

## A PLACE OF REFUGE

Edited with an Introduction

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As publicists of the American way of life, European immigrants of the nineteenth century have seldom been surpassed. Barely ashore, these ardent letter-writers began penning first impressions to friends and relatives in the Old Country coupled with enthusiastic appeals to come and join them in "the land of freedom and opportunity." The characteristics of America most often praised in these missives were, on the one hand, the absence of religious and political persecution, grinding poverty, snobbish social class distinctions, and on the other, the unlimited natural resources and economic advantages.

Civic, social, and economic betterment, however, were not the only attractions of the New World. An allure less well known but equally as compelling, especially among Christian groups, was the image of America as a place of refuge for a decadent, doomed civilization. Europe, according to this view, rested under God's imminent judgment, for it

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was inextricably linked, historically and geographically, with the Roman Empire, an empire marked for destruction for having crucified Jesus of Nazareth. The intentions of the Almighty, it was believed, had been clearly indicated centuries earlier in the Jewish prophet Daniel's vision of the great "Image" crushed by a huge stone "hewn out of the mountain without hands." Since America had never been part of the Roman world, it was considered a safe haven, a place of escape from Divine retribution.

The band of nearly 800 Dutch immigrants who founded the colony of Pella in northeastern Marion County, Iowa, in the fall of 1847, were one of the groups motivated strongly by Daniel's vision of a doomed Europe. The name Pella, indeed, meant "place of refuge," and was taken directly from the classical Greek city of that name where the Christians fled upon the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

The following letter, written in the fall of 1848 by the religious leader and promoter of the Pella colony, the Reverend Mr. Henry Peter Scholte (pronounced Skol'-tuh), and subsequently published and distributed widely in the Netherlands to lure other immigrants, is one of the best illustrations of the theme of America as a sanctuary from the coming deluge in Europe. This significant letter, entitled *Tweede Stem uit Pella* (Second Voice from Pella) was only recently translated and is here published for the first time.

The revolutions throughout Europe in 1848 form the immediate background of Scholte's appeal. Erupting first in France and then spreading quickly to Germany, Austria, The Netherlands, and elsewhere, the revolutions with their mob violence and street fighting seemed to presage the breakup of the civilization of Europe, a destruction that Scholte and his fellow Christians had long anticipated. While many Hollanders viewed the revolutions as part of a liberal struggle for freedom, Scholte warned that reform could at best be only a temporary expedient; European society was beyond redemption. In the end, the revolutions would raise false expectations and thereby increase rather than decrease discontent, the clergyman predicted.

In his letter, Scholte did more than warn his fellow countrymen to flee the Judgment. As in his first letter of February,

1848 [*Eerste Stem uit Pella* (First Voice from Pella), translated by Jacob Van Der Zee and published in the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, IX, 1911, under the title "The Coming of the Hollanders to Iowa"] Scholte also outlined in much detail the advantages of America and especially of the Dutch colony in central Iowa. Since Pella's sister colony at Holland, Michigan, on the southern shore of the Lake, founded a few months earlier than Pella, provided the major competition for prospective immigrants, the Iowa publicist began his descriptive account on that note. At least one family bound for Iowa but lured instead to the Michigan settlement by unscrupulous promoters in eastern cities, Scholte declared, had since realized that hewing wood could not compare with farming rich Iowa land.

In a similar competitive vein, the Pella leader boasted that central Iowans could soon expect the Des Moines River Improvement project, begun that year, to provide a key waterway to the Mississippi River and New Orleans. The newly-platted city of Amsterdam, six miles southwest of Pella on the River, would then become the seaport of central Iowa. With this prospect in view, Scholte denigrated the pet public improvement project of the rival Holland colony—the federal construction of a permanent harbor at Black Lake, an inlet of Lake Michigan. Given the nature of the lake currents, Scholte averred, the much-touted project was impossible to construct. While wrong on the first count, the clergyman was right on the second. The Des Moines River project was aborted in favor of a railroad and Amsterdam became a ghost town; Congress never appropriated funds for the Michigan harbor.

The *Second Voice from Pella* also contains many insights for students of ethnic and cultural history. Most historical works present the views of native Americans toward immigrant groups. Scholte's letter, however, discloses the reaction of the foreign-born to Americans, especially their farming techniques, horticultural methods, craftsmanship, and dress. The native Americans, the Dutchman observed, made cheese and butter of an inferior quality, failed to realize the potential market for flax, hemp, and rape-seed, looked askance at the

vegetable garden plots surrounding every Pella home, lacked the skill properly to tan leather for shoes, and did not use corduroy and wool flannel or make a distinction between summer and winter clothing. The Dutch might learn from Americans how to tap maple trees and cook the syrup, but "it is impossible for Europeans, especially Hollanders, suddenly to get accustomed to the American way of dress," Scholte concluded.

Although American clothing presented problems of adjustment for the Hollanders, civic affairs did not. Scholte's second letter, even more than the first, indicates the ease with which the Dutch were integrated into the political life of frontier Iowa. Both major political parties attempted to woo the foreign-born vote and in a bipartisan move, the state legislature on January 22, 1848, created a new township for the Pella colony, called Lake Prairie. This special act also granted to the newcomers full political rights at the township level, thus obviating the traditional five-year waiting period. Under the new law, Lake Prairie held its first local election in April, 1848. In what might be described as an integrated election, the voters returned sixteen Hollanders and four Americans—a proportion roughly equal to the strength of each group in the colony. Three Dutch immigrants comprised the public school staff, but they gave instruction in both Dutch and English.

Mrs. Albert Raap and her son, Mr. Henry Raap of Paramount, California, both natives of the Netherlands, kindly assisted in the preparation of this translation of Scholte's letter, extracted from one of the few remaining copies of the original pamphlet in the Heritage Hall Collection at Calvin College. The text is complete except for the deletion (noted by ellipses) of several portions of Scholte's lengthy "sermonette" to the Netherlanders in the middle section of the letter, and an extraneous forward by a Dutch editor. Capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing have been altered where necessary to assist the reader, otherwise the translation is more or less literal.



Cover, Second Voice From Pella

*Tweede Stem Uit Pella, Second Voice from Pella*, by H. P. Scholte.

I. The Situation in Pella

When I sent my letter from here to the Netherlands last February, I did not expect that the situation in Europe would so soon fulfill my expectations. I viewed the happenings in France with a very different feeling than most of my fellow American countrymen here.

The American people, in general less well acquainted with the internal affairs of European nations and with the actual state of mind of European peoples, saw in the Paris revolution a noble struggle for freedom against a parasitic lust of power. They thought to see in it the beginning of a period of development which would bring the various European nations to the same blessed state as that presently enjoyed by the people of the United States. In most of the large cities celebrations were held as a sign of rejoicing over the advancement of freedom.

With me it was very different. In the first place, I considered the European peoples in their present state of mind to be unfit to enjoy a society such as we have here, since they either never have had or have lost the ability to think for themselves and to act accordingly. The whole social system of the Old World seems very much like an old decrepit body. With a few powerful stimulants, it may, to be sure, momentarily take on the appearance of youthful vigor and strength, but with any exertion it soon relapses into the same lethargy and sluggishness as before, falling prey to one or another oppressors who increase still more the burden by which the people previously were bowed down, and who finally bring lethargy and sluggishness to exhaustion, causing the body to descend into the grave.

Secondly, I judged the economic state of affairs of Europe to be very different from that of North America. Freedom alone can make no people on earth happy if that people does not also have the opportunity to develop itself freely, either by farming and dairying or by trade and manufacturing. Being somewhat familiar with the economic and social structure of Europe and especially the Netherlands, and considering the general exhaustion of the middle class, the

imaginary value of paper money for which no actual value exists, the overpopulation so disproportionate to tillable soil and unevenly distributed at that, and the high though presently inevitable tax structure, I thought that revolutionary freedom could produce nothing but increasing expenses and frustration of the unfounded hope of thousands who expected improvement to come out of change.

In the third place, I was convinced that unbelief increasingly characterizes the religious life of most Europeans, the Netherlands not excluded. Because of this, the desire for freedom by the masses does not stem from noble principles and aspire toward a higher purpose, but on the contrary, issues out of a lust for greater undisturbed sensuality. From this it must follow that he who is poor and possesses little looks with jealous eye to the man with more possessions and wealth, and eagerly takes hold of every opportunity that he hopes will also enable him to acquire a portion of that wealth without being accused of theft or robbery by the judge. I was fully assured that this situation could not be compared with earlier heathen nations who likewise lived in unbelief.

The European nations bear the name of Christians and cannot separate themselves from that name unless they include themselves in the apostacy foretold in God's Word. Even then, however, the name of Anti-Christ and Antichristendom bears witness of the Christ, whose kingly office to be sure has long been a stumbling-block to rulers and nations, but who nevertheless is clothed with all power in heaven and on earth, and of the coming revelation of whose kingdom the present world events are clear signs.

In accord with the revealed Word of God, I cannot but regard a large part of the Eastern and Western nations as the incompatible outgrowths of the great Roman Empire, which is destined by that Word to be destroyed by the omnipotent reign of David's Son and David's Lord, the only lawful heir of David's throne, who shall reign from sea to sea and from one end of the earth to the other, while all those who did not want Him as King shall be condemned as his enemies.

Now even though the Netherlands and northern Europe

as well as England did not belong to the actual Roman Empire, they nevertheless had contacts, relations, and alliances with that Empire under whose supremacy the Lord of Glory was crucified as King of the Jews. Consequently, I expect that those countries shall also share in the effects of the terrible judgments that must come to the Roman Empire. Since I have become accustomed to make use of the light of the Word of God in explaining the obscurities of world history which I see happening, I cannot but regard the future of Europe, from the human point of view, with anxiety; however, as far as the Lord is concerned, I look forward with joy to the glad time when the heavenly song of praise shall be heard: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ" Revelations 11:15.

Upon such reflections it was inevitable that I should gratefully recognize the good hand of God on me and mine, and on so many of my companions, through which we have been brought to a place that now is to us a *Pella* in the fullest sense. While we not only enjoy God's gifts in nature and taste the pleasures of a real independence, we also experience in an extraordinary and mighty way that the Lord in His Grace and Spirit is making His abode with us. This realization is becoming more common among the citizens of Pella as we learn more about the developments in Europe and in the old Fatherland, and as we see in just about every house in the last few weeks the miracles of God's grace in the upcoming generation. We do not forget our former countrymen, but on the contrary, their present situation is often the topic of our conversation. This is also the primary cause of this letter, and I hope whole-heartedly that my former fellow citizens will listen to this "voice" with the same interest and willingness as I have in sending it to them.

First, I will give a short account of our material, political, and religious affairs, and then I will speak a word to my former compatriots in their present circumstances. Since the time I sent my first "voice" from Pella to the Netherlands, families have come to us from time to time from the Netherlands. Before they reached us, these families generally had all kinds of temptations to withstand. Already in New York,



but also in other places such as Buffalo, men are busily engaged in scaring the immigrating Hollanders away from Iowa and having them go to Michigan instead. This is done partly by a few persons in New York and elsewhere who are connected with the Dutch colony in Michigan, and partly by agents of land speculators. The speculators have large land holdings in Michigan which they are unable to sell to the Americans. As a result, they are eager to lead foreigners to those parts in the hope that through such settlements their lands will go up in value.

This summer one of my acquaintances in New York wrote and advised me to place an agent there also, in order to give the immigrants better information. I replied that I would not resort to such a method, since I was fully persuaded that the growth of our Colony was not dependent on men. I had sent plenty of information to the Netherlands about our Settlement and therefore would rather leave further development to God's guidance. We have had an example in one one family (who in Buffalo already allowed themselves to be persuaded to turn off toward Michigan instead of traveling on to Iowa) that the Lord in a most unexpected way can reveal the truth. This family now lives here contentedly on an outstanding farm, and one of their sons who did travel to Michigan has written his parents that he is thinking about coming here. This is the Noteboom family.

Let no one think I want to say anything detrimental to the settlement in Michigan. Nowadays we frequently correspond with some of our former countrymen who live there. According to their letters they are content. There is some agriculture and plenty of timber, especially pine and spruce trees, which gives work to many poor people. As long as there is timber on hand to be stripped, chopped, and sawed, the people who deal in it can make and profit and those who work in it can find their daily bread. As long as there is lumber to be delivered there is no worry about foodstuffs, for the ships that haul lumber bring enough foodstuffs with them for trade. And once the trees are gone, it will probably be possible to get enough out of the land through farming and livestock so the inhabitants would not need any foodstuffs from other places. As far as I know, the construction

of a good harbor will always remain under the *pia vota* [i.e., as a fond wish]. The natural state of the east side of Lake Michigan makes construction of harbors virtually impossible. The usual course on the inland lake goes along the west side, where several good landing places can be found in the state of Wisconsin. Even the harbor of Chicago, already an important trading place, located on the south-west corner of the lake, is impossible to keep in shape for incoming and outgoing ships and steamboats without continuous artificial removal of the sand that is constantly washed ashore.

No one should forget, however, that the location of each persons home, in whatever country it may be and no matter how one may ponder and deliberate, is planned and directed. Whoever assuredly believes this, if he stands before God free of unreasonable practices, will neither be too anxious, nor worry too much, nor get angry. It is an old truth, ever confirmed notwithstanding the most contradictory human actions: "A man's heart devises his way, but the Lord directs his steps" (Proverbs 16:9). We appreciate the immigration of our former compatriots, especially Christians, but it must be entirely out of their own free will and on clear and reasonable grounds. We do not wish afterwards to receive from anyone a just reproach for having given a wrong or too strong coloring of the matter from one side or the other. Whoever comes with a wrong point of view or with unreasonable expectations, finds it just as little to his liking here as anywhere else. We would rather be spared of such immigrants. Some of these have already given us enough trouble. Fortunately, however, we are rid of the most mischievous. Some of our fellow immigrants from Holland are still in St. Louis, where a few—who prefer big wages and little work, and who do not see a chance for this in Pella—still hang around and do their best to tell the Hollanders who arrive there all kinds of evil about our Settlement, pressing them instead to go directly to Michigan. Those who know these people intimately or use their own reasonable judgment, run into far less danger of being misled. However, I figured it necessary to make some mention of it, although I will give no names as yet since this would be advantageous for no one.

This year agriculture and stock raising are the chief concerns in our Colony. In field work most of our farmers surpass the Americans in neatness and orderliness. Different kinds of grain were sown and these grew luxuriantly. The harvest was plentiful. Extraordinary rains during the last weeks have caused some damage to grain here and there where it had not yet been gathered into the barn. So much grain has been grown, however, that we have more than we can use, unless of course there is a considerable increase in the number of colonists who settle here. The constant increase of population in this state, which extends more and more to the west of us, offers opportunities for selling products at higher prices than can be had closer to the Mississippi.

At this time many people concentrate on making cheese. Experience has taught us that cheese can be made here as good as in Holland. The reason for the poorer quality of the American cheese is in the way it is made, not in the soil or climate. We do not even have pastures of domesticated grass; the cattle still graze on the prairie or in the timber. In addition to the cheese that is normally consumed in the neighborhood, five shipments have already been sent to St. Louis where it has earned for itself a separate place on the market list as *Iowa Cheese*. The cheese finds eager buyers in St. Louis, and although little known as yet, it already brings higher prices than American cheese. Our farmers, of course, are very pleased about this, and everyone who has any chance at all to make cheese does so, but not always with the same success. This summer outstanding butter has also been made, but only for personal use. When we can deliver butter from here to the St. Louis market without it spoiling, it is certain that we can get a good price for it, since fresh butter is a rarity in the more western states.

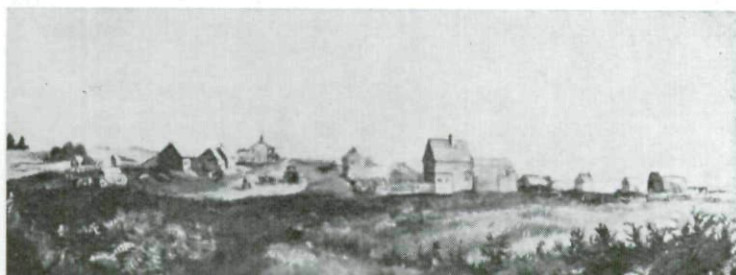
For more efficient preparation of cheese and butter there is a real need for better working places. These are generally lacking here among Americans and this fact has led to continual work in building houses and stables. This in turn creates demand for sawed lumber, baked or hewn stone, and lime. Two brick kilns are in operation; one has baked twice, the other once, and all the bricks were sold immediately. The saw mill, known from the testimony of most Americans as the

best river dam in the state, saws exceptionally well. While all the other neighboring mills have been shut down from the continual rising of the rivers and creeks due to excessive rains, our mill was able to continue operation. We have so much water power that the saw mill cannot use it all. The need for a grain mill has become evident and as soon as the financial state permits, a grain mill will be added. Recently one of the American settlers in this township bought a horse-powered saw mill which is already in operation and provides part of the needed lumber.

Cattle-raising here is also a very profitable business. We have experienced that we do not have to look for a market for our beef cattle. Buyers themselves come from the neighboring state of Illinois to buy and take our cattle. They pay cash and at reasonably good prices, considering the fact that these cattle cost almost nothing to raise since they look for and find ample grazing on the open prairies. This summer already beef cattle were shipped from here to Illinois, giving our farmers a new opportunity to procure milk cows. The hemp and flax trade can likewise provide many with work. Flax and hemp grow exceptionally well and these crops produce much seed. I have never seen such a luxuriant crop in Holland. When it becomes evident that Dutch farmers understand this trade better than Americans, then a good market can certainly be found anywhere in America for these products. Last week a sample of flax, prepared by a Dutchman, was sent to St. Louis. The same thing will be done later with hemp. Rapeseed also grows luxuriantly here and yields plenty of seed. An oil mill could be a good business here and with increased production of flax and hemp, a flax-mill and rope-making business could be operated with profit. According to a few who have experimented, those who wish to begin sheep raising, including the preparation of wool, could also find a good opportunity for this.

In the city of Pella one can notice an increasing amount of building and the platting of several streets. In the surrounding area houses are being built everywhere and farm land prepared and fenced. Since the lots in the city are quite large, a vegetable garden can be found beside each house. This seems strange to Americans since they do little

or no gardening. All sorts of vegetables grow in abundance. Cauliflower is the only exception and gardeners attribute this to rapid evaporation. But this problem can be overcome by providing adequate protection, for example, by planting corn. The most appetizing melons are grown on the so-called cold soil. [In Holland melons are grown in hothouses. ed.] This spring several asparagus beds have been started on the prairie land. The asparagus was sown after plowing the land only once without further preparation, and indeed, it is flourishing so well that anyone in Holland, despite the best care in preparing a bed, could not expect a better crop in the second year. We do not have, as yet, many domesticated fruit trees in these areas, but in the spring a number of grafted apple and pear trees were planted and on the average these trees are growing quite well. Many peach and plum trees have been taken from the forests and transplanted in the gardens. Strawberries as well are transplanted. One of the farmers prepared excellent wine from grapes found in the woods.



*from Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*

#### **Straw Town in 1847**

Many flowers such as roses and lilies grow on the prairies and in the forests. The wild flowers which grow here would command high prices in the Netherlands. Additional varieties of flowers have started to grow from the seeds which were brought from Holland. Provision has already been made for the laying out of a regular nursery for trees, and we hope to be in a position soon to transplant here some domesticated trees from the Netherlands.

In the city there are two blacksmith shops that are busy continually. One of them already delivered several plows,

known in the Netherlands by the name "Zeeuwsche," which satisfy very well. There is a cartwright shop and a cooperage that produce good work. Also, connected to the sawmill is a blacksmith shop. Recently another cartwright arrived from the Netherlands, and he already has delivered work. There are three stores where groceries, yardage, hardware, and other household goods are for sale. They also undertake marketing the produce of our farmers, especially cheese, in St. Louis. There are shoemaker shops which constantly have work, but the bosses wish that a tannery would be set up nearby where leather could be tanned the same way that it is done in Holland. There are also a few tailors and a pair of wooden-shoe makers, as well as three house painters; the latter, however, do not find continuous work in this line, but keep themselves busy with whatever their hands find to do. We have ample carpenters and bricklayers to work with the wood and stone that is on hand. However, the increase of the population will make it necessary for more artisans. There were more farm hands than we could profitably use, but they found work with neighboring Americans who like to have Hollanders work for them.

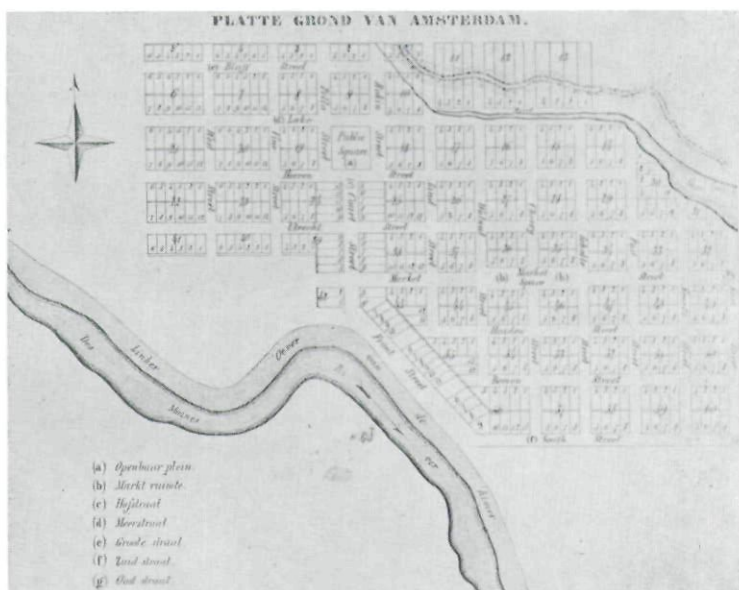
Because of the continuous passing through of immigrants there is need for a good hotel. None of the Hollanders here at present has the desire or ability for that. We hope, however, that before winter comes, an American will make available a suitable house for that. Since our colonists got used to making their own bread, there is presently not much for a baker to do. Yet somebody is busy putting up an oven. There is also a confectionery being made with the idea of export, and a small pastry shop is already completed with the same object. The Americans like confections and pastry especially well. There is an opportunity here to get very good honey, and those among us who are acquainted with handling bees are beginning to apply themselves to this. There are also a few maple trees in our Settlement, but our countrymen are not yet acquainted with tapping the trees and cooking the sap.

For further clarification I am adding a map of Pella drawn up by the county surveyor. The site of a city along the Des Moines River has also been surveyed and it was the

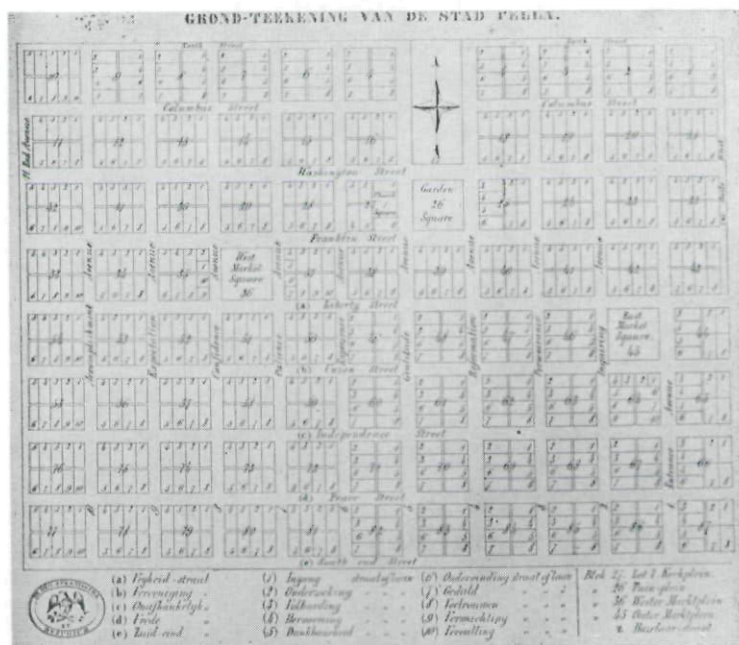
desire of our American neighbors to name it Amsterdam. Since the river is being made navigable for ships and steamboats, this will have to become the harbor for Pella and the surrounding district. One can be reminded that what was once the Amsterdam of the Netherlands is now the Amsterdam of America (now called New York). The name was given to the city because of its Dutch origin and because it was intended for trade. I am also going to send you a map which shows the above described area. While workers are busy making the Des Moines River navigable, a work party has also begun at the Mississippi River. After inspection it became clear that the mouths of the river were not adequate for this purpose, thus it was decided to dig a canal. For two weeks already the men have prepared locks and all the related mechanisms. The working line extends up to Ottumwa, about ninety-three miles from the start of the canal. At this time the surveying of the river from Ottumwa to Fort Des Moines must be completed. Amsterdam is almost half way up the river and therefore is within the surveyed area. The river needs a dam and lock here, and this is the reason why the site has been chosen for the building of a city. A good road runs from here to Pella and is already in use.

We have no reason to complain about our health. August and September are known to be the unhealthiest months. In Pella, however, there are no sick people. A few people living on the river are affected by fever. Nevertheless, our people on the average appear quite healthy and are even better here than in the Netherlands. This summer a woman died shortly after her arrival. She was pregnant, got sick while she slept in a draft, and died soon after this. Also a man of seventy-five years died when he fell, suffering internal injuries. I think I have given you as good a comprehensive account of our material state as is possible. I can only add that during these times there is already a mail delivery three times weekly, by means of a covered wagon which rides on springs and journeys all the way to Fort Des Moines.

Our civic affairs are governed by state law. As a result of the unusual law especially made for us—which I mentioned already in my first letter—the election of township officials took place on the first Monday in April, in conjunction with



Plat of Amsterdam



Plat of Pella



the American citizens still living in our township. These willingly agreed that the majority of the officials should be chosen from among the Hollanders, since they constituted the majority of the residents. Thereafter an agreement was made that we would hold separate preparatory meetings in order to learn the choice of the people on both sides, with the intent of being able to vote together on the lawful election day. This took place and consequently the present city government has been elected, sworn in, and put into action. To satisfy the curiosity of some, we give the following list of officers: Justices of the Peace, Green T. Clark,+ H. P. Scholte; Constables, Stilman Elwell,+ Cornelius Vanden Berg. These serve two years. Commissioner, G(iles) Autry,+ A(ntonie) J(an) Betten, P(ieter) Welle; Clerk, I(saac) Overkamp; School Inspector, H. P. Scholte; Treasurer J(an) Roziersz; Overseers of the poor, Corn(elius) Den Hartog, H(endrik) Barendregt; Road Supervisors, Wellington Nossaman,+ Wm. Van Asch, C(ornelius) 't Lam, P(ieter) Van Meveren, D(ir)k Synhorst; Fence Inspectors, A(lexander) De Visser, J(an) Toom. These serve one year; however everyone can be re-elected. The ones marked with a cross are Americans.

The clerk of the township is also clerk for the school inspector. The job of the latter, generally, is that of supervising the township schools, examining and hiring public teachers, and withdrawing contracts because of immoral conduct or neglect. He divides the township into districts according to the needs and in compliance with the interests of the inhabitants, takes care of the election of the district directors, and corresponds directly with the state superintendent of public schools, and concerning money matters with the county school commissioner. As a result, the township is divided into five districts. Of these, the Pella district was immediately organized and has the only school. It has been in progress for a few months already. The Skunk district is organized also, and the residents are busy building a house for the teacher. The three other districts all will be organized soon. The children going to the school that is now operating are taught in Dutch and English. I(saac) Overkamp and J(ames) Muntingh were given contracts as public teachers, while H(enry) Hospers functions as assistant teacher.

I will not give too much attention to describing the duties of the various officials, since this is of little importance to you Netherlanders. All the documents are written in the English language, and if necessary, are translated for us Hollanders. Only once was it necessary to resort to the judiciary in a matter of a small debt. For the rest, the activities of the justice of the peace have been limited until now to performing marriages—which is one of his duties here—and to notarizing the signatures of personal and mutual documents.

As far as our group is concerned, our political life is governed by the laws of the state just as the American citizens. In the election of county, state, and federal officials, however, we are restrained from voting until we have attained full citizenship. But our political involvement is not limited only to matters of the township. In a public meeting in Marion County, I was present when a law was discussed which has been passed contrary to the best interest of the people. As a representative of the Dutch Colony, I was chosen a member of the commission to draw up some articles expressing the desire of the people, to be sent to the persons in power. I did not withdraw myself from this and had the satisfaction of seeing the essence of my proposal concerning that matter accepted first by the commission and afterwards by the entire gathering. The outcome of this expression of the will of the people, emulated by a neighboring county, has been that the indicated law was suspended until the next meeting of the representatives of the people. During the recently-held election of those state representatives, the candidates for the offices publicly pledged themselves to achieve the recall of that law.

This coming November another election is pending that concerns the whole nation. The President of the United States must be elected. Three candidates have been nominated by the various political parties: General (Zachary) Taylor, by the Whigs; General Lewis Cass, by the Democrats; and Martin Van Buren, by a third party composed of those who do not want to vote for either Taylor or Cass. (Van Buren was the candidate of the Free Soil Party, pledged to limit the extension of slave territory. ed.) Those parties are now holding all sorts of public meetings in favor of their candidates, in

order to convince the mass of the people to vote for their candidate in November. Although the Hollanders at present cannot take part in this election, they are nevertheless being invited to the meetings to give moral support to one party or another and to win votes of American citizens by their influence. Today there was another such meeting in a neighboring town. By chance a couple of Hollanders from Pella who spoke English happened to be there. Immediately they were invited to take part in the meeting and the dinner connected with it, and were presented to the gathering with warm sincerity as members of the Dutch community. If our former compatriots who are inclined to think as we do compare how they are treated by the various political parties, they will be able to notice quite a bit of difference, and I do not believe that things have improved in this respect since we left the Netherlands. Here we are appreciated by our fellow countrymen. They all know that religion is of primary importance with us, yet they do not consider us fanatics, and are not afraid that we will exert a negative influence on society. In this respect, we therefore have no reason for complaint, but much rather grounds for thankfulness.

What above all inclines my heart to thankfulness in my new fatherland, however, is the present religious situation in Pella and vicinity. Everyone should have been able to gather from my previous letter that, with respect to religious life, there is much cause for rejoicing. Considering all the favors granted us by God in our material and social life, the religious state of the Colony often filled my heart with concern. I was too strongly convinced that the faithful observing of the outward forms of religion is in no way pleasing to the Lord, when the essence of religion does not fill the heart as well, especially when one pretends that religion is of primary importance. I often looked with anxiety on the younger generation, which finds little that is stimulating in the example of their elders. Many times this was an object of my prayers, but sometimes it seemed to me as though prayer was futile, considering the increased disobedience of the children. I even began to imagine that this situation had become for me and others who were burdened by it a way of trying us, purifying us, and detaching us from earth, and a means of keeping us from becoming too

greatly attached to this good land. Then, suddenly, I heard that one of the mischievous youngsters was converted. Upon investigation the genuineness of this conversion was apparent enough; in addition, there was a second and third. From that time on, there has been constant evidence of the work of God's grace. Several children, young men and women, as well as adults have openly before the congregation made confession of their faith in Christ Jesus, as their Saviour and God. This made a favorable impression upon those who were already members of the congregation, so that now the situation is very different from a few months ago. In this respect most of the families have been blessed by the Lord with one or more tokens of His regenerating and sanctifying grace. It is a matter truly refreshing to the heart of the Christian to hear out of the mouths of children the plain and unaffected confession of the work of God in their souls, and to see how God's love, poured out by the Holy Spirit in their hearts, inclines them to look up their former playmates and to invite them to turn with them into the Way of Life. The Word of God is studied zealously and the time otherwise wasted in useless activities or idle conversation is now directed toward strengthening faith and praising the Lord together. Things in Pella and vicinity are now truly as is sung in the Psalm (118:15): "The voice of gladness and salvation is in the tents of righteousness; / There do they sing with adoration, / The Lord's right hand is strong to bless."

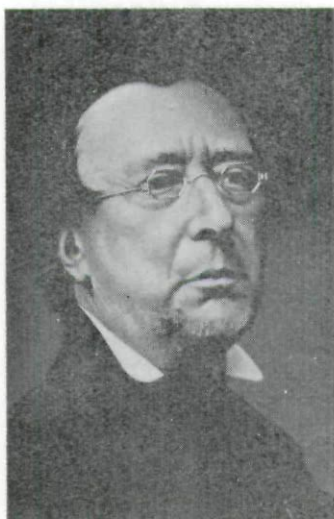
Convinced that the Evil One as usual would not fail to attempt to spoil the work of God which he had not been able to prevent, I considered it quite expedient to focus the attention of the youthful, aroused multitude upon a particular matter, thus to provide genuine food for heart and mind. The intent was, in the power of the Lord, to prevent deviations and impassioned overexertions. Being aware of the importance of the times in which we live, and having noticed that the mind of the young people was also concerned with the return of the Lord, I decided to originate a weekly meeting to consider together the book of Daniel the prophet. The reasons for this choice were many. The youthful piety of Daniel and his companions provides an immediate attraction to youthful converts. The situation of being richly blessed

by God in a strange land, while their people generally existed in misery, has much in common with our present situation. The zealous studying of these young men, who coupled their worldly knowledge with a humble, prayerful life before God, and their practice before people of not exalting self but giving God the glory, is an immediately stimulating example to be followed. The provident hand of God manifested upon them is exceptionally encouraging in the face of ever-present danger.

In addition to all of this, this book comprises the history of the world in both past and future. A treatment of this book provides immediate occasion for the study of history, chronology, and geography concerning matters of God's Kingdom. I was therefore of the opinion that this part of God's Word, in the present circumstances, could be especially influential in promoting a rational worship, while preventing an overly emotional form of worship, in which Christians, alas, so often are satisfied with empty phrases, so that they eventually become accustomed to regarding the Word of God as a sealed book or a dead letter. My decision has been received with great joy, and the weekly discussions on Daniel are attended by a large crowd. Through these discussions, it is also constantly necessary to refer back to the history of the Old World, while we are also compelled to cast an eye to the future, and thus to learn to regard the signs of the times in which we live. This, in turn, gives us immediate occasion to evaluate in the light of divine revelation that which we hear concerning present world events. I am now hoping that the living space and peace granted to us here by the grace of God shall be instrumental in arousing gratitude for God's blessing, providing better training for the service of the Lord, promoting a greater development of knowledge concerning the Kingdom of God, and rejuvenating the joyful hope of the coming fulfillment of the Word of God revealed in the book of Daniel.

While nearly the entire Old World is in an uproar—where confusion is destined to follow confusion and upheaval to follow upheaval—we are now able to observe, out of this place of refuge provided us by God, the preparations that the King of the whole earth is preparing to put into action, in order to bring to complete fulfillment the prophecy of Daniel.

Pella has now become doubly precious to me, since the Lord has shown that He desires to live in our midst here, and I am unable to keep from my former fellow countrymen the great works that God has done and is doing in our midst. Out of a grateful heart I invite many of my Christian friends to *Come and see!*



H. P. Scholte



Scholte Home, Pella; House still borders  
North side of Town Square

I expect, however, that many are not able to come over to us, though they would like to—one because of a lack of conviction that it is God's will for him, another because of worries over the difficult journey, and yet another because of lack of money to travel and to start a business. I expect that many do not want to come, though they are able, for they still hope that the situation in the Netherlands will improve, or that they can hold out for their lifetime. I expect that some of them are not able to give reasons themselves concerning what they want or would like to do, and who because of that are entirely indifferent toward any possibility to come here. For these and other reasons, I wish yet to direct a word to the inhabitants of the Netherlands in the present articulation of time.

## II Address to the People of the Netherlands

. . . I know that I could consider myself free of any responsibility to speak to the people of the Netherlands but I know also that this would not satisfy the demands of my heart. Though no longer a citizen of that country, yet I can and shall never forget where God's mercy granted me life for both time and eternity. My former fellow countrymen now have even more compelling reasons not to disregard my words. When I was in the Netherlands, they could suspect and some did suspect that I was eyeing honor and position in the Netherlands. This suspicion is now no longer justifiable. Socially and politically I am detached from the Netherlands, and even hold an office among the American people already. I am, however, still attached to the land of my birth, and I am not unconcerned about the portion which that land shall receive of the plagues which God shall pour forth upon the fourth world power.

The Netherlands did not belong directly to the Roman Empire. The Batavians were related to the Roman Empire not as subjects but as allies. As a result of this alliance, the spirit of the Roman Empire also penetrated into the Netherlands. The necessity of a good lawyer to have a doctorate in Roman Law, the use of the Latin language in almost every profession, and the Roman Catholic union of church and state are proof of this. The Netherlands as well as northern Germany was attached to Rome and cannot now detach itself

from this. As a result of this, we see the events taking place in the actual Roman Empire also having an immediate influence upon the Netherlands. This was true in the past and is the case again now.

Let no one think that I am referring only to the Roman Catholics in the Netherlands. No, I am referring to the Dutch civilization, Protestant as well as Catholic. In name and form the one segment may differ somewhat from the other, at times they may appear to be hostile toward each other, but actually both belong to the same clan. The blindness toward this truth is one of the major tragedies of the Dutch nation. Shall that blindness come to an end now? Shall the relationship with the Roman Empire be ended? The present events again speak in the negative. World history should have taught them indisputably that no change in the form of government would bring happiness to a nation. Whether Rome was ruled by the senate, by consuls, by tribunes, by emperors, by decemviri, or by dictators, it was ever the same Roman Empire. The same is still true of all the governments that have come out of that Empire. Therefore the Christian must regard it as foolishness whenever any nation seeks salvation in a change of government, unless old principles are thrown out and new ones adopted. The one sound principle in this present world is this: give to God what is God's and to the worldly government what belong to it according to God's ordinance, i.e., honor, toll, and taxes. The former is practiced neither by nations nor by governments of the Roman Empire. That Empire has never yet repented of the sin committed by Pontius Pilate in delivering the King of the Jews to the shameful death on the cross. . . .

People of the Netherlands! There is still a remnant of the firmness of iron in your form of government, but also an abundance of matter like miry clay which is not fit to bind and strengthen the building of the state. Now, even if some of the minor items in your national budget are eliminated or suppressed, this does not change the miry clay into a lasting and strengthening substance. You as a nation are guilty of the sin of Pontius Pilate. And not only now, it was this way during the supposedly most flourishing times of the commonwealth. Consider the title of your national Bible translation:



"By order of the Honorable Gentlemen of the United States." See it in the actions of the Synod of Dordt, where those Honorable Gentlemen command what shall or shall not be discussed altogether in the spirit of the Roman Empire under Constantine the Great and other emperors and empresses. Now, God tells us through Daniel that the entire image (whereof Babylon is the head and the present-day nations having come out of pagan Rome are the toes) shall be crushed by a stone hewn out of the mountain without hands—the kingdom of Christ. We need not search far to find the reason why the Holy Spirit, in the Revelation given to John, causes the name of Babylon to appear again in the end. It is the name of the head of the entirety.

Confusion has been the history of the world powers and confusion is again generally present among the various nations belonging to, or related to the Roman Empire. Well might one of your most excellent poets sing: "Watchman! What of the night?" The night, in which no one can work, is at hand; the night, similar to the one in Babylon when Belshazzar, confident of his walls and fortresses, imagined himself secure against the nearby Medes and Persians and frolicked away all anxiety with idle celebrations of his victories, including the one formerly gained over the people of Jehovah and of the plundering of the house of Israel's God. People of the Netherlands! Oh! that no carousing festivities may be found in the palaces of your rulers! The fate of the nations of the image may not be written on the walls of royal banquet halls by a supernatural hand; nevertheless, it is written in the Word of God: "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

Christians in the Netherlands! A brother gives you this advice after the preceding observations; Wake up! Behold! and ask if the word is not applicable to you: "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins and share in her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). You will never suffer harm by waking up, observing, and investigating, but you might by failing to do these. I know, and am convinced that none of God's children shall be lost eternally, but he who wishes to remain in Babylon shall be plagued along with Babylon, and when this is the case with children of God, they shall still,

while the world is blaspheming God for the judgments, recognize the grace of the Lord who is sending them this trial by fire, in order to take from them forcibly that which they had not willingly relinquished at the loving call of their heavenly Father.

You could and probably will ask, then, if we are safe in America? My answer is: there is a multitude of sinners among the people of the United States of North America, but as a nation they have not become guilty of the sin of the Roman Empire. North America has never belonged to that world power, and the United States came into being as a nation only through rejecting all social and religious ties with the mother country. The Declaration of Independence did not flow out of a theoretical concept of freedom, but out of a practical recognition of right and justice. The extensive lands, on which millions more shall be able to find adequate sustenance, have not been wrested from their former owners with bloodthirsty weapons, they were bought and paid for. The principle of the Babylonian world powers in the North American colonies originally transplanted from Europe was completely rejected when the Union was formed. After that came the acquisition of such a great expanse of land and the forward march of the enterprising settlers by which the farthest districts (also the state of Iowa) were opened to European immigrants. The laborer is not oppressed, the needy not forsaken, the stranger not cast out, and the people not crushed by unbearable taxes. The nation is free, and shows itself able to handle and use this freedom. The worship of God is held in honor without being supported by money from the state, but also without being bound by the state. These and other reasons cause me to conclude that the situation of the United States until now is entirely the opposite of the situation of nations subject or related to Rome. Moreover, Christians in various lands of the Old World are casting glances hither. He who believes in the direction of Providence must notice this and investigate the reason.

Ordinary study of world history teaches everyone the rise, prosperity, and decline of various nations. People of the world see in this nothing but a natural ebb and flow, and generally they are so blinded by this interpretation of history

that they almost never apply that history to themselves and their own people. The Christian, however, who uses the Word of God as a light and lodestar in following world history, knows that God has a hand in all these events and that there exists a connection between sinful conduct and decline of a nation. In the so-called Old History, God has caused the names of many places and peoples to be mentioned by his prophets.

While those nations did not acknowledge God nor keep Him in mind, God did think of them, and determined the reward for their actions. God is unchangeable in His being and veracious in His works. Now, when the Lord tells us in His Word that the aforementioned history is written as a warning to us, upon whom the end of the ages has come, is it not then an actual rejection of God's counsel to refuse to evaluate present history by and compare it with that which we find recorded in God's Word? He who truly does this will be regarded as a peculiar person, but that will not bother him; he knows where he is, and where he is going, and has grounds for and is sure of his actions.

With the present happenings in Europe and the Netherlands, one must either live an indifferent vegetable existence or choose sides. The latter becomes the more necessary in proportion to the extension of the suffrage. No Christian, or any reasonable person, may put himself on a par with a plant, thus burying the talent granted him by God. Which party to choose now, however? This may seem easy for a worldly person, but the Christian has rules other than earthly politics; he has the Word of God.

According to this Word, the Christian is obligated to resist the raging spirit of freedom presently agitating Europe, primarily because it is the spirit of unbelief and dissipation, but also out of a sincere concern for human society. In Europe many people imagine or try to convince others that they are following the example of the United States of North America, and many Americans believe this to be true of the movements in the Old World. When I was yet in the Netherlands I also thought that this was possible. But having become acquainted with the situation here, I consider it impossible.

In the first place I consider it impossible to govern

Europe as inexpensively as the United States. The reason for this lies in the spirit of the people and that is why people in Europe cannot understand that security and order can reign here; yet this is so. Everyone here believes it to be his duty to take care of the general welfare, and the fulfilling of that duty is the personal concern of everyone. I am certain that should European society suddenly be placed in that situation, one would see the most terrible disorder and confusion. Through the condition of society, there exists in Europe and also in the Netherlands a class of people known as common or vulgar. That class does not exist in the United States. In Europe there exists another class known as the nobility, or the aristocracy, or the respectable world, etc.: this class does not exist in the United States either. What we have here is in the fullest sense of the word—*the people*. Every citizen is part of it, from the President of the Union to the poorest person. Everyone is aware of it and tries to conduct himself worthy of it. That is why it is common to find well-bred manners in the most lowly dwellings and often under the most destitute exterior. Well-bred not in the sense of what is known in the Netherlands as “making compliments”—the North American citizen has no concept of this—but in the sense of modesty. Everyone is known as a gentleman and conducts himself accordingly.

Now it is possible in Europe to imagine such a society in theory, but to put it into practice seems impossible to me. That is why it is and remains peaceful here without military might, without a host of police functionaries. Military might is necessary here only at the borders, not within the country. For that reason, one does not find military guardhouses anywhere. There are a few constables in the cities and in the country-side; but it would be a mistake to compare these with police officers in the Netherlands. This latter type is not found anywhere here. Place Europe, place the Netherlands, in such a situation and public safety would no longer be found. This is true not only of the government in general, but also with respect to particular things. I will mention but one example. Could one imagine railroads in Europe, or in the Netherlands, without manned guardhouses along them to see to the safety of the roads? Now, this is entirely unnecessary here. There

are guards in such places which require immediate attention, e.g., by movable bridges, but these are the only places. At crossings are signs with painted warnings; no more is required for the safety of the roads. What is known as rowdiness is no national attribute here.

Another matter has great influence on the entire social structure. It is not regarded beneath one's dignity to perform manual labor; but rather, it is considered good, even an honor, to be able to help oneself. That is why farmers are not distinguished here from gentlemen. The richest here is either a dairyman or farmer, and every dairyman and farmer is mister (sir or gentleman), and every woman is a madam (lady). Place the Netherlands suddenly in such a situation and soon one would see barbarity in place of civility. No matter if one preaches in theory, "Liberty, equality, fraternity." It is necessary to have people who are suitable to bring it into practice, and we are continually experiencing how awkward most of the incoming Europeans are in this respect. It is difficult for them to adjust suddenly to such a different situation. The practice of manual labor causes almost everyone to be able to help when something needs to be done, and no one withdraws from social duties and gets a substitute unless he can spend his time more profitably elsewhere.

There is yet something else that is of great importance. In the Netherlands there exists a class referred to as the poor. This class is on relief and produces beggars. The latter I have never met here; never has anyone asked me for alms in the United States. We have poor people who are supported by general funds. These, however, are people who are unable to work as a result of physical handicaps or mental retardation. There is opportunity for everyone willing to work; for there are yet millions of acres untouched, available to anyone willing to settle on them. In the Netherlands all the land is divided into private property, and this can not be changed. The fixed rule of the Communists, Chartist, and Fourierists—to make all things community property—is destructive to any society and will not thrive on American soil. Such systems have been experimented with here but they die out. These and other reasons make it absolutely impossible for Europe and the Netherlands to place themselves in a situation like

that of the United States by a revolution or a change of administration. . . .

We will let the matter rest here for now, commending this address into the hands of our faithful and unchangeable Covenant God, trusting that He in His Providence shall cause it to reach each one for whom in His counsel it is intended.

### III General Advice

I have received letters from various people in the Netherlands and I have been asked to give them information about daily concerns. I have answered as many questions as I was able to answer. I am going to take this opportunity, however, to recall some of these things more publicly.

First, I shall write about the best way to get here. Generally speaking, the easiest and cheapest way to travel is via New Orleans, at least during the best times of the year—either in the spring or the fall. At New Orleans one can transfer from a regular boat to steamboats that travel directly to St. Louis, from which place other steamboats travel to Keokuk. This is the usual place for the arrival of those people who join us. Coming by this route, one can save himself a great deal of work and expense with transferring, which is necessary when traveling overland from one of the eastern ports. In November a steamboat service will begin between New York and New Orleans. It will be preferable, therefore, after arriving in New York, to travel via New Orleans.

By land the best way is via Buffalo, Erie, Beaver, Cincinnati, and then to St. Louis. More than likely during the summer it is possible to travel via Buffalo and Chicago and then by way of the Illinois River. Since only recently the Illinois River has been made navigable, I am less acquainted with this route. I would advise those people who speak the English language relatively well to choose their own means of transportation and to keep receipts of their own traveling expenses. I am always concerned with those people who wish to travel cheaply. Those people who wish to travel more luxuriously can do so by traveling along any possible route. I should remind those people who have luggage not to take those routes which must be traveled partially by means of stage coaches and postal wagons, since these do not carry bulky luggage. From Keokuk to Pella is by wagon. The

freight for luggage usually costs seventy-five American cents or three-fourths of a dollar for every hundred pounds. We would advise you to get the wagons with the luggage weighed at Keokuk and to get a certificate of a signed agreement avoiding later possible argumentation over prices and other conditions.

What to take along? This depends primarily on each individual's particular choice and taste. In general, taking along things that are bulky and of little value should be discouraged. For farmers, it is advisable to bring a few good shovels and sickles, skins for various grain sifters, and, for the dairies, good cheese forms, various strainers, and tubs. It would not do any harm also to think about taking a couple of good discs for the plows. For artisans it is wise not to sell at a sacrifice tools that are of any value, for then it is not necessary to buy new tools. All lumber shrinks which comes here from Europe. It is therefore better to wait with buying new until you are here. The tools in general are excellent here, though not cheap. An artisan who prefers not to live among Hollanders, but would rather work among Americans, cannot do much with his Dutch tools because he will have to work after the manner of Americans. Manufacturers do well to take along drawings of machinery and tools used by them.

For everyone it is a good idea to take along some leather for shoes and boots, especially greased leather. The latter is not found in America, and all leather is not tanned as well as in the Netherlands since it is done too quickly here. Sole leather is alright here. For work clothes it is suggested to take along black and yellow corduroy which is not available here. Whoever is used to wearing wool flannel had better not forget this, since it is not for sale here. Americans do not use it. This also applies to black and striped "kalamink," which is used by women for skirts, and to "merinos." The first is not found in America and the latter is very expensive. Moreover, take duffle for winter clothes and so-called linen for undergarments. This kind of linen, especially the better kinds, is also very expensive here.

Perhaps some of you will wonder why some of the things so common in the Netherlands are not available here. However this is involved with the whole situation of the nation.

Everyone here is a lady or gentleman, and this is also the case with clothes. No one has so-called work clothes, and the common laborer does not wear a suit any different from that of the other citizens. In addition, no distinction is made between summer and winter clothes. The normal apparel of an American is a shirt, stockings, pants, vest, and 'tails', or coat. In the winter, besides this, a heavy overcoat, and that is all. That is why the materials for making some of the clothes which the Hollanders are used to wearing are not found in the stores. Now, it is impossible for Europeans, especially Hollanders, suddenly to get accustomed to the American way of dress, and as far as the underclothes are concerned, it would not be advisable either, for reasons of health. Silk material and also silk ribbon are in abundance in America, but very expensive. Wool and worsted for stockings, likewise, are needed articles. Women generally will do well to supply themselves with bias tape and ribbon and other small items which can be taken along without much trouble.

For bedding, it would be advisable to take along wool and cotton blankets, since the American ones, like clothing, are generally very expensive. Similarly, linens, napkins, and diapers are seldom used, and are very expensive. Recommended for the household are brushes, scouring pads, and chamois; furthermore the operating parts of a good old-fashioned clock or pendulum and small household goods to which one is accustomed, which are not easily found here or are high in price. In general, all things which do not belong in daily living and to meet household needs are expensive here and actual items of luxury are very expensive. Now one person has one thing, another has yet something else, for which as men call it, he has a weakness. Once here, and having brought such things along, one feels less of the strangeness of moving, and one has time to get used to other ways. Taking along smaller household utensils involves only minor expense, especially considering how little such items bring when sold. Good mirrors and porcelain, if one knows how to pack, can also advantageously be taken along. Experience has taught that, despite meeting many difficulties on our trip, mirrors, paintings, and other breakable goods, when well packed, can be



brought along without damage.

Customs are not paid by immigrants on goods brought along for their use, and in general there is little trouble on arrival. To the emigrant it is advisable not to make the packing cases or bundles too large, so that two men can not handle them. The packing cases must be good and strong and tightly shut; padlocks are not necessary. For silk and colored materials, it is good to line the insides of the cases with tin, and to solder them against the ravages of sea air and dampness. No one will regret taking along good vegetable and flower seeds; and whoever has an opportunity to bring along roots, shoots, or seeds from Dutch fruit trees will be richly rewarded for his troubles.

What to take up profitably? This question has already been answered partly in the historical portion of this account. It must generally be remembered, however, that it is regarded as an honor and virtue to take on whatever work one's hands find to do. This is in agreement with the Biblical injunction that whatever your hand finds to do, do this with all your might. It is not true—and this is generally the case in a new settlement—that immediately all trades and labors are in proper proportion to the number of inhabitants. I have noticed this to be true, however, that an enthusiastic and wise worker or tradesman does not have to suffer poverty. Some trades will depend on whether or not factories will be established here and whether or not some aspects of agriculture will be practiced on a larger scale. When, for example, some flax growers intend to settle here, there will be opportunity for a large number of laborers, and the increase in the number of people has a direct bearing on various trades and stores. In a like manner, the growing of hemp is affected. Experimentally, it has already been proven that both crops grow exceptionally well here, and I am certain that when the typical and proper Dutch preparation of flax and hemp is carried over to the place, business men will be able to undertake this trade profitably and will be able to find a market anywhere for their products. The same thing holds for the spinning of flax, weaving, rope-making. The products of these trades likewise are not dependent on the particular place where one lives.



*from Souvenir History of Pella, Iowa*  
**Birdseye View of Pella in 1857**

A tannery could also operate profitably in this area; this is a necessity not only for this place but for the whole state. The same is true for a brewery and a vinegar factory. Since our syrup here is not as good, a potato and syrup factory would be an asset, even more so since potatoes grow very well here and they probably contain a higher amount of sugar or syrup than in Holland. I would not encourage a distillery, since I think that an increase in strong drink would be bad for the Colony. Good business could also be carried on with a vegetable-oil plant and this would encourage the increased production of seeds which flourish here. A good brush factory is certainly desirable. For all these things, however, it will be necessary to have a little money, as well as the initiative to start a business from scratch. Those people who have been blessed by God with money and who do not want to concern themselves with any kind of business, can invest their money at reasonable interest in many various ways. The regular interest rate here is six per cent, but in some cases more is offered. According to law, it is usury to charge more than ten percent.

I have now touched upon those things which were clearest in my mind and which could be discussed for a number of reasons. Experimentation and development will undoubtedly produce more evidences and then there will most likely

be another opportunity to speak about these things.

Concerning the letter exchange between the Netherlands and Pella, it is advisable to send the letters via Harve during these times. At present the relation between the postal service in England and North America is not the best. And the English police at Liverpool are very suspicious of American correspondence because of the tension in Ireland and the fear of collaboration between Ireland and North America. Therefore we send our mail via Harve and I would advise you in the Netherlands to do the same. It is a different matter when letters are sent directly to America by boat, but then the letters take a longer time to arrive.

It has become evident that some people have the mistaken impression that we know or hear practically nothing of the happenings in Europe. This is a wrong impression because weekly, and often more frequently, steamships of Europe bring us tidings of the Old World and immediately upon the arrival of the ships, the telegraph is put into operation. Within a few hours the telegraph broadcasts the news to the inhabitants of this land while simultaneously the daily newspapers also distribute the news which has come from Europe. The telegraph service extends right to Iowa. I am certain that we hear the news sooner than some of the inhabitants of the Netherlands. The daily papers do not contain news about the Netherlands.

I have to admit that I have had no part in the naming of the streets of the planned city of Amsterdam of which I am including a map. The names were already given and affirmed by a surveyor and others before I had a chance to see them. As can be seen, the names of the streets in Pella have been chosen according to a particular order. In Pella the lots are kept open chiefly for the Hollanders, whereas in Amsterdam the Americans also have access to them. The lots, therefore, are not sold publicly because then the highest bidder would have to be considered and consequently it would be difficult to keep unfit people from buying. Thus private business deals have and will be carried on. The price of lots in Amsterdam differ with respect to location. Those on Court Street and Front Street are the most expensive, but is yet only one hundred dollars. In other streets lots can be bought for forty

dollars. The value of lots will soon rise as the result of building and developing and when the river becomes navigable. This year the lots in Pella are still sold for fifty dollars but the lots around Garden Square are sold at one hundred dollars.

The state highway runs directly through Pella, entering the city on the southeast side, continuing northward to Franklin Street and running parallel to it up to Garden Square where it intersects Washington Street and continues to the west side proceeding into End Street. A grave yard is situated on the north-western side outside of the city limits. If a Hollander wishes to come here later, but at this time desires to buy city lots in either Pella or Amsterdam, he can do so. Lawful deeds can be prepared immediately and sent since the legal descriptions of the lots in both places have already been registered in the county's records. These deeds are valid before the law, just as those of the land-registry in the Netherlands.

As to building of houses, one can figure out the costs when he keeps in mind that bricks baked in the oven cost four dollars per thousands, lime at the oven costs fifteen American cents per bushel, oak, walnut and lime trees cost one to two dollars per hundred square feet an inch thick and the cost is proportional to the desired thickness. A day's wage for a craftsman working as a hired man is one dollar and a half a dollar for the helper. The number of working hours is ten hours per day.

At this time I am going to say good-bye to my countrymen and I trust that they are convinced that I have taken the trouble to tell everything in a clear and exact manner. I hope it will be of use in shedding some light on the present confusion and obscurity, and that it may be of substantial benefit to someone. I shall consider my labors rewarded when I am remembered in your prayers of faith before God.

The Writer.

#### IV Postscript.

Having finished the letter, I just read in the paper that the railway from Sandusky to Cincinnati has been completed, and this means that the whole route from New York to St. Louis can now be traveled by steam power. As a result, this route will be of much importance to the immigrant. Then one

can travel by steamship from Buffalo to Sandusky and from there by train to Cincinnati and again from there by steamship to St. Louis. I cannot tell you what the price of freight is since I have not yet seen the fare of the new railway. After the closing of the little account above, I received a letter from a farmer who lives in the state of Illinois opposite St. Louis. He is a Hollander by birth but has already lived in America for a number of years. Several weeks ago he visited our colony and observed everything. He was so pleased at the sight of this landscape that he decided to sell his farm in Illinois in order to come here this fall. He wants to buy a farm here and for this reason he wrote. Such facts speak much better for themselves than words and discussions can ever do.

H. P. Scholte.

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## MEMOIR OF THE WILLIAM ARCHER FAMILY

By Margaret E. Archer Murray

*The following history of the Archer Family was handwritten, in pencil, by Margaret E. Archer Murray at the age of 87. A typed copy was made and submitted to the Annals by Murray Work of Des Moines, Iowa, grandson of the author. The punctuation, capitalization and spelling used by Mrs. Murray have remained unchanged for publication.*

*The sketches accompanying this history were done for the Annals by William J. "Bill" Wagner, Iowa architect and artist.*

Murray this is April 27, 1938 I was 87 the 2nd of this month what I am telling you here is in part from memory & from what mother told me years ago

if I make some mistakes you will overlook them especially in spelling as I am quite deficient in education

I do not know a great deal about my parents' early life

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