

Hollanders in Kansas

by

Conrad Vandervelde

The Netherlands were a long way from Kansas when Hollanders reached the state in the late 1860's and early 1870's. The high, dry, dust-blown and fire-swept prairies and the long unmarked trails were in sharp contrast to the canals and waterways which lapped front steps of their houses in the old country. There, the land averaged only thirty-seven feet above sea level, with one fifth of the area below sea level, reclaimed from the North Sea and kept dry with windmill-driven pumps.

Why Netherlanders with centuries of family and national traditions, and with close and warm blood ties should want to leave, far and forever behind, their land with its familiar scenes and faces, needs to be explained. This is a sad but interesting story. How they reached the "Great American Desert" in mid-America over 1500 leagues of stormy and uncharted sea and over 1800 miles of high mountains, broad rivers, and unmarked trails is a thrilling tale. How they met the dangers, overcame the difficulties, established their new homes and created a civilization in the raw wilderness inhabited by savage Indians is a story of faith, heroism, and perseverance. Few Hollanders came directly to Kansas from their native land; for many the arrival in this state was a second or third step on their way to a realization of their hope. Therefore, we need to glance back over their whole course.

The Dutch of Rip Van Winkle's day, of the mysterious folk in roomy pantaloons in the Adirondack tenpin game, is no essential part of our story of the Dutch in Kansas. We skip this tale with regret but with the suggestion that the half true, half fictional background may well serve as a backdrop for our stage.

TERMS

At the outset perhaps we should make clear some terms we will use. The people of the low countries in Western Europe

are variously called Netherlanders, Hollanders, and Dutch. In their language the country is called "Noderland," the "below land." Two provinces are North and South Holland. From these provinces the name Hollander is probably derived. The main language of the Netherlands is Holland, but each of the eight other provinces has its own slightly different dialect. The term "Dutch" is to be distinguished from the term "Deutsch," used to mean German. In this story the term "Netherlander" is used in referring to the people in their native land. The terms "Hollander" and "Dutch" are used interchangeably as the sound of the sentence and the whim of the writer may suggest.

HOLLANDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Hollanders in the United States as a whole were always a minor national group in comparison with other nationalities. The record of the number of European immigrants to the United States from 1820 to 1949 shows but 265,000 from Netherlands, whereas there were during the same period over 6,000,000 from Germany, over 4,500,000 from Italy and also from Ireland, over 3,500,000 from Russia, 2,750,000 from England, 2,500,000 from the Scandinavian countries, and from Greece about 400,000. Holland immigrants ranked about eighteenth in number.

The census of 1860 lists 28,281 Netherland-born citizens in the United States; there were only 45 in Kansas at that time. The number of Kansas born in Netherlands rose to 906 in 1910, but declined to 513 in 1930 and to 262 in 1950, the last census date for which this item has been calculated.

What this nationality in both the United States and in Kansas lacked in Holland-born population was made up in the size of the families these people had. Human, biological, and Dutch nature multiplied the number of Hollanders in both Phillips and Smith counties where Holland-owned farm joined Holland-owned farm for miles. Loyalty to the church in which the Holland language was long retained kept the group together and encouraged in-group marriage.

MOTIVES FOR EMIGRATION

Religious interests were dominant and lay deep in the hearts and in the history of the Dutch. Religious motivation was primary in every movement, individual and group, which impelled emigrants to leave the over-populated low countries for the newer

America with its freedom of worship and its vast unpopulated lands.

The migrations to America, which increased in marked degree in the 1840's, were spiritually impelled by several forms of religious oppression. The traditional spirituality of the Gereformde (Reformed) Church in Netherlands (characterized by devout, puritanic worship and life which denounced dancing, card playing, theatres, extravagance in dress and other forms of worldliness) was being replaced by an aristocratic, state-controlled worship, void of sincerity, in what was known as the Herformde (re-organized) Church.

The migrations to America centered around two leaders and two colonies: Dominie Albertus C. Van Raalte, who led his colony to the Black Lake, Holland, Michigan area, and Dominie Henry P. Scholte, who led his colony to Pella, Iowa. To the activities and attitudes of the Re-organized Church in Netherlands, Van Raalte and Scholte along with others protested without avail. Meetings held by them and their kind, popularly attended, were broken up by police, and the leaders were beaten and fined. Efforts to worship with the use of their devout and rhymed psalms set to music were interrupted, and the worshippers were abused and insulted. Whole congregations finally seceded, led by their deeply determined religious ministers.

Economic conditions of the lower classes in Netherlands joined with and re-enforced religious persecution in the late 1840's to intensify unrest. General poverty and consequent unabated hunger were increased by the potato blight which infested most of the land. Potatoes, supplemented by cabbage and turnips, had replaced wheat bread as the staff of life for the masses. Under these circumstances, optimistic letters from America had a great influence. Hollanders who had gone to the New Country told of the ease of making a living in America, where people ate three meals a day. One immigrant facetiously but convincingly wrote: "Rijk Amerika! De vette farkin lopen hier los met een groote mes in de rug!" ("Rich America! Fat pigs run around loose with a big knife in the back!" — presumably available for slicing off bacon!)

In 1846 an appeal by Netherlands was addressed "to the faithful in America," laying before them their social and economic plight and expressing the hope they might join them in the United States. "Our hearts' desire and prayer to God is, that

in one of these uninhabited regions in America there may be a spot where our people, by the culture of the land . . . may find their temporal conditions secured [and] we would desire that they, settling in the same villages and neighborhoods, may enjoy the privilege of seeing their little ones educated in Christian schools"

The Netherlander's view was "*Here I am hungry, there I shall have enough to eat: here my hands accomplish nothing, there they will help me become a prosperous man; here I cannot clothe myself, there my labor will clothe my entire family.*"

An organization of Netherlanders was formed with emigration in a group its goal. A fund, raised for the purchase of public lands for the group in America, grew by donations and by assessment upon the members of the organization of a certain number of days' work. Scouts were given money by the organization to make a preliminary trip across the Atlantic to investigate and report. Their reports were enthusiastic.

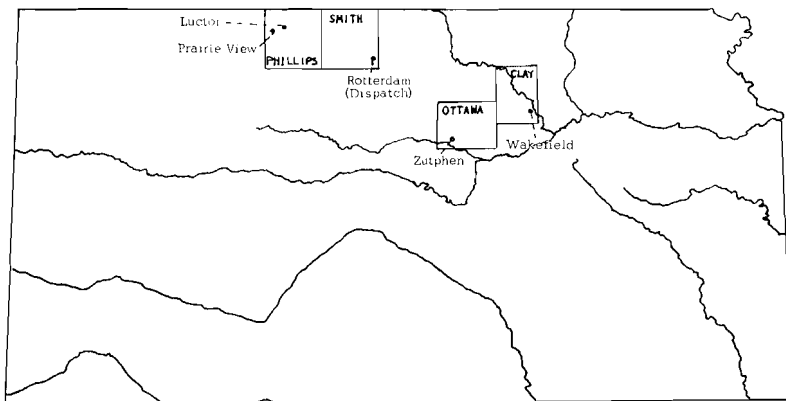
To be sure, not all discussion of America was optimistic. There were some well-established and well-to-do Netherlanders, fearing a general depletion of their cities and the loss of common workmen, who warned against believing the optimistic reports. They said the stories were told by land promoters and were untrue. But if these warnings deterred some who had no personal friends in America, they could not stay the enthusiasm and purpose of those who had received many letters from their own relatives and former neighbors.

KANSAS SETTLEMENTS

Few Holland immigrants came directly from their native land to Kansas. They came by way of the Black Lake, Michigan, and the Pella, Iowa, areas. In the course of fifteen or twenty years, both the Michigan and the Iowa colonies were crowded and all the land was taken. The Iowa colony became known as the "mother of colonies."

A "Go West" fever struck the Pella community in the latter part of the 1860's. Reports of available government land in Kansas with high productiveness in wheat and corn induced a group of Pella-ites to found a colony in Zutphen, Ottawa County, about fifteen miles from Salina. The enterprise failed almost immediately, not because of land, but through the poor management by the Pella druggist who had promoted it.

For the time, the interest of other Pella landseekers was directed to Nebraska, where another Holland settlement seemed to be succeeding. However, attention could not be diverted long from promising Kansas. In the early 1870's a committee of Pella citizens went to Clay County, where some Hollanders had already settled. They reported favorably on soil, water, markets, and timber for building. Although the railroad lines with special excursion trains and the real estate agents of the area tried to promote this movement to Wakefield, the settlement did not grow.



The main Dutch settlements in Kansas. Zutphen, Ottawa County, was settled in the late 1860's but failed almost immediately. Wakefield, Clay County, was investigated by a few Hollanders in the early 1870's, but nothing ever came of a Dutch settlement there. Rotterdam (Dispatch), Smith County, was settled around 1870 but grew very little. Luctor, Phillips County, was settled in the late 1870's but failed to grow much. Prairie View, Phillips County, is at present the main population center of the Hollander descendants in Kansas.

ROTTERDAM, SMITH COUNTY, KANSAS

Two other Holland settlements were established in Kansas in the 1870's, however, and they prospered and have survived. In 1870 a small colony was founded in Rotterdam (renamed Dispatch in 1891), Smith County, not far from the present Downs and Cawker City. In three months it was described as "the largest Dutch settlement in Kansas." The Dutch people, as well as the other settlers of Kansas, met the adventures, hardships, suffering, dangers with courage and perseverance to make Kansas their home.

Indians in the neighborhood, displeased at losing their hunting grounds to the white man and at being removed to reservations by the federal government, were a constant source of annoyance and fear. A few Indians remained, and some periodically traveled through the area. They were hungry and often begged food from the isolated farmers. One morning while a housewife was preparing breakfast, she saw an Indian stealthily approaching the house. She called her husband, who was helping the children dress before breakfast. The husband, with the pretense of going out to the woodpile for fuel, picked up an axe, which he thought might be useful in an emergency. The Indian saw him and came closer. In sign language he indicated that he was hungry and that he wanted the dead chicken lying in the yard. The farmer gladly consented to the request, and the Indian left to roast and eat the fowl.

Mrs. and Mrs. Albert Leunning, early Dutch settlers living just west of Rotterdam, relate this story. One day a band of about twenty Indians traveling through the neighborhood stopped at their house and by sign language made it known they were hungry. Out of the kindness of his heart, and also knowing he was hopelessly outnumbered, Mr. Leunning went to his chicken coop, caught six hens, and gave them to the Indians. The Indians built a fire a short distance away, squeezed the hens' necks until they were dead, and laid the hens on the fire to roast, feathers and all. They didn't even take the trouble to behead the hens!

There was always danger also from wild animals. Mike Folger, who came to Rotterdam in 1870, went hunting one day and came upon seven wildcats in the bluff area. He was alone. He wanted to shoot into the lot but he feared if he wounded or killed one, the others might turn on him. He had to content himself by slipping quietly away, leaving the wildcats unmolested. What a fine lot of caps for men folks to wear in the winter time could have been made from just one pelt!

Snakes were also a source of danger. One day little nine-year-old Hattie Leunning drove the family's cattle out to feed near the bluffs. She sat down on an old buffalo skull to do some crocheting while she kept her eye on the cattle. When she rose to round up some cows that had gone too far from the herd, her little dog started barking and circling the skull. There, inside the skull was a rattlesnake. It had probably been sleeping there all

curled up, and when she moved she aroused it. The little dog attacked the snake and finally killed it, but not before the snake had sunk its poisonous fangs into the little pet. He became deathly sick. Little Hattie hurried home with the pet in her arms. Her father quickly made a mixture of water, dirt, and clay, with which he covered the dog. The dog recovered after many days of pain.

The ingenuity of the Dutch in Rotterdam and elsewhere is manifested in the way in which they met their problems. Lumber for building was expensive and had to be hauled a long way from the end of the railroad line. They built a sawmill, a simple scaffold six or seven feet high. On the "sawmill" a log was laid. One man at one end of a crosscut saw stood on the scaffold; the other man stood on the ground at the opposite end of the saw. This was their fully manned and efficient sawmill!

Their ingenuity was also shown in one of their methods of moving houses. A Mr. Postma bought a parcel of land and wanted to move his home, a two-room house he had built on another farm, to his new land. He hired a Mr. Tanis to do the job. Mr. Tanis placed under the house long planks which he had greased with hog lard. With a rope, a block and tackle, and a team, he pulled the house easily. Each time the ends of the greased planks were reached, the planks were re-greased, replaced, and the operation repeated.

Two churches were founded in this thinly populated area in the early 1870's. The Dutch Reformed Church, organized in 1871 by a minister from Michigan, met at first in a sod house. Later a log church was built on a five acre lot with another acre used for the Reformed Church Cemetery. Differences in matters of practice, which today seem unimportant, split this church; a second Dutch church and denomination, the Christian Reformed Church, was organized in 1872. In 1880 there were about eleven families attending this church. In 1948 the number of families had risen to sixty, but by 1955 the number had dropped to fifty-six, with many of these from other nationalities drawn in by intermarriage. It may be said here that in many Holland settlements in the United States both denominations had organizations, often only walking distance apart and in relatively small communities.

With other Kansans the Rotterdam-Dispatch settlement suffered as a result of the grasshoppers which darkened the sky

and ate up their crops. Drought, too, forced them to beg for seed for the next year's seeding. One farmer in despair packed up his family and drove all the way back to Michigan. Most of the settlers however, perhaps from necessity, stuck to the land and recovered their losses, finally strengthened their church, secured a permanent resident pastor, and found life good.

Today, although the church membership is "diluted" by other nationalities married into Holland families, the church survives as basic to, and directive of, their purpose in life.

LUCTOR, PHILLIPS COUNTY, KANSAS

The largest settlement of Hollanders in Kansas finally was that around Luctor, in Phillips County. The settlement covered an area of twenty miles east to west and twelve miles north to south.

In 1877 three of four families from Nebraska established homes there and served unofficially "to spy out the land." They seeded a plot of ground, returned to Nebraska and awaited the harvest. The soil was productive. These families were satisfied with their choice and, as a result, more Hollanders from Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and other states were induced to establish their homes beside their fellow countrymen in this new neighborhood.

The early experiences of the Hollanders in Phillips County were those of pioneers of every early settlement in the West. Their first homes were generally sod houses or dugouts. Their first churches were built of sod, the cheapest — and sometimes the only — material immediately available.

One citizen of Emporia, who was born of Holland parentage in a sod house near Luctor, gives a clear picture of the humble domiciles of many of the early settlers of that area: He recalls that the sod house had two rooms, one with a dirt floor, the other boasting a board floor. The wall separating the two rooms as well as the outside wall was about two feet thick. Window frames and windows were set in the outside wall. Lack of chairs as well as of space made the window sill a convenient seat for himself and his brother when they ate their meals from the dining table set almost to the wall.

He recalls also that sod houses and dugouts were often set on a slope or in the side of a hill and, when possible, faced south. If the slope was fairly steep, the rear gable end of the

house might be almost level with the ground at that point. In such case, there were no windows at the rear of the house. The ground was well graded at the base of the walls on the outside to carry water away rapidly from the foundation to prevent seepage into the house. However, in prolonged or heavy rain, water came through the roof and the exposed sides of the house and streaked the whitewashed interior. Rain damage often necessitated retouching or even a complete whitewash job.

Since there were no modern fly sprays and no flyswatters (except for a rolled-up newspaper), the total fly population was considerably greater than today. When food was placed on the table, flies were the first to sample it. This man tells that his mother was an alert, persistent, and successful guard over the food, but he recalls sights and experiences in the homes of neighbors where he worked in harvest time which took his appetite. Flies stuck in butter or floating in gravy are not conducive to gustatory pleasure.

In these matters the Dutch were not different from other people living in sod houses — except that their long tradition of extreme cleanliness made their problem more acute and more agonizing. The Dutch had always scrubbed everything back in the Netherlands — even the cobblestones in front of their houses.

How fitting and prophetic was the name chosen for the community: "Luctor," meaning "I struggle," a word in the emblem of Zoeland Province in the Netherlands. Pioneer life in this prairie community was truly a struggle.

PRAIRIE FIRES

The prairie fire was a very serious, though not too frequent, hazard of pioneer life. One of the early Dutch families, not long before moving to Phillips County, lost three children in a prairie fire in Nebraska. One Sunday afternoon, October 8, 1871, the husband and his wife drove to church taking with them their son, a mischievous lad of about seven, and their six months' old baby. A daughter twelve years old was left at home to care for their two other children, two and four years of age. When the parents returned from church, they found their land and their home had been swept by a prairie fire. The dead bodies of their two younger children were crouched behind the stove. The older girl was found dead a short distance from the house. It was thought that the older girl, seeing the fire coming, started to



Two Holland-born couples, early settlers in the Kansas Dutch colonies. This photo was taken around 1913. (Courtesy of Conrad Vandervelde)

run to the neighbors for help, but was overcome by smoke. The two younger children had apparently in fear crawled behind the stove. This kind of incident could as well have happened in any of the prairie states to any of the pioneers.

GENERAL MERCHANDISE STORES

To meet the needs of the growing community, general merchandise stores carrying all kinds of goods were established to provide farm implements and seed as well as some foods and personal and household goods. Even drugs and patent medicines like "Hood's Sarsapilla" were to be found in some of them.

Before railroads reached the area all this merchandise was hauled by ox, mule, or horse team from the nearest railroad point. Before 1887 two railroad lines were built across Phillips County with stations at Long Island and Prairie View, missing Luctor by a few miles. Although the business activity at Luctor rapidly declined after the railroads bypassed it, the Dutch churches remained to hold the community together. Today one active church survives with the members of the two churches consolidated into one congregation.

CHURCHES

A church for the Hollander in Luctor, as everywhere, was as vital a necessity for spiritual life as was food for the physical being. Although from the first, Holland congregations were missionary in spirit and supported foreign missions, the churches organized in the West were not established for the conversions of the Indians, as were some churches of other denominations. Neither were they established for the wayfarer. Primarily, the Dutch churches were instituted to provide the spiritual atmosphere to which the Hollanders had been accustomed, for Christian fellowship and the culture of their own souls, and for the education of their own children.

In 1878 the Luctor colony built a sod church and met regularly for worship and sermons. Services then were conducted by one of their own number. In August of 1884, a Reformed Church was organized by a dominie from the Classis of Michigan. J. Rennerdink and A. van der Velde each donated five acres of ground for the church. H. Kroese and L. ter Maat were chosen elders, and A. Nyland and J. Ledeboer, deacons. The people erected a small frame shanty on the land for the first meeting house.

In the next year, 1885, another church was formed in the Luctor area. Not in the spirit of rivalry, but in loyalty to the denomination with which they were originally connected and which seemed more like home to them, six families, called "Seceders" by the Dutch Reformed, organized their own church only two and a half miles from the Dutch Reformed Church, which would have been sufficient to care for all the Hollanders in the area.

It is not possible to give a complete picture of Hollanders in Kansas or in the United States without stressing the prominence of a church — *the church* — for the Dutch were stubborn in this, as well as impenetrable to logic and reason. We ought therefore to give a detailed account of their church life and worship, particularly in the early days before the churches and the members became Americanized.

The church was always one of the first public buildings to be erected. It was set apart almost exclusively for worship, for funerals, and for the education provided by the Sunday school. At first the congregation, few or many though they might be, crowded into one of the largest available homes in the community for religious worship until they had time to build a church, sod or other.

Before a regular minister might be secured, the worship service was conducted by an "elder," an official lay officer. Fortunately the sermons of Charles H. Spurgeon and other great preachers of the day had been translated into the Holland language — perhaps for just such use. The writer of this article listened in his early years in Wisconsin to such sermons droned in monotone by unimaginative and non-dramatic readers through a long hour and a half service, competing unsuccessfully as far as this youth was concerned with the songs of birds, the cackling of hens, and the crowing of roosters outside the church in the open country near a farm yard.

Congregational singing, the only kind permitted, consisted of psalms put into rhymed form and set to music. Each member provided his own "Psalm (pronounced *pe-sal-em*) Boekje," which he carried reverently to church and home again when the service was over. A "voorsinger," a musically competent leader with a strong voice and a pitch fork usually (never a pitch pipe), set the pitch, and sang just a little louder than most of the congregation and usually a split second or two ahead of the group

PSALM 42.

Hijgend hert, der jagt ontkomen, Schreeuwt
 niet sterker naar 't genot Van de frissche wa-
 terstroomen, Dan mijn ziel verlangt naar God.
 Ja, mijn ziel dorst naar den Heer; God des
 levens! ach! wanneer Zal ik naadren voor
 uw oogen, In uw huis uw' naam verhoogen?

2. 'k Heb mijn tranen, onder 't klagen, Tot mijn spijsze,
 dag en nacht; Daar mij spotters durven vragen: „Waar
 „is God, dien gij verwacht?” Mijn benaauwde ziel
 versmelt, Als zij zich voor oogen stelt, Hoe ik, onder
 stem en snaren, Feest hield met Gods blijde scharen.

3. O mijn ziel! wat buigt g' u neder? Waartoe zijt g' in
 mij ontrust? Voed het oud vertrouwen weder; Zoek
 in 's Hoogsten lof uw' lust; Want Gods goedheid zal
 uw' druk Eens verwisslen in geluk. Hoop op God; sla
 't oog naar boven; Want ik zal zijn' naam nog loven.

Reproduction of part of the Forty-second Psalm in a Holland-language New Testament, published in 1884. (Courtesy of Esther Vander Velde)

P S A L M 42

(As copied from *Het Nieuwe Testament*, printed in the Netherlands language in 1884 by J. Brandt en Zoon, "De Nederlandsche Bijbel-Compagnie Te Amsterdam.")

1. Hijgend hert, der jagt ontkomen,
Schreeuwt niet sterker naar 't genot
Van de frissche waterstroomen,
Dan mijn ziel verlangt naar God.
Ja, mijn ziel dorst naar den Heer;
God des levens! ach! wanneer
Zal ik naadren voor uw oogen,
In uw huis uw' naam verhooggen?
2. 'k Heb mijn tranen, onder 't Klagen,
Tot mijn spijze, dag en nacht;
Daar mij spotters durven vragen:
"Waar is God, dien gij verwacht?"
Mijn benaauwde ziel versmelt,
Als zij zich voor oogen stelt,
Hoe ik, onder stem en snaren,
Feest hield met Gods blijde scharen.
3. O mijn ziel! wat buigt g' u neder?
Waartoe zijt g' in mij ontrust?
Voed het oud vertrouwen weder;
Zoek in 's Hoogsten lof uw' lust;
Want Gods goedheid zal uw' druk
Eens verwisslen in geluk.
Hoop op God; sla 't oog naar boven;
Want ik zal zijn' naam nog loven.

P S A L M 42

(From the King James Version of The Holy Bible. The lines have been written in stanza form to approximate the Dutch stanzas; the English, of course, is not a literal translation of the Dutch.)

As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul thirsteth for God, the living God:
When shall I come and appear before God?
My tears have been my meat day and night,
While they continually say unto me,
"Where is thy God?"
When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me:
For I had gone with the multitude;
I went with them to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept holyday.
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted in me?
Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him
For the help of his countenance.

(for it was always a problem to keep even long-meter singing from lagging).

In church worship men and women sat apart, each group in a section assigned by custom. In some churches the sections were marked off by a railing down the center of the row of long seats, resting on or fastened to the backs. It requires no imagination to realize there was a temptation for teenagers to sit next to the railing — except when an eighty-year-old worshipper was on the other side for the railing. In some churches the rows of seats in the middle area of the building were for women and the row of seats along the two sides, which were cold in the winter, were occupied by the men. Babies, male and female, were naturally seated with the women.

Somewhat arbitrary was the age at which a male baby "became a man" by changing over to the men's section. The writer recalls with emotional vividness the first time he sat in the men's section. The whole hour and a half service was one of mental distress. He was still in short pants. He had not received maternal permission for this deviation from his customary seating. He knew his action would be a matter of parental discussion (if not worse!), and it would be wholly one-sided. His exceptional behavior during the service, without the usual peppermint lozenge slipped to him by his mother to break the monotony and to still his wriggles, probably contributed to an unspoken assent to his act by his parents after they let him know that they knew what had happened. From that time on, he sat with the men in the Dutch congregation.

USE OF THE HOLLAND LANGUAGE

The original Holland settlers in Kansas who came from Iowa, Nebraska, and other easterly states, and later immigrants direct from the Netherlands, clung to the language of their fatherland and of their church. It has been suggested that many Hollanders seemed to think God was a Hollander and that angels conversed in their language. The feeling of some settlers was that sermons preached in English did not have the spiritual quality of sermons preached in their mother tongue. Their attitude toward the English language is facetiously expressed in a story frequently told to the writer about a mother whose children had learned the English language in the public school and used it in their conversation with playmates. One Sunday this mother

overheard her children at play in the yard talking English. She rushed out and in shocked tones exclaimed, "Wat, Englesch praten, en dat op Zondag!" ("What, talking English and that on Sunday!")

The general use of English by children in the public school was, in the course of time, inevitably to replace for them the language of the home. Habits of expression in school and among playmates carried over into their homes; parents quite naturally learned to understand English speech, although they might not be able to express themselves in it. Some children, while understanding the language of their parents, did not practice it enough to become fluent in it. To an outsider a conversation carried on bi-lingually between parents and children would be amusing. Amusing sometimes also, except for the seriousness of it, would be a rapid, somewhat heated and one-sided argument of a parent reprimanding a child half in English, half in Holland, with the most withering parts expressed in the mother tongue.

In the church, the official records, sermons, and first instructions in Sunday school and catechism were in Holland. Gradually English, for the benefit of the oncoming generations, crept in. Two Holland sermons were preached on Sunday — one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In the course of time, one English sermon a month might replace a Holland sermon, or in rare cases it might be added for an evening service. This required ministers who could preach in both languages — not an easy feat.

The 75th Anniversary History of a Holland church founded in 1885 in Phillips County states that in 1905 a school was conducted by the church in the Holland language. In 1921 an English sermon was preached every other Sunday instead of a Holland sermon, and Sunday school was taught "exclusively" in the English language. In 1931 "the American services were increased to equal the number of Dutch services." In 1936, English was used in recording the church board minutes, and the number of Holland services was reduced to only one service on alternate Sundays.

This seems to have been the process, generally, all over America: English gradually replaced Holland in the churches founded by the immigrants, and in their homes. Contacts in business, even in compactly Holland communities, also favored the use of English.

Today there is not a single Reformed or Christian Reformed church in Kansas, so far as the writer knows, in which the Holland language is used. Ministers of these churches are educated in colleges and seminaries which use only the English language. The devout spirit and the reverent tone, however, of Dutch church worship and the earnest Christian fellowship among the members have been perpetuated by their larger church association in the General Synod of the United States of these two Holland-born denominations.

THE DUTCH AT LARGE

While Hollanders have generally clung together in certain areas and usually around their original-language churches, there are some here and there in Kansas who by marriage or change have taken up residence outside the communities where most of their countrymen settled in the early days. How many there are of the present generation who are still of pure Dutch blood there is no way of knowing. How widely those with some Dutch blood are scattered can be seen by an examination of telephone books which list "Van's," a fairly good indication of Dutch origin. Dutch names persist even where Dutch virtues and vices seem to be waning.

One such Hollander away from his "volk" (clan), the writer found in a small eastern Kansas town in the back of his hardware store. His place of business was not marked by the usual sign, "Hardware Store" to show what was sold, nor was his name emblazoned on the front to tell who sold it. There was not even a show window in which select bargains were displayed to invite buyers. These were not necessary. His wares were known to all in the community, and in the countryside. His reputation for service was established, and is indicated by the remark of a citizen of the community who said, "We couldn't get along without *him!* If he doesn't have exactly what we want, he'll get it for us 'by Tuesday' [the day on which weekend orders to Kansas City are delivered]."

DUTCH INFLUENCE IN KANSAS

What contribution Hollanders have made to the culture known as the "Kansas Spirit" is hard to measure, or even to estimate. Naturally the small number of the nationality in the

state would limit the total impress. The Dutch settlement at first in colonies or geographically limited areas — not more than a half dozen families to begin with, and their isolation at first from others due to the language difference would also limit contacts and the resultant influence upon others and the state at large. In the communities they established, their industry and consequent prosperity, their religious conservation, their devotion to their homes and churches combined with love of freedom and independence to produce substantial citizens with moral and social responsibility.

This writer has made no attempt to determine the extent of their participation in politics and government on local and state levels. On the national level, the names of such well-known leaders as Roosevelt, Rockefeller, Vandenburg, Van Dyke, Van Doren, Vanderbilt, Vandeventer, Van Hise, Van Loon, Van Buren, Edward Bok, DeVries, De Witt, to name a few, would suggest there might be some men of science, of letters, of politics among the Dutch in Kansas, who have had their share in leavening the lump.

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