and arms wielding sharp "double-bit" axes.

The front cover of Dorothy Koert's *A Portrait of Lynden* has a picture of strong axeplying men cutting down a giant of the forest. Even in my boyhood I had occasion to witness the felling of trees by hand, and I can still see the huge chips of wood sliced out of the trunk to make a "cape." Other cuts made from the opposite side felled the tree. As it teetered and the cry went up—half in warning, half in happy relief—"Timber!"—the giant crashed to earth across smaller trees felled earlier and positioned in parallel rows so that the larger tree could be sawed through. Once prone, the trees were trimmed and snaked into a clearing to be hauled by truck or farm wagon to the nearest primitive sawmill. My childhood ears heard every day and all day the keening cry of the steam-driven saws that were cutting logs into boards. The



comparatively mild climate of Lynden has been great for growing trees, but, as Whitaker, quoted by Van Hinte, said, it was "a worker's climate, not for idlers."

Henry Lucas mentions Hollanders named Roo, two brothers, who built a small sawmill near Lynden. That sawmill, always referred to by us as "Roos' Mill," was so close to the farm on which I was reared that we could hear the whine of its great saw clearly from our home. When my parents bought their ten acres of virgin timberland in 1914, they solved the problems of clearing it by selling the trees to Roos' Mill. They received a dollar per thousand board feet of prime first-growth Douglas fir. Such wood is scarce-

ly obtainable today. It was the first money they made on the investment of their last dollar. My two older brothers both worked at Roos' Mill, and my oldest brother worked for the mill even after it was moved nearer to Lynden. It continued to operate until it was largely destroyed by a disastrous fire when I was about fourteen years old.

The sawmill created a troublesome problem—the disposal of accumulated sawdust. First it was conveyed onto a large pile and then set afire, and it smouldered and smoked day and night. When, eventually, the mill was no more and the site was leveled off to make room for Lynden's expanding borders, the sawdust was simply plowed underground. But its fiery disposition lived on.

Washington became as famous as its lumber mills. Lynden's ready supply of large cedar trees led to the making of cedar shingles. The language of the mills became the language of the people, and some of it is still alive in Lynden. For example, shingles were sawed from chunks of cedar wood about four by two by one feet. These were called "shingle bolts." Today, if you go to one of the bakeries in Lynden to buy what we in the East call "long Johns," you would ask for "shingle bolts," because the oblong shape roughly resembles the cedar blocks.⁶

Once the arduous task of lumbering off the land was over, the people of Lynden became small farmers, concentrating on dairying, poultry, and egg production.

Strawberries and sugar beets followed. In fact, almost any form of truck and flower gardening thrived in a climate which was like a great hothouse. Lynden butter became famous all up and down the east coast. Lynden eggs, the choicest of them, found their way to the hotels and eateries of New York City. Lynden's canned chicken was one of the first and most successful products of its kind.

The growing prosperity of Lynden reflected itself in the lives of its churches. When my parents were there for their

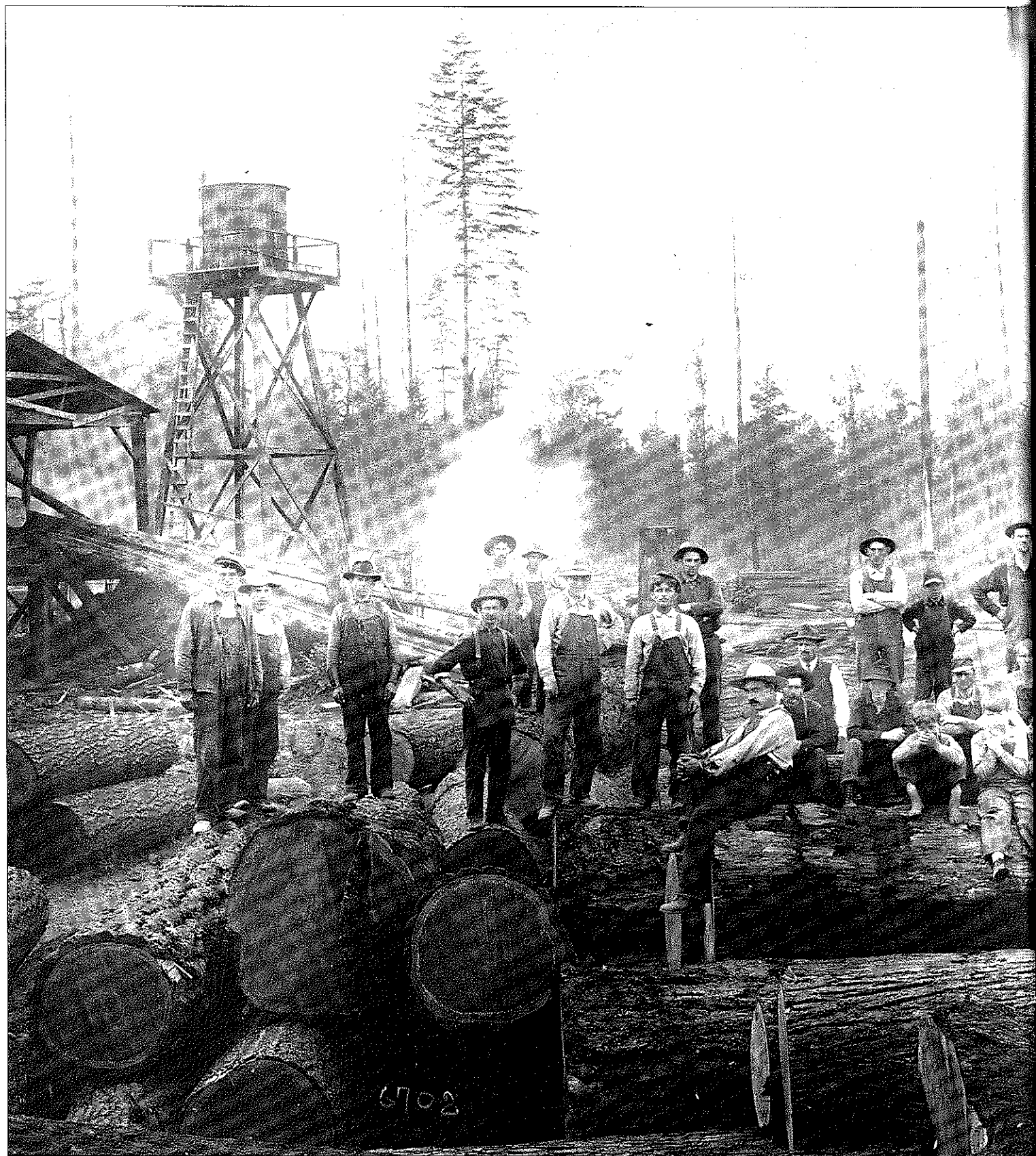


(above) First Christian Reformed Church celebrating its 25th anniversary; (facing page) First Christian Reformed Church.

From time to time during dry weather, it burst into underground conflagration. Fortunately, it rains a good deal in Lynden. (Too much, thought one minister who came to Lynden from New Mexico. He became so depressed by the persistent rain that he drew the draperies in the parsonage, turned on the lights, and made believe it was night!)

Washington State was the nation's leading producer of lumber as early as 1910, and almost all of it came from west of the Cascade Mountains. The shingle mills of western

first stint, the little First Church met in a lodge hall used for dances on Saturday night. My father and mother got up early Sunday morning to clean the hall, ridding it of liquor stains and quids of chewing tobacco. A few years after we moved to the Dakotas, the Lynden church bought a half acre of ground between Grover and Front Streets for \$175.00. They built a frame church building ten times larger than the congregation required. When it was dedicated, the program included an address in English by Rev. Cox of the Presbyterian church in Bellingham. In view of the struggle over the question of Dutch or English services and the supposed provincialism of Lynden, this shows a





remarkable cosmopolitanism. In time the congregation of First Church grew so large that a balcony had to be added to the church, making it the largest auditorium in Lynden. Under the influence of J. R. Brink, my father's cousin and also an itinerant home missionary, the parsonage was built—a home so substantial that it served succeeding ministers for forty years.

During 1910 the First Reformed Church was brought to birth. It crowned the efforts of Seminarian John Van Dyke and a number of devoted families, some of whom had at one time been in the Christian Reformed Church. By January 1, 1911, the Reformed congregation numbered sixty-nine members. Since they had neither church nor parsonage, they met first in the Baptist church, which they later purchased along with some adjacent land. The first pastor was Jacob G. Brouwer, who made his way among his people with a two-cylinder automobile that "sounded like an Oliver tractor and could be heard coming for half a mile." The Reformed congregation has grown and flourished in the area, giving birth in 1944 to a daughter church in the town of Nooksack. In 1954 the Faith Reformed Church was also organized.

But the Christian Reformed Church has continued to be dominant among the people of Dutch extraction, and today there are five congregations in Lynden itself, together with daughter churches in Sumas, Everson, and Bellingham.

Lynden Christian School opened in 1910 with one teacher, Ruby Hanover, the daughter of Lynden's first tailor.⁷ The first little rented school soon proved inadequate, and a suitable four-room school followed. This building, though modified, is the school in which I spent eight years of elementary training. After the thirties, a Christian high school was founded, and today a complex of splendid modern schools stands as a monument to the self-sacrificing idealism of Lynden's Hollanders.

Many ethnic groups, the Dutch among them, were convinced that God understood only the language which they spoke. The gospel, they assumed, could not be preached in another language. A story from Lynden shows that even though Rev. Cox from the Presbyterian church was asked to speak in English at the dedication of the new Lynden church, not all Lyndenites were free from

misconceptions about language. In 1920 the Christian Reformed Church had decided to send missionaries to China. The first party of missionaries left from the port of Seattle, and a small party of folk from Lynden, including my father, went to see them off. When he returned, he encountered the elderly Mrs. Fred Bierling, widow of the elder whose surprised look first greeted my father back in 1899, and the following conversation took place on Lynden's Front Street:

"Och, Dominie, hoe kan dat nu goed gaan? Moeten al die arme Chinesen nu Hollandsch leren?" (Why, dominie, how can that ever work out? Must all those poor benighted Chinese learn Dutch?)



(above) logging near Lynden, c. 1902; (facing page, top) Lynden Poultry Yards delivery truck; (facing page, bottom) processing Lynden eggs.

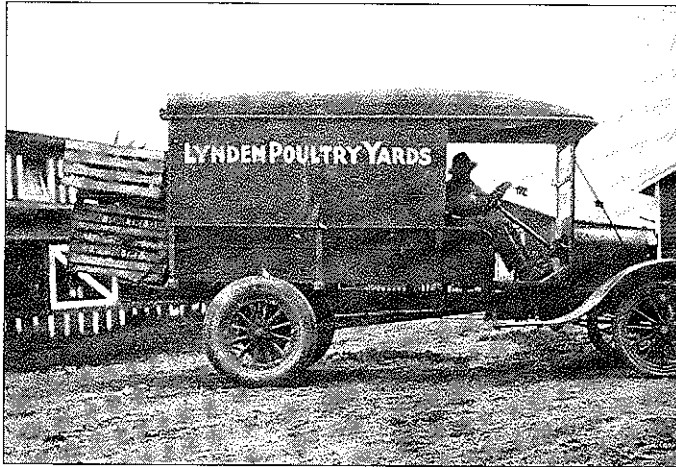
"Nee, Vrouw Bierling, waarom?" (No, Mrs. Bierling, why should they?)

"Maar een mensch kan toch geen Christen wezen en geen Psalmen zingen?" (But surely nobody can be a Christian and not sing Dutch Psalms?)

Though my father was willing to excuse the Chinese for not speaking Dutch, he was a stickler for our retaining the Holland language. At home we might not speak English. He maintained we'd learn English in due time outside. At home we had to talk Dutch, and we did. When I went to school at the age of five years, I spoke Dutch far more

readily than English, and in any kind of a "tight" situation, I instinctively blurted out Dutch, to the discomfiture of my school teachers, who were not always bilingual.

There is much more that could be told about the colorful



early days of Lynden, about rum-running in the days of prohibition; about fast cars racing through back roads between Sumas, Blaine, and Seattle, carrying whiskey; about dancing and movies and card-playing, universally frowned upon but still slightly indulged in; but above all, it was a citadel of Dutch courage and a monument to Dutch ingenuity and dedication—a home for many years to

homesick Hollanders, who found there a climate and soil much like those of the old country. Lynden is typical of Dutch settlements, where the churches and schools hold a dominant place.

Footnotes

¹Documentary material about the Dutch colony in Lynden and others in the far Northwest is not abundant. Heritage Hall at Calvin College (Grand Rapids, Michigan) has gathered a number of informative clippings from *De Wachter*, *De Grondwet*, *Volksvriend*, and *The Banner*. There are also memorial booklets in connection with anniversaries of the First Christian Reformed Church and the Christian school. Dorothy Koert, herself a descendant of early settlers in the Lynden area, has compiled *A Portrait of Lynden*, a paperbound book replete with family histories and pictures. Jacob Van Hinte writes briefly about Lynden in his *Netherlanders in America*, and Henry S. Lucas, similarly, in his volume bearing the same title. Henry Beets, really the pioneer historian of the Christian Reformed Church, in his *De Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Noord Amerika*, touches very briefly on the Northwest, but mainly as something incidental to his treatment of the home-missions efforts of the Christian Reformed Church. For the rest, I have drawn freely on personal and family recollections.

²Zylstra, incidentally, is the grandfather of Marian Vanden Berg, wife of Dean Emeritus John Vanden Berg of Calvin College.

³See *Origins*, vol. III, no. 1, pp. 18-26.

⁴The nearest Catholic church was in New Whatcom, now Bellingham, a distance of almost twenty miles by roads so bad that people had to leave home at 3:30 in the morning to get to the 8:30 mass. Out of the little Indian mission a Catholic church developed, but it was never large, simply because few Catholics settled in the area.

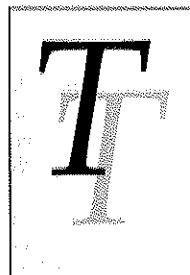
⁵One technicality had not yet been met. The new minister had not yet been formally installed. This was done almost a year later, on June 2, 1901, by Rev. Westenberg. The records I referred to spoke of a "J. Westenberg," but I find no record in the Christian Reformed year-books of a Rev. J. Westenberg. However, G. Westenberg was serving in the church of Peoria,

Iowa. He was, therefore, a minister in *Classis Iowa* and might, therefore, have visited Lynden, representing the classis as "church visitor." While he was in Lynden, he no doubt installed my father.

⁶One of the proverbially low-paying jobs in the shingle mill was that of "shingle weaver."

⁷Ruby married Herman Elenbaas, and their son, John Hanover Elenbaas, who became a minister in 1952, is now serving his fifth charge, in Conrad, Montana.

A DUTCH SETTLEMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA



he main settlement of Hollanders in North Carolina is an atypical one. The community is not named for places in the old country residence, as is the case in Michigan, where the Holland settlements bear such Dutch names as *Zeeland*, *Graafschaap*, and *Drenthe*. *Terra Ceia* is a combination of Latin and Spanish; the name denotes "heavenly land." Secondly, the area was settled, in general, not by immigrants from the Netherlands, but by Hollanders already resident in the United States or their descendants. Third, the *Terra Ceia* enclave is different because the early Dutch settlers there did not have a spiritual leader, such as Reverend Albertus Van Raalte or Hendrik P. Scholte, to lead the Hollanders to their segment of "the promised land." Lastly, the mainstream Dutch colonies were settled in the nineteenth century; the first Dutch settlers to locate at *Terra Ceia* arrived in the mid twenties.

In a sense there is no such place as *Terra Ceia*, because the usual amenities associated with a settlement—a

store, a tavern, even a filling station—are not to be found there. It is literally a crossroads, and only the most detailed map of North Carolina shows the name. However, the Hollanders till the farms in the surrounding area. The church, with an almost exclusively Dutch membership, is situated on one corner, the church school on another, the residence of one of the leading Dutch families occupies a third, and the fourth corner is vacant—although a general store was located on the site at one time. Indeed, there is no road marker of any kind indicating that one has arrived at *Terra Ceia*.

In Beaufort County, *Terra Ceia* is located less than twenty miles from Washington, the county seat. There were settlers in the area when North

Carolina was still an English colony, and by the time of the Civil War, cotton plantations were to be found. But in the post-war years the plantations gave way to tenant farming, and this proved unsuccessful. The region, with its almost subtropical climate, reverted back to forest, brush, and swamp.

Mark Potter, who at one time served on the Interstate Commerce Commission, was a wealthy individual who had visions of creating a baronial estate with himself as the lord of the manor. Before World War I he had acquired 45,000 acres of rich North Carolina coastal land. Among his holdings was the Broad Acres Ranch, which was conveyed to him on December 19, 1918. Potter installed a drainage system marked by numer-

ous canals and sold some land to hopeful settlers. In 1919 he turned it over to the Pungo Deep Sea Development Company. The malaise that characterized Amer-

ican agriculture in the 1920s resulted in the lands reverting back to Potter—who, in the meantime, was having his own difficulties—and the property passed into the hands of the bankers. They tried to get settlers to the area

Terra Ceia

John Yzenbaard, a Professor of History at Western Michigan University, has written a book-length account of his own congregation's history (*Kalamazoo's Art & Craft*) and he also specializes in the history of Michigan.

but were unsuccessful.³

Later, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad distributed a twelve-page brochure (n.d.) in which the carrier extolled the virtues of land in Beaufort County: "Come down to Beaufort County and look around. It's worth the trip even if you don't buy an acre of land." According to this promotional material, prosperity was possible there with little risk or effort. "The new settler . . . does not have to wait years or decades for his fortune. It is almost within reach as he sets resolutely forth to grasp it." Concerning the fertility of the soil, "Four crops in one year" was the promise put forth.⁴

The bankers hoped to sell the land in twenty-acre tracts with C. R. Nickerson handling arrangements for them.⁵ A few Italian families located in the area but left within a short time.⁶

With the failure of the Italian colony, Hendrik Van Dorp was appointed as manager of the Broad Acres Ranch, receiving a salary of six hundred dollars annually to rent out the houses and lands. In a sense Van Dorp was to become the leader of the future Dutch settlement, although not in the way that Van Raalte and Scholte had dominated their groups. He had come to North Carolina late in 1925 as the result of publicity in the Netherlands by the Broad Acres Ranch, which placed newspaper advertisements and also sent agents to drum up business. "I got in touch . . . and was so interested

. . . that I made up my mind . . . to go to America," he wrote.⁷ Van Dorp left the land of his birth because he was concerned about prevailing conditions in the Netherlands but also because he feared the Germans. Van Dorp had had some training in Dutch horticultural schools and had received a certificate to teach such courses; he had taught in The Hague.⁸

The later success of the Terra Ceia area was to lie in the production of flower bulbs and cut flowers. Al-

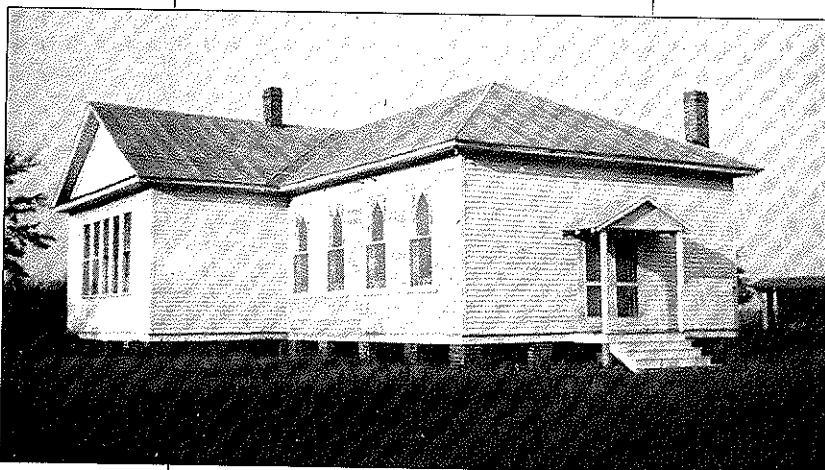
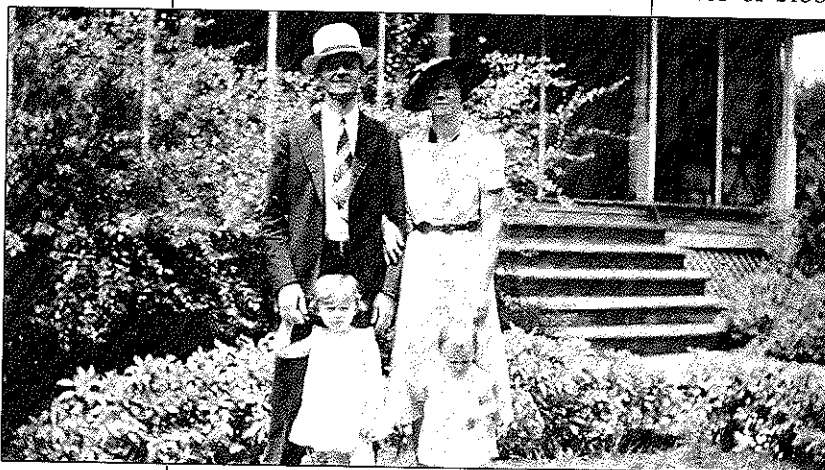
got started in flower production. One version is that he brought some tulip bulbs from the Netherlands when he emigrated. Another account⁹ avers that Van Dorp was persuaded to buy some bulbs on credit. Be that as it may, he soon switched from truck gardening to floriculture, at first putting in just one-tenth of an acre in bulbs.

Centuries of Dutch experience in hydrography and flower growing were eventually called on to produce acres of blossoms. Proper drainage

was only one of the obstacles. In 1948 Van Dorp commented, "Every time it rained it looked like a lake. We have got a drainage district organized and have about whipped the drainage problem."¹⁰ During the previous twenty years old canals had been cleaned, and now new ones were dug. Today more than thirty thousand acres are drained by these canals, reminiscent of rural areas in the Netherlands.

Originally Van Dorp was engaged as a manager for the Broad Acres Ranch. In the late twenties a few Dutch settlers arrived, but they were not encouraged by the agricultural pros-

pects of Terra Ceia, and most of them left. However, with the deepening of the depression in the 1930s, some of them returned, and this small number was augmented by Hollanders who had lost their farms in Iowa, South Dakota, Michigan, and New York. Unimproved land could be bought for



(top) Rev. Charles Greenfield and family; wife Dena and daughters Claire and Marie; (bottom) Terra Ceia church, 1936.

though it smacks of hyperbole, it is yet true that this morass, where insects and lizards were common, was literally to bloom. There is some difference of opinion as to how Van Dorp

five dollars an acre,¹¹ but that was about all there was to recommend the area. "Poverty? . . . you can't imagine what the word means . . . You should see the thin, haggard women, the toothless, snuff-chewing young and old women . . . Some have one or two long, brown teeth that look horrible . . ." Thus did Mrs. Charles Greenfield—the wife of the minister—describe the area in a letter to a friend.¹² In a later letter (January 10, 1937) she wrote, "This community is not . . . thickly populated and most people are very poor . . ."

It is a common saying: "One Dutchman a theologian; two Dutchmen a church; three Dutchmen a schism."¹³ Thus it is not surprising that a Christian Reformed group assembled in 1935 under the auspices of the Third Christian Reformed Church of Patterson, which at the time was led by Rev. John J. Hiemenga. In the previous summer two seminarians—William Muller and Jack Smith—had conducted services in the Terra Ceia area, and the residents asked for a full-time worker. Van Dorp must have been doing quite well by now, for he generously offered his six-hundred-dollar annual salary to the mission board. The Eastern Home Missions Board of Classis Hackensack and the CRC Emergency Fund supplemented this amount with four hundred dollars and appointed a recent Calvin Seminary graduate, Charles Greenfield, to work in the re-

gion at a salary of a thousand dollars per year. Mr. and Mrs. Greenfield and a two-month-old daughter arrived in August of 1935 and took up residence in a house formerly occupied by the manager of Broad Acres. Mr. Greenfield preached his first sermon on August 25 in the Christian Church. However, this arrangement did not prove to be satisfactory, and so the group acquired an abandoned four-room school building at virtually no cost and used the structure as a

formerly had Christian Reformed affiliations. It was understood that, when candidate Greenfield arrived, he would preach one weekly sermon in Dutch and the other in English. Since "so many Southerners attended the services," the Dutch service gave way; on occasions a Dutch service would be held.¹⁴

In 1936 the Terra Ceia Christian Reformed Church was organized, and Mr. Greenfield was ordained and installed as its first pastor. He served the congregation until 1940, when he accepted a call to Ackley, Iowa. By this time the church membership had grown to sixteen families. In September of 1940 a Christian school began operation under the leadership of Harold Verhust.¹⁵

A modest prosperity was to come to the Dutch settlement from the sale of cut flowers. In 1926 twelve thousand tulip and daffodil bulbs were planted, and within three years, two hundred acres were under cultivation.¹⁶ Van Dorp's twenty-acre holding had increased twentyfold by 1940. He had seventy-five acres in

flowers, seventeen full-time employees, and several times that number at harvesting time. He had his own power plant and had bought a nearby dairy in order to have a steady source of manure. Later he was to concentrate on the dairy, but in doing so he overextended himself.



(top) Digging a well to replace windmill at parsonage in Terra Ceia, 1936; (bottom) Tulip Time parade in Washington, N.C., 1938.

church building. It had no screens or electricity but, according to Mrs. Greenfield, "plenty of bugs."

At the time, there were in the vicinity a half dozen families who had

The land in the Terra Ceia region was slowly appreciating in value. In 1941 Broad Acres Ranch conveyed 9.1 acres to Van Dorp for \$455.10.¹⁷ Millions of cut flowers were produced annually and were shipped by refrigerated rail cars and trucks to Philadelphia, New York, and Boston.¹⁸ With the national penchant for organizing festivals of one kind or another, it is not surprising that a tulip festival came into being in 1937. Mrs. Olive R. Rumley, wife of the county sheriff and an employee of the *Washington Daily News*, is credited with sponsoring these annual events, which centered in Washington. Even in the depression year of 1938 the flower producers were realizing from two hundred to a thousand dollars per acre from the sale of cut flowers.¹⁹

With the outbreak of World War II and the British blockade of Europe, the price of bulbs in America increased from three to five dollars a hundred. By 1941 Van Dorp had a hundred-acre operation, and in that year the tulip festival attracted thirty thousand spectators.²⁰ In 1944 Van Dorp did not market any tulip bulbs, for, as he accurately predicted, "Next year will be victory year and a tulip year."²¹ The prices, he knew, would bound upward. Following the war the flower growers increased their acreage. Indeed, according to the record of real estate conveyances, four of them purchased additional land in the single month of October 1946. Surprisingly enough, the Dutch growers had no competition in the area. That was to come from another source. The growth of Florida and the development in air transport meant the virtual end of flower production in Terra Ceia. Some turned to dairying, corn production, or a combination of the two.²² Today there is only one flower producer in the area—Terra Ceia Farms, begun by Leonard Van Staaldunen and now operated by his sons.

More than a hundred acres of bulbs are planted there annually. Much of the work has been mechanized, although the fresh flowers are still picked by hand, by local laborers, and these fresh blooms are then shipped by refrigerated truck to Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York, and other metropolitan centers.²³

Following World War II, when there was a supply of "war-surplus goods," including army chapels, the Terra Ceia congregation obtained the chapel on the grounds of Camp Butner, 165 miles distant. At the time, Reverend John Kenbeek was serving as pastor of the church. The seemingly tireless Van Dorp was in charge of moving the structure. In what free time was available, from ten to fifteen men went periodically to the camp (they were housed and fed in other army buildings), disassembled the chapel, loaded the components on Van Dorp's truck, drove to Terra Ceia, and reassembled the building. In 195 days in August of 1948, Terra Ceia had a "new" church building. That former army chapel still serves as the core of the present church.²⁴

Today, Terra Ceia, the only Dutch settlement in North Carolina, still survives. The closely knit group numbers over two hundred. Though floriculture has nearly died out, having been eclipsed by dairying and truck farming, the rich, flat land, crisscrossed by canals, and the preponderance of Dutch names remind the visitor of the Netherlands. Sorting out those Dutch names and tracing the relationships between and among the various families is a ready challenge for a sociologist or genealogist.

Footnotes

¹⁷General Index to Real Estate Conveyances, Beaufort County, p. 83.

²²"At one time, he had a paper profit of a million dollars on them." Raleigh News and Observer, Jan. 13, 1926.

²³The Queen City Realty Company of

Charleston offered good lands "a hundred fifty miles from Charlotte," but failed to attract buyers. De Volksvriend (Friend of the People), July 26, 1923.

⁴A copy of this pamphlet may be found in the State Archives at Raleigh.

⁵Raleigh News and Observer, Jan. 17, 1926.

⁶In an area of Dutch names, one can also find a "Toncrella."

⁷The State, April 13, 1940.

⁸Bernard H. M. Vlekke and Henry Beets, *Hollanders Who Helped Build America* (New York: American Biographical Company, 1942), p. 253.

⁹Washington Daily News, Sept. 24, 1980.

¹⁰Raleigh News and Observer, Apr. 11, 1948.

¹¹John Mulder writing in *Onze Toekomst* (Our Future), Nov. 9, 1938.

¹²To Mrs. John Schuring, Feb. 11, 1936.

¹³A schism was to occur later but not for theological reasons.

¹⁴Unpublished manuscript of Dena Greenfield.

¹⁵Today the school system goes through high school; indeed, there is no public school in Terra Ceia.

¹⁶Unidentified clipping in the State Archives at Raleigh.

¹⁷General Index to Real Estate Conveyances, Beaufort County, p. 303.

¹⁸Reverend Greenfield informed the writer that Dutch iris flowers had to be picked almost immediately after they had reached their peak. Occasionally the peak period would come on Sunday, and this put the pious Calvinists in a dilemma!

¹⁹Mulder, p. 5.

²⁰Raleigh News and Observer, Apr. 18, 1941.

²¹Undated clipping in North Carolina State Archives.

²²It was previously noted how Van Dorp got into dairying.

²³Washington Daily News, March 16, 1983.

²⁴John Kenbeek, "Breaking and Building," The Banner, May 7, 1940, p. 608.

²⁵One example may be noted. Jacob Zwal and his bride left the Netherlands in 1952 because he "couldn't get land to farm." He first settled near Wilmington and then worked for Van Dorp. In 1958 he rented forty-eight acres from Van Dorp and started with five cows and sixty dollars. Seven years later he bought the land he was renting and today he is the owner of one of the largest farms in the area. Raleigh News and Observer, April 1, 1967.

New York Times Herald
April 16, 1939

**North Carolina Hollander Ships Tulip Bulbs to Holland
Hendrik Van Dorp Creates Industry in "Land of Opportunity"**

TERRA CEIA, N.C., April 15.—Hendrik Van Dorp didn't send coal to Newcastle, but he has shipped tulip bulbs to Holland.

Not a lot of bulbs, of course, but enough to satisfy a 15-year-old ambition; to epitomize, in an obscure but personally gratifying way, the vindication of Hendrik Van Dorp's judgment.

From a colonization attempt, which ended in failure and disillusion for a half hundred Hollander immigrants, Van Dorp rose to be probably the largest individual tulip planter in America, shamed his scorers and skeptics and offers himself as a living, walking proof that he was right 15 years ago when he believed that America still was the "land of opportunity."

Ships 125,000 Dozen

Today he ships 125,000 dozen flowers each spring to the markets of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore. Annually, he ships nearly a million bulbs. And, after the flower crop is harvested in early spring, he plants his truck crop in the same land and, benefiting from the long growing season down South, harvests another profitable yield of corn and beans.

The Hollanders of Terra Ceia came to Beaufort County in 1925 to take over cultivation of the rich black swamp land owned by a large plantation company. Within a year, dissension between the immigrants and the company had

broken out, and now only Van Dorp and two or three other families of the original colonists remain on the land. The other 58 Hollanders in the Dutch community here have moved since then.

Because of the early and long growing season, the original plan was to grow fancy vegetables for the northern markets. Van Dorp, however, longed for the brilliant fields of his native land. He wrote home for a few tulips and planted them around his farmhouse. They thrived surprisingly—early and sturdily.

Imported More Bulbs

He imported more Holland bulbs, and more and more. Now he has 30 acres in tulips, and many more acres in other flowers—daffodils, jonquils, gladioli. He found that he could dig up his bulbs and still plant his truck crop on the same land in time for a profitable harvest.

Today, in April, his 30 acres, fiery red, gleaming white, orange and vari-colored, attract thousands of visitors, and each spring nearby Washington, N.C., has a tulip festival, which, by and large, is a tribute to the Hollander's foresight and energy. Van Dorp bulbs now sprout in almost every front yard in Eastern North Carolina.

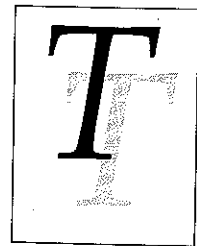
From his profits, the tulip king has built modern packing and storage houses, and in the spring employs a large force to harvest his gorgeous crop. Tulips are usually shipped the day picked, though they may be kept on cold storage as much as a week.

The crop this year is bringing a good price.

The Terra Ceia community now has 60 Hollanders, all skilled farmers. They have their own church and full-time minister, and plan a school soon. In this county they rank at the top as agriculturalists and as good citizens.



**Dena Punt Greenfield's Comments
About Terra Ceia, 1935-37
October 12, 1935**



his is a strange land, but it has its beauties, if you can see them—woods (firs, maples, oaks, sycamores, pines, and cedars), an open space, a house, a cotton patch, tobacco patch, garden, and endless woods again. The scenery is varied by swamps, stagnant black rivers, and then there are more woods. When you think you've driven to the end of nowhere, you strike a great clearing called "Broad Acres," about ten miles square. We live about in its center. In front of our home and across the road is a wide and deep canal. We've seen it brim full and almost dry. Weeds love it. Lizards, frogs, snakes, crickets, and water animals do too. A road on the other side of the canal is lined with sycamore trees, and our road is too. Not bad to look at. Canals and ditches network this part of Carolina to drain the land, but they don't drain.

Malaria is very common, and four of our little flock have had it. Typhoid is not uncommon. Some of the Hollanders have had that too, because of bad water conditions, open wells, no drainage, and no screens on most

houses. People struggle for an existence and really know what poverty is. The houses that the Southerners live in are a sight. Actually, most houses have *never* seen paint!

Most of the Hollanders live on the West Broad Acre Road, exactly one mile west from us. Up in our west bedroom at the back of our house I can see their homes and also two and one-half miles beyond. Above the timber line, the sun is setting. What sunsets we do see! No house or tree obstructs our view, and we see the whole western front. All sorts of birds live here, and they sing gloriously. Yesterday we saw a bird all red—tail, wings, and all. There are opossums here, with bear and mink. (Charlie saw a bear on the road when he went to teach Sunday School.) In our houses we have millers, moths, house and horse flies, mosquitoes, and dirt daubers. We found our closets occupied by the dirt dauber when we came here. It is very hard to keep insects out. We seldom have a mosquito in the house, but the dirt daubers are the biggest nuisance. We think they fly down the chimney.

We meet in an abandoned school-house. We have two services, at eleven and eight o'clock, with Sunday School at ten o'clock. Our church has a pulpit (a surprise gift for the minister recently), a piano, and a reed organ for psalm singing. The building has windows but no screens. Dirt

daubers buzz merrily around Charlie's head on a Sunday morning. In the evening they are replaced by swarms of buzzing insects known all over the globe to be excellent blood suckers.

Last Sunday it was very cold. There were about eighteen individuals for the evening service. Preaching commenced. Soon the gasoline lantern above the speaker's head went out. Mr. van Dorp, the elder, climbed on the pulpit to turn it off and placed a kerosene lamp there. Then that went out, and Mr. van Dorp handed the minister a flashlight. With that he was able to complete the service. It is working against odds, but you can gather from this how sadly necessary it is to work here.

One of our Dutch boys is married to a Southern gal. The girl went to the hospital with kidney trouble. Her folks didn't want her there. She went home after a while, to be taken care of by her mother. We learned that it was no use for Rosalie to take the doctor's medicine because someone had cast an evil spell on her. An enemy is believed to have done this. The people paid \$1.50 to find this out. The girl's spell could be broken by taking a certain medicine from a man who has power, but his price was \$25.00. Witchcraft among white people in the twentieth century! The woman's husband asked the preacher to come and

explain things to his wife. The girl is finally up after being sick for about six or seven weeks. This is called con-juration.

One young mother told us that her great, great grandfather had been turned into a mule overnight by some enemy. It's laughable, yet tragic. Work to do? How to begin is the question. Most of these woods people were born and raised around here, and the men make wine to get drunk. The women chew tobacco and snuff. One shudders! They scarcely live. They get money for their tobacco crop about now, spend most all of it, and are then poor until the next crop sells. They are religious, but very superficially and superstitiously so.

February 11, 1936

We live in the eastern part of Carolina, which is very swampy and wet. One must stay on the highway and follow the high places. We cross long bridges at times, made of rickety planks, which span big swamps. From the trees hang yards of fungus growth: moss, mistletoe, etc. It looks very tropical, and the trees emerge out of the water. I always expect to see an alligator stick up its head, but I haven't seen one yet. Last week Mr. and Mrs. van Dorp took us to Wilmington to see some Dutch families. Near Wilmington we saw large groves where pine trees were being tapped for turpentine. It looked very nice. It's quite an education to travel, and so interesting. We had dinner that day with some wealthy, elite Hollanders who had no church connection. In fact, they had come to America with the Frederik Van Eeden Colony, a socialist group. These folks did so well in bulbs that they became cap-

italists. We had tea and supper with another Dutch bulb man and his family. They were Christian Reformed and very interested in our work.

We left for home after seven o'clock p.m. and dreaded the dirt road home. We tried one road, got dreadfully stuck, were helped out, and turned around and went to the pavement again. We tried the main road this time but got stuck beautifully and worked for hours getting out. Mrs. van Dorp and I finally got out of the

five in the morning and stayed up to feed the baby at six. That was quite an experience—the preacher and his wife stayed out all night!!

In our Dorcas Society we are studying Bible women, and with my notes these ought to be easy lessons. I've coached one of the ladies to ask thought-provoking questions. We do have fine discussions, and the women think it's great to learn something. Some of them were brought up in our church, but you can't imagine how ignorant some are.

They hear the gospel preached year in and year out, and it falls off of them like water from a duck's back. A pity, isn't it? They never dreamed that there were so many women mentioned in the Bible, and they have no idea where to look for them either. I can hear my father saying, "My people perish because

they have no knowledge." But some of my ladies are tackling the Bible lessons. They are so eager to learn that they study every lesson, and we certainly have very edifying meetings, but you can guess who learns the most.

The people come to us for medical advice. Charlie was asked what to do for a sick cow and later for a sick chicken. The cow he might know about, having been raised on the farm, but the chickens are out of his line. He also is asked for help when people are sick. I'm the baby authority and must know what to do for most anything. What Mrs. Greenfield says carries much weight! Dear me, what if I'd say the wrong thing? I'm glad I've had a lot of experience with stomachaches, headaches, and what have you. It gives me much help in advising. I try to be sensible. Don't you

*People struggle
for an existence
and really know
what poverty is.*

car to help push and place boards in the ruts while the men hoisted the back end up with small trees they chopped down with an axe found on a yard. At last we got out of that mess again. Only we were still on the wrong side of the bog. How could we get home? We tried a little side road, thinking that might be better because less traffic had torn it up. We dove in. Mud and water splashed all over us, and we were in for it. Of course, we were dressed up. Charlie had left his rubbers home, but fortunately Mrs. van D. and I had our boots along. Charlie got out to push the car while van Dorp tried backing out. We managed to get out of that mire too—still far from home. We tried the main road once more, and after much struggling in the ooze, we finally made it. What a relief. We stepped into our kitchen at five minutes past

worry, I don't prescribe medicine. I can see where sorrow and pain have gone ahead to prepare me for helping here. It takes much polishing to make this stone shine in these backwoods. Some stones need more polishing than others—this one needs much.

October 9, 1936

We went calling on Southerners yesterday afternoon. At a tumble-down shack, way off from the road, we called on a woman with her daughter, son, and daughter-in-law. The Southerners surely appreciate our calls. These folks have no way of getting to church, but they come when they can get a ride. Sometimes a truck picks them up. They sent us home with sweet potatoes, freshly dug, and instructions on how to make a pie with them—plus a mess of collards. The latter is a Southern vegetable that looks and grows like cabbage but grows no head. I asked how to cook the collards, and they laughed at my dumbness. I didn't know how to make sweet potato pie, and I couldn't cook collards. I asked if I should cook the leaves like spinach. "Spinach? What's that?" And carrots they never heard of. So tit for tat.

December 11, 1936

There are no cellars here. The houses are elevated on little piles of bricks, and the wind creeps underneath them. Our house stands on higher piles than most. We even had a cow under the house once. But when the water rises in the spring, then the water can flow away freely. We have an icebox, and the ice man came all summer—four or five times a week.

You simply must have ice down here. We have no electricity. We have a gasoline lamp, which needs filling about every third night in the summer and about every second night in the winter. Kerosene lamps need constant filling, and their chimneys must be washed every few days. Our gasoline stove needs filling too, and all this is so much extra work. The gasoline iron is quite a contraption and needs a mechanic to run it. We have no outside toilet. I wish we had. Our

*We sometimes
had small fish
coming right out
of the faucet . . .*

bathroom is on the second floor. We trot up there, and, if we know someone is coming, we take up four pails of water to give it a good flushing. We have a windmill across the road, which is supposed to pump water to our place. We were without water so much of the time that a well was dug and a pump put over the kitchen sink. It is water fit to drink, too. The other wasn't—we sometimes had small fish coming right out of the faucet. We get our mail every day right in front of the house, because we live on a mail route.

January 10, 1937

It's been very warm here the last week or so. We have not had a fire for days, and it feels like spring. The daffodils and tulips are popping their heads above ground, and this morning I picked about ten violets. The

Hollanders are already shipping flowers from their covered beds. We haven't had killing frost since the flowers started. The hedge in front of the house is shooting out new green. We've had much rain, and the roads are very rough and rutty.

The Dorcas Society found two very needy families in need of Christmas baskets, and we found a little girl to clothe. We spent our entire pot but surely made a few people happy. The little girl, now eleven, was so pleased that she said "Thank you" with all that was in her. We gave her a coat and four suits of underwear (all second-hand), a strong pair of new shoes, three pairs of stockings, and two slips. The poor folk who keep her were so pleased that they put a big Rhode Island Red chicken in our car. This community is very thinly populated, and

most people are very poor compared to folk up North. But they seem content with what they have and are far from aggressive.

Did I tell you what I saw in church recently? A man considered quite well off in these parts sat next to me in church one evening. His wife and baby sat at the other end of our row, and his three school boys sat in front of us. The collection plate was passed. The boys passed it up; so did the wife, but my neighbor placed a dollar bill in it. Then, to my surprise, he held the plate, took about ninety-five cents in change out, and sent it on. They say it happens often here, but I had never seen it before.

THE CALUMET REGION

TOWARD SUCCESS

PART II

Truck gardening was viable if not always profitable in the Calumet area because the Dutch character was suitable to the demands and also the conditions of the region. The Dutch farmers possessed a certain intensity in their pursuits.

This tenacity gave them a drive to "make it" even under adverse natural and economic conditions. Success was often measured in inches. Getting by on a minimal amount of money and using worn equipment and clothing were often seen by others as signs of a miserly attitude. Actually there was no choice.

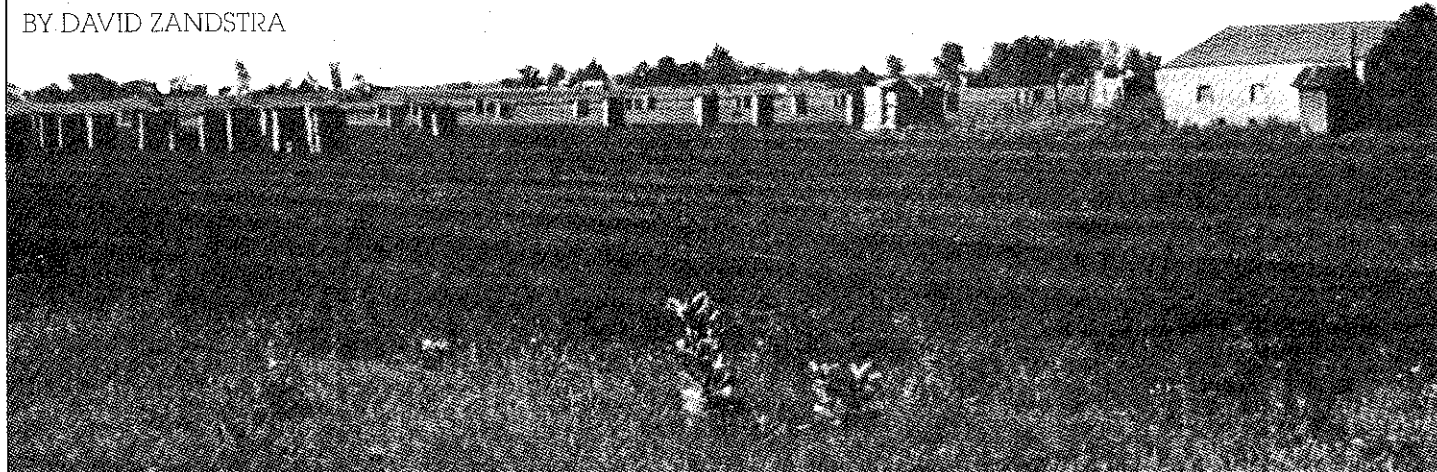
However, such a life-style caused some individuals to develop niggardly values. Two telling incidents illustrate.² Prior to electrification and modern medicine, people died

at home. When, late at night with family gathered around, one old saint felt himself slipping from this life, he told his family to turn off the coal lamp; he would die in the dark, and he did. Another gardener, while peddling, placed a chicken under the seat of his horse-drawn wagon. Because peddling was an all-day affair, he also took a lunch for himself and a bag of oats for the horse. At noon he would stop to eat his lunch and feed the horse. At that time the chicken was released to recover any oats that the horse dropped from his leather feedbag.

Recalling his youthful days as a grower and peddler in Chicago, E. K. Leep described his frugal weekend amusement:

On Saturday nights, with a neighboring chum we

BY DAVID ZANDSTRA

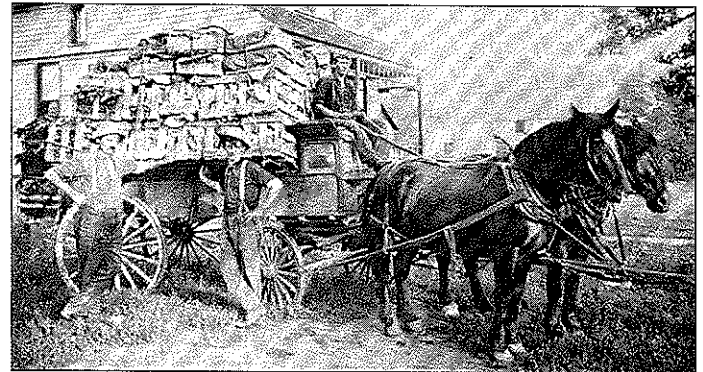
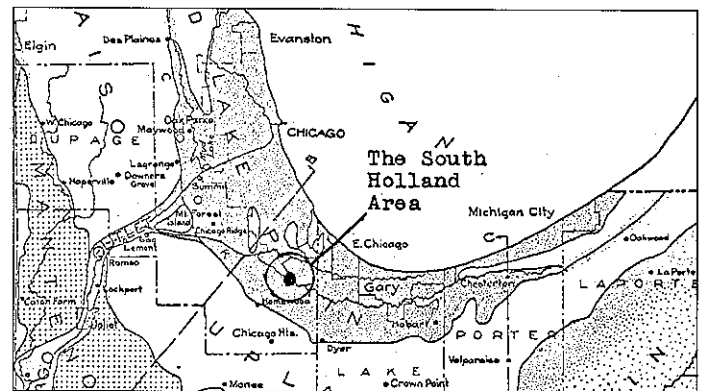


walked 3 miles to Roseland. In a little country store we bought a package of Virginia Cheroots containing 3 cigars for 5 cents. Arriving in Roseland, we smoked one and saved 2 for Sunday, smoking one in the morning immediately after the morning service and likewise after the evening service. This to present an air of well-being. We would take in the town and see what we could see free of charge—Kickapoo Indian shows and related diversions. Pete and Joe had an ice cream parlor, and before turning homeward again, we would invest in an ice cream soda for 5 cents. Then we trudged homeward, contented after our weekend splurge for a total of 10 cents each.

Edna Ferber, who noticed that the Dutch life-style was largely void of refinement, incorrectly concluded that these farmers simply had no sense of culture. It was not lack of interest, however, but too little free time or money to pursue cultural activities. Furthermore, they expressed their culture within the context of the Christian faith. Faith in God provided them with confidence in their endeavors. For most, this faith was more than a decorative appendage in life. Their faith produced a determination and willingness to labor long and tedious hours to achieve success. Describing his initial failure and frustration, one grower suggested that the only resources which kept him going were rutabagas and his faith in God.

The family unit, built on a strong sense of community, played a vital role. Each family member was expected to put as much effort as possible toward the family welfare and take as little as possible for personal needs. This arrangement allowed expenses to be kept at a minimum and might even build a cash reserve for necessary expenses, such as sending a son to college. The individual's actions were determined by the family's *esprit de corp*. Group welfare was equated with group survival.

In their drive to improve, the Dutch farmers had an intuitive balance between trying new ideas and yet retaining old proven methods. When trucks were developed by the Detroit car makers, the peddling farmers tried them even before World War I. Model names such as *Commerce*, *Dearborn*, *Graham Bros.* replaced draft horses except for field work and for peddling when the roads were impassable for trucks. But the economy of speed had an irreversible impact, which doomed the horse-powered era. Trucks needed no rest and sometimes were as much fun as a horse. Two young boys, returning home from peddling, decided to see what their new 1920-model truck could do. When they reached twenty miles per hour, a speed neither had gone before, they feared that both they and the truck would disintegrate. This did not happen, and the truck did



(top) The location of South Holland in the Chicago Lake Plain; (bottom) Roseland, Ill., 1914. Garden produce loaded for peddling. David Leep driving; standing left: A. Bylsma; standing right: Bert Dykstra.

not need to be fed then they arrived home. However, that partnership which existed between driver and horse slowed the disappearance of the horse till after World War I.

Truck gardeners were among the first farmers to use commercial fertilizer, which became available prior to World War I. The effect of Chilean nitrate on growing plants, for example, did not go unnoticed by the Dutch growers. At the same time, manure from the Chicago stockyards continued to be used by the same farmers for its own unique fertilizing properties.

Because the area was flat, with very poor natural run-off, drainage was of paramount concern to local farmers. In addition to improving ditches and laying clay tiles, the Dutch gardeners plowed their fields into beds. A bed was twelve feet wide with a double furrow on each side, running the length of the field. These beds, or raised areas, were particularly useful in the spring to aid the drying of clay soils. They also provided crop protection during excess rainfalls. Certain crops, such as onion sets, which require an early germination responded to this tillage practice.

Many gardeners, failing to appreciate the advantageous conditions for farming in the Calumet locality, decided to

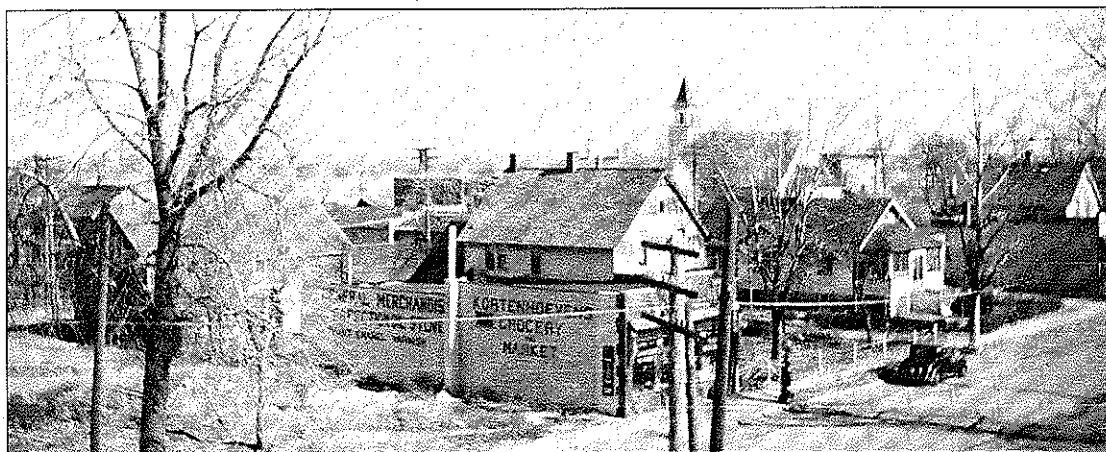
improve their circumstances by moving elsewhere. When confronted with offers to purchase large acreages for low prices in the West, many could not refuse. One particularly successful real estate agent named Spoelstra, who worked for the western railroads, described eastern Montana as the promised land of biblical vision, flowing with milk and honey. Highly influential, he was also capable of a mealtime prayer that was of eloquent proportions. When the Dutch colonizers returned from such now forgotten places as Kuner, Colorado; Columbus, Montana; and Kramersburg, Saskatchewan, they realized what they had given up in the Midwest. Devastated by a lack of markets, fickle weather, and human isolation, they had to abandon their dreams. Only a few were able to return to vegetable gardening.

The weather of Chicagoland has been particularly advantageous for most vegetable crops. It is a mini-climate moderated and stabilized by Lake Michigan. Rainfall, about thirty-five inches per year, tends to be uniformly spread over the yearly cycle, late summer and fall being slightly drier and thus desirable for harvest. Since few effective irrigation designs were available till after World War II, the full impact of reliable rainfall was quite apparent. Daily temperatures in the area tend to be cooler in summer and more moderate in winter than in areas farther from Lake Michigan. Although spring may arrive later, the growing season is longer than it is in regions outside of the mini-climate zone. When a product's appearance is of equal or greater importance than the quantity produced, the role of weather cannot be minimized.

The local area also afforded a number of logistical conditions of which the truck gardeners took full advantage. Fresh produce, unlike grains, could not be stored, but had to be sold quickly. Refrigeration and cooling were limited to cold water. Therefore, reliable roads and bridges were quite necessary for prompt delivery to the various markets. These roads, often unpaved trails, permitted the Calumet villages to replace Roseland as Chicago's local market garden. Nearness to markets also freed villagers from the bondage of railroad transportation.

Local banking institutions must be given due credit for

the eventual success of the Dutch gardeners. Good-faith (unsecured) loans were then available from bankers who believed that Dutch farmers would treat debt in light of the eighth commandment. A loan officer at the Lansing State Bank once asked a Dutch farmer applying for a loan if he



(top) Highland, Ind., circa 1939. Christian Reformed Church parsonage and school; (bottom) Highland, Ind., circa 1937. View from overpass, Highland Christian Reformed Church in background; (facing page) Roseland, Ill., 1921. Cultivating parsnips.

owned anything for collateral. The farmer replied that he doubted even the ownership of the tattered hat he wore. "Such courage," the banker decided, "deserved the loan." That loan was paid in full at the stated rate of interest through the Depression.

Another reason gardening was in some measure profitable was the availability of large numbers of laborers. The primary source was the gardener's own children. Dutch

families were notoriously large. For example, an inventory of seven neighboring farms in Highland, Indiana, showed that family size varied from ten to sixteen children. One of the local farmers, when informed that his wife had just given birth to another healthy boy, candidly remarked, "I dink we yust got anodder veeder." These workers did not have to be paid, either.

Children and wives of immigrant families whose male heads labored in the local industrial shops comprised the largest numbers of workers. Many Poles, Slovaks, Serbs, Italians, and others were ready to earn a few dollars a day. Farmers often drove a truck to milltown neighborhoods before sunrise to pick up workers and at dusk to return

them. Curiously, lifelong friendships were often established between these divergent ethnic groups and the Dutch farmers. Friends and relatives newly arriving from the Netherlands also served as temporary labor resources. Hobos and, later, migrant Mexican families were also hired and given summer housing.

Onion Sets

That crop most closely identified with the Dutch gardeners in the ridge communities is onion sets. For about thirty years, 1920-1950, over seventy-five percent of all onion sets grown in the United States were grown in Cook County, Illinois, and Lake County, Indiana. Over three thousand acres, nearly one-third of the cropland, were used from about 1920 to 1950 for onion-set production, which centered in South Holland. This virtual monopoly was created by a coupling of nature—heavy clay soils and a long summer tempered by Lake Michigan. Onion plants prefer these conditions.

While searching for new crops in the 1890s, South Holland farmers discovered that onions grew exceptionally well. A ready market existed for the small onion bulbs. But how to manipulate the biennial nature of the onion plant had to be learned. If onion seeds were sown very thickly, only a small bulb could be produced. That bulb, or "set," was so small that it could not produce seed the second year. When planted, or "set out," the second year, it became a full-sized onion. (Hence, the name "onion sets.") The idea then was to raise onion sets to sell to other farmers throughout the United States who would plant them to produce dry onions.

Describing the early days of the onion-set industry as "labor-intensive" would hardly do justice to the efforts exerted. Sowing, weeding, and harvesting were arduously done by hand. A brief description of one task, weeding, will suggest the extent of the labor required. There were no herbicides other than human hands. Many species of local and often noxious plants had taken a permanent residence in the onion fields. Even though most set fields were small, from four to fifteen acres, weeding such a field even with a large crew could be nearly overwhelming. If the weather was adverse to weeding, excessively rainy or warm, the assignment occasionally was impossible to do correctly. Looking out over an apparently unending sea of green while resting on their knees—the working position—suggested to the Dutch weeders a brief taste of eternal punishment. Fields were usually weeded two or three times before harvest.

The tiny onion set kindled a creativity in the Dutch farmers like no other crop they raised. Relief from such drudgery as well as the cost of labor and time required to



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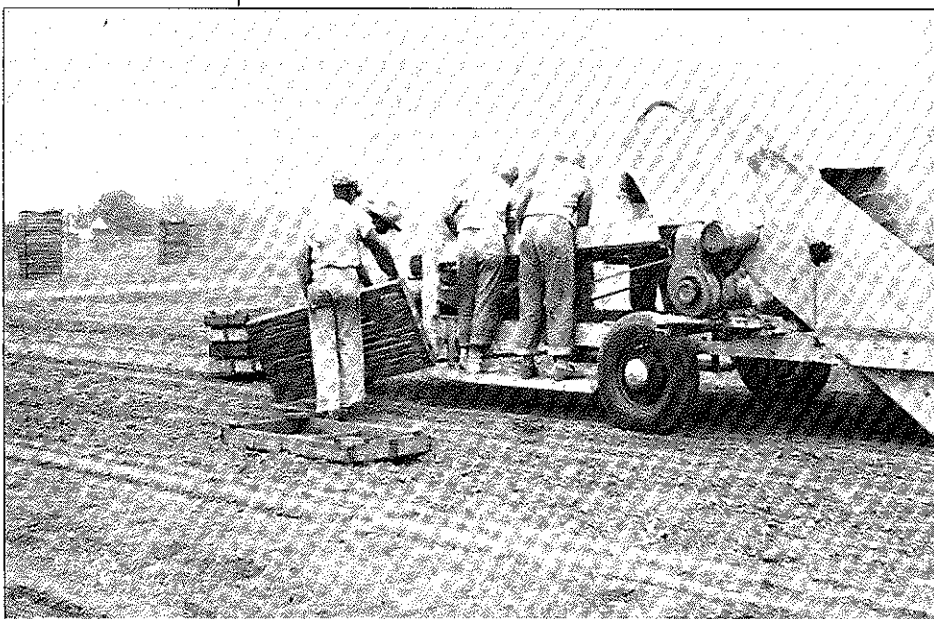
Ons assortiment: implementen, veld- en tuinzaden, enz.

produce this crop were strong incentives for change. The Dutch farmers needed to mechanize. Initially, the horse was the only means of power, so the early attempt at mechanizing was to take single-row hand tools and combine them into multiple-row devices. One early and successful tool was the Corneal Dekker onion-set planter. One wheel of this machine turned a belt with attached cups. As they passed through a bulk box, the cups picked up the onion sets one at a time and dropped the bulbs into the soil. The entire process of planting onion bulbs, done formerly by hand, was now done in only a fraction of the time. This planter continued to be used with only slight modifications when tractors entered the scene in the late 1930s. More effective cultivators were developed by Dick Vogel.

Harvesting of onions was also initially done by hand. Bulbs were uprooted by hand and placed in long, narrow piles called *windrows* to cure. Later the sets were separated from the dried tops and dirt and emptied into flat crates for winter storage. Pay was about three cents per bushel. About 1940 a harvesting system was designed for the onion-set industry to reduce the cost of labor. This mechanized system used a modified cultivator to lift the bulbs from the soil. A hay rake redesigned for onion harvest then piled the lifted sets into windrows, where they could cure and even be stored temporarily if weather did not allow harvest. Later, a tractor-pulled machine with an elevator and oscillating screen picked up the windrowed sets, removed much of the dirt, and deposited them in flat storage crates. Workers either stood on or walked behind this moving set harvester. M. Van Dahm and Peter Lagestee created many of these machines and the improvements on them.

Even the crates which stored the onion sets went through an evolution before a standard size was agreed upon. After various dimensions were tried, a wooden crate of twenty-four by forty-eight by four inches with a

cleat at each corner and a wood lath bottom became standard. A trial-and-error kind of engineering designed a box that was sturdy and durable, easily stacked and handled, shallow enough to keep bulbs from molding, adequately ventilated, and easily and economically repairable.



A familiar landmark on the farms where onion sets were raised was the large insulated storage warehouse. Often better insulated than the farmers' own homes, these warehouses were constructed with double walls, a ceiling well-insulated with sawdust, and ample doors and vents to control temperature and humidity. Although onion sets

are fairly resistant to frost, the growers discovered that a dry and cool (about 34 degrees Fahrenheit) best preserved the bulbs throughout the winter months.

Early spring, generally March and April, witnessed the milling of the stored onion sets. The process called for sizing the sets, removing dirt and dried out sets, and bagging into one-bushel sacks (thirty-two pounds). Mechanical sizing bars and fanning mills early simplified the procedure to size and remove the chaff from the sets. The most difficult and costly job was the removal of dirt clods, which was done by hand as the sets moved over a long belt. During the 1940s a device known as a "stoner" was adapted and patented by Dutch growers to separate

required were unpalatable to the Dutch.

As land sold for subdivisions, the dominance of onions in the Calumet region disappeared. In general, with the development of onion slips (an onion transplant) and hybrid seed, the demand for onion sets declined.

Decline

Although farming was the initial occupation of most Dutch settlers in the communities of South Holland, Lansing, Munster, Highland, and Ross, a thinning process had begun almost immediately. Some farmers became salaried employees in local industries, but most who left farming took up small businesses that often served the remaining

farmers. Storekeeping and peddling were popular. Farming skills, such as blacksmithing and carpentry, were also built into businesses. Those few who exhibited academic ability could escape the rigors of farming by attending school. Theological training at a seminary or teacher training at a normal school seemed to be especially attractive for young men trying to leave the neighborhood. Women, with few exceptions, were not given an equal opportunity to develop their academic skills.

The Depression, which began in 1929, drove large numbers of young people as well as established farmers away from agriculture. The economic collapse virtually destroyed the market



(all pictures) South Holland, Ill., 1952: Harvesting onion sets.

onions and dirt. By using wind, the stoner easily separated onions from soil because of their differences in specific gravity. This machine often cut the labor costs of milling in half.

After this process the sets were ready for market. They were sold to seed companies and other brokers throughout the United States. Several marketing groups, such as Dutch Valley Growers, were organized to merchandize the combined production of the members. With such a concentration of production, a wholesaling monopoly could easily have been maintained. Unfortunately, the distrust and independence of various farmers never allowed this to happen. Farmers often sold their crops at a price lower than what only a short while before had been informally agreed upon. The United States Department of Agriculture had even presented a plan which would have profited every grower, but the cooperation and policing

gardener's ability to continue paying for his land and implements. A few dollars was often the only remuneration from peddling a large truckload of produce. Even though there usually was food for the table, such horrible frustrations sorely strained the farmer's stubborn determination to continue farming.

Those growers who survived the Depression experienced a wartime prosperity which allowed them to pay their debts and even purchase additional property. War-time controls on farming expenses as well as strong demands for their products created a prosperous economic period. Large numbers of teenagers and Mexican migrants were hired to replace the young men who were drafted into the armed forces. Even German prisoners of war were pressed into service in local fields. They were regarded as some of the finest workers ever. If the occasional Dutchman showed up in the ranks of the prisoners, he was verbally thrashed for having joined the Nazi forces. After World War II, returning soldiers and others often opted for

salaried employment because of the locally favorable economic climate in business and industry.

When peace returned in 1945, there was a quickening on the farms of the modernization and mechanization process. Modern tractors took the place of the remaining draft horses. A wide array of new chemicals, including DDT, became generally available, replacing materials such as Paris green. Herbicides, for example, cut labor costs nearly fifty percent on many farms.

Because of their close proximity to the population and industrial centers of Chicago and northwest Indiana, these truck gardeners possessed a latent wealth which did not become apparent till after 1950. With the increasing industrialization of the region, led primarily by the steel mills, the land that the farmers had struggled for decades to purchase became their most valuable commodity. Not wanting to turn away a good deal, they sold their property for many times what they had paid for it to so-called "developers" eager to turn farm land into homes and businesses with little concern for ecological stewardship.

By the 1970s a few farmers continued to raise produce, often on small parcels of land. Most took their new-found wealth philosophically to the banks and Florida. Many made significant donations to various causes and charities that they had always supported. They also discovered that there was an additional body of tax laws, such as those concerning long-term capital gains, to which they were now subject. This quandary prompted one old farmer to remark that when he had no money he had problems, but now that he had much money he still could not escape financial problems.

A few growers displaced by suburban sprawl moved to outlying areas such as Grant Park, Illinois, and Demotte, Indiana. This migration was also necessary because much of the soil had been fatigued by over a half-century of intense vegetable culture. Soil-borne diseases, insect pests, and certain noxious weeds were all symptoms of the need for new land. To relieve themselves of burdens associated with truck gardening, these farmers often switched to raising soybeans, corn, or hogs. A few continued truck gardening. With the modern transportation network and modern packing and refrigeration techniques, a considerable change in vegetable production has taken place. Although soil and climate are still of paramount consideration, location has become less significant.

Today, 1986, a handful of the original market gardeners remain. A low level of profitability has persisted in vegetable production. Therefore, most of those remaining have specialized in some way—packaging vegetables on a year-round basis, selling produce on a pick-your-own basis, or raising vegetables for commercial processors. Even they

are not immune to the forces which have caused most others to disappear from the Calumet ridge.

David Zandstra is a farmer in Highland, Indiana. He majored in history at Calvin College and taught for the Illiana Christian High School from 1967 to 1975. David maintains a vigorous interest in historical studies as an author of local history in the Calumet region.

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FOR THE FUTURE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 1,2 (left) Broere, Bastiaan, *Beschrijving van het Leven*
 4 (both), 19 (above, right and left) *Ons Eigen Land*, a gift from Frank M. Ludwig in memory of his father, Frank A. Ludwig
 7 *Harper's Weekly*, 1871
 10 (both pictures), 13, 15 *Harper's Weekly*, 1863
 16,20,21,30 *Harper's Weekly*, 1883
 19 Kok, J. H., *Anderhalve eeuw Gereformeerden in stad en land Zeeland*
 24,25 Stellingwerff, Dr. J. *Amsterdamse Emigranten*
 28 Koert, Dorothy, *A Portrait of Lynden*
 48 Cook, Richard A., *South Holland, Illinois, A History, 1846-1966*
 51 *De Wachter*, April 17, 1918
 60,64 Edwin deJong

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

"Bringing the Netherlands to Canada" by Phil Reinders

"Growing Up in Roseland in 'the Twenties' and 'Thirties,'" by Richard Tiemersma

Grand Rapids: The Southwest Side and Y. P. De Jong

The Roots of Classis Red Mesa: "The Pioneer Christian Reformed Indian Mission," by Robert Groelsema

Dutch Americans in the Civil War

Montana—"Boom & Bust"

Student Life a Century Ago: The Grand Rapids Theological Seminary

Pelgrim Vaders (continued)

The Vanden Hoek letters (continued)

Van Schelven's *Grondwet* series "Historical Sketches from Colonial Life"

CONSISTORY MEETING REPORTS in church bulletin is a new factor in the consistory-congregation relationship of the Edmonton church. The reports are not regular "minutes" but they do state quite clearly what is transacted at the meeting of the consistory, with the exception of the financial reports.

CANADIAN CALVINIST

T

he Canadian Calvinist first appeared on August 6, 1945. It was published in Edmonton, Alberta, and those who edited the paper were the ministers Paul De Koekoek (1890–1982), Maynard Keuning (1906–1983), and John Roorda (1903–1970). In the last issue of *Canadian Calvinist*, dated September 1951, editor De Koekoek announced the merger of *Canadian Calvinist* and *Contact*, a Chatham, Ontario, magazine, which began in August, 1949, as the voice of the Christian Reformed Immigration Societies in Eastern Canada.

At the time the periodicals joined to form *Calvinist Contact*, De Koekoek characterized each as follows:



The "Canadian Calvinist" stressed the spiritual, cultural, ecclesiastical; "Contact" attended more especially to the natural, economic, civic; but both touched on all. Henceforth, they shall apply themselves to this task as one.

Also interesting to note is the fact that English was the language used in the *Canadian Calvinist* whereas Dutch prevailed in *Contact*.

On October 16, 1951, the first issue of *Calvinist Contact* appeared, containing articles in both Dutch and English. Now published in St. Catharines, Ontario, *Calvinist Contact* is a thriving weekly containing articles in both English and Dutch. Presently, circulation is about 8,000.

Through the years, several periodicals no longer in existence served the Canadian Christian Reformed community. Among these are *Home and Family* (1953–1957), published by Bosch and Keuning in Hamilton, Ontario; *Church and Nation* (1956–1969); and *Vanguard* (1959–1981), first titled *Western News*, then *Christian Social Vanguard*, then *Christian Van-*

guard, and finally shortened to *Vanguard*. In its early life *Vanguard* came off the press in Edmonton, Alberta. During later years *Vanguard's* address was Rexdale, Ontario.

—C. J. Bult

The Canadian Calvinist

August 6, 1945

A Monthly Publication Vol. I No. 1
For Contact Between Canadians of
Reformed Faith and Life

HOME AND SCHOOL

CONGRATULATIONS Lacombe! It is reported that your Christian school building is almost completed and that you have engaged a teacher for the coming school term. Canadian Calvinists are happy that the doors will be opened of the first Reformed Christian School in Alberta—the second in Canada. Much power to you and your teacher, Miss Alida Keestra!

LEGISLATION on Private Schools in Alberta is in the air. A report re-

ceived by the Lacombe group, to the effect that no more Christian schools may be opened, proved erroneous. However, State permission is required henceforth for the opening of any new school. Moreover, other legislation is contemplated, and it shall be well for us who are interested in Christian education to be on the alert and to watch developments closely. Particularly since sentiments seem to prevail in "high places" that permission to open private schools will only be granted where they, in the opinion of state officials, shall not interfere with public schools in the same locality. The latter provision may determine the fate of many a Christian school in this province.

CONTACT WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION in Alberta has been made by a committee of the Christian school board at Lacombe. Included are the Revs. Roorda and De Koekoek, the latter having been requested to serve as its advisor. Impressions favorable to our schools were left by the Minister, and he intimated a readiness to keep our people informed on educational developments, through the pastors mentioned above.

EDMONTON TAKES INVENTORY in regarding Christian day school education. A society has been organized, and its officers are expected to explore the possibilities of opening a Christian school sometime

soon. There seems to be a mind to do what can be done for the instruction of its children in the Covenant way.

CHILDREN'S ALLOWANCES are given to Canadian parents whose financial income is below a certain (low) level. That may help give the children the natural necessities of life not only, but also the spiritual. In fact, a wise use of these allowances may be a decisive factor in the establishment of Christian schools in our smaller church centers.

CHURCH MATTERS

NEW PARSONAGES are rising up in these parts of late. Monarch has built a spacious manse last year. Lacombe's new ministerial home is nearing completion. Edmonton is following closely, the foundation of its manse having been laid. An additional lot, recently bought, helps provide ample space for the new church to be built next to it eventually.

THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL seems to be reflected in the people attending church meetings at Houston, B.C. The visiting minister there observed in his audience, in addition to the ex-Netherlanders, people of Italian, Scotch, Danish and Eukraean descent. Dangerous to that church? Perhaps, but also a Calvinistic challenge to our people there to be a "savoring salt and a shining light" in its part of the earth.

CONSISTORY MEETING REPORTS in the church bulletin is a new factor in the consistory-congregation relationship of the Edmonton church. These reports are not regular "minutes" but they do state quite clearly what is transacted at the meetings of the consistory, with the exception of that which from its very nature would be private. The evident purpose of this venture is to keep the congregation more fully informed on its own affairs, and to cultivate mutual confidence and intelligent cooperation in the work of the church.

VACATIONING WHERE? Recent labor regulations, calling for holidays with pay, suggest the study of proper vacationing spots for our people. We shall do each other a distinct service if we publicize desirable places we have discovered. We should know where nature's beauty is most arresting and the surroundings quiet not only, but also where the company is of good moral standards, and which spots are near our own churches. Certainly, our holidays should not infringe on our Holy Day worship.

A SUMMER BIBLE SCHOOL is conducted by our people in Edmonton. Miss Clara Visser is teaching, assisted in turn by the Misses Dorothy Prins, Emma Tuininga, Lily Ebberts, and Jessie Nicolai. The term is about 15 days. The enrollment over 20. As far as we know this is the first school

of its kind among our people in this part of Canada.

CIVIC INTERESTS

CITIZENSHIP in the land selected for habitation should be a goal of course among us Calvinists. Barring exceptions, our people should become citizens soon after immigration. And that not only for the protection of their material interests and political privileges, but also to enable them to take active part in the public life of the nation. It seems that, due to war conditions, naturalization processes have been temporarily stopped. It may be expected that our people will be quick to take the opportunity of naturalization when it shall be offered again at the war's conclusion.

POLITICS are often in ill favor among our people. When the political pot is boiling, its fragrance is not always sweet. However, our Netherlanders are generally not averse of "de politiek." And why should they? The domain of state and statesmanship is theirs by disposal of their God. But have our Holland-Canadians taken to politics to any serious extent? Is this, perhaps, the time to make a thorough study of the main Canadian political parties? How do they square with our Calvinistic world-and-life view, and what can we do about it? How should we vote? Are not association and organization for political study and action in order?

THE STATUS OF OUR MINISTERS in Canada holding U.S. citizenship was discussed at the Spring meeting of Classis Pacific in such a way as to leave the impression that unless some measure of Synodical control over these ministers was shown to exist, they might be obliged to leave Canada October 1st of this year. It seems now clear that this does not apply to those who received permit for temporary residence as U.S. citizens. It certainly would be useful if an over-all under-

standing could be reached by our Synod and the Canadian government regarding the status of our American Christian Reformed ministers laboring in Canada.

THE SERVICE MAN, A MINISTER OF GOD is the position taken by the Rev. Marvin L. Derby, pastor of the Williamson Memorial United Presbyterian Church at Burlington, Iowa. In a well-written article in the *Calvin Forum* (June-July '45) the author shows that this is the consistent interpretation of Romans 13. Read the article in its entirety. It throws biblical light on our modern soldiery, so often misrepresented. It shows the noble part of a task often gruesome in its execution. And it implies that it is not right for us to shun this disagreeable duty when our government calls.

SOCIETY ACTIVITY

THE RALLY of our young people at Neerlandia, August 6, is a high spot in the activity of our youth. The program should interest all attendants. A new feature of this year's program is a Round Table discussion to be conducted by five Edmontonians on the subject: "Socialism and Christianity." The Rev. Roorda will speak on "Moral Hazards in Modern Entertainments," or something to that effect. Rev. De Koekkoek will address his audience on "Training for Service." Several young men and young ladies will render contributions of a varied nature.

Such rallies are educational as well as social. They help mold the opinions of our youth and provide the social touch. Our Covenant youth are expected to eventually establish Covenant partners. That means, to be frank, that such young people of both sexes and from different churches should have the opportunity to make acquaintance with each other.

PUBLIC CONCERTS are occasionally rendered by our young people. This was recently done by the Choral

society at Edmonton. This program was well received. The sentiment of the audience evidently was: "Let's have more of them." This writer does not know what other groups are doing, but he feels free to encourage such society activity, both in music and in song. And they remind him of other choral societies which successfully joined in federation for united renditions. Such a Choral Federation should not be impossible here, although it may at first be possible on a modest scale only.

TRAINING FOR SERVICE, that is what Reta Williamson of Nobleford intends to do. While temporarily working in Edmonton, she is getting ready to take a two-year course at the Reformed Bible Institute at Grand Rapids, Michigan, expecting to begin her work there this fall. She hopes to find some field of Kingdom work upon completion of her course. May the Lord prosper her in the undertaking. Are there any other Canadians preparing for, or engaged in soul Kingdom work?

Alice Elzinga, also from these parts, reports occasionally concerning her work in Surinam, in *The Banner* and the *Missionary Monthly*. By reason of her early contacts with the Alberta churches, and for the sake of the work she does, she is entitled to our special interest, prayer and material support.

A NEW TREASURER will soon serve the Canadian churches. Synod '45 appointed Rev. De Koekkoek alternate to Rev. L. Trap. That means that the former will take over this work sometime this summer in view of the fact.

BOOKS

First Lacombe Christian Reformed Church, 1935-1985. c/o Ray Prins, RR #3, Lacombe, Alberta, Canada T0C 1S0. Price: \$30.00 plus \$2.00 postage (Canadian currency). 273 pages, hardcover.

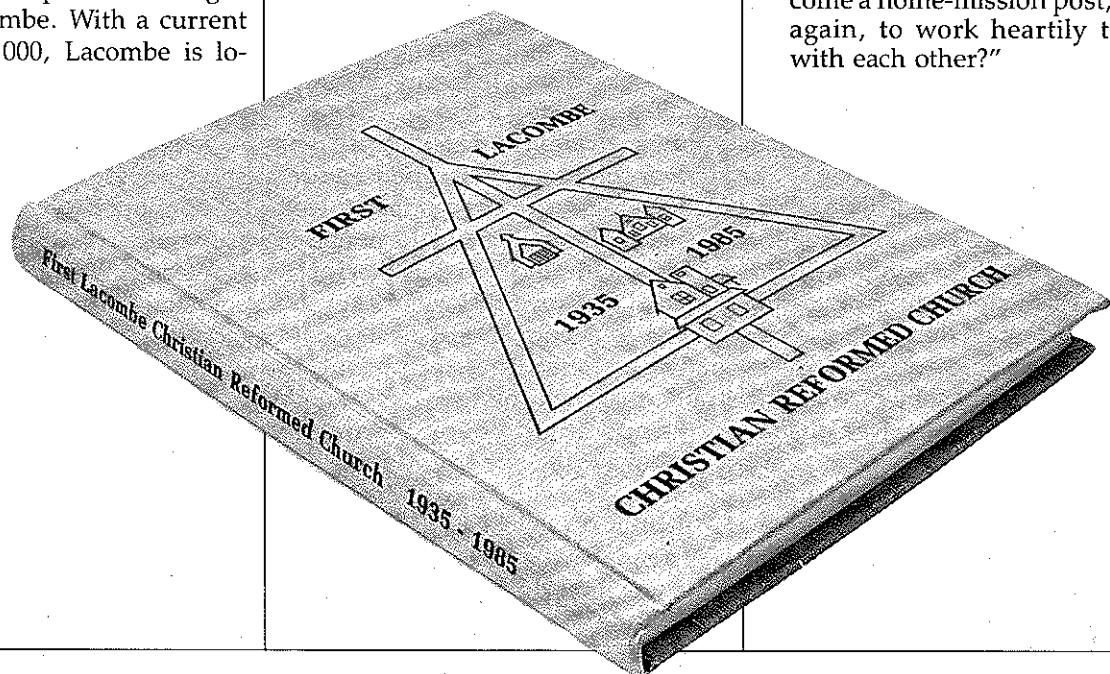
For people over fifty, the most vivid memories of the "Great" Depression include concern for an adequate income to buy necessities, but also that period's total lack of the conveniences which seem essential in our lives today. During that bleak era, on October 26, 1935, the Lacombe Christian Reformed Church was organized. That event culminated efforts first begun in 1927, when Dutch pioneers sought farms near Lacombe. With a current population of 4,000, Lacombe is lo-

cated in south-central Alberta, about ninety miles north of Calgary. This still rural congregation, with 112 families, is located seven miles west and three miles south of Lacombe. Its daughter congregations—Rocky Mountain House, Red Deer, and Lacombe (Bethel)—were all established in the fifties, and Rimbey was organized in 1985.

Throughout Lacombe's formative years, 1927-1935, the relationship with its mother church, First Edmonton, was at times less than cordial and often somewhat turbulent. In the "Historical Sketch, 1927-1935," of the *Silver Anniversary Booklet* we read,

"Our membership papers were sent to the Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton, but our foster mother seemed reluctant to accept new chicks." The *Fiftieth Anniversary Book* contains excerpts from a joint meeting attended by representatives from Lacombe and Edmonton which illustrate the tension which existed between the established church and the fledgling Lacombe congregation:

[Edmonton] feels that there is a steadily widening gap between the group and the consistory of Edmonton. The question was asked, "What does Lacombe want . . . to be freed from Edmonton and become a home-mission post, or once again, to work heartily together with each other?"



Paging through this volume, you will find other refreshingly candid comments about the Lacombe church and its past. These remarks are interspersed among a multitude of pictures, which illustrate sod plowing in 1929, hog barns, recent (1951) immigrants trying to use their Dutch bicycles on snowy roads, "anonymous bathing beauties," women comparing babies, individual families, many of their homes, church buildings, and varied aspects of congregational life. Emerging from the pictures and prose in this fiftieth anniversary volume is an unvarnished narrative of God-fearing people (among whom were many Frisians) who came to Canada, a nation where they hoped to find a better future for their children. Lack of money, loneliness, and learning a new language tested the mettle of these twentieth-century pioneers.

Jelske Ten Hove's father died in the Netherlands a few days after she arrived in Canada in 1929. "This sorrow," we read, "had to be borne in a strange land with no one to share the grief. If only there was a church, a pastor, or even one other person speaking Dutch!" Hard to imagine today is the fact that one immigrant family of seven during its first winter in Canada lived on a weekly cream check of \$2.50. Also, the church offering for the month of December 1931 totaled \$19.93, and of this amount \$13.15 was for the budget.

These new arrivals faced the unhappy aspects of Canadian life with an attitude best considered a blend of hard-headed pragmatism and commonsense piety. One immigrant states:

Other hardships in the early years were not considered such. Everyone was in the same financial state and "what we didn't have we didn't miss." But the blessings abounded—freedom, good health, and basic needs were met.

Some found the Canadian landscape "bleak," the housing primitive and cold, St. Johns "dirty looking," and money hard to borrow. Still, they remained in Canada, and, no doubt, shared the sentiments of Siebe Siebenga who, after he had conquered the language problem and the Canadian cold weather, declared "he would not have gone back for anything."

How present-day members of the Lacombe church see their own past is an essential element of this anniversary book. Now they are prosperous and have a vital church life and thriving Christian school, which began in 1945. Many immigrants had a feeling of inferiority, and consequently one couple was greatly "impressed" when the farmer they worked for ate his food in a "deftig" manner and did not slurp it like the farmers in Holland. Another immigrant purchased a used car which combined a gleaming finish with a very poor motor. He sent a picture of it to friends in the old country. After all, he reasoned, they would be impressed by the automobile's outward appearance and would never know about the qualities of the engine. Sunday School began in 1932 or 1933 in the Freisian language. Before teaching in Freisian, the language the children spoke and the nationality of all the parents, the teacher had to overcome the objections of the parents who did not consider Freisian "good enough for holy things."

Socialization on Sunday was an anticipated event during the church's early years. In fact, we learn that more than one mother deliberately pinched her baby's bottom so that she could leave the worship service with her crying infant and walk with other mothers who were also burdened with fretful babies. Mrs. Janny Luymes remembers vividly the domestic details involved in preparing the family for the morning church ser-

vice, and lunch afterward in the church basement where caring for children without the benefits of plumbing or a nursery presented a new challenge each week. By the 1950s "staying for lunch" was on the wane. Better roads, more reliable automobiles, and increasing farm ownership with its hour-by-hour demands contributed to the demise of this fondly remembered routine by about 1960. Also a casualty of the fifties was the regular Dutch language church service.

Although the minister was considered the leader in the community, he was not immune from practical jokes of keen observations about his behavior and preaching style. Ministers coped with sleeping parishioners and poorly heated buildings in amusing ways. On one occasion a dominee found explosive match heads placed in his pipe by youthful pranksters. A student minister "... could holler so loud when he preached that young children would become frightened." For those in the congregation, these incidents and similar episodes humanized the minister. In the eyes of all who observed him, the minister remained, as always, the *dominee*, but also he became a member of the human race and exhibited the strengths and weaknesses of the rest of its members.

There is an authentic rural robustness about this anniversary book. The founders of this church were (as are their children) well acquainted with the smell of manure and the relentless hard work on the land and in the barn. What we read about them is told in a manner best described as earthy candor. How these imperfect, practical farmer-saints in Lacombe have served God during the past half century is the prevailing theme of this anniversary book.

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

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Volume IV

Number 2

1986

GATHERING OYSTERS, WEST SAYVILLE, L. I.



Historical Magazine of Calvin College and Seminary Archives