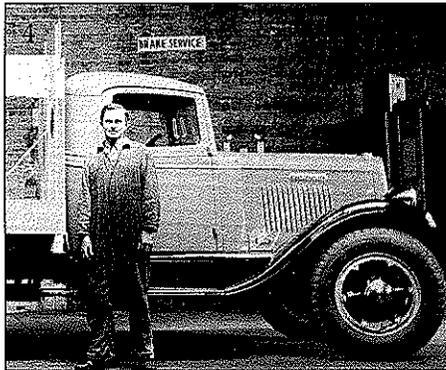


ORIGINS



Chicago's West Side

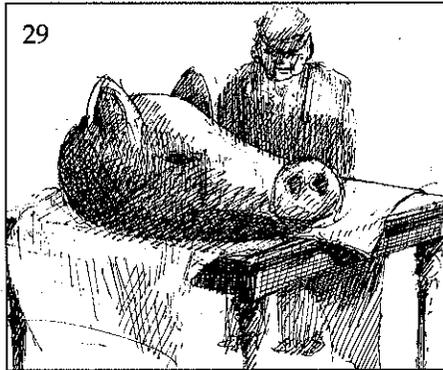
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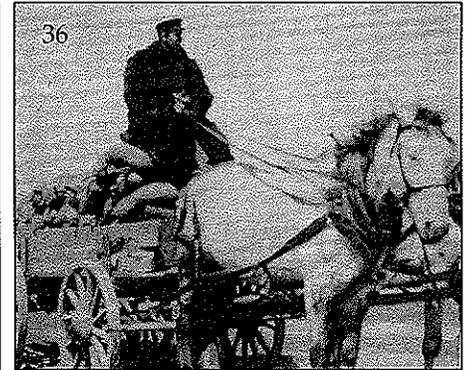


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Origins is designed to publicize and advance the objectives of the Archives. These goals include the gathering, organization, and study of historical materials produced by the day-to-day activities of the Christian Reformed Church, its institutions,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



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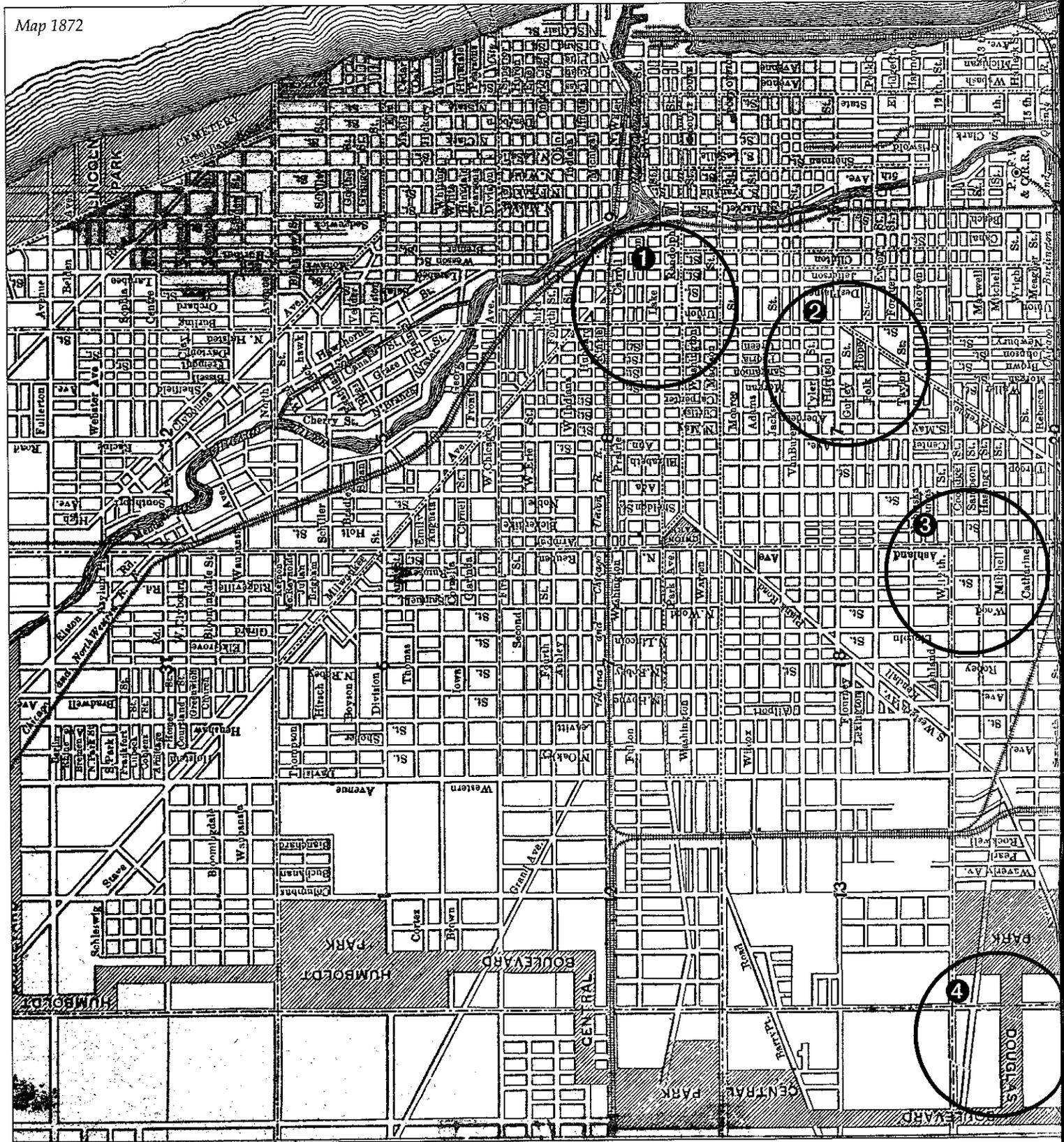
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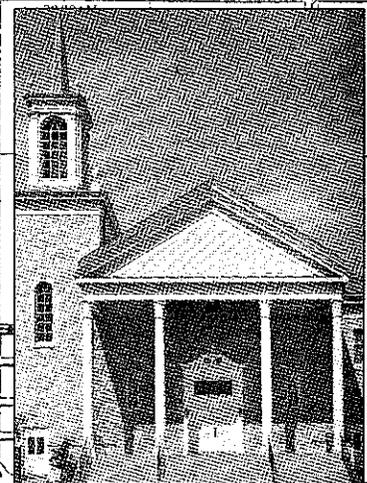
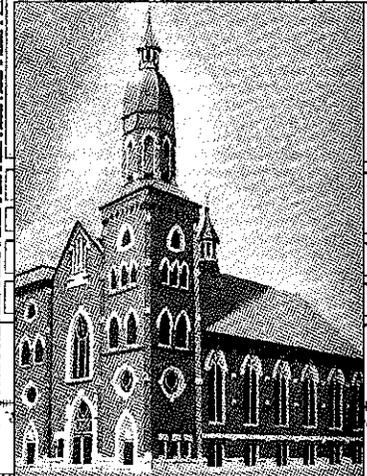
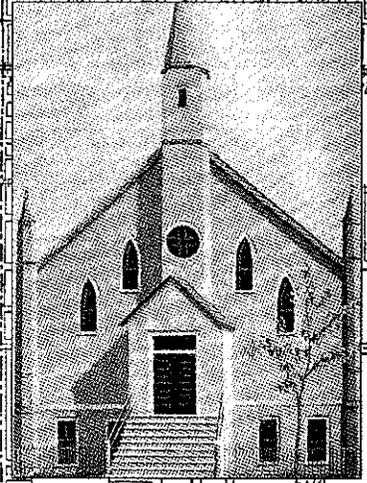
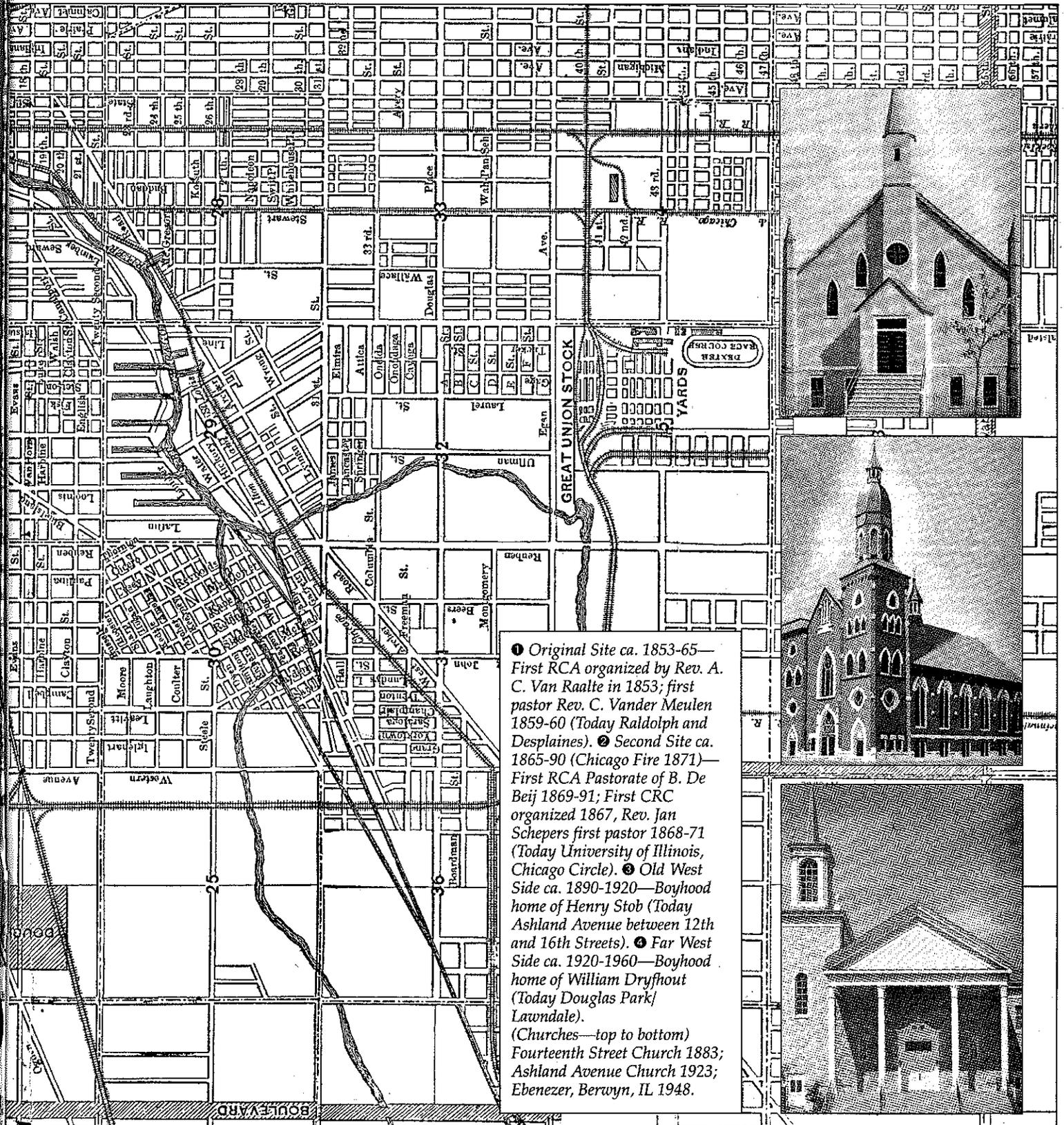
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CHICAGO'S

Map 1872



WEST SIDE

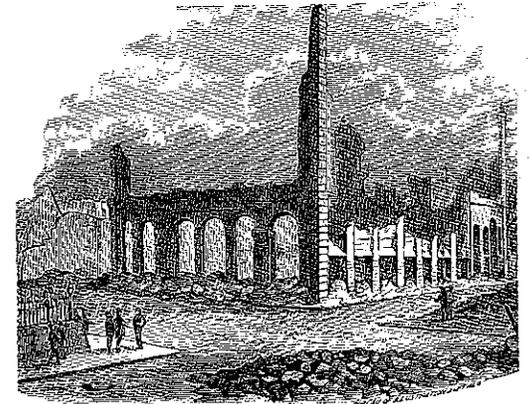
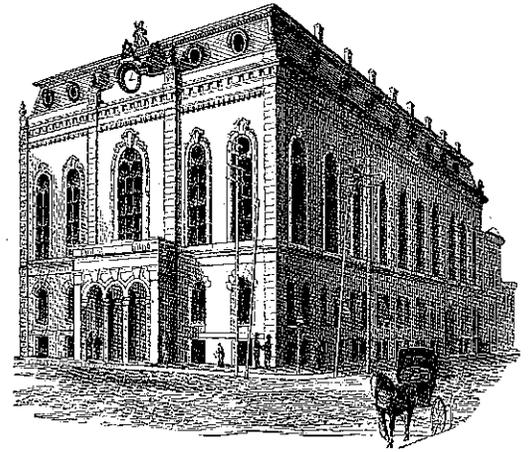


❶ Original Site ca. 1853-65—
 First RCA organized by Rev. A.
 C. Van Raalte in 1853; first
 pastor Rev. C. Vander Meulen
 1859-60 (Today Ralldolph and
 Desplaines). ❷ Second Site ca.
 1865-90 (Chicago Fire 1871)—
 First RCA Pastorate of B. De
 Beij 1869-91; First CRC
 organized 1867, Rev. Jan
 Schepers first pastor 1868-71
 (Today University of Illinois,
 Chicago Circle). ❸ Old West
 Side ca. 1890-1920—Boyhood
 home of Henry Stob (Today
 Ashland Avenue between 12th
 and 16th Streets). ❹ Far West
 Side ca. 1920-1960—Boyhood
 home of William Dryfhout
 (Today Douglas Park/
 Lawndale).
 (Churches—top to bottom)
 Fourteenth Street Church 1883;
 Ashland Avenue Church 1923;
 Ebenezer, Berwyn, IL 1948.

The first Chicago Netherlanders came to the city from various places shortly after Chicago was founded in 1837. An 1839 immigrant named Falch was so successful in producing soap that by 1850 he had accumulated \$10,000 in assets and was the wealthiest Netherlander in Chicago.

By 1853 the Dutch community had grown sufficiently to organize a congregation. Seven families requested the services of Michigan's Albertus Van Raalte to organize the First Dutch Reformed Church of Chicago and they gathered in a near West-side store front. These parishioners had immigrated as independent persons and families from six different Netherlandic provinces. Unlike Holland, Michigan, or Pella, Iowa, they had no dominant leader.

The Dutch populace grew to about 400 in 1860 and lived primarily in a working class neighborhood located



(above) Chicago Chamber of Commerce building before the 1871 Chicago Fire.
(below) Chicago Chamber of Commerce building after the 1871 Chicago Fire.

The West Side Dutch in Chicago

between the branches of the Chicago River. The new wave of immigrants arriving after the Civil War increased the community to about 2,000 and by then they were concentrated in the Southwestern quarter of the city where they constructed their first church buildings. When the 1871 fire consumed much of Chicago's central district only five Dutch families lost their homes because most of them had moved out of the urban core.¹

Joining the second wave of Dutch immigration (1867-1873), a heavy concentration of Groningers arrived and

by Hans Krabbendam

Dr. Hans Krabbendam, a doctoral student of the University of Leiden, works currently at the Roosevelt Study Center in Middelburg, the Netherlands. Krabbendam's research includes an M.A. thesis comparing R. T. Kuiper and Bernardus De Beij. His doctoral study treats the life of Edward Bok, the longtime editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*.

*This article, translated by Mr. E. R. Post, has been adapted for use in this *Origins* and appeared as "De Nederlandse Kolonie in Chicago," in *Amerikana*, Vol. 4, Nos. 1 and 2, 1990.

ultimately dominated the Chicago's Dutch enclave. People called it the "Groninger's Corner." These folk exerted a formative influence on the enclave and its churches. During the entire nineteenth century the Groningers acquired pastors and teachers from their native province and new arrivals increased the enclave's population to at least 4,000 by 1900.²

An agricultural depression in the Netherlands (1878-1895), which resulted from a glut of cheap North American grain on European markets, was the primary cause of immigration from clay soil regions like Groningen. As grain prices dropped, Dutch farmers economized by turning to agricultural mechanization and by raising crops which required less hand labor. Consequently, many farm hands became idle and a large number of them resorted to immigration.³

After the Chicago fire of 1871 there was a great demand for labor in building trades with wages ranging from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day. This combination of available work and high wages attracted the poor and unemployed who, with industrious and sober habits, could save up to \$25.00 per month. Capital accumulated in this manner enabled some immigrants to purchase farms. A significant number of Chicago's immigrants migrated to agricultural areas to invest their wages in land. Others, particularly those who sought to avoid wage slavery and the growing unionization of the skilled trades, found occupations which permitted them to work in the open air and be their own bosses—in teamstering and later trucking. Living near the "Chicago Loop" enabled them to fill a market niche. They bought horses and wagons and looked for loads to cart away—sand dug up in building construction, ashes produced by coal fuel, and rubbish of all sorts.⁴ In that pattern Harm Huizenga bought a horse and wagon to begin what ultimately became a flourishing waste disposal operation.

As Harm's biographer indicates, at twenty-three this young Groninger left his native village, 't Zandt, to seek a brighter future in Chicago. He arrived in 1892 and lived with his mother's cousin until he found work but his first job paid only five dollars weekly and three-fifty of that was required for room and board. Within a year's time he found better paying work in the garbage business and five years later he returned to Groningen to find a wife. While visiting the Kremer family in Uithuizen, Harm met the young woman who, after a few months' courtship, returned with him to Chicago as his bride.

The Huizengas began their new life together in a basement apartment but as they prospered and as their family grew, they moved to better and larger apartments. By 1910 the Huizengas had, in addition to four children, a

business requiring several wagons. Harm had become a prosperous citizen.

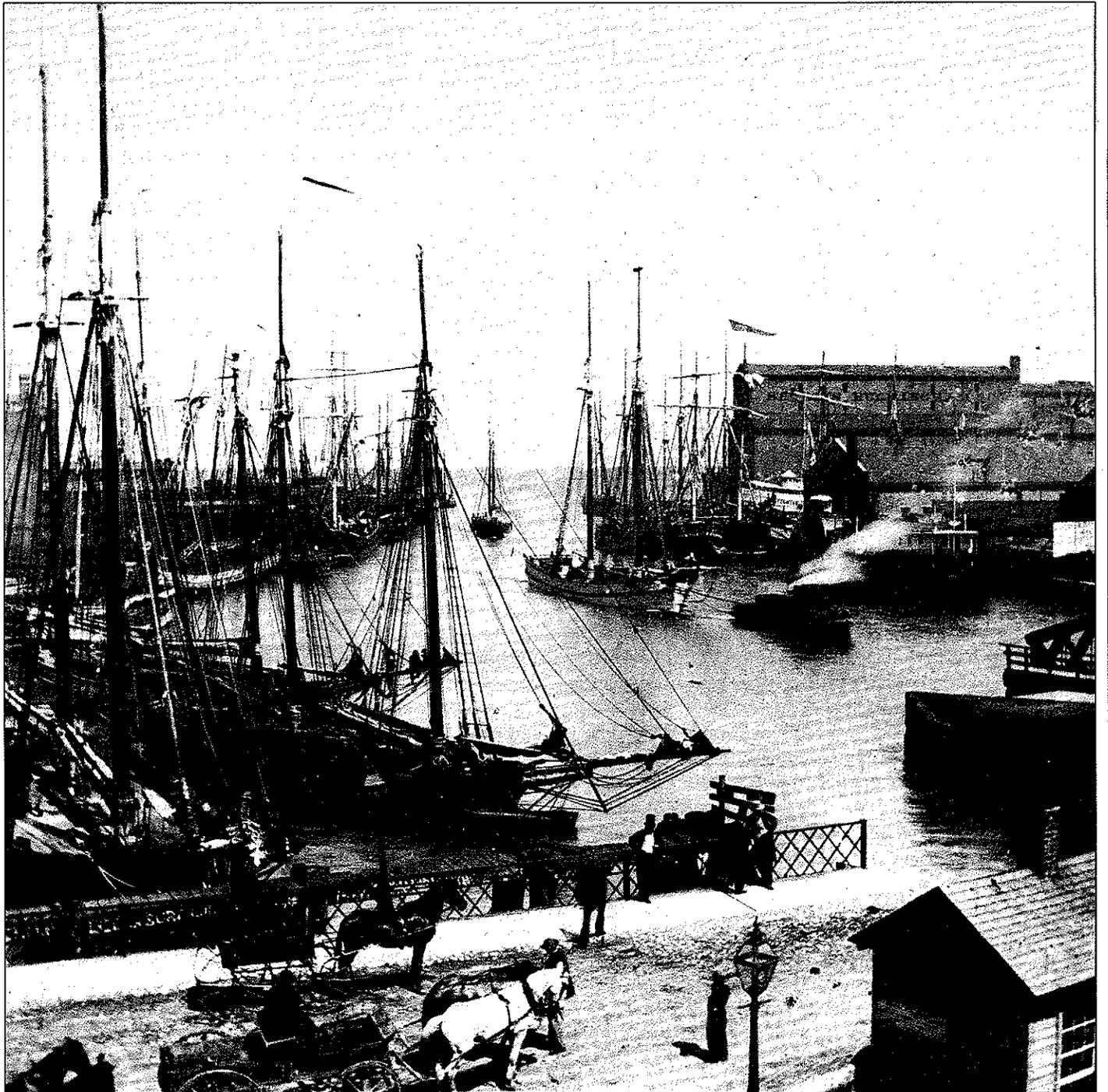
After Harm's wife died in 1914 he learned that a suitable mate in Groningen was interested in him but she was not inclined to leave the Netherlands. So he sold his business for \$6,000 and returned to Groningen to court his prospective bride. He married and remained in Groningen for three years before returning to a new residence on Ashland Avenue, the very center of the West Side Dutch enclave. In 1928 the Huizengas joined a general movement of Westsiders to a new neighborhood in Cicero where, once again, the Groningers assembled a community around their churches and other institutions.⁵

The life story of Harm Huizenga runs parallel with the major events of the West Side Community. For most of them Netherlandic ties were strong. Dutch, and especially the Gronings dialect, persisted in daily communication. Women at home often failed to learn English but the children, by attending both private and public schools, quickly managed the language transition and became bilingual. Male adults who worked outside of the ethnic community or who conducted business with English speaking clients also mastered the new language. Through all of this the general ethnic enclave remained cohesive and on several occasions groups moved short distances away to re-form new ethnic clusters around churches and schools.

Immigrants who moved from Groningen's villages to metropolitan areas like Chicago encountered a difficult transition. Clustering with familiar people eased the strains of novelty but the West Siders were never completely isolated. Italian, Irish, and Jewish neighbors were always part of their experience. Marriage patterns, either within or out of the ethnic community are potent indicators of ethnic solidarity. A study by historian, Robert Swierenga, himself a native of the "Groninger Corner," indicates that in 1870 all the Dutch who were affiliated with Dutch speaking Reformed churches had Dutch spouses. For those without such church connections, the number of in-group marriages equalled just 78 percent. For the children of these two groups the contrast is more obvious; 75 percent of the non-Reformed children married outside the ethnic enclave while only 11 percent of the Reformed offspring⁶ married into other ethnic groups. These statistics vividly demonstrate the powerful link between religious affiliation and marital choice.

Dutch-American cultural institutions, which also had the potential of preserving ethnic identity, did not appear in the Chicago area until the 1920's, but these organizations did not attract large numbers. Skilled workers and well-to-do professionals—lawyers, physicians, brokers,

*View from Rush St. Bridge of the Chicago River (about 1869).
Printed with permission from the Chicago Historical Society.*



and some pastors—did join the Chicago branch of the Knickerbocker Society. Modeled after a similar but more prestigious group in New York which enrolled families with lines going back to Colonial New Amsterdam, the Chicago Knickerbockers found adherents from the more recent immigrants of the nineteenth century.⁷ Educational institutions also provided ethnic cohesion and the earliest schools, Hope College in 1866 and Calvin College in 1876, were established primarily to train pastors in the liberal arts and theology. Christian elementary school education also gained gradual support but primarily to maintain the Dutch language and provide instruction in church doctrines and Bible study. Unlike their German counterparts, the Dutch did not hold to a nearly mystical tie between their language and cultural identity. Instead, the Dutch promoted the retention of Dutch to assure communication between parents and children and also to maintain the theological tradition which was embedded in the Dutch language. After 1880 a number of English language churches developed to supplant this link, but Dutch language church services continued in some quarters until as late as World War II.⁸

Because the movement for state funded Christian education dominated the domestic political agenda in the Netherlands in the late nineteenth century, many immigrants brought that concern with them to the U.S.A. Most Netherlanders believed that the public school system in the States was far less secular than the public schools of Holland and that reduced their inclination to establish independent Christian schools. For many Dutch communities, Chicago included, the solution was to instruct the children in Dutch during the summer and this program continued until near the end of the century. By then the language issue was less urgent but some of the immigrants who were dedicated to the pattern of Christian education in the Netherlands promoted and organized similar schools in the U.S.A. These institutions taught a standard curriculum—reading, writing, history, arithmetic, etc.—which was constructed around Christian interpretations and values. By 1924 the eight Christian day schools of Chicagoland instructed over 1800 pupils and by then a Christian high school had also been established in Chicago.⁹ All of these institutions contributed significantly to the cohesion of the Dutch ethnic community.

Chicago's Dutch churches, some Reformed and others Christian Reformed, were organized around religious views which had gained prominence in the Netherlands, but until about 1880 the First Reformed Church of Chicago, led by Rev. Bernardus De Beij, was the enclave's dominant congregation. In 1868 De Beij arrived in Chicago

with his wife and six children from Middelstum, Groningen. He remained in the Chicago pastorate until his death in 1894. He was already fifty-three when he braved the great journey and had become a pastor at an advanced age after persuing private instruction from a pastor in his home area. During his studies, De Beij supported himself by digging turf. He served only one church in the Netherlands—Middelstum. Of that congregation's parishioners about sixty preceded De Beij to America and their letters provided the pastor with much information about the New World.

When De Beij received a call from the First Reformed Church of Chicago he regarded it as a divine call to serve a shepherdless flock. His relationship with the Middelstum consistory was strained at that time and he was scarcely able to survive on his annual salary of 800fl. Further, he regarded the U.S.A. as a more favorable place for the future of his children.

De Beij aimed to draw as many immigrants as possible into his church, including many who regarded Chicago as a temporary home where they could accumulate funds to purchase farm land further in the West. According to oral reports, he became a pivotal leader in the ethnic community and other groups regarded him as the leader of the Chicago Dutch group. He was active beyond the religious sphere and kept a sharp eye on economic affairs, including employment opportunities and land values. His personal real estate investments, funded by an inheritance of \$3,300, returned profits of at least 25 percent and as high as 100 percent.

New arrivals received a hearty reception at his home and often gained his financial assistance. For the construction of a new church building he contributed \$650 or a tenth of the total cost. He encouraged the Dutch to purchase homes and in 1881 he was the co-founder of the "Holland Building and Loan Company" which provided home loans to newlyweds. For the passing generation he helped in the acquisition of a cemetery.¹⁰

De Beij also provided well for his own family. Three sons and a daughter became successful physicians. He had come to America to become an American including, although with some discomfort, the anglicization of his grandchildren's names. Of this he wrote, "I was not in favor of anglicizing the name but I had to give in to the masses. It is true, of course, that my descendants are in America and will never come back to the Netherlands. So, they had better become Americans."¹¹ He himself imitated American preachers—their manner of preaching and their use of thematic sermons liberally seeded with personal anecdotes.

All of his children married Netherlanders but most of his grandchildren married outside the ethnic group. Some left the Reformed church. That was the price De Beij was willing to pay for rapid cultural adaptation and the city of Chicago provided many opportunities to drift away into America's many cultural streams.

The growth and ultimate demise of foreign language newspapers and periodicals is a common feature of most ethnic communities. Cities with large and concentrated immigrant populations were able to sustain daily newspapers—Polish, German, and the like. But the Dutch were too few in Chicago to support a daily newspaper. Nonetheless, some were launched. The "Batavier," for example, failed soon after it appeared but weekly papers were more successful. Thus *De Nederlander* survived during part of the eighties but was absorbed by a competitor from Holland, Michigan. *Onze Toekomst* followed and survived from 1894-1953. It featured news from various Dutch ethnic communities and provided reports from the Netherlands as well. But its religious features were crucial to its survival. Republican in politics and theologically reformed, *Onze Toekomst* gained a circulation of about 3,500 in the 1920s.¹²

Literature—novels, poetry, or essays—were not the common products of the Chicago Dutch community. The notable exception, Peter De Vries, became popular and highly acclaimed long after Chicago's original Dutch enclave dispersed. The famous Edna Ferber novel, *So Big*, deals with the south Chicago neighborhood, Roseland, but is flawed in its understanding of the ethnic community. The story is good but it is not really an accurate reflection of the Chicago Dutch.¹³

Today the remnant of the West Side enclave does not stand out in obvious ways. Groninger descendants live among the mixed populace of a sprawling metropolis. They are a largely middle class folk, some of whom have forged ahead with exceptional economic success. The most notable case of this fact is the Waste Management Corporation which employs 26,000 people worldwide and leads all others in the disposal of ordinary and hazardous waste. Although it originated in a Dutch community, it is no longer controlled or directed by its founding families.

As little as they differ in ordinary routines from their American neighbors, the Chicago Dutch on the West Side remain distinct in their religious and educational patterns. The Christian day schools, high school, and a local college, Trinity, remain vital. West Side churches, descending from congregations formed in the last century, are well attended and prosperous. A survey of those who manage, serve, and attend these institutions will

indicate a continuing domination by West Siders whose roots go back to Groningen in the second half of the last century.

Endnotes

¹For this information about Netherlanders in early Chicago and for statistical data I have borrowed a great deal from an unpublished lecture by Dr. Robert P. Swierenga, "Chicago's Groninger Hoek: The Origins and Development of the Dutch Colony on the 'Old West Side' in the Nineteenth Century." Paper presented to the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies. Conference at Palos Heights, IL, September 1987. Dr. Swierenga based his data upon a detailed study of census reports.

²In the 1857-1880 period the proportion of Groningers was twice as large as in the period before 1857. After 1857 they made up a quarter of the total number of Netherlands emigrants. For the period after 1880 there are still no exact data available, but it is evident that the number of Groningers increased in proportion.

³Hille De Vries, "The Labor Market in Dutch Agriculture and Emigration to the United States" in: Swierenga ed., *Dutch in America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ., 1985) pp. 78-101.

⁴Herbert J. Brinks, "Netherlanders in the Chicago Area," *Origins* Vol. I, No. 1, 1983, pp. 1-7. The labor unions were begun as secret societies which required members to take an oath. Many Dutch immigrants of Christian persuasion could not do this with a clear conscience. Besides, most of them were farm laborers who remained unorganized.

⁵*The Life Story of Harm (Harry) Huizenga 1869-1936*. Privately printed, 1991.

⁶Amry Vanden Bosch, *The Dutch Communities of Chicago* (Chicago: Knickerbocker Society, 1927) pp. 65-67.

⁷See the membership in list in Vanden Bosch, *Dutch Communities*, pp. 43, 102, 103.

⁸Naturally, this applies only to the churches in the West. In the Eastern states of New York and New Jersey, where the RCA had existed much longer, English had been used for a long time.

⁹Vanden Bosch, *Dutch Communities*, p. 43.

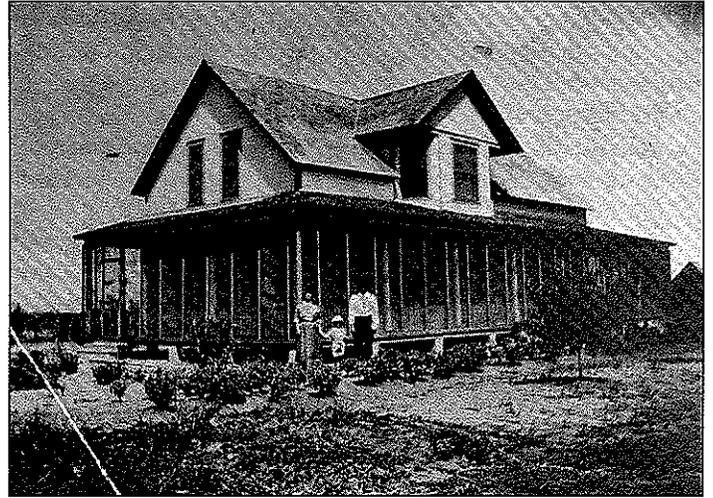
¹⁰Bernardus De Beij, "Eene laatste Getuigenis." A farewell sermon delivered at the First Reformed Church in Chicago on Sunday, Nov. 1, 1891. Chicago, 1891, p. 8.

¹¹B. De Beij to P. Lanting, March 15, 1873, Nov. 9, 1874 and January, 1878. "Immigrant Letter Collection," Heritage Hall, the Archives of Calvin College and Seminary, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

¹²Henry Lucas, *Netherlanders in America* (Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan, 1955) p. 537. Vanden Bosch, *Dutch Communities*, pp. 61-64.

¹³Edna Ferber, *So Big* (New York, 1947).

The youngest child of John and Anna (Baker) Stob, I was born on June 24, 1908, in the residence above my father's feed and grain store on Blue Island Avenue and 15th Street, scarcely more than two miles from the center of downtown Chicago. When I was two years old my parents joined a group of friends and neighbors from the First Christian Reformed Church in an attempt to establish a Dutch farming community in Winnie, Texas, not far from the gulf city of Galveston. Alternating periods of flooding rains and searing droughts discouraged most of the settlers and in late 1913 my parents returned to Chicago.



Stob family home in Winnie, Texas (1910-13).

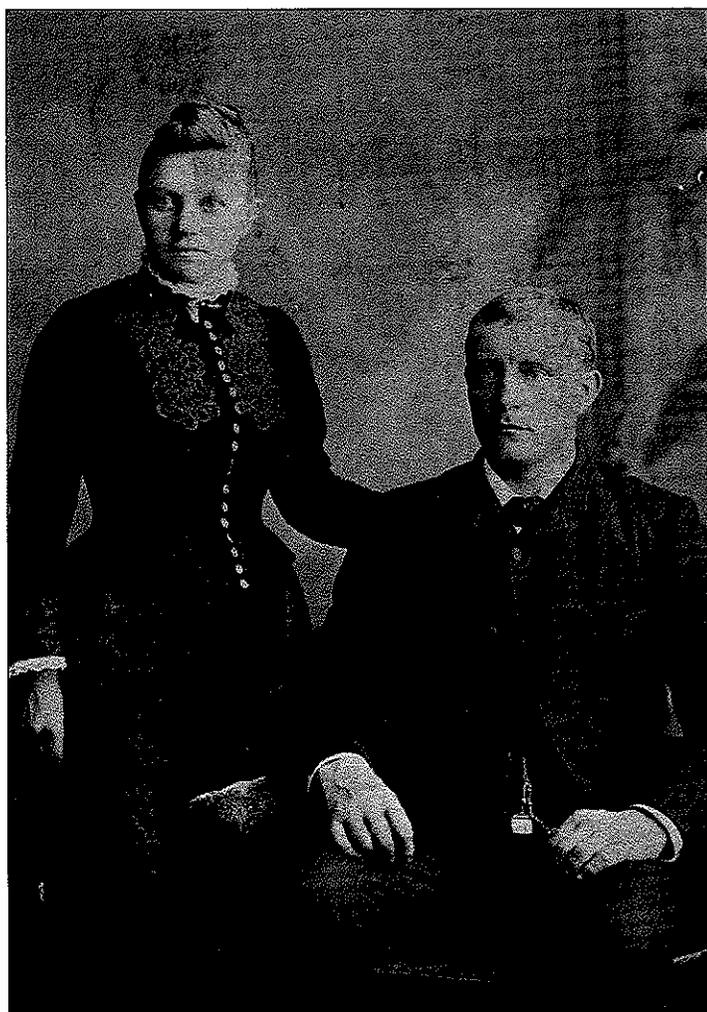
Upon our return, my parents rented an upper flat in a building located on the southwest corner of 14th Place and Ashland Avenue. It lay a good half mile from my birthplace on Blue Island Avenue, roughly three miles

HENRY STOB

from the Loop, and in the very center of the Dutch community that had gathered around church and school. The accommodations were modest, even by community standards.

There was a living room, usually referred to as the "front" room, which overlooked Ashland Avenue and which to outsiders was accessible through a front door opening upon a steep staircase, a means of entrance which the members of the family seldom used. There was a rug upon the floor (wall to wall carpeting then being unheard of) and some overstuffed chairs were arranged upon it, but occupancy of the room was usually reserved

Dr. Henry Stob, emeritated Philosophy Professor, Calvin Seminary, is in the process of writing his memoirs. *Origins* will select other portions of the Stob Memoirs for future publication.



1888 wedding photo—John and Anna Stob.

for visitors. It was not the place in which the family normally gathered.

There was a dining room which, as I recall, was never or seldom used for dining, in part, no doubt, because near the center of it Father had placed a pot-bellied stove fueled by coal, the ashes from which had regularly to be sifted in the interest of economy.

A corridor, flanked on one side by a bathroom and on the other by a bedroom, led from the dining room into a spacious kitchen which was not only Mother's throne room but also a veritable family room, the headquarters of our communal existence and the scene of our liveliest intercourse. It was in the kitchen that we ate our meals, attended to prayers and Bible readings, played table games, and discussed whatever pertained to family or world affairs. It was here, too, that Mother did the laundry, in part upon a corrugated washboard and in part in a hand operated machine furnished with a wringer. I seem to remember, too, that before consigning extremely dirty clothes to the machine, Mother would soak them in an oblong copper boiler in the interest of maximum cleanliness. Dominating the room was a large cook stove in which both coal and wood was burned and upon which Mother not only cooked our meals but also heated the irons with which she pressed our clothes. From within the oven of that stove there periodically emerged the best pies and cakes in all of Cook County. Next to the stove stood an icebox into which the itinerant iceman would insert the fifty-pound block of ice we ordered by placing at the window the sign which he provided. At the other end of the room was a large oblong table ringed with chairs at the head of which Father sat in an oaken arm chair placed near a rack supporting the Dutch Bible which he read aloud each time the family sat down to meals. The reading was, of course, accompanied by prayers offered both before and after eating.

The house was lit by gas lamps, the mantels of which had regularly to be replaced. For lack of screens, flies not infrequently invaded our quarters, but sticky fly paper judiciously placed, or sheets of poison fly paper resting in saucers, captured and killed most of them.

A window in our kitchen looked upon a smallish uncovered wooden porch from which likewise uncovered wooden steps led down to a ground floor platform from which we gained access to 14th Place. It was this exposed back stair that we habitually used to enter or leave our flat.

There was a yard of sorts that stretched from the back of our house to the adjacent alley, but it was no more than twenty-five feet wide and forty feet long. It contained not a blade of grass and it was encumbered too by a shed in

which we stored our coal and wood. But it served boys of my age as a baseball diamond, and at the time we considered it rather spacious. A hit from one end of the yard onto the street counted as a home run, a wallop of which one could be justly proud.

Stretched high above the yard ran Mother's clotheslines which ran on pulleys fastened to the porch at one end and at the other to a tall pole near the shed. When, as sometimes happened, a frayed line broke, it required great ingenuity to restore the device to usefulness.

On the ground floor of our building there existed a Dutch bakery conducted by the brothers La Botz. We bought sweet rolls from them as well as delicious cream puffs. My companions and I hung about the place a good deal, and in response to our importunities we would sometimes get a reluctantly given cookie or sweet.

We lived at the 14th Place address for about two years. At the end of that time, when I had attained the age of seven and one-half, I had acquired and stored in my consciousness enough experience to give a certain shape and structure to my person and to afford me a recognizable identity and presence.

I had made the pleasurable acquaintance of my classmates at school and I had come to be accepted by most of the kids on our block. But most of all I had been nurtured into relative maturity by a conscious and beneficent association with the members of my family.

My father's sturdy but unaffected piety, his wise counsel, his exemplary reading habits, his involvement in the affairs of church and school, his steady industriousness, and his kindly disposition affected me deeply. Now that I think of it, I do not remember him ever raising his voice or uttering a harsh word. When I was disobedient or had done some unseemly thing, he simply called me to him, took a firm grip on my arm, and looked me in the eye. By this body language alone he made plain to me that certain things were not done in Israel or tolerated in the Stob household.

And my mother was a gem. The house was, of course, her domain. She was vice-president, treasurer, and general manager of the realm. To each of her children she assigned a place and a task, with the result that everything proceeded in an orderly fashion. She was no martinet, but with a firm hand she gently guided the family into a routine that gave our life together a certain consistency and predictability. It was known, for example, that meals were served at designated times, that we were expected to eat what was set upon the table, and that no one was to waste any food; what one took upon one's plate was to be eaten. She kept the house spic-and-span and would abide no unredressed clutter. We younger

children were taught to wipe our feet when entering the house. We had appointed pegs on which to hang our coats and caps. Shoes and other apparel had to be neatly stored. We were to come in from play as soon as darkness fell and promptly thereafter wash from face and hands the city's accumulated grime. Bedtime and rising time were regulated. We school children were not permitted to be underfoot when the early risers were being served breakfast before reporting for work. But she was, amidst all her managerial duties, a loving and caring mother who taught us by precept and example to be neat, decorous, and cooperative. Her lively faith in God and providence matched that of my father and she instilled in us a regard for the Scriptures, a respect for authority, a sense of duty, a love for neighbor, and a recognition of the absolute need for religious commitment to the Creator and Lord of all.

There are handicaps in being the youngest child in a large family. One comes to inherit clothes and toys handed down from above and to be regarded as not yet licensed to voice an opinion. And indeed, it was a rule in our house that in the presence of adult visitors a child was not to speak unless spoken to. But there are advantages to being a minor, I grew up in the company of intelligent and articulate adults to whose conversations I was privileged to attend, whose knowledge I could draw upon, and whose concern and help I could always count on. Brothers and sisters alike served as my mentors. Tom, Neal, and George undertook to advance my education by tutoring me in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and by alerting me to the significance of events happening around us. My sisters saw to it that my hair was combed, that my teeth were brushed, that I was appropriately dressed, and that I observed the social amenities. Mart, nearest to me in age yet my senior by three years, took pains to insure that the several indulgences accorded to the baby of the family were kept within bounds. But what proved to be as helpful as anything else was the family gathering that took place most evenings in our large kitchen.

It should be remembered that the absence of internal distractions and external enticements was a feature of these early years. We had no car to lure us on to city and country roads. We had no radio and no television to tempt us away from reading and conversation. Dancing and attendance at movies (then called "nickel shows") were forbidden. The opera and the symphony existed beyond our means and doubtless beyond our level of appreciation; our musical education being limited to psalm tunes and gospel hymns. All of this left the older children with little to do outside the home except to visit

friends in other homes, attend a midweek church meeting, go to an occasional ballgame, or perhaps, as in the case of Tom and Neal, court the favor of some young lady. But even the latter occupation was restricted in those days. At best, a young man who was "dating" saw his girlfriend only on Wednesday and Sunday evenings and, since taverns, nightclubs, and other such worldly things were out of bounds, his time with her was normally spent in the "parlor" or on the porch swing. The minutes of private courtship lasted from the time monitoring parents retired for the night and the stroke of midnight. No proper couples continued their tryst beyond that witching hour.

Dinner was in the evening and it was a communal affair with each occupying his or her assigned chair as age dictated. Always attended by devotions, it was also an occasion for round table discussion. After the girls had cleaned the table and washed the dishes, the whole company normally assembled for further talk. From this habitual activity I gained knowledge and insight not accorded to those less favorably placed than I. During 1914 much of the talk centered upon the war which was brewing and which erupted in August of that year. The July assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was emblazoned in the press and generously commented on at home. The August declaration of war frightened the family and put into the shade the July announcement that the Panama Canal had been completed and would in one month permit the passage of an ocean-going vessel. Father was initially on the side of the Germans, for he resented England's recent wresting of South Africa from the control of his favored Boers. Paul Kruger was in those days a hero we were taught to look up to. The older children, however, having no experience of The Netherlands, tended to side with Britain and France, though they hoped that the United States would not be drawn into the conflict. They were encouraged in this by President Wilson's August Proclamation of Neutrality.

Other issues were discussed at table with fervor and elan. A 1914 decision of Synod to allow office bearers to speak English at classical meetings became a topic of conversation, as did the purchase that year of *The Banner* by the Christian Reformed Church. The April 1915 torpedoing of the British Cunard Line *Lusitania* by the Germans off the coast of Ireland with a loss of 1200 lives modified my father's opinion of the Germans and confirmed my brothers' allegiance to the Allied cause. There was talk that year, too, about William Hale ("Big Bill") Thompson's election as Mayor of Chicago, as well as Jess Willard's capture of the world's heavy-weight boxing crown.

It is not to be supposed that ours was an academic debating society. There were no learned savants among us. Father and Mother had not gone beyond the fourth grade and none of the children had gone beyond the eighth grade, except perhaps Tom who had taken some commercial courses after finishing grade school. But the Lord had blessed our parents with intelligence and character and they had been able in God's good providence to fashion with their gifts a life-style conducive to the wholesome nurture and development of their children. Meanwhile, we were a set of ordinary people doing what seemed natural in the light of our Dutch and Reformed inheritance.

Moreover, it was not all talk that went on. We played table games, too. I think there was Parcheesi, a game played with dice, no less. And then there was Rook. Card playing as well as dancing and theater attendance, was forbidden by the church, but in our circles the interdiction was held to apply only to "devil cards" and gambling. Rook was considered exempt and it was widely indulged in. Father was good at the game and later Mart became equally adept at it. I, however, took little interest in it and seldom played.

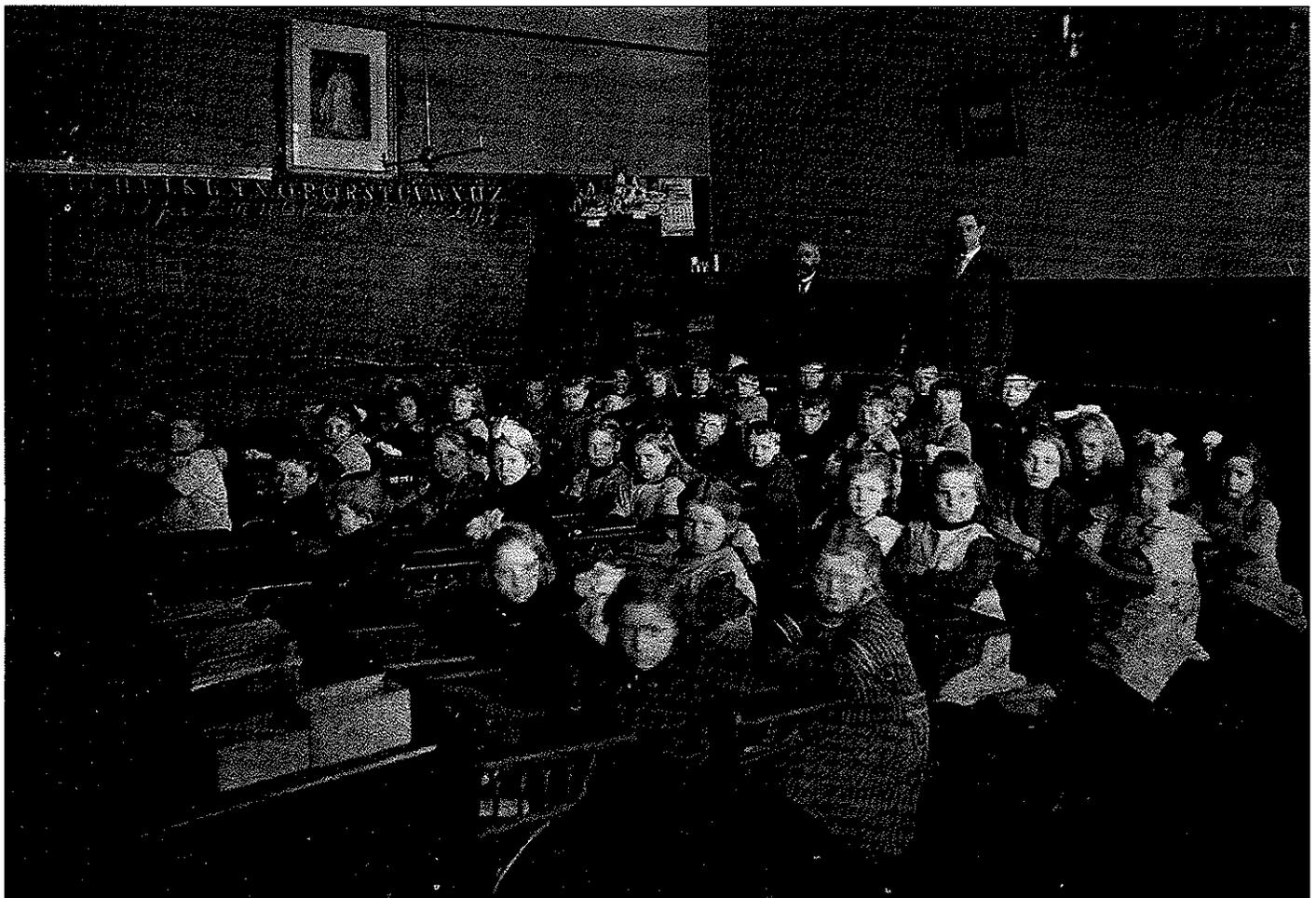
I am told that soon after our return from Texas, Father found temporary employment at the Badenock Grain Elevator from which wholesale establishment he had in former years purchased his hay and feed. Within months he reopened a retail store in these commodities at Hastings Street and Paulina, but sensing the arrival of the automobile age he abandoned this project and before the year 1914 had come to a close, he had established himself in a cinder hauling business which, with two wagons and half a dozen horses, yielded him an acceptable return on his investment.

Supplementing the income brought into the house by my father were the contributions which were made early on by some of the children. By the middle of the year 1915 four of my older brothers and sisters were gainfully employed. With Father profitably engaged and four or five children paying room and board, Mother was able, after setting aside funds for church and school, to defray all household expenses and also, I suspect, to lay a little aside.

It was perhaps this improvement in the family's financial situation that induced my parents to look about for better living quarters. When it became known that the lower apartment of the Stege house on Ashland Avenue was for rent, the decision was made to occupy it forthwith. I believe it was late in 1915 or early 1916, when I was about to enter the third grade, that we moved across the street into our new residence, one which was just a

Ebenezer Christian School—Class of 1915-16.

GRADE II. About 1916. Mr. H. Jacobsma, Teacher; Mr. H. Kuiper, Prin. Bottom Row—Ella Mulder, Tena Lobbes, Tena Holtrop, Sadie Tameling, Bertha Blauw, —, Alice DeBoer, Tena Dykenga, Grace Bandringa, Katherine VanByssum. 2nd Row—John Peters, Andrew DeVries, Katherine Kiemel, Dorothy Boer, Anna Oosting, Geraldine Decker, John VanderVelde, George Ottenhoff, William Noorlag, Rudolph DeVries, Henry Stob, Bernard Iwema, John Stouwie, —, Andrew Hoekstra. Top Row—Jennie Kerkstra, —, Jennie Hoekstra, Anna Dykhuizen, Anna Decker, Theresa Brouwer, John Blauw, Harry VanderPloeg, —, Anna Huizer, Herman Veldman, Herman Bosman, —. (Read each double row separately, left to right, front to back.)



stone's throw from the 14th Place flat that we were vacating.

The Stege house was so called because it was owned and on the upper level occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Stege, proprietors and managers of the huge brewery that stood on the corner of 15th Street and Ashland, a scant half block away.

The family was now well situated and space had been acquired to accommodate the friends the growing children increasingly brought into the house. Private meals were still eaten in the large kitchen, but guests were served in the dining room. A foot-pumped organ now graced the living room and about it the young adults gathered on Sunday afternoons to sing their favorite songs, thereafter to enjoy the evening meal of ham, cheese, eggs, and bread that Mother lavishly provided.

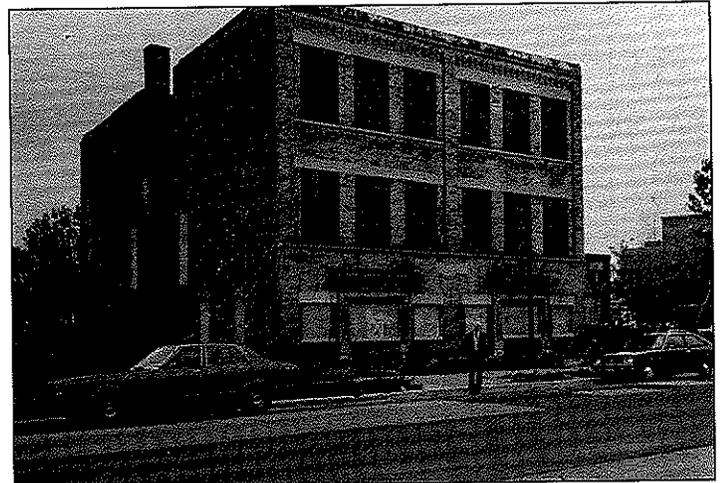
In the first year of residence in the Stege house—the year 1916—a number of things happened. What I remember most vividly is the November reelection of Woodrow Wilson to the presidency of the United States. My father was a Republican and he favored the candidacy of Justice Charles E. Hughes. Because of his interest in the race, we stayed up late on election day in order to read the message about the result which was to be signaled toward midnight by a light flashed from the Wrigley Tower. A victory of Hughes was flashed that night and we went to bed satisfied, but the morning papers revealed that Wilson had won. His promise to keep us out of the war had apparently turned the tide.

General John J. ("Black Jack") Pershing's vain pursuit of Pancho Villa across the Mexican border also elicited our interest that year, but it was only when the general took command of the American troops in 1917 that the Mexican expedition took on fresh meaning. Of lesser interest, though a cause of some regret, was the movement of the Chicago Cubs from a stadium in our area to Wrigley Field on the far north side. In spite of the move, the Cubs continued to be our team and they remain mine to this very day.

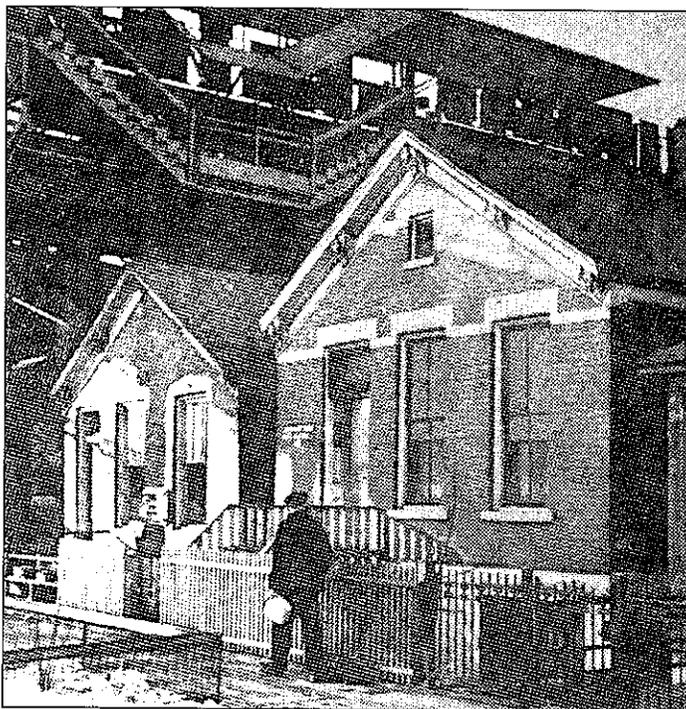
It was a Dutch neighborhood we lived in, although it was not an exclusive enclave without an ethnic mix. Jews lived in numbers along 14th Street and there was a scattering of Irish and Polish Catholics in the neighborhood, but the Dutch predominated and it was under the shelter of their culture and mores that I grew up.

These Dutch people, most of whom had roots in the Netherlands' province of Groningen and who still mastered and frequently spoke the language of that region, boasted no proud ancestry and laid no claim to culture, but they espoused and generally practiced the stern morality and displayed the personal graces which the

1983 photo of Ebenezer Christian School; Henry Stob in foreground.



(top) John Blauw buying coal on 1419
Ashland Ave. (1941).
(bottom) Dutch homes on 1702 and 1704
West 14th Place.



Calvinistic faith they embraced tends everywhere to engender. True to their ethnic tradition, they were also industrious and thrifty. Few of them were rich and some would perhaps be regarded now as deprived and underprivileged, but I doubt that any of the latter thought of themselves in this way. Most lived happily within their modest means and though they did not despise prosperity and success, they had learned from the apostle to be content with the circumstances in which they found themselves.

The Stege house, which we did not own but merely rented, was with its appointments, grass, and flowers, an anomaly in the neighborhood. Most houses were small and placed close together with only a narrow gangway stretched between them. There were almost no lawns, trees, or gardens, and no empty lots in which children could romp and play. Flowers sometimes appeared on windowsills but their presence did little to relieve the general bareness of the scene. The alleys were unpaved and muddy after rains. For want of adequate policing by the city's sanitary department, they were often cluttered, too, with refuse and debris and, consequently, rat infested. Yet, in spite of these conditions there was among the people a pervasive spirit of friendship and neighborliness, as well as many front steps and porches from which to exercise these admirable traits.

Men and unmarried young women were, of course, the providers. The place for a married woman was in the home; matrimony led to housekeeping and the bearing and rearing of children, not to outside employment. A married woman or a widow living on the edge of poverty might indeed become a cleaning lady for the more affluent or resort to laundering other peoples' clothes in her own home, but she was not apt to take a job in a public work place; in our neighborhood this outside activity was reserved for men and girls.

Some heads of families in the community worked in shops or factories, others held office jobs, and a number ran their own small businesses. Messrs. Veldman and Dryfhout owned a blacksmith shop on Fourteenth Street and Paulina, and Mr. Dekker owned another one at 14th Place and Laflin. Mr. Stouwie ran a grocery store at 14th Place and Paulina and Mrs. Rispens owned one a block away, at 14th Place and Ashland. The butcher shop which he ran in conjunction with it was later taken over by Mr. Boersma. Mr. James De Boer owned a hay and feed store which he conducted with the aid of his three oldest sons at 14th Place and Loomis. Mr. Conrad Ottenhoff was an excavator who in his work deployed heavy earth-moving equipment. His brother George dealt in real estate and insurance and Walter dealt in oil. The Wigboldys, Wieren-

gas, and Evenhouses were, I believe, engaged in trucking. Mr. Van Byssum sold shoes and did shoe repair in a small shop he ran on 14th Place. Mr. Vander Velde delivered ice in summer and coal and wood in winter from his home on 14th Place and Paulina. Mr. Koning, who lived nearby, was a collector of manure, which he sold to dealers who shipped it by the carload to outlying farmers for the fertilization of their fields. Then, of course, there were the aforementioned La Botz brothers whose Ashland Avenue bakery supplied the community with Dutch pastries.

Our dental needs were taken care of by Dr. Hargerink and when we got sick we could call upon the services of Dr. Van Dellen. Both had offices on Ashland Avenue near our house. I don't remember how the physician got about—he may have been among the very few who owned a car—but it was common for such as he to make house calls and after ministering to the sick, to stay and chat awhile. When death occurred, Mr. Leenhouts was available for embalming. He ran a funeral establishment on Ashland Avenue, just a few paces from our house, but it was more a workshop than a meeting place for mourners. The body of the deceased normally lay encoffined in the family living room and to pay their respects and condolences neighbors came in measured steps and muted tones to the crepe-draped house of mourning.

I can hardly omit from this account of our people a report concerning the smoking and drinking habits of its leading men. Cigarettes were unknown when I was a small boy; they were introduced, I believe, when the soldiers returned from France in 1919. In any case, they were not smoked by the elderly who, then already, referred to them as "coffin nails." But pipes and cigars were everywhere in evidence. My dad usually smoked a corncob pipe and on the rack beside the family Bible there always stood a large can of roughcut tobacco. He smoked cigars, too, of course, especially on Sundays and when guests were in the house. The minister also smoked and so did the elders. The consistory invariably met, I'm told, in a smoke-filled room, though the goings-on of these stalwarts bore no resemblance to the shenanigans of the scheming politicians who were said to meet within similarly foggy confines.

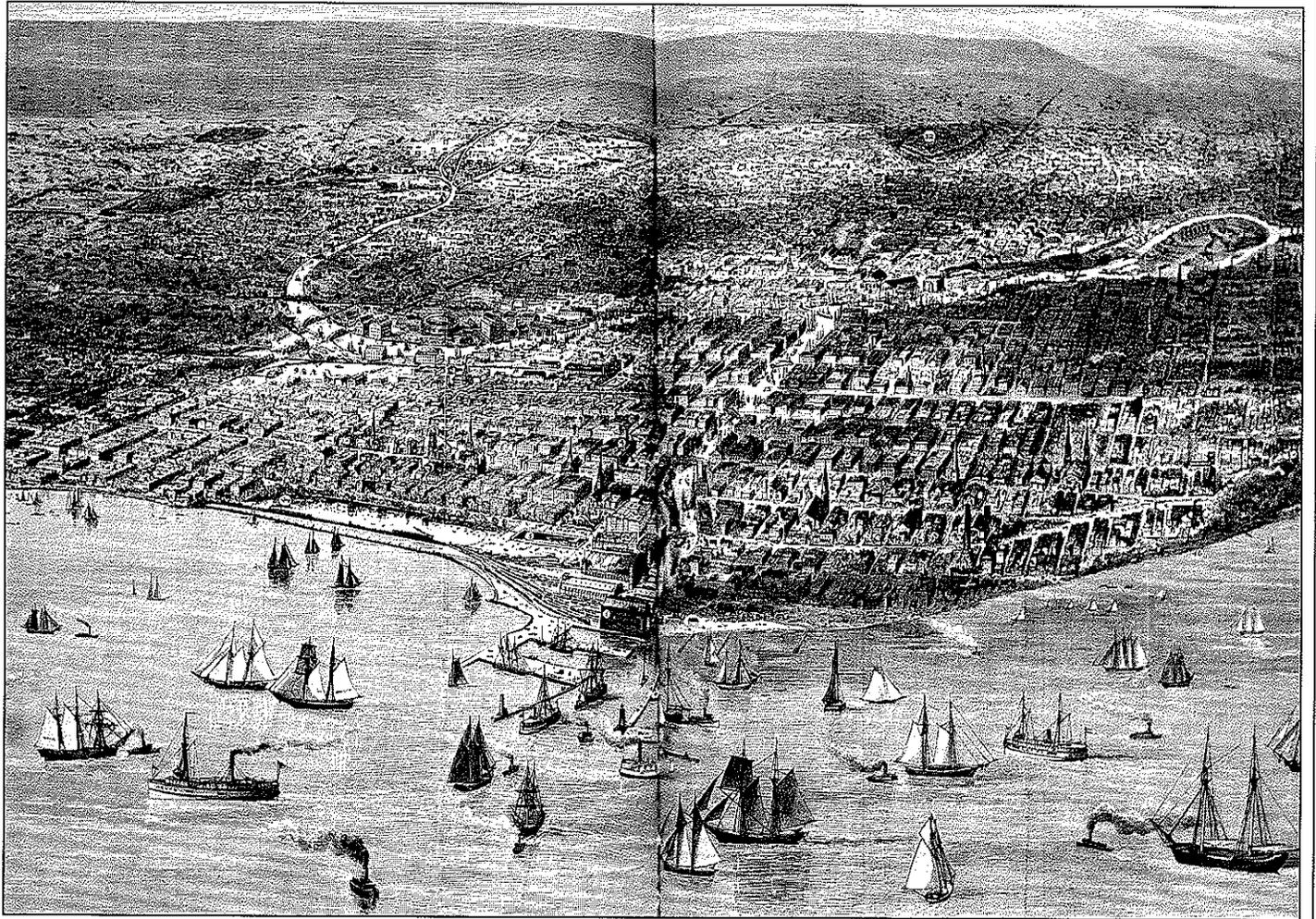
They say that the Dutch and the Scots, both sons of Calvin, resorted to drink in order to withstand the wet cold blasts that blew down upon them from the turbulent North Sea. However that may be, liquor was freely, though not excessively, imbibed by a great many of our staunch burgers. It was not uncommon for elders to be served a jigger of bourbon or rye when they appeared for house visitation. There was then nothing so fancy as a highball; people took their drinks straight and undiluted,

albeit in thimble-sized draughts. It was the custom in our circles to serve "boerenjongens" at year's end. This was a compound concocted of whiskey and raisins, and a batch of it was prepared in the Christmas season by most Dutch matrons. People would visit each other after church on New Year's Day and be toasted with a small glass of these floating, rum-soaked raisins. Nobody objected to the use of beer, and on hot summer days the adult members of our family drank it openly on our front porch. A good quantity of it could be fetched from the corner saloon in a tin pail for a dime, and when I was still in school, I was sometimes dispatched to perform this errand. Nobody inquired whether or not one was a minor.

The drinking, happily, was generally done with due temperance, but there would be occasional lapses and public drunkenness was unfortunately not unknown on our Dutch streets. It was, however, strictly condemned and any offender was bound to be visited and reprimanded by the church authorities.

It was among these people, and within this neighborhood, that I lived my schoolboy years. When I was in first and second grade and still living in the flat above the bakery, I seldom moved beyond that portion of 14th place which ran from Ashland to Paulina, except of course for Sunday visits to church and daily trips through the alley to the school on 15th Street. As I grew older I roamed widely and more freely through the neighborhood in order to absorb its sights and sounds. I liked the smell of Mr. De Boer's hay and cherished the often-granted opportunity to ride on the wagon with his sons when they made a delivery of it. I delighted to see Mr. Dekker at his forge and to witness the deftness with which he fitted shoes on sometimes balky horses. The livery stable on 14th Street also interested me. I can still summon to awareness the horsey odors emanating from it, just as I can bring to consciousness the aroma of draught beer that floated from the saloons on our corner when the doors stood open in summertime. Then, too, there still reverberates in my ears the rumblings of the El that thundered past 14th Place at Paulina.

*Bird's eye view of Chicago from 1874
Harper's Weekly magazine.*



Recollections

The "Far West Side," known currently as the Lawndale district, is situated about four miles West of the "Old West Side." That Dutch community was centered at about Fourteenth Street and Ashland Avenue where the local Dutch economy focused heavily on the horse-drawn cartage business. Horses and wagons were commonly quartered in backyards while homes stood flush against the sidewalks without lawns or trees. Around the turn of the century that original enclave spilled over along Roosevelt Road at Crawford Avenue, and became the center of the "Far West Side."*

The Far Westsiders built churches and a Christian school within easy reach of their homes, but the area also contained an ethnic mixture of Bohemians, Jews and others. The Douglas Park Christian Reformed Church stood



Dirk Kooy at the forge.

CHICAGO'S "FAR WEST SIDERS" IN THE 1920s

by Rev. William Dryfhout

on the 1300 block of South Harding Avenue while the Third Christian Reformed Church, organized for exclusively English-language worship, erected a basement structure at 4100 Grenshaw Street. The Timothy Christian School, with four classrooms, stood in the northeast corner at South Tripp Avenue and Thirteenth Street; the Reformed Church in America's congregation met in a basement edifice on the 1300 block of South Austin Boulevard.

Most of the Dutch people were located south of the railroad freight tracks,** on shaded streets such as Spring-

Rev. William Dryfhout, emeritus pastor (1977) of the Christian Reformed Church, lives currently in Randolph, Wisconsin.

field, Harding, Komensky, Karlov, Kedvale, Keeler, Tripp, Kildare, Kolin and Kostner. The Dutch shopped in the area's many stores for all sorts of merchandise, but the main shopping area followed Tripp Avenue Eastward to about Harding Avenue. The main corner, Twelfth and Crawford, featured Triky's large dry goods store, a bank, and a drug store, with the United Cigar Shop on the southeast corner.

On barrels, just outside their shop's doors, Bohemian butchers hung rabbits from which older boys snatched tails to display on the front tips of their ice skates. During the Christmas season Triky's store hired a Santa Claus to serve the children; our parents allowed us to talk with him, but very reluctantly. After entering the elementary school we also learned about the Crawford Avenue State Bank because that firm provided twelve-inch rulers to every pupil.

My mother traded for groceries at Schad Brothers, where, because of her limited use of English, she could make herself understood in that German shop. The Dutch "aardappel" sounded much like the German "kartoffel" (potato) as did both meel/mehl for flour and rijst/reiz for rice. Otherwise foreigners could point to articles which lined the grocer's shelves or which were located in glass display cases. This, of course, was before the days of self-service marketing. The butcher also treated children to a wiener when they accompanied their mothers for shopping. Next door to Schad's, Pepper's Candy Store exchanged our rarely available pennies for sweets which we selected carefully from a wide variety of choices. On Saturdays, when chores at home were finished, young boys often parked small wagons in front of the grocery stores to await patrons who might want their delivery service. That could fetch a nickel and, rarely, a dime. The most promising spot was the neighborhood A & P Store.

The bakery, located on the southeast corner at Tripp and Twelfth, attracted a large number of Christian school students who took no lunch to school. They raced to the bakery to buy buns and returned to eat them with their classmates in the school lunchroom. Small bottles of milk appeared later, an innovation from the Wheaton Dairy.

Kooy and Dryhout's Wagon Repair shop stood west on Twelfth Street between Komensky and Karlov, and their wide-open doors invited curious onlookers to watch blacksmith Kooy at his forge. A spare lot alongside the shop contained a variety of surplus wagons designed for the delivery of ice and other products or for dumping coal, gravel or wood. Hidden behind a large display sign, children enjoyed playing among the wagons, wagon wheels and other assorted equipment. A pop bottling

plant in the rear provided an occasional treat when a worker passed out a bottle from the bottling line.

A mysterious store, located across from the wagon shop, was hidden by a sheet hung in the front window while another sheet divided the shop's interior. This Chinese laundry housed a whole family which lived and cooked (we could smell the food) inside the curtained area. In the front they laundered the stiff cuffs and collars which were fashionable at that time. The shop was always steaming hot from the constant heating of flat irons which were used to iron out wrinkles. No doubt the heat induced the workers to wear their typically light and loose fitting T-shirts and trousers. Customers received "tickets" marked with mysterious hieroglyphics which identified the particular orders. We never saw either children or women in the laundry.

The backyards of the "Far West Side" featured the evidence of that era's daily chores. After the winter the alleys contained heaps of stove and furnace ashes. Vegetables and flowers were grown in the back or side yards. Chickens and pigeons, usually located in backyard coops, awakened the neighborhood with early morning crowing and cooing. Several yards contained barns with rented space for the horses and wagons of the many door-to-door peddlers.

In those horse and wagon days "ragsheemies" traveled up and down the streets and alleys calling for "Rags and iron!" to purchase whatever the residents offered for a few pennies. The wagons congregated at their market strip near the 2700 block of West Twelfth Street. In the summertime wagons of this sort spread out through the community with loads of fruits and vegetables. Each peddler called out a particular product—"sweet corn!" "pickles!" "apples!"—and eked out a small living. In the fall the calling changed to "wood" or "coal" which all sounded like "whoa!" "whoa!"

On Sundays (mornings, afternoons and evenings), church-bound pedestrian traffic moved eastward to the sanctuary on Harding Street. The roads were unpaved in

*By boarding the "green" streetcar these urbanites were able to visit family and friends in the "old West Side" and the car line ran as far West as Cicero Avenue, where a few families settled. Beyond Cicero Avenue the "12th Street car" (later Roosevelt Road) ran to Austin Avenue. The route skirted the boundary of Chicago on the north and Cicero to the south. It was between Central—56th Street, and Austin—60th, that the "Far Westsiders" began to migrate in the mid-Twenties. At Austin, on the city limits, a "yellow" car line took passengers farther West to Berwyn, Oak Park, and Forest Park. During the Twenties the "green" Chicago streetcars became "red" but the whole network, green or red and yellow, facilitated the westward trek of the Chicago Dutch from their original site on Fourteenth Street to western suburbs like Berwyn.

**Trains ran parallel to Twelfth Street to about Seventeenth Street.



the early Twenties and full of pot holes which kept the wagons and cars moving at a slow pace. During the summer the pot holes, which the residents had not filled with ashes, were patched and the tar wagon sprayed fresh tar on the roads to keep the dust down. Many a child slipped and tarred his or her clothing while chasing a ball or trying to avoid a passing mongrel. I know all too well a particular youngster who got "tarred" indoors after carelessly allowing his clean white clothing to get tarred outdoors.

Most of the Dutch community read the weekly *Onze Toekomst* (Our Future) published in the "Old West Side" from a South Ashland Avenue address. The paper carried reports from all the Dutch-American communities of the Chicago area—Englewood, Roseland, South Holland, Munster, and West Chicago suburbs such as Oak Park, Evergreen Park and even Des Plaines. In the CRC's denominational periodical, *De Wachter*, West Siders read news about the whole denomination, while the similarly focused *Banner* was printed in English. A few families received, and then passed around, the weekly *Groninger Kerkbode* which kept them informed of ecclesiastical news in Groningen, the native province for a large majority of the West Side immigrants.

Along with typical news these periodicals published continuous stories which had the same attraction as today's comic strips and soap operas. To retain subscribers the publishers offered free books, "premies" which were often bound collections of serial stories or religious books of a popular sort. This literature, together with daily devotional messages printed on the imported block calendars (scheurkalenders), provided legitimate Sunday reading and also preserved the Dutch language for some of the area's young people. Because other reading material was limited, the "bonus" books became a significant part of the typical family's library. The children of such homes often found their high school German language courses rather easy because of the similarities between German, Dutch and Gronings.

Changes in the Far West Side included the arrival of Jewish neighbors who moved into three-story tenements built on empty lots. Soon their kosher meats, fish and delicatessens appeared along Twelfth Street. We often watched a "rabbi" grinding up horseradish in a mill that stood outside the front door of a delicatessen. On Saturday afternoons, when we were returning from catechism classes, a Jewish woman could occasionally beckon to one of us Gentile boys and ask him to light a fire in a cook stove. Because she could not re-light the fire on the Sabbath we gained the valuable award of a penny. The Jews had their synagogue on Independence Boulevard on the

eastern border of the Far West Side. Near the corner of Tripp Avenue and Twelfth Street a large Jewish bakery was erected to produce pumpernickel bread, bagels and other baked goods which were distributed throughout the city in large trucks.

When the Jews migrated from the "old" to the "far" west side, the CRC's Nathaniel Institute followed and was housed in new facilities at 1241 South Crawford, later named Pulaski. This Christian mission for Jewish people provided ministries in health, wholesome entertainment, and gospel preaching. More recently a group of the area's African-Americans have acquired the building to house the Lawndale CRC. Similarly the Tripp Avenue Christian School has been used successively as a Jewish synagogue and currently as an African-American Lodge.

By the late Twenties the Dutch were already migrating to Cicero, Oak Park, and Berwyn. There a new business center clustered around West Roosevelt Road and South Austin. A later migration has gone further westward into Bellwood, Elmhurst, Wheaton, Winfield, Western Springs and as far as Naperville. Chicago's Dutch-Americans have been moving westward ever since they settled and prospered in the "old" and "far" west side neighborhoods. They have left little behind them to mark their presence in these places, but this recollection is intended to remind them of the many years during which God has sustained them in work and worship.

Names associated with the Far West Side of Chicago 1900-1930

(as a 77 year old memory may recall, subject to correction)

Widow De Vries and daughters—South Springfield Avenue
 J. Boss—South Springfield Avenue
 Dirk Kooy—1200 block of South Harding Avenue
 Brands—1200 block of South Harding Avenue
 Rev. J. O. Vos—1300 block of South Harding Avenue, in parsonage to North of Douglas Park CRC
 Pete Van Dyk (and parents)—1600 block of South Harding Avenue
 Kooy & Dryfhout Repair Shop—1109 South Crawford Avenue
 Nathaniel Institute—1241 South Crawford Avenue
 Dr. Balk, dental office—1301 South Crawford Avenue
 Tiesema Coal Yard—against CBQ Railroad
 K. Vander Molen—731 South Karlov Avenue
 K. Dryfhout—South Karlov Avenue
 Tinge, Sr.—South Karlov Avenue
 Tromp—South Karlov Avenue
 William Stob—South Karlov Avenue
 The Vissers Sr. and Jr.—South Karlov Avenue
 J. Balk—1600 block of South Karlov Avenue
 Dirk Zwart—1200 block of South Kedvale Avenue
 R. Swierenga—1400 block of South Kedvale Avenue
 Hoving—South Keeler Avenue
 A small church—South Keeler Avenue
 Ed Swierenga—South Keeler Avenue
 Dick Zwart—1300 block of South Keeler Avenue
 Ebo Boerema—1200 block of South Tripp Avenue
 Mrs. Dyk—1200 block of South Tripp Avenue

Tinge Jr.—1200 block of South Tripp Avenue
 B. Huiner—1200 block of South Tripp Avenue
 Dryfhout—1236 South Tripp Avenue (1913-1919)
 Timothy Christian School—South Tripp Avenue
 Cook—1300 block of South Tripp Avenue
 Jake Stob—1300 block of South Tripp Avenue
 Noorlage—1300 block of South Tripp Avenue
 John Stob—1300 block of South Tripp Avenue
 Bulthuis—1400 block of South Tripp Avenue
 N. Knol—South Kildare
 Jake Vos—South Kildare
 Knol Sr.—South Kildare
 Ms. Pals and Ramaker—South Kildare
 Andrew Vos—South Kildare
 Huizenga—South Kildare
 Overzet—South Kildare (1920)
 B. Huiner—South Kolin
 Cleveringa—South Kolin
 Zielstra—South Kolin
 Speckman—South Kolin
 Abel Speckman—South Kolin
 Herman Van Stedum—1200 block of South Kolin
 Van Kampen—1300 block of South Kolin
 K. Vander Molen—650 South Kostner (1920)
 Draayer—South Kenneth
 N. Hendricks (Christian school principal)—1500 block South Kenneth
 K. Dryfhout—751 South Kilborn
 Auwerdas—800 block of South Kilborn
 Voss—West Wilcox

Rose Van Dellen (Christian school teacher)—4100 block of West Wilcox
 B. Huiner—West Arthington
 Veldman—West Arthington
 Vanden Berg—4000 block of West Arthington
 Molenhuis—4200 block of West Arthington
 J. Stob Sr.—West Adams
 J. Kooy—4600 block West Adams
 Boerenga—West Filmore
 Cook—West Filmore
 C. Dryfhout—4100 block of West Filmore (across from Calumet Baking Powder Company)
 Karsen Sr.—West Greshaw
 Huitsing Sr.—3900 block of West Greshaw
 De Jong—4000 block of West Greshaw
 Bastiaans—4000 block of West Greshaw
 Third CRC and parsonage (Rev. J. Weersing)—4100 block of West Greshaw
 Tammeling—4400 block of West Greshaw
 Pluisters—4400 block of West Greshaw
 Dirk Kooy—4100 block of West Twelfth Street (1910—above the Sewing Clothing Shop, whose humming machines were watched through the front window and doors)

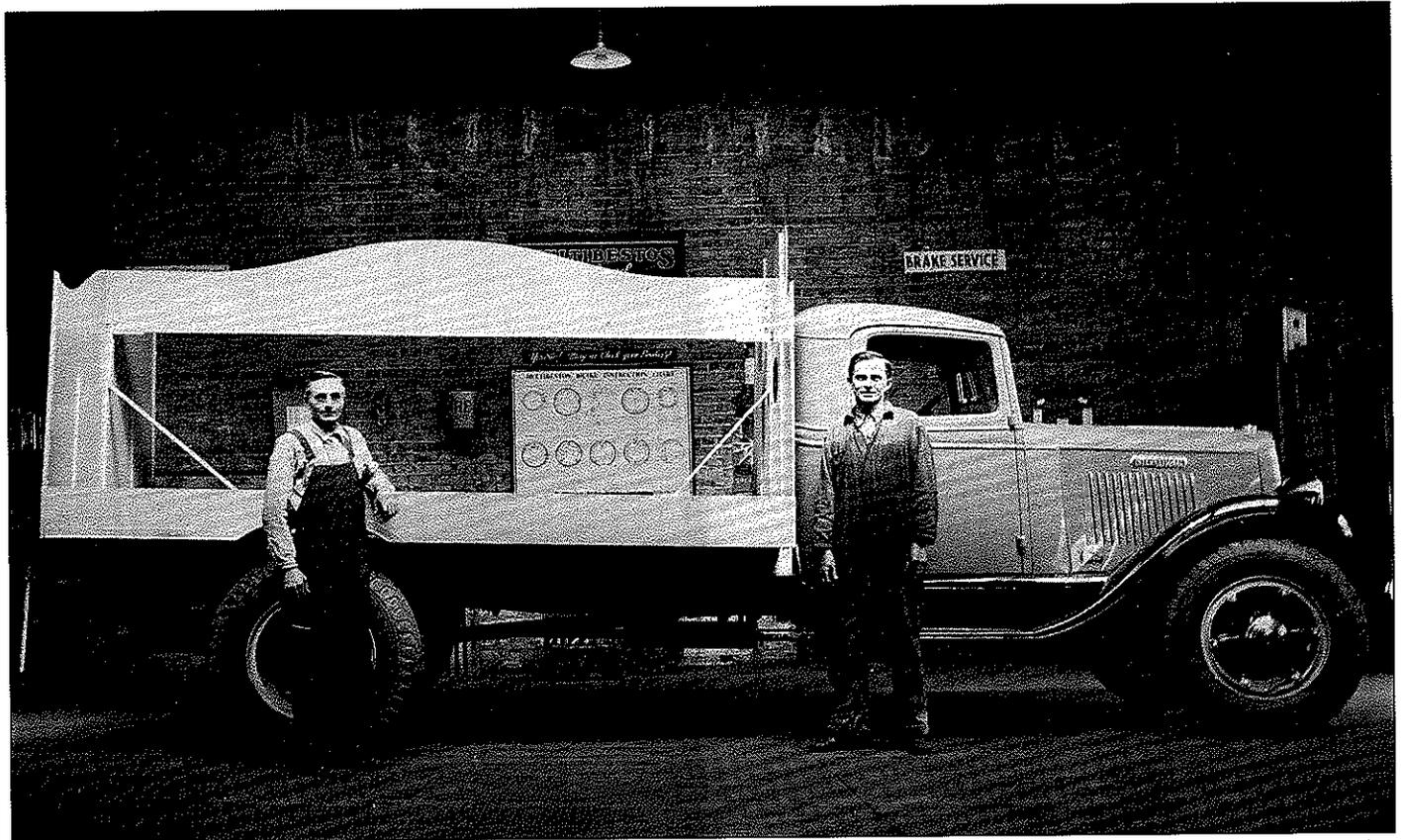
Some "products" of the Old West Side:

Revs. Henry Danhof and Herman Hoeksema, Dr. Fred Wezeman, Harm Vander Woude, Richard Veldman, Ralph and Ben Danhof, Henry Evenhouse, and John Groenwold, et. al.

Rooted in the Far West Side:

Dr. Ralph Stob, Revs. Richard Karsen, William Dryfhout, and Marcellus Weersing (Presbyterian).

Custom-made Coca-Cola truck by Kooy and Dryfhout.



Letters to my Wife



A painting of Sara Brandt Scholte,
his first wife.

H. P. Scholte to Sara by Muriel Byers Kooi*

The ecclesiastical secession (Afscheiding) of 1834 flowed rather directly from the joint efforts of Hendrik De Cock and Hendrik P. Scholte. On the Sunday of October 12, two days prior to the Ulrum congregation's official act of secession, Scholte visited with De Cock in the village of Ulrum. De Cock, who had been suspended from his pastoral duties, attempted to gain

Scholte's services to fill the vacant pulpit. The request was denied. Whereupon, after attending the regular worship service, Scholte led a group of followers to a nearby pasture where he preached from a farm wagon. About two months later he was summonsed to court where he was accused of having preached rebellion against the King and of provoking the Ulrum gathering to disobey established church authorities. With that, Scholte was imprisoned in Appingedam where he remained until

*Kooi's article on H. P. Scholte's religious activity in Pella, "An Elusive Peace in Pella" will appear in the next *Origins*.

his release five days later. The letters below (Nov. 30, Dec. 5, 1834), written during that imprisonment, provide an intimate look into Scholte's personal reactions to these events.

These letters were given to Martha Lautenbach of Pella, Iowa, by Robert Hamilton of Grinnell, Iowa. They had been preserved in the Henry Nollen/Robert Hamilton family papers for many years and then donated to the Central College Archives. Martha Lautenbach, former archivist and curator of Scholte House, translated the letters and author Muriel Kooi has edited and arranged the material for publication in this *Origins*. M. Kooi is an authority in the history of Pella, H. P. Scholte and local Iowa history.

Appingedam

November 30, 1834

Dearly Beloved,

Since yesterday evening I have been sitting here, in custody, although I think I will be transferred to Groningen. The brethren here provided me with a bed so that by God's grace I slept very well; I did not even realize that I was in prison. I am deeply aware of the support of the Lord and the affirmation of the words spoken by the prophet, "Be not dismayed by those who oppose that which you confess because to them it is corrupt, but for you it is salvation and that from God."

This morning I awakened refreshed and strengthened through the restfulness of sleep. I took the word of God not knowing what I would read but the Lord knew what I needed. I opened my Bible and saw Psalm 17. My eyes flowed over with tears of joy because of the mercy of God. He is ever the same. He will take care of His own. In the joyfulness of faith, I sang Psalm 68, verses 1, 2, and 3. And then I ate my breakfast—with relish.

So you can see, my dear wife, my happiness, in affliction, that the Lord is good. From the bottom of my heart I hope and pray to the Lord that your soul may be made quiet and submissive to the will and leading of Him who makes all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose. Sometime, and who knows how soon, it will be made clear that God the Almighty is the

vindicator of His truth and honor, the Redeemer of His people; then we will also share in that joy and happiness which He has promised to His true followers.

The earlier "process" will not be resumed and until then I expect to be kept in prison. I will write later whether I need anything from home. Greet the congregation for me. I feel sure that they are leaning on the promises of the Lord and that they will be faithful to His word. If there are further questions about the goods, they should write to the Hague. Then someone will come to plead the right of the congregation.

I will also immediately write to Hogendorp as to how things are here with me. I expect a letter from you before I write again; if you write, send it in care of O. Schildkamp, sweets-baker on the Oude Boteringe Street in Groningen. Then he will drop it off at the prison.

Tell Arie to make a place in the barn for the horse and cart. There will still be room for the small baggage cart and the two-wheeled buggy.

If you have time, write to Aunt Kramer. Greet all friends and brethren for me and tell them that, by God's grace, I am hopeful for the future and that my conscience tells me that charges brought against me are only slander and that I do not doubt that the Lord will sooner or later so direct, that truth will triumph and the slander will be punished.

I am glad that the sermon on Isaiah 8 was heard by so many in our community.

Now I must close. The jailer is here to pick up the letters.

The Lord our faithful and unchangeable God of the Covenant comfort you,

(bottom right) Heritage Hall mural "Het Woord" by Chris Stoffel Overvoorde.

(across top) The Scholte House was built in the fall and winter of 1847-1848. Custone foundation stones, quarried locally, were laid only a month after the settlers arrived in Pella in August 1847. Lumber was hewn locally, mostly walnut and oak. The home is now a museum filled with Scholte's books and furnishings.

strengthen you, and establish you in His truth and may you and all His people, praying and beseeching at the throne of Grace, glorify His name and help spread His Kingdom. Also remember in your prayers

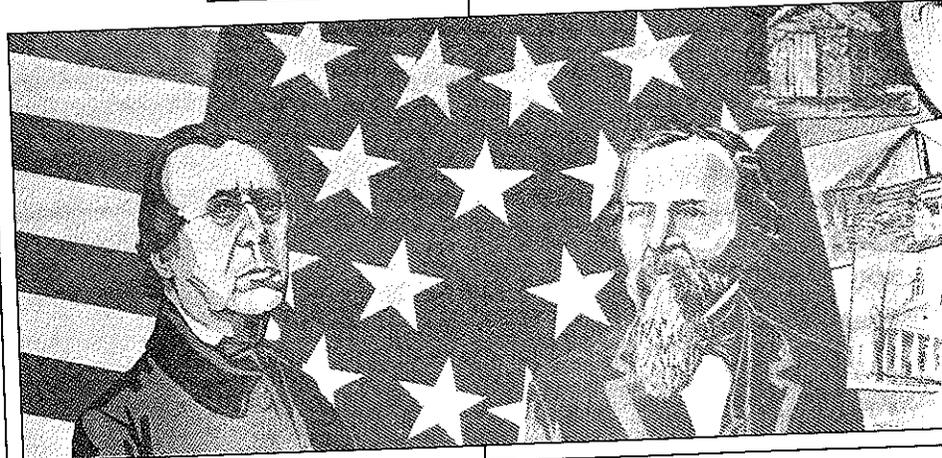
Your loving husband
(Signed) H. P. Scholte

Groningen
December 5, 1834
Dearest Beloved,

God be thanked I am once again foot-loose. I have directed the Attorney Van Loon to ask for provisional freedom for me under the law of the land. He did his best for me and the request was so blest by the Lord that yesterday evening I got freedom back again.

I then discussed with the attorney whether to bring counter-suit for all the slander and the lies. The believers in Groningen, where I arrived this morning, were amazed and overjoyed to see me.

I was in good spirits in the prison but for my body it was necessary that I be set free. I was often exposed to the damp cold outside air which came in through the bars. But again, the Lord provided for me. I can now go where I will until I am again called up. That will probably happen in about four days. I could stay here until then but I really should see about the matters at hand in Amsterdam and The Hague; I also long to be at home. I think I will go from here to Amsterdam tomorrow where I hope to arrive on Sunday morning. Then I can meet with Van Haal and others on Monday; then on to The Hague where I can spend the night. I'll speak with Hogendorp on Tuesday, take the steamboat on Wednesday, and, Lord willing, I could be in Gor-



cum by midday. If the boat has not left, I can come home but if I miss the boat I will have to stay in Gorcum until Thursday. In any event, let Arie (the hired man) be sure to have the horse at Veen on Wednesday. Then he can wait until the steamboat comes. If I am not there he can leave the horse at Veen. If I get there by Wednesday I can come along right away.

Ds. (Dominie) De Cock is in prison for five months, together with a member of his congregation who has to serve one

month. He is Klaas Pieter Ritsema, the one who wrote the letter to Prof. Hofstede de Groot. They are both in good spirits. Ds. De Cock has a good room with a stove and bed so those months will pass quickly. God's people here are all in good spirits; how things will work out for me is still unknown but I live with the idea that my enemies will fall into the pit which they dug for me. If the Lord is with us, who can be against us? God the Lord will make everything come out right.

Mrs. De Cock also had to appear in court on the 9th; what the charges against her were I do not know. That, too, will be resolved.

The people here are standing more firmly in the faith as the oppression becomes greater. I have now experienced that it is good to suffer persecution in the name of Christ.

Greet the brethren for me; I hope to be with you soon. May the Lord make us humble in prosperity and patient in adversity and so all things will glorify His name and bring well-being to his dearly purchased followers.

The Lord grant you, according to the riches of His Grace, to be much in prayer at the throne of Grace, also for him who is your loving husband.

(Signed) H. P. Scholte



(above right) In the photo is the pencil box belonging to the Dutch poet, W. Bilderdijk. Also seen, Scholte's spectacles, ink well, books and long-stemmed pipes..

(above left) Dominie Scholte in the old Dutch pulpit of the church he served in Utrecht. (Drawn by Pella artist Ed LeCocq in 1969.) This pulpit was later brought to Pella by descendants of Scholte. It can now be seen in the replica of Scholte's Church in the Pella Historical Complex.

A. C. Van Raalte to Christina

by H. J. B.

The Albertus C. Van Raalte Collection (letters, sermons, and documents 1836-1876), which the late William B. Eerdmans donated to the Calvin College Archives in 1962, contains relatively few letters written by Van Raalte. That is not surprising. Before the era of typewriters, carbon copies, and copy machines only the most important economic and legal communications were duplicated. Consequently, most letters from Van Raalte's hand can only be recovered when they have been preserved by those who received them. The letters printed below were written by Van Raalte to his wife and thus the correspondence remained in the family.

These two letters, December 24, 1846, and January 13, 1847, are particularly significant because they were penned during the time when Albertus was selecting a location for his followers who had remained in Detroit during the Winter of 1846. Mrs. Van Raalte (Christina Johanna De Moen) lived there in an apartment with their children while her husband trekked across Michigan to find a site for a settlement. During this trip Van Raalte made two crucial decisions with long term consequences. First he scuttled plans to locate in Wisconsin and then he selected land around Black Lake rather than an area near Ada; Michigan where the Thornapple and Grand Rivers converge.

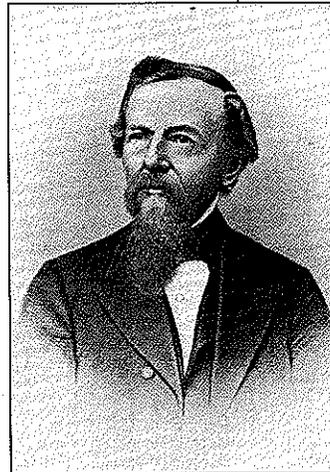
This correspondence refers to a number of prominent Michigan persons and their significance for Van Raalte and the Holland Kolonie has been detailed in Henry Lucas' book *Netherlanders in America*. Segments

from that volume, pages 73-76, follow.

In Detroit Van Raalte met new friends, who also took an interest in his plan to found a Dutch colony. Theodore Romeyn, an attorney in Detroit and scion of a family many of whose members had promoted the interests of the Reformed Church, appears to have been informed of his coming. Through his kindness Van Raalte placed his family in a boarding house, which cost him \$2.25 a day, while his followers were assigned room in a warehouse (on the corner of Woodbridge and Shelby) belonging to a baker, a Scot named William Witherspoon. For his family Van Raalte later secured from the same "kind Scot" an apartment situated in the central part of the city, for which he paid \$4.00 a month. One of the rooms was assigned to Mr. and Mrs. Bernardus Grootenhuis. During Van Raalte's absence from Detroit, Mrs. Grootenhuis was companion to his wife.

During the fortnight after his arrival Van Raalte was learning to know the people of Detroit. Through Romeyn he met some prominent citizens, and among those who took an active interest in his problems were

the Reverend George Duffield, a Presbyterian minister, and Mr. Shuball Conant, a judge, men who were in a position to give advice and



A. C. Van Raalte



Christina Van Raalte

whom Van Raalte believed he could trust completely. But his purpose remained firm to search for a suitable location for the colony in Wisconsin or some other western state. On December 16 he wrote to Brummelkamp that in the following week he planned to travel by rail to Kalamazoo, thence by stage to St. Joseph, Chicago, and nearby Lockport.

At Kalamazoo, Van Raalte also made the acquaintance of persons who took his interests to heart. Romeyn had given him a letter of introduction to M. I. Colt, who, it appears, presented Van Raalte to Ova P. Hoyt, a Presbyterian clergyman, and these gentlemen in turn introduced him to John R. Kellogg, from Allegan, a judge in Allegan County. All three impressed Van Raalte as "God-fearing upright gentlemen" in

whom he could repose every confidence. Judge Kellogg suggested that Van Raalte accompany him to Allegan and drew his attention to lands at Ada, in Kent County, a few miles east of Grand Rapids. He suggested, also, lands in the Grand River Valley, farther east in Ionia County, and offered to accompany him on a tour of inspection. Van Raalte was told, too, of lands in the six northern

townships in Allegan County which could still be bought at government prices and of which Mr. Hoyt was preparing a detailed description. All this Van Raalte wrote to his wife on December 24, adding that "through God's providence I shall be occupied in these parts for several weeks" and declaring that "more and more I am coming to believe that Michigan will become the state in which we shall establish our home."

Led by Mr. Kellogg, "a good man, intelligent and well informed," who had been born in New Hartford, New York, in 1793 and had settled in Allegan in 1836, and by an Indian guide, Van Raalte left Allegan to

inspect the lands north of the Kalamazoo and Rabbit Rivers. The route ran from Allegan northwest, crossed the Rabbit River, a branch of the Kalamazoo, entered Fillmore Township at its southeast corner, in section 36, and continued northward to the center of section 3. This route, at that time little more than a path through the woods, was used regularly by all who wished to go to the Black River country.

At the end of the road in section 3 stood four buildings, the most prominent one being made of sawn boards and having a basement; it had been erected by Isaac Fairbanks in 1844 and was still standing in 1950. This house was occupied by the Rev-

(top) Van Raalte homestead ca (1870-1960). (bottom) Display case in Calvin Archives constructed from Van Raalte home window frame and brick.

erend George N. Smith, a Congregational clergyman who since 1838 had been missionary to the Indians living here and in Indian Village on the south shore of Black Lake (now Lake Macatawa).

Snow covered the ground when Van Raalte and Kellogg arrived at the Mission, just before the close of the year. Apparently Van Raalte had already decided to establish his colony nearby, for, as Fairbanks repeatedly told the story, "I heard a rap on my log cabin and met for the first time the Reverend A. C. Van Raalte and, if I mistake not, Judge John R. Kellogg from Allegan, and learned from them a colony from the Netherlands were about to locate in Fillmore Township and vicinity and establish their homes." On New Year's Day, 1847, Van Raalte and Kellogg, accompanied by Smith and Fairbanks, waded through the snow, then about two feet deep, along the Indian trail stretching northwestward toward Black Lake, and selected the site of the Dutch settlement, soon to be known as Holland. There can be no doubt of the date, for Fairbanks wrote: "I remember the time from the habit of the Indians of firing a salute around our dwellings to usher in the New Year."

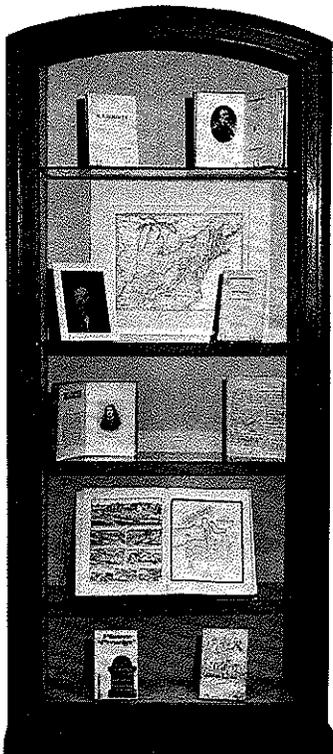
Kalamazoo, Michigan

December 24, 1846.

Thursday Morning

Dearly Beloved Wife!

Here is a short letter to inform you of my travels so far. Soon after my arrival at the inn, I visited with Mr. Colt and handed him the letter from Mr. Romein. Mr. Colt was very friendly and invited me for supper. There I experienced much cordiality as Mr. Colt introduced me to Judge Kellogg, Judge of Allegan. This gentleman is doing much to help me and he wants to go with me to visit the place



called Ada as well as other regions near Ionia and along the Grand River. He will take me to his house in the city of Allegan. Six townships in Allegan County are still for sale at government prices, and we hope to visit these also. Reverend Hoyt will furnish us with a correct drawing of the above mentioned townships. Since God in His providence gives evidence of His guidance, I will have to stay in this area for several weeks. When you have something to write to me, my address will be the home of Reverend Hoyt. Mr. Romein or Reverend Duffield will be able to give you the address. Reverend Hoyt is very helpful and seems to be a godly man; presently I am staying with him. Mr. Colt also serves God. Judge Kellogg is also generally respected as a trustworthy, just, and understanding man so that I have every reason for thanksgiving to God for the treatment I received. More and more I realize that this state of Michigan shall become the state in which we are to live. Pray much of the Lord that He may be gracious to us and help us so that I may know He is leading and grant us what is good for us. Yes, dear wife, pray much. You may be very happy for all the good that I've experienced. You must not be sad and discontented; you must thank God, for really we have enjoyed many privileges in this strange land.

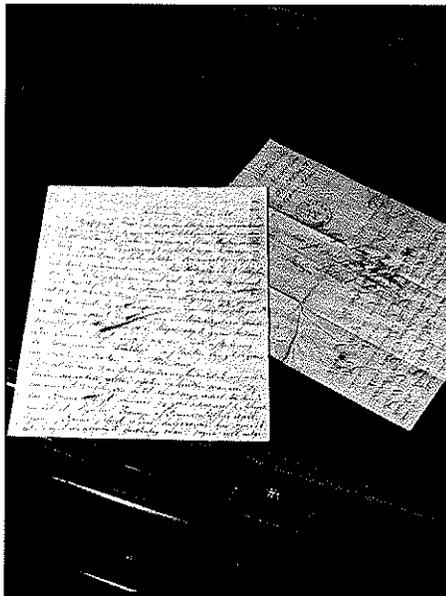
Kiss the dear children for me. Don't let Benjamin eat too much. Tell them that I plead that they obey you and that they do well in their studies. See if Grootenhuis will give them a lesson every day. Greet Jennigje Groothuis and Janna. Especially give my greetings to Rev. West and Duffield as well as Mr. Romeijn and his noble men who will deliver this short letter.

When I've finished my investigations here I hope to write you again. Now, dear ones, rest in the Lord, look away from your own considerations, submit yourself to His will and entrust to Him your destiny. Dear wife, a day without an hour or so for reading or praying? Oh,

don't become that busy with your work. Have care for your soul, for whenever it prospers all your work will also go better. Farewell to all.

Heartily, your loving friend,
brother, and husband,

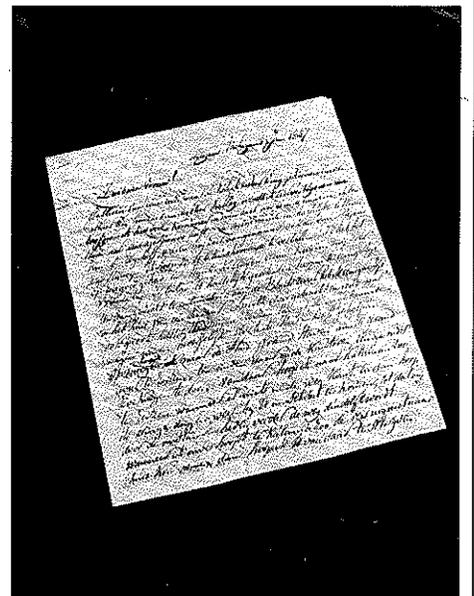
A. C. Van Raalte



Van Raalte, A. C.
Allegan, Michigan
January 13, 1847
Beloved Wife!

Upon my return to the home of Mr. Kellogg yesterday, after a trip to the Black River, I was greatly pleased to find your letter awaiting me. I was much concerned about you and the children. I am happy that God has spared you. The sympathetic and hearty letters of Rev. Wyckoff were very pleasing to me; also those from Mr. Romeyn. I hope to translate them for you when I get home. I had a good trip and Mr. and Mrs. Kellogg impress me as being very friendly. They send greetings to you and hope to meet you sometime. At the Black River I spent some time in the home of Rev. Smith. They, too, were very cordial. My travels on the undeveloped roads were difficult but the Lord helped

me. In the morning I hope to travel to the city of Grand Haven, which is on the Grand River, to get information in the offices. From there I hope to travel to Kalamazoo, barring unforeseen difficulties. After that I hope to be with you once again in Detroit until circumstances make it clear which way to go next. If, while in Kalamazoo, it unexpectedly becomes apparent that I cannot continue



the journey home just now, I hope to write you from there. I am sending you the enclosed letters so that in reading them you can better follow my thoughts and become informed of the circumstances. Have Groothuis copy the letter indicating the considerations which determined my preference for Michigan over Wisconsin. Ask him to mail the letter in person. See that it is well sealed, securely enclosed. If Mr. Romeyn is available, he may read the letter but Groothuis must mail it.* Greet Mr. Romeyn heartily, thanking him for his participation and abundant friendship. Lacking time, I won't be able to write him. However, when he reads the letter to Rev. Wyckoff he'll know everything.

Kiss my dear children, dear wife.

Rev. Wyckoff writes that you must take note of Job's longsuffering and its

conclusion. He says that when it's night, the day is near. Just let Groothuis quickly learn English for that is worth more to him than to earn a few dollars. I wish him much courage. I also, through God's goodness, have received courage.

Hearty greetings to Rev. West. His friendly letter was exceptionally pleasant for me. Convey to him my sincere thanks. If the occasion arises, greet Rev. Duffield, too.

I just received a letter from Barendrecht and his group in St. Louis but he does not write anything about other Hollanders. I also received a letter from Brusse in Milwaukee. I want to write Barendrecht, too.

Now dear friend, be of good courage, seek the hidden things and nourishment for your soul. Don't let the busyness of the wash destroy you. Greet Jenningje Groothuis heartily for me. Once more, kiss the dear children. The journey at hand will take, I think, about eight or ten days. May God be your shield and pleasure.

Your heartfelt loving husband
and brother (in the Lord),
A. C. Van Raalte

*Doubtless this important correspondence contained the same information which Rev. Anthony Brummelkamp's *Holland in Amerika* publicized in 1847. This forty-three page booklet, though already translated in 1977 by Rev. Gerrit Vander Ziel, has not yet been published in English. Yet it is the most detailed and precise statement available to explain Van Raalte's decision to found the Holland "Kolonie" in Western Michigan.

By Mins Reinsma

THE GIFT

Tony Zijlstra asked, "Could you put new siding on my barn?" "Sure," I said. "When do you want me to start?" We set a day for the coming week and "negotiated" my wages. "I will pay you one dollar per hour," Tony announced.

After the deal was made, I had to figure out, before the following week, what siding was and how to nail it down. My best bet was Clarence Timmer, who, with his brother, owned and operated the hardware store in New Holland, South Dakota.

I told Clarence about the job I had taken and about my ignorance regarding siding. His only remark was, "Your wages are thin, but then your experience is zilch." He took me outside to the neighboring building, a grocery store, pointed to the front of the building, and said, "This is siding, not too good anymore, but you get the idea." He explained the reason for the strange shape of the boards, and how they should be nailed down. "The most important

part is like everything else in life: start from the bottom, on a straight line, and do not depart from it." He warned me that most buildings, and surely those that needed work, had never been straight to begin with or had, through the years, given up this noble concept. "Keep measuring from your last board to the top, and compensate." He then added, "Compensate means 'give a little.'"

Later, when I drove on the Zijlstras' yard, the needed material was neatly stacked, close to the building that needed the siding. After greeting Tony, I started the job and followed closely the instructions Clarence had given. The old planks had to be removed first, I remembered. "One

Mins Reinsma, the author of "Painting the Church" and other tales, immigrated to New Holland, South Dakota, from the Netherlandic village of Andijk in 1950. He and his family lived in South Dakota for only about one year, and his initial encounter with the New World occurred in that rural setting. In the Netherlands he had been a retail grocer but in New Holland he became a painter and carpenter. This story combines recollections of carpentering and an unexpected bonus from his "boss."

side at a time; otherwise the building might lose heart and hit bottom." It was a dusty job, but any fool could do it.

I was called in for lunch by "the Missus"; I found this a fine custom.

I was surprised that the kitchen still looked Dutch. On the wall hung an ugly tapestry of tulips and windmills, and on top of a cabinet stood two Delft-blue vases, one on each side of a large jardiniere. The Dutch chairs, with their old-fashion matted seats, were in poor repair. Tony's chair, the one with the armrests, had a cushion hanging from the back posts, the pattern lost by purpose. The table was marvelously set: bread, butter, jams, and several types of meat.

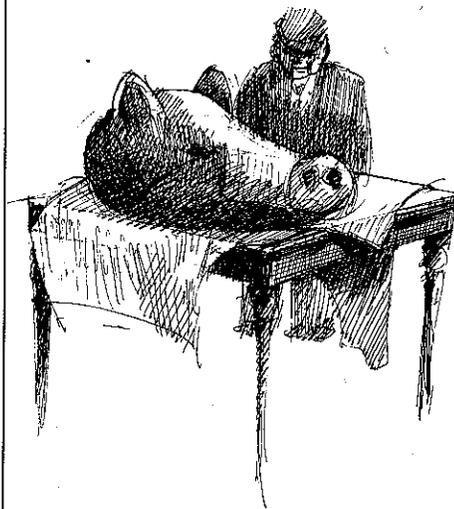
Tony was a short, heavy set man; centered in his round, rugged face was a set of pure white, narrow, poorly made artificial teeth. His hands were large, coarse, and red. Mrs. Zijlstra was beginning to gray; she needed only a white crocheted cap and a floor-length apron to fit into an old family home in Holland.

We prayed silently, Tony's little cough marking the "Amen." The conversation was sparse, the smoked ham wonderful.

The next day, coming to work, I noticed a lot of activity taking place around the kitchen entrance. Large basins with steaming hot water, a long table with a variety of bowls and trays, a meat grinder, and several knives were laid out. Tony walked up to me and said, "It's butchering day." I did not ask him what he planned to butcher, but I knew he was not talking about a few chickens.

After working on the barn for an hour or so, I heard the victim's squeals, soon followed by throaty screams. From the sound of things, I knew that a pig, groomed for murder, was reduced to the makings of ham, bacon, and sausage.

Before I left for home that evening, Tony asked me, "Do you folks like pork?" I assured him with just enough drive in my voice, that pork was by far our favorite meat. I added that any kind of meat had been scarce on our dinner table lately. Tony nodded; "I will bring you some tonight, when we are finished," he said.



Coming home that evening (we lived in a small trailer at that time), I told Tryni about butchering day and Tony's promise. She worried about the lack of refrigeration because we had an icebox but no ice. I told her about the American saying "Don't cross the bridge before you get there" or something like that.

Tony knocked at the door around seven; he carried a large package wrapped in white linen and placed it on our small table. When we thanked him profusely for his generosity, he replied, "Now, now."

When he had gone, we looked at the large parcel, wondering. Smoked bacon? Ham? Pork chops?

Luke, who was at that time about three years old, looked at the parcel with childlike wonder. He became even more interested when I started to unwrap this strange gift. His little nose was just even with the table edge. He saw it first. A childlike scream, similar to what I had heard that very morning, startled us. Then I saw it—a huge, complete pig's head, caught in surprise, lay before us. Its flat snout pointed my way, stiff white bristles gleaming, the mouth open, showing yellow teeth and a pink corrugated interior. The rough tongue was extended. The open eyes, showing disbelief and astonishment, looked at me accusingly.

After we had calmed our boy down, which took some doing, and put him to bed with a farfetched story, we tried to start thinking rationally. We knew that any farm wife would be able to dissect this cold, wax-like head and create several culinary treats from its parts, but we had neither the skill nor the tools to do this. Sure, we had a large butchering knife, but it could scarcely split an apple. I made a feeble attempt at carving up a meaty-looking cheek, but the knife, even after considerable encouraging, would not penetrate the unyielding skin.

After some further investigation, I wrapped the pig's head back in the cloth and placed it on the front seat of my car. When it got dark, I drove to the dump, opened the car door, and kicked the parcel out.

We learned that a pig, butchered, divided up, and preserved, is not only bacon and ham; it also has parts useful only to those who know the finer points of its anatomy and have the subtler skills of pork preparation.

Halifax, Heit, Mem and Dr. Beets

by Jennie Visser*

The other day I came across the picture again and recalled the day we arrived in Halifax. It was foggy that early morning and Mem said, "Heh! just like in Holland, rainy and foggy."

I was a child then, but I had my impression and I was aware of mother's depression—can anything good come from what is not Holland?

Heit and Mem, Mr. and Mrs. Visser, shortly after immigration in 1930.

*Jennie Visser has been a Christian school teacher in Canada from 1956-1983.



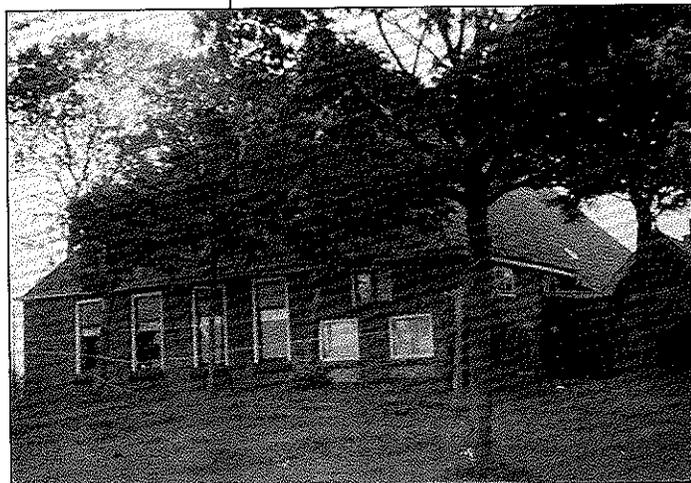
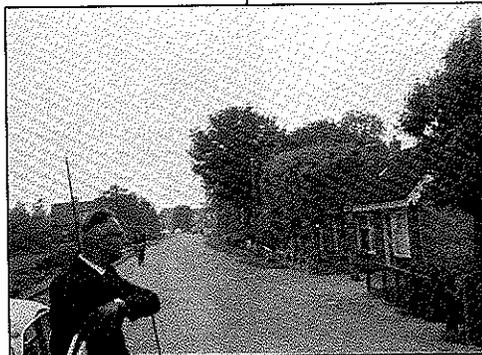
Mem had been sick during the whole nine-day ocean crossing and that morning of arrival was her first day back on her feet. We youngsters had been cavorting at will all that time with the older siblings to supervise. But they also used their freedom to make friends with male and female passengers. There were many singles on board, and what young girls of fourteen or sixteen would not be attracted.

Morning after morning Heit and Mem remained in their bunk-bedrooms. Father, more or less to keep mother company, for he was not really that sick, but he was loyal. But the same reprimand came after each morning greeting . . . behave yourself today.

Our passenger ship, the New Amsterdam in 1930, was like a city to us. We explored its heights and depths, its length and breadth and every nook and cranny. We were called nuisance-kids by those who

lay sunbathing in the March sunshine which was not a continuous luxury. So, when our group increased in number as the days wore on, and seasickness wore off, we became something of a menace to deck strollers and recliners. The days were joyous for us however, and when there was a call for iceberg sighting one day, we stormed past all the camera buffs to get a glimpse. But the weather was raw and the

favorite. We hastily scribbled the design of lines on paper and played it with buttons. When some button rolled on the floor and disappeared among the legs of other passengers, we would make up the loss by plucking and pulling them from our sweaters and jackets. My sweater was completely buttonless when we arrived in Halifax. Mem was mysti-

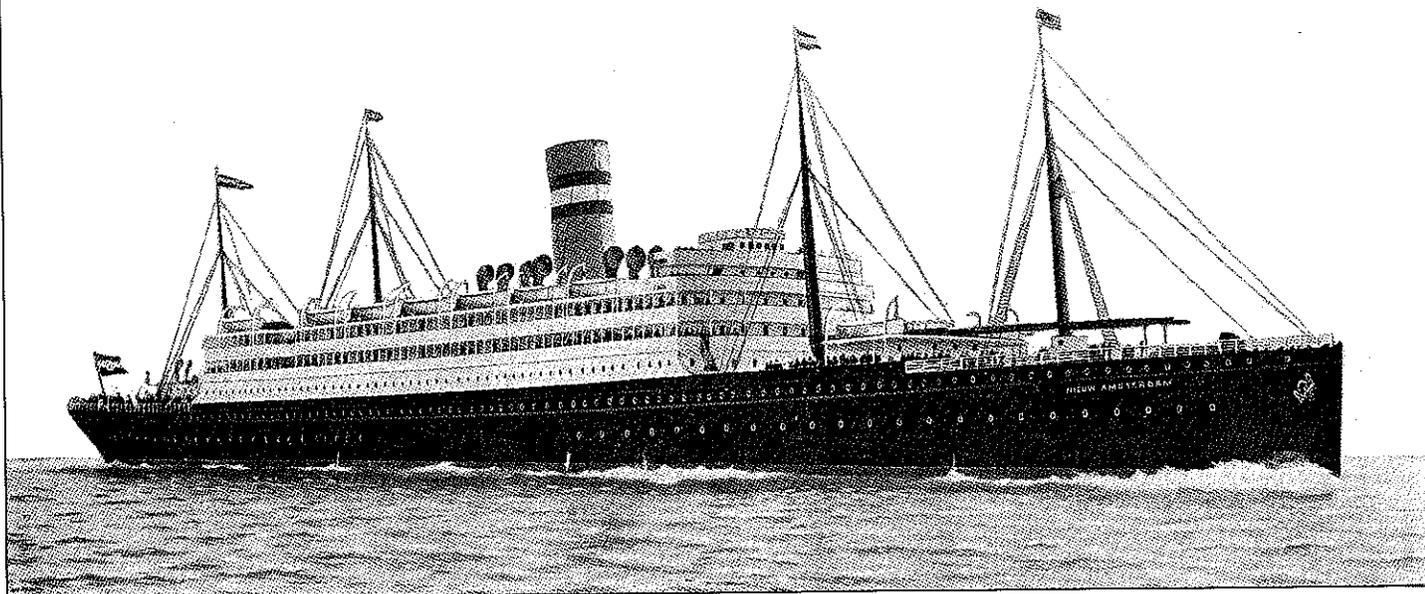


(above left) Street in Oudehaske.
 (above right) Visser farm in Oudehaske.
 (below) S.S. New Amsterdam.

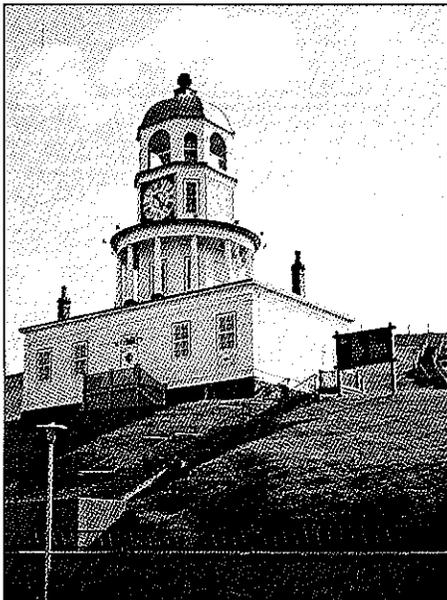
deck was cold. Misty rain made for poor camera shooting. On such days we sat in the dining hall where games were set up for amusement and fun.

My boat friend and I made our own games, a mill game was our

fied, for she was a careful seamstress and blamed the loss to the salty seabreezes which, according to her, deteriorated wool in a snap.



The day we arrived at port in Halifax was a history lesson for us. Heit had told us that this part of Canada had been discovered a thousand years prior to our coming. I found it quite a revelation myself when I saw the inland harbor between Dartmouth and Halifax with its many lights, big liners, and fishing boats. What a tremendous sight, we would



(above) 1928 class in Oudehaske; author—front seat left.

(below) Halifax harbor landmark of the "Citadel."

*packing cases

have stayed to look but were hustled on, each carrying something of value. I was to mind baby sister, and Wilma, a playmate of sorts who was younger than I, but needed attention, and a firm hand to pull her along. She had a way of exploring on her own, it made Mama Hinke frantic. Even today Wilma is grateful for that service, though neither of us remember, but her mother told her and she wrote me. She lives in BC.

Heit had given some other history of Halifax, claimed it was explored by Norsemen first, but the Dutch, Irish and Germans arrived later on, and

now we were one of them. Heit added some French names to the information about explorers, which I recognized in school later on as having been told by father in some peculiar pronunciation of his own. Granted, Heit knew a lot, I took mental stock of his knowledge when he swayed his arms to emphasize, or give directions we were to follow.

At this time we followed the crowd down a gangplank with railing on both sides. It was not an easy descent. In the 1930's there were no roller-coaster steps, as we called them, there was just a pushing and a jogging that finally landed you to the bottom on a board platform. Heit had encouraged us to look for the Citadel, a fortification on a height of land, which he was sure we could see, for it was built for ships entering the harbor. He pointed to some obscure tower in the hazy distance,

but all we could see was grey fog and a row of grey buildings that looked mysterious—like prison walls.

I had imagined that it might be used to keep the Indians in—or out—but learned later on that all the buildings were of service to the harbor. Halifax was the only open Canadian harbor in winter. In the 1930's it conducted world trade on a formidable scale even though Nova Scotia had only some 1200 miles of paved highway. That had scared me a little bit way back in Holland. Although I came from gravel-road country and polder dikes, I knew that paved roads were the means of getting you anywhere. Teacher had only taught us about Indians when we had become the celebrities of travel across the Atlantic, but the lack of paved roads worried me. How could we ever haul these seven heavy "kisten"* Heit had made himself, to our destination in Quebec!

Dr. Beets, an eminent gentleman from the U.S., assured me that trains would pick up the seven "kisten," which after all had all my belongings in them, as well as the heavy iron pots and enameled pans mother had brought along; and father's supply of heavy tools which were to build our cabin in the wilderness of Canada. The latter doubled the cost of freight. Of course mother's sewing machine, which was her private possession at age fourteen, added considerably to the weight of pots and pans, pliers, plane, pick, plastering trowel, etc.

Dr. Beets had his misgivings about the contents when Heit told him we had seven "kisten." Our family of eight was a Noah's ark number. There were some households with us that almost numbered the exit from Egypt. One Rodermond family counted sixteen in its clan, and the relatives, in hot pursuit, had fourteen in total. That made an appreciable

number. "Canada will be proud to own them," said Dr. Beets, and Mr. Snorr, an immigrant agent, gave the same prediction. Unfortunately, the Rodermonds traveled back to Holland when the mother passed away shortly after they arrived.

Dr. Beets had some lively discussions with Heit who was well versed in the history of Van Raalte, Scholte and other early pioneers of the church. Dad had brought the history books along in the kisten, I still have them: Meerburg, Scholte, De Cock, Van Velsen and Van Raalte, the 1919 edition. I can see them there conversing around the table in the dining hall. Dr. Beets, a man with a friendly face and considerable mustache; all of them smoking, cigar or pipe. The doctor was not very tall compared to

dad, but Heit said he was a great man . . . I thought great men should be tall too. In later years, when I met him again, his mustache didn't seem as prominent, maybe the boat motion had discouraged him from trimming it properly.

Dr. Beets was offering the *Heidenwereld* magazine to the passengers, and we promptly became subscribers on the New Amsterdam. We also were introduced to *De Wachter* which the dear doctor apparently offered as a gift for prospective readers. I think the *Heidenwereld*, which became the *Missionary Monthly* in title, has been a friend in our home ever since. It has led to some interesting distribution of family, nieces and nephews, grandchildren among the natives of Africa and New Mexico, but why did

they call it *Heidenwereld*! Mem took the meaning literally—all these Indians—and so fortified herself with the *Heidenwereld* magazine. The Halifax shoreline people seemed quite harmless to me. I spied no feathered Micmacs, but Mem found the spectators a bit peculiar.

"They are all smiling," she said, "what is there to laugh about?" Granted, we might have been the cause for that gawking and gaiety. Mem in her Sunday best hat and coat, black at that for lack of more suitable travel wear, perhaps. "Wear as many clothes as you can," we had been advised. "That lessens the weight of your over-weight baggage and kisten." It made you "stikken-hot" and weary in locomotion.

Arrival at Halifax Canadian Immigrant Annex 1930



The new knitted underwear and woolen underclothes remained in the kisten once we settled in the new land. They were too tight for comfort, too hot, and too odoriferous after one day's wearing. Mem sent them all back to Holland after World War II. They had been stored in the kisten for fifteen years by that time.

We were registered properly as landed immigrants in the Halifax Immigration Building. Then we had breakfast. The only thing I remember is my brother taking a big spoonful of what he thought was jam, on his bread. After one bite he pulled a most unpleasant face, then cried, and rubbed his tongue. Mother was immediately upset with the demonstration, for what had been eagerly engorged was violently disgorged on

the plate. A kindly black waiter took plate and contents away, and mother embarrassed by such display, smelled the content of the bottle from which the supposed jam was taken. "Chile sauce," she read, not comprehending. "It is spoiled," she claimed. She asked the waiter to remove it also from the table . . . "nim dit ek ma." He did.

Before our group parted to various regions of Ontario, the West, and Quebec, we had our picture taken with Dr. Beets and Mr. Snorr in front of the Immigration Building.

It was a sad parting after that, for we had become united, and I thought I would never see my boat friends again. But I did . . . even Dr. Beets. We entertained him for supper at our dorm in Grand Rapids years later.

But on that day, March 28, 1930, the road ahead seemed lonely. We were the only family to go to Hemmingford, Quebec, with seven "kisten" in tow.



GERMANS IN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH 1857

by H. J. Brinks

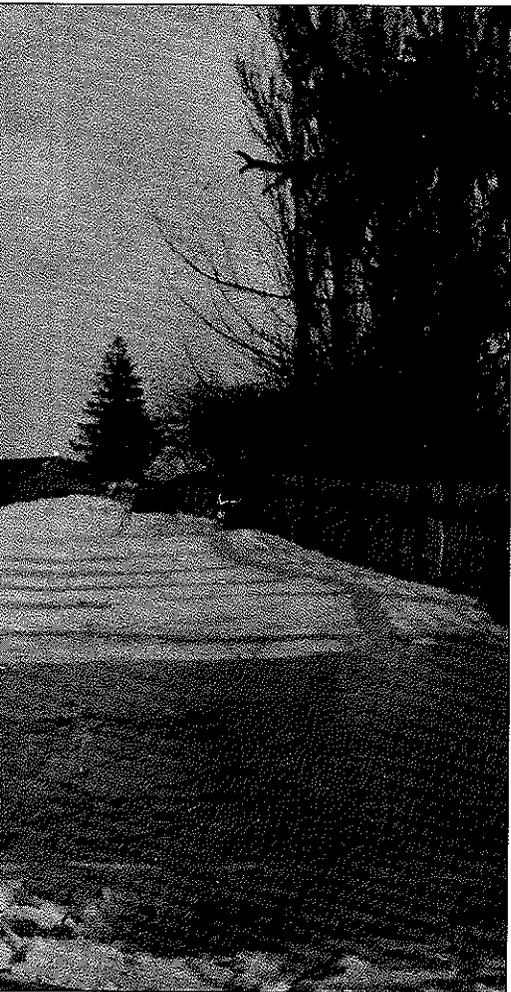
In 1857, when the Christian Reformed Church was founded, sixty-five percent of the Graafschap congregation was of German origin, and thus thirty percent of the new denomination's 246 adult members stemmed from the Westphalian province of Graafschap Bentheim.¹ This fact certainly alters the general perception that the C.R.C. stems exclusively from Dutch people, but it is more significant to note that the German Bentheimers dominated the early years of the C.R.C.'s history and much of that influence must be traced to their religious experiences in Graafschap Bentheim.

That the Graafschapers came to Michigan and associated with A. C. Van Raalte's colonists is readily explained by the provincial borders of Northern Europe. Graafschap Bentheim forms a German peninsula jutting into the Dutch provinces of Overijssel and Drenthe. In addition the German Reformed Churches of the region used Dutch in worship

Walking to church—Graafschap, Michigan, ca 1900.



THE REFORMED -1872



services because German was considered to be a proper vehicle for Lutheran but not for Reformed worship. And, because the local dialects differed only slightly across the borders, religious movements spread easily. So, when the orthodox religious revival of the 1830s spread throughout the Netherlands, interaction with the Bentheimers was inevitable. It should be emphasized, however, that the German revival had independent origins.

The founding father of the German secession was Harm H. Schoemaker who, ten years before the 1834 secession in the Netherlands, had already become a popular lay leader. After his conversion in 1823 Schoemaker immersed himself in the pious writings of Wilhelmus A. Brakel, Bernardus Smijtegelt and Jacobus Koelman, sources which, together with advice from an aging lay leader, prepared him for his work among the seceders at Northwestern Graafschap Bentheim, a region adjacent to A. C. Van Raalte's preaching circuit in Drenthe and Overijssel. Thus, when Schoemaker and his people

were officially ejected from the German Reformed Church in 1837, they sought counsel from Van Raalte who crossed the border to organize the first congregation of the Old Reformed group in Itterbeek on January 1, 1838.

Some twenty miles to the southeast another lay leader, Jan Barend Sundag, had also begun to conduct private worship services near the city of Bentheim. He, however, sought advice from Hendrik De Cock in Groningen and not from Albertus Van Raalte. After a brief career as lay leader Sundag moved to Groningen where he prepared for ordination under De Cock's supervision. In 1840 De Cock joined Sundag in Bentheim where they organized a new congregation. Because Sundag was until 1848 the only ordained pastor in the Old Reformed Church he exercised a powerful influence in the denomination, and he was an outspoken opponent of A. C. Van Raalte.²

In an 1848 letter dictated during one of his many imprisonments and intended for circulation among the

Old Reformed congregations, Sundag declared,

"Very likely it is known to you that, since the beginning of secession, there has been a great deal of differing opinion within the seceded congregations. At least it is true that for a long time there have been two parties in the body of the secession. However, those on the Van Raalte

side make up by far the smallest party. And it is from this side that many novel ideas have come which have caused unrest and also great harm . . . When I attended the seceders' 1846 synodical session in Groningen, several articles which were proposed from the side of Van Raalte were considered by the Synod and unanimously condemned . . . Van Raalte does not agree with the church when she wishes to be true to the church order of Dordt.

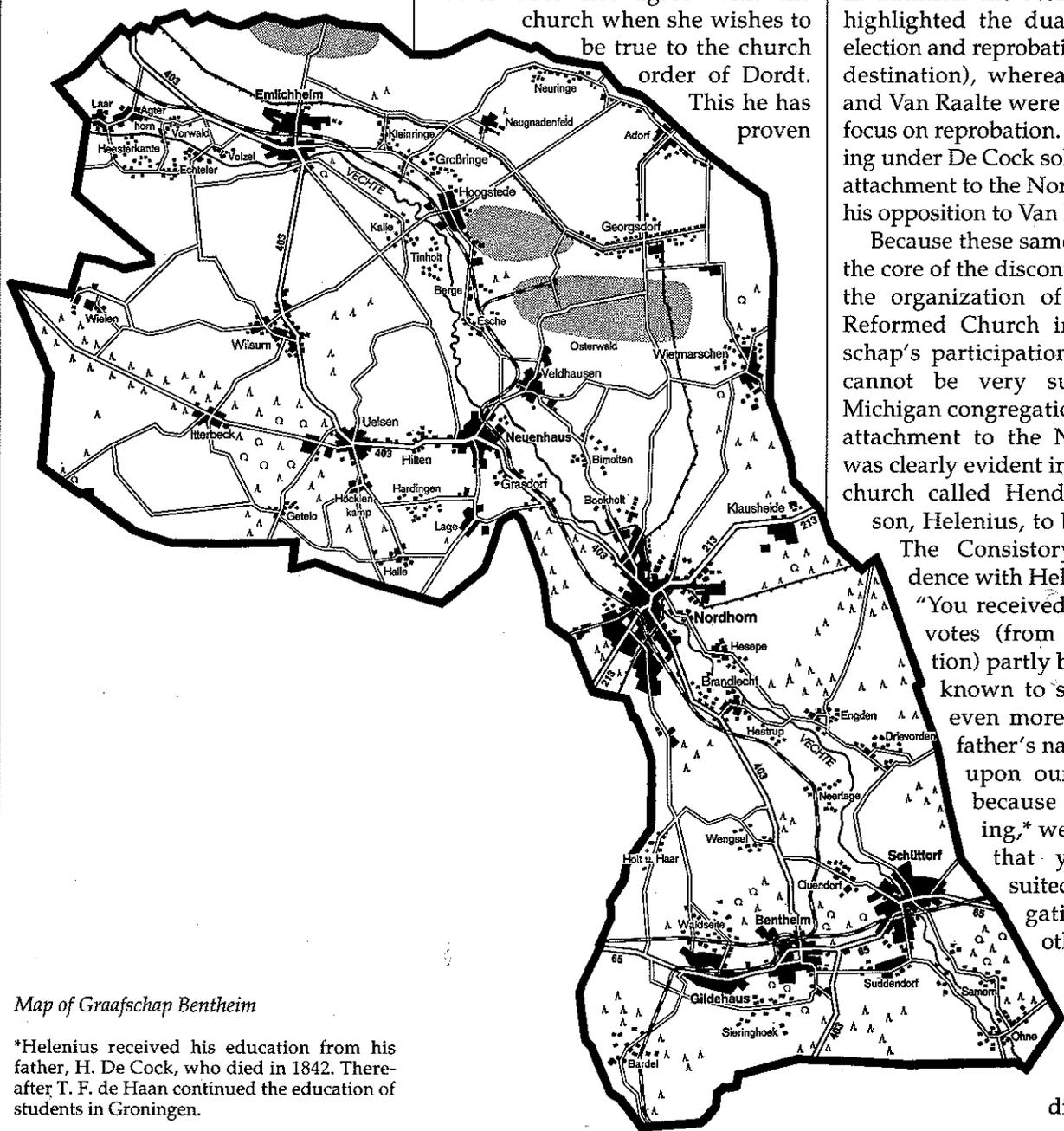
This he has proven

in my presence at the Synod of 1843, in Amsterdam.³⁷" As the letter indicates Sundag was an ardent proponent of De Cock's faction in the *Afscheiding*. This so-called Northern Party was marked by its espousal of the Church Order formulated by the 1618-19 Synod of Dordrecht, and it differed with both the Scholte and Van Raalte subgroups on that issue. In addition the Northern segment highlighted the dual preaching of election and reprobation (double predestination), whereas both Scholte and Van Raalte were less inclined to focus on reprobation. Sundag's training under De Cock solidified both his attachment to the Northern view and his opposition to Van Raalte.

Because these same issues were at the core of the discontents leading to the organization of the Christian Reformed Church in 1857, Graafschap's participation in that event cannot be very surprising. The Michigan congregation's continuing attachment to the Northern Party was clearly evident in 1851 when the church called Hendrik De Cock's son, Helenius, to be their pastor.

The Consistory's correspondence with Helenius declared, "You received all but eleven votes (from the congregation) partly because you are known to some of us but even more, because your father's name is engraved upon our hearts. Also, because of your training,* we are convinced that you are more suited to our congregation than many others."

Helenius did not accept Graafschap's invitation, and neither did a host of oth-



Map of Graafschap Bentheim

*Helenius received his education from his father, H. De Cock, who died in 1842. Thereafter T. F. de Haan continued the education of students in Groningen.

ers who were beckoned from the Old World. The prominent among them, J. Bavinck and W. A. Kok, together with others such as J. H. Schoemaker and W. Coelingh were either natives of Graafschap, Bentheim or firmly identified with the Northern Party.³ Finally Douwe Van der Werp, who had been ordained with Helenius De Cock in 1844, did accept a call from

The denomination which Van der Werp joined in 1864 had an exceedingly inauspicious initiation into the family of American churches. The Grand Rapids congregation, with less than 100 members, had been plagued by instability. The original pastor, H. G. Klijn, had returned to the R.C.A. after six months of service, and the leading elder, G. Haan,

ters were only ephemerally evident in Vriesland and Grand Haven.⁶

The key to Graafschap's prominence, and also perhaps to the survival of the C.R.C. itself, was the arrival of Douwe Van der Werp in 1864. Until then the Graafschap congregation had persisted under the sporadic attention of Koene Vanden Bosch, who as the denomination's



Count of Bentheim's Castle.

Graafschap in 1864. Van der Werp was the congregation's first pastor after the 1857 secession and in him the church acquired one of Hendrik De Cock's most intimate disciples; they had worked hand in hand from the earliest moments of the 1834 *Afscheiding*. Furthermore Van der Werp was well acquainted with J. B. Sundag who had also studied with H. De Cock. Thus the ecclesiastical threads of the Northern Party webbed outward from Groningen to both Graafschap, Bentheim and Graafschap, Michigan.

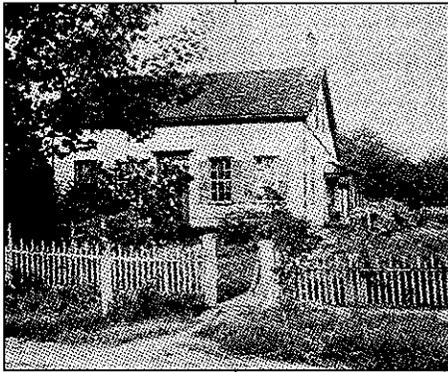
had shifted loyalties several times between the C.R.C., R.C.A., and independentism. The second Grand Rapids pastor, W. H. Van Leeuwen (1863-67), left after a brief and divisive term, while the third pastor R. Duiker transferred to the R.C.A. at the end of his Grand Rapids pastorate in 1872. Another founding congregation, Noordeloos, began with only twenty members and some of these were embroiled in a persistent conflict because Jan Rabbers wished to organize a separate congregation in Zeeland. The founding group in Polkton, Michigan, simply vanished while two additional clus-

ters were only ephemerally evident in Vriesland and Grand Haven.⁶ only ordained cleric (1857-1863), had functioned from his Noordeloos parsonage as an itinerant minister for congregations and informal groups meeting in Grand Rapids, Grand Haven and elsewhere. But when Douwe Van der Werp arrived he quickly became the C.R.C.'s dominant pastor. Born in Uithuizen, Groningen, Van der Werp was a tinsmith's son, but because he

demonstrated scholarly inclinations, he was apprenticed to a school teacher. By 1834 he had become the assistant teacher in the Houwerzijl school for basic education, and he expected to replace the school's aged headmaster upon his retirement. Meanwhile Van der Werp had become an ardent disciple of Hendrik De Cock, and when it became known that the assistant teacher at Houwerzijl had authored a controversial pamphlet, entitled "Whom Shall We Believe, God or Man?" he was summarily dismissed. The pamphlet attacked the views of P. Hofstede De Groot, a leading proponent of ethical theolo-

gy at the University of Groningen, who was also the school inspector for the Houwerzijl school district. Van der Werp's writing was not only associated with the censured Hendrik De Cock, but it was also rather easily interpreted as flagrant insubordination.

Since he was no longer employed, the youthful educator moved to Ulrum, where he became Hendrik De Cock's secretary during the hectic days prior to the secession. Even though De Cock's censure prohibited him from preaching, he continued to gather with his congregation. On



such occasions Van der Werp and several other lay leaders read sermons to the parishioners who assembled in local shops and barns. De Cock however, lead these gatherings in prayers which lasted nearly as long as a typical sermon.*

After the Ulrum church seceded in 1834 Van der Werp continued to assist De Cock in Ulrum and elsewhere; a recently published account of the secession suggests that Van der Werp may have had a part in drafting the official act of separation which became the foundation for the seceded churches of the Netherlands. In any case, Van der Werp was certainly a leading participant in separating the Ulrum congregation on October 13, 1834, and his commitment to that secession never wavered.

*It seems likely that the "long Prayer" so common in C.R.C. liturgy originated in this era. Such "prayers" permitted De Cock to preach a sermon within the prayer. Later, lay leaders who were not permitted to preach also used the "long prayer" for this purpose.

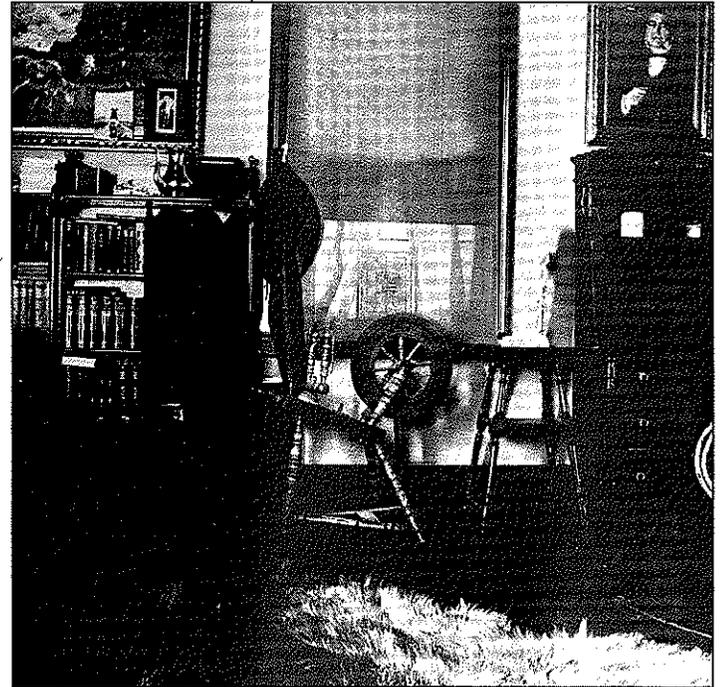
Before beginning his pastoral activities, Van der Werp organized a Christian day school in Smilde. There he instructed some forty students in a room provided by W. W. Snippe. After a short time, however, the educational authorities of Drenthe closed the school, and the court in Assen sentenced Van der Werp to one month's imprisonment for violating

educational regulations.

Following the demise of the Smilde Christian School, Vander Werp became an itinerant lay leader, a position for which he had been prepared by his close association with De Cock. He served the congregations of Dwingeloo, Sappemeer, Franeker, and Uithuizermeeden, among others. In Uithuizermeeden he became well known for his preaching and drew crowds to open fields and large barns. But there, too, he suffered fines and the antagonism of opponents who met him and his followers with sticks and stones.

In 1840 he joined four other lay pastors in organizing the Church Under the Cross. This splinter group originated in reaction to H. P. Scholte's views of church polity. They resented the ease with which

Scholte seemed to give up the 1834 seceders' claim that they, rather than the State church, truly represented the Reformed tradition in the Netherlands. Unlike the Seceder church, the Church Under the Cross disregarded the ordinary channels of ordination: The "Kruis Kerken" pastors simply ordained each other. Van der Werp remained with that church for less



than a year, because in 1841 he became an official student of Hendrik De Cock. One year later he moved to Leeuwarden, where he studied under Tamme F. De Haan and was appointed as the lay pastor to the Leeuwarden congregation. Van der Werp passed his exams in 1844 to become a candidate for the regular ministry. Though troubled by internal conflicts,

Netherlands could have carried better credentials to the Christian Reformed Church than Van der Werp. His theological persuasion was unmistakably northern, and his close association with Hendrik De Cock assured him a measure of trust and respect which no other association could have provided. Van der Werp offered the 1857 seceders in America

Christian Reformed Church and its confessional principles." *De Wachter's* first issue declared that, while it should stand for the truth, it was not a vehicle for troublemaking, for God had commanded Christians to "stand for the truth in love."⁷

Unfortunately, the publication was not able to maintain this high ground. It soon became a vehicle for debate; nearly every issue contained some response to accusations printed in the R.C.A.'s periodicals. In fact, the antagonism ranged well beyond decency on both sides. Finally, on October 9, 1868, Van der Werp urged his contributing authors and correspondents to refrain from "using *De Wachter* as a battlefield," but the war of words continued for many decades.

In spite of the battle with the R.C.A., Van der Werp did introduce positive issues for denominational consideration. Perhaps the most significant of these concerned the importance of Christian day-school instruction. In 1870 the editor argued that merely reading the Bible in school did not adequately satisfy the objectives of Christian instruction, since the Bible also required explanation.⁸ It was a short step from this position to the establishment of Christian schools in which both the reading and explanation of the Bible could be guided by the church. The impetus that Van der Werp provided for establishing both the theological school and Christian day-schools provided a foundation which has distinguished the denomination for more than a century.

Van der Werp remained in Graafschap until 1872 when both he and his students moved to Muskegon. Following his death in 1875 the students were transferred to Grand Rapids where Gerrit E. Boer continued their instruction. In 1876 Boer was appointed as the first professor of the newly founded Grand Rapids



(across left) Original Graafschap parsonage. (across right) Interior at Beuker family home in Graafschap, Michigan. (across bottom) Douwe Vander Werp. (above) Robbert family farm in Germany.

their closest link to the 1834 secession in Holland. And since the founders of the Christian Reformed Church insisted that they were returning to the views of the seceders in the Netherlands, Van der Werp virtually incorporated those views. He became, in effect, the Van Raalte of the Christian Reformed Church.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the denomination assigned its most crucial tasks to Van der Werp. One year after his arrival he became the denomination's theological instructor in the Graafschap parsonage. Then, in 1868, when the denomination began to publish *De Wachter*, Van der Werp became the periodical's editor with the task of "advancing the

the six churches he served in the Netherlands flourished, for he was an exceptionally energetic pastor. In Ferwerd, for example, he preached three times each Sunday and then instituted a Thursday sermon as well. In addition to his four regular catechism classes, he organized a fifth class for the older folk who could not read, and he insisted upon a prominent place for benevolence within the congregation.

Apart from leading founders like Hendrik De Cock, few others in the

Theological School. With that the city became the ecclesiastical center of the C.R.C., and Graafschap's prominence diminished rapidly. Nonetheless, the prominence and significance of that largely German congregation in the C.R.C.'s early years should not be forgotten.

As the Graafschap community filled up and the overflow population moved to other communities or founded, as in the case of Lucas, Michigan, a new settlement, the Ben-theimers spread across West Michigan. They were, of course, particularly noticeable in the Lucas C.R.C. where over the years 47 percent of the congregation's elected officers have been from Graafschap. The Allendale C.R.C.'s membership in 1976 indicates a Graafschap contingency of

43 percent and the more recently organized (1940) Montello Park con-

gregation in Holland also contains a rich tincture of Graafschapers.⁹

Although it is clear that the mother of those churches lost her leading role in the denomination after 1872, the arrival of Rev. Roelof T. Kuiper in 1879 and the publication of his *Voice from America about America* in 1881, refocused the Dutch community's attention on the white steepled church located on Graafschap's highest knoll. Kuiper's booklet, although partly an attempt to justify the C.R.C.'s 1857 secession, provides a useful overview of Michigan's



Henry Bouwman in 1906 with a load of fertilizer.

Dutch-American community in 1880 and stands as a fitting memorial to Graafschap's denominational prominence from 1857-1872.

Endnotes

¹Henry Beets, *The Christian Reformed Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eastern Avenue Book Store, 1923) pp. 60-61; the Bentheim segment of the

membership was identified by comparing the Graafschap C.R.C. membership list in *Souvenir: Historische Schets* (Graafschap, Michigan, 1917) pp. 28-35 with *The County of Bentheim and Her Emigrants to North America*, by Swenna Harger and Loren Lemmen.

²H. Beuker, *Tubantiana* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1897) pp. 51-66. Gerrit Jan Beuker, *Unkehr und Erneuerung* (Bad Bentheim, Germany: Synode der Evangelisch-Altreformierte Kirche in Niedersachsen, 1987) pp. 243-256; 287-302.

³Letter of J. B. Sundag, March 18, 1847 in *Immigrant Letter Collection 1840-1980* in the Calvin College and Seminary Library Archives (hereafter Calvin Archives).

⁴Letter of Graafschap Consistory to Helenius De Cock, July 23, 1851 in *Helenius De Cock Papers 1824 to 1894* in the Calvin Archives.

⁵*Minutes 1851-1863* of the Graafschap C.R.C. Microfilm in the Calvin Archives.

⁶*Minutes* of the C.R.C. Classis September 5, 6; December 12, 1866; Henry Beets, "Ds. W. H. Van

Leeuwen, *Gereformeerde Amerikaan*, January, 1901, Vol. V, pp. 13-22. H. Beets, *De Chr. Geref. Kerk* (Grand Rapids, MI: Grand Rapids Printing Co., 1917), pp. 127-8; 178.

⁷Henry Beets, *De Chr. Gere. Kerk*, pp. 42-3; Foppe M. Ten Hoor, "D. J. Van der Werp," *Gereformeerde Amerikaan*, January 1898, Vol. II, pp. 282-285; J. Wesseling, *De Afscheiding Van 1834 in Friesland*, (Groningen: De Vuurbaak, 1980) Vol. I, pp. 22, 75, 77, 100-102, 106, 125-130, 276-79; J. Wesseling, *De Afscheiding Van 1834 in Groningen* (Groningen: De Vuurbaak, 1972) Vol. I, pp. 46, 57, 73, 97, 106-110, 146-152; Vol. II, 1974, pp. 38-41, 137, 158, 178, 187, 197, 262.

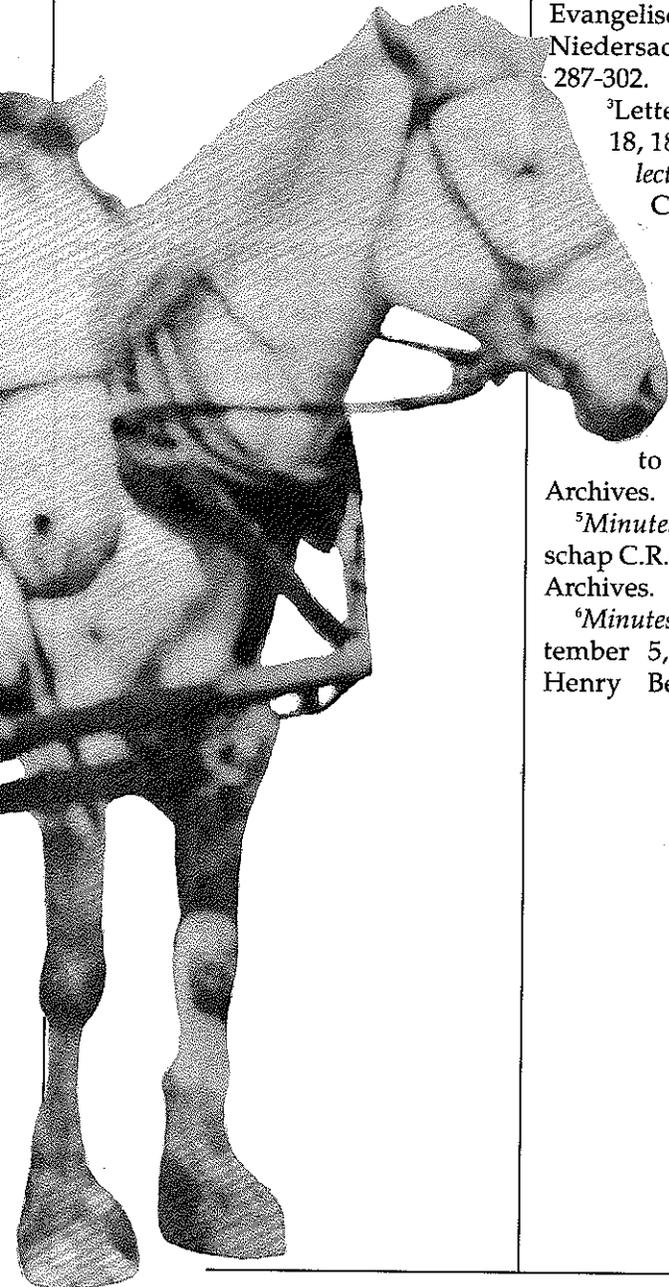
⁸*De Wachter*, February 14, 1868; October 9, 1868; and May 6, 1870.

⁹*Directory*, 1983 of the Lucas, Michigan C.R.C.; *Directory*, 1976 of the Allendale, Michigan C.R.C.; *Montello Park Christian Reformed Church Holland, Michigan 1940-1990: Fiftieth Anniversary Directory* of the Montello Park C.R.C., all in the Calvin Archives.

Mr. E. R. Post translated and republished *A Voice From America About America* in 1970. Several copies are still available from the Calvin College Archives at \$3.50 each.

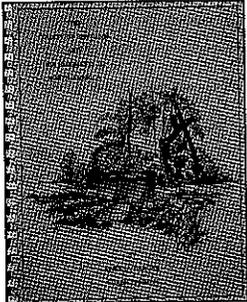
A VOICE
FROM
AMERICA
ABOUT
AMERICA

R.T. KUIPER



BOOKS

The County of Bentheim and Her Emigrants to North America. By Swenna Harger and Loren Lemmen.



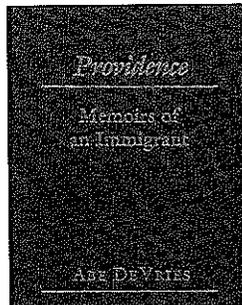
Very little has been written in English about the County of Bentheim and its inhabitants. For this reason Harger and Lemmen have produced a volume of extreme value for all who trace their roots to this German County partially surrounded by the Dutch provinces of Drenthe and Overijssel. Included are the authors' comments on such topics as the history of Bentheim, the church life of the Bentheimers, their domestic mores, economic life, and religious controversies. Reasons why these folk emigrated to America are given and seventy pages are devoted to passenger lists and emigrant records where basic data about Bentheimer immigrants have been consolidated.

Revealing the Bentheimers' careful concern with matters spiritual and temporal are the texts of wills and marriage contracts. Not neglected is the question: "Were the Bentheimers Dutch or German." A query answered by the words ". . . they

were Germans by nationality but Dutch by tongue."

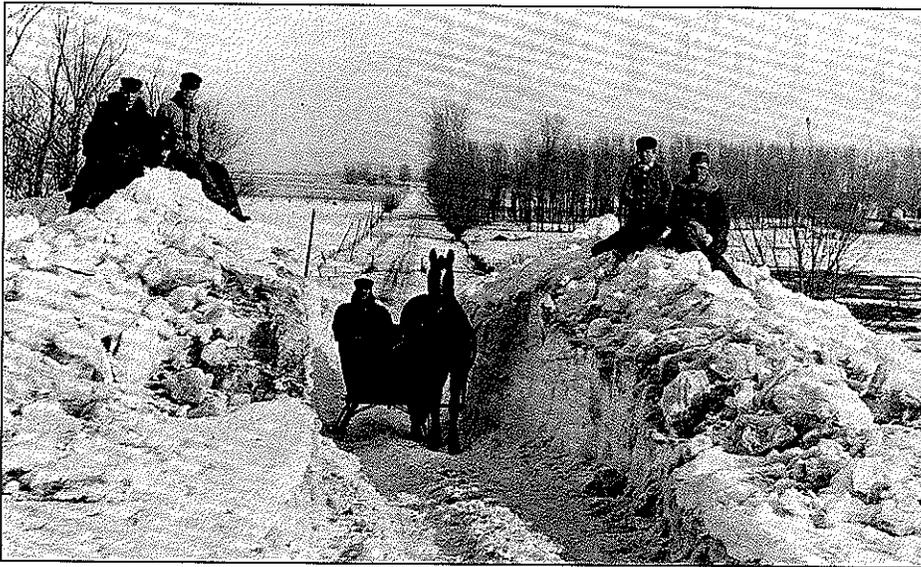
Bentheimer immigrants played a very significant role in the founding and early history of the Christian Reformed church. If you have a Bentheimer in your background you will better understand your ancestral, ethnic and religious heritage once you have paged through the illustrated work prepared by two people who have not forgotten their roots.

Providence: Memoirs of an Immigrant. By Abe De Vries, Grand Rapids, MI.



In a privately printed autobiography, A. De Vries writes in great detail about his family, good friends, casual acquaintances and other folk. Here we read about his social, spiritual and emotional growth from the time of his birth in 1935 to the present. He left the Netherlands for Canada in 1956, returned to his homeland in 1958, came back to Canada in 1960, and migrated from Canada to the United States in 1961.

His work experiences include butchering, wrestling, mining, playing hockey, boat steward, tire salesman and a host of other jobs from which he was either fired or left to find something else compatible with his personality and talents. With utter candor and blunt prose, De Vries portrays himself, his past, and those he knows now and has known over the years. What we have here are the unvarnished and atypical recollections of an immigrant. Many will find it unusual, but also interesting.



Winter scene 1910 on the Beltman farm near Orange City, Iowa.

FOR THE FUTURE

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

Memoirs of Rev. Arnold Brink

Letters to Canada *by* G. G. Harper

The South African Boer War *by* H. Ippel

"Silk City": Reports from Paterson's immigrant mill hands *by* H. J. B.

Christian Education in Northern New Jersey

M. Schoonbeek—Hard Times in Grand Rapids 1873-1890 *by* H. J. Brinks

Klaas Schilder: The Man *by* Peter De Klerk

Samuel Myer Isaacs: The Dutch Rabbi of New York City *by* Robert Swierenga

Going Dutch in Redlands Calif. *by* William Gabrielse

Growing up Jewish in a Dutch Neighborhood *by* June Horowitz

Henry Stob's Chicago Years

The Beltman Family in Orange City, Iowa 1877-1950 *by* Hendrik Beltman

H. P. Scholte's Church in Pella *by* Muriel B. Kooi

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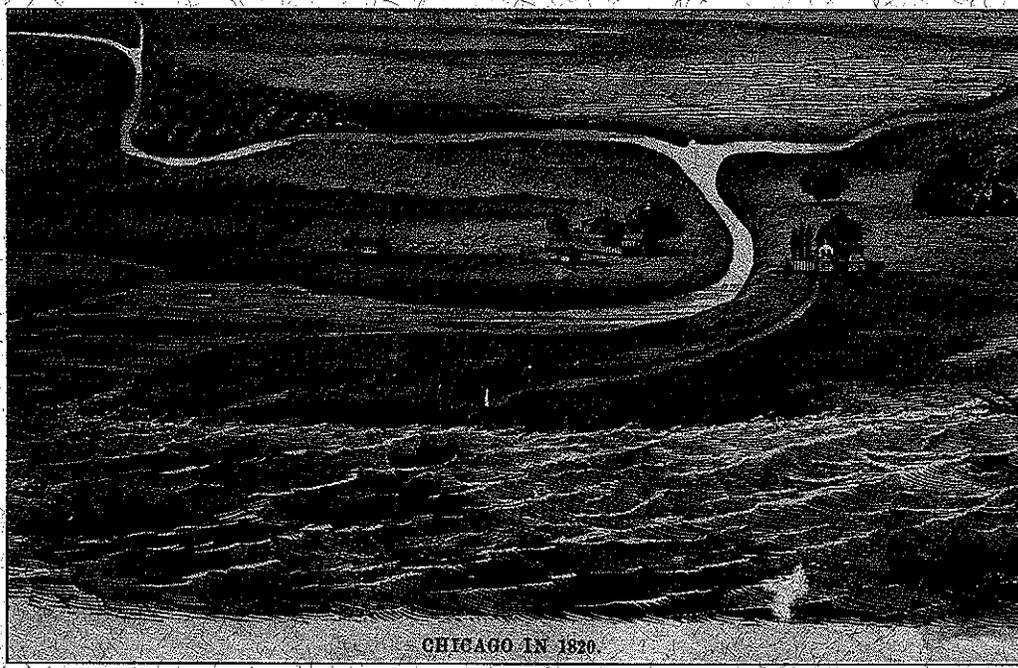
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ORIGINS

Volume IX

Number 2

1991



CHICAGO IN 1820

Historical Magazine of Calvin College and Seminary Archives