



One of the early Hollanders who settled in Kansas. This photo was taken around 1913. (Courtesy of Conrad Vandervelde)

# Facts and Fiction

The *heritage* of Kansas . . . . What is it?

It is everything that makes Kansas what it is, and what it is not. It is the geography, the industries, the cities, the farms. It is the tornadoes, the meadowlarks, the summer heat and the winter cold. But mostly, the heritage of Kansas is the people.

Kansas is the Indians — the Kaws, Shawnees, Wyandots, Cheyennes, Osage, Potawatomies . . . . It is the European emigrants — the Swedes, Germans, French, Welsh, Danes, Italians, Dutch . . . . It is the emigrants from this continent — the New Englanders, Indianians, Ohioans, Iowans, Kentuckians, the Mexicans . . . . Kansas is Charles Robinson, the Dalton Gang, Jerry Simpson, Charles Curtis, Wild Bill Hickok, Birger Sandzen, William Allen White, Carrie Nation, Frederick Chouteau.

Each race, each nationality, each individual, famous or not, has made this state what it is. The Indians did their part, both good and bad; the whites did their part, both good and bad. And to understand our state and ourselves, we must look to the people.

*Heritage of Kansas* has done short studies on some of the Indians of the state; now it is the time to survey some of other groups who settled in Kansas, built her up, left today's generations with an irrevocable heritage.

The Dutch people are the first to be considered. There is no particular reason for their being first; it might have been the Scots or the German-Russians or the Czechs. The Dutch, as a matter of fact, are a relatively small national group in Kansas, centered around Prairie View, Phillips County (or now spread out over the state individually). At any rate, this issue of *Heritage of Kansas* is concerned with the people from Holland and their descendants.

What do we non-Hollanders already know (or think we know) about the Dutch people? They are a good-humored people with a reputation for extreme cleanliness. They are noted for their practicality in all phases of life, and for a very solid,

sincere faith in their religion. Most of us have heard all of our lives that we must "take a Dutchman for what he means, not what he says." Aside from these generalities, however, most "outsiders" know very little about the Dutch.

The main article of this issue will explain about the Hollanders and some of their history, but before reading it, you might find some of their proverbs of interest. You may be able to think of more familiar proverbs which are comparable to theirs, but some of them seem to be unique.

For example, for the fellow who jumps from one thing to another, never finishing anything, the Hollanders say, "Alles door gekropen, en het goede bij gelopen" ("Crawling through everything and missing, and running past the good").

Another proverb, concerning dumbness, is stated: "Die het niet in de hooft [or kop — meaning noodle in American slang] heeft, moet het in de beenen hebben." Literally translated, this means "He who does not have it in his head must have it in his legs," or loosely translated, "He who is just plain dumb must make up for his mental deficiency with sheer physical labor."

Cooperation in overcoming difficulties and accomplishing big things is commended in this saying: "Een dragt maekt macht," meaning "One all-together pull makes for power." (The first word is pronounced as a "long a" and the "a's" in the other words are pronounced as "ah.")

Caution in accepting easy substitutes is suggested in this one: "Dat kan well anders maar is dat beter?" ("That [substitute] can well be different but is it better?")

About Kansas, the Dutch have the saying "Kansas is goed voor alle menschen, zijn niet goed voor ansas" ("Kansas is good for everyone but not everyone is good [i.e., good enough] for Kansas").

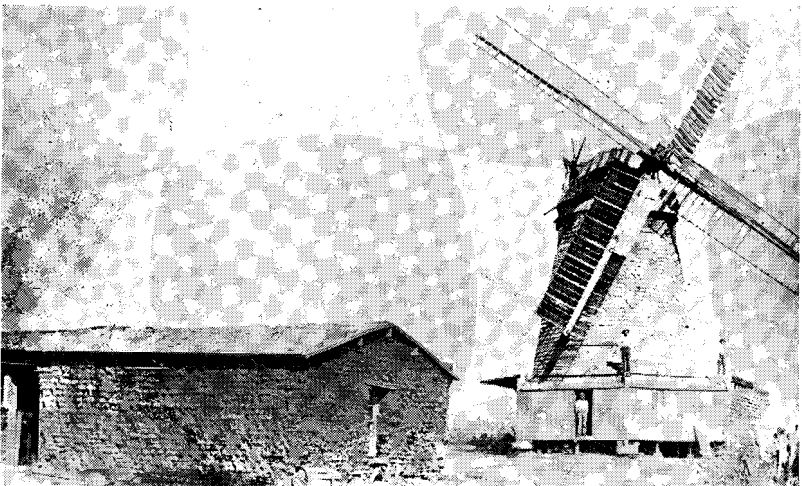
And to disabuse the idea that all is lovely in Kansas, the Dutch have this warning, using a favorite Dutch evening meal or dish — "pap," buttermilk boiled with rice to make a sort of pudding: "Het regent hier ook al tijd geen pap." Translated, this saying means "It doesn't always rain 'pap' [i.e., good things] in Kansas."

These proverbs were given to *Heritage* and translated by the lead author for this issue, Dr. Conrad Vandervelde, a real gentleman, scholar, and Dutch descendant. Although Dr. Vandervelde is not a native Kansan, he has lived in the state since 1911 —

over fifty years. At the College of Emporia, he served for many of those years as Professor of Psychology and Philosophy, as Registrar, as Dean (for thirty years), and finally as Acting President. Later, in the 1920's and 1930's, he taught psychology at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia.

Off and on for years, Dr. Vandervelde has also served as pastor for Presbyterian and Congregational churches around the Emporia and Wichita areas. He received his Bachelor of Divinity degree from Princeton in 1907, after getting a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ripon (Wisconsin) College and a Master of Arts from Princeton. In 1918 he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by his old alma mater, Ripon College.

Conrad Vandervelde strikes one at once as being a gentleman and scholar: he is tall and kindly looking, with a sparkle in his eye, and an innate dignity of carriage and manner. Despite his eighty-four years, he acts and thinks with preciseness and extreme intelligence and alertness. He has read and researched in a number of areas, the latest being concerned with the Dutch people in this country and in Kansas, and with the growth and development of the Presbyterian Church in Kansas. He genuinely enjoys this sort of work, remarking that he'd much rather be studying and learning than playing golf.



Windmill and sod building at Reamsville, Smith County, about 1880.  
(Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society)