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Remembrances of Former Days in Sioux County, Iowa

Gerrit Draayom

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REMEMBRANCES
of
FORMER DAYS
in
SIOUX COUNTY, IOWA
Sketches of the beginning
of the settlement and
experiences of the
colonists
by
GERRIT DRAAYOM

Price 50 cents
Whenever we submit something for publication, whether it is in the form of sketches or history, it never occurs without the help of others. This is also the case now and we wish to thank those who enabled us to give a clear account of the beginning of the now flourishing colony, namely, Mr. Betten, Mr. Van der Meide, Mr. Van de Waa, and the personnel of De Volksvriend - all still living.

We are indebted to our German and Scottish friends, Henry Hollenbeck, Lewis Brewster, Henry Schnee, and others who have long since departed; but their children are still amongst us and working with us in and for our shared Fatherland, of which their ancestors were solid citizens.

We also wish to thank De Volksvriend for their interest, of which we have proof through oral and written expression. No one knows better than ourselves how imperfect our labor is; but, in the present days of agitation and hankering after that which will be seen, it is satisfying to be able to observe so many tokens of appreciation.

Yours,

GERRIT DRAAYOM.

Hospers, Iowa, October, 1924.
GERRIT DRAAYOM, SR.
HOSPERS, IOWA
by Gerrit Draayom, Sr. was translated from the Dutch language to English by Nella Kennedy, Orange City, Iowa. The book was edited and typed by Gertrude (Draayom) Ohm (granddaughter of Gerrit Draayom, Sr.), Avoca, Iowa.
Everything has a beginning, a continuation, a history. The history of Sioux County is just as important as that of Greece, Sparta or Carthage. In those histories, heroes abound (no account is given of heroines). Those men, who made great plans and fought their opponents successfully, were heroes; their names are, therefore, inscribed in our annals, which we hand to the youth in our school series. In our relationships - spanning more than fifty years - we encountered more heroes and heroines in Sioux County than we ever heard of in the histories of aforementioned countries. Except for Rome, mothers repeatedly are on the stage.

In Sioux County, the heroines were preponderant. In the dark days, which we lived through together, mother had to see to it that something was put on the table, and see to it that the stockings were clean and darned or patched. For, tomorrow, Jan, the husband, or Hendrik, the oldest son, had to go to the Rock River for wood, to Calliope, to the mill, or maybe to LeMars. The howling northwest wind was regularly met on such a trip. And even though mother would have everything in order, her heart would break often times, when the courageous boys would commence those trips without complaint - to get firewood or groceries. So, if I were an author and had written a book, I would dedicate (which seems to be the practice) that book to the "Amazons of Sioux County". Only a few of them remain. Their remains rest in the cemeteries. Here and there a stone indicates their resting place. In most cases, however, there is none, but their names are not forgotten by grateful descendents. And even though we, born Netherlanders, afflicted with national traits such as jealousy, etc., we have good grounds to claim that disrespect towards the elderly is not an inherited Dutch trait.

Recently, we read that the question, "Who are the twelve most famous women in America?" had been answered now. The portraits of those chosen twelve appeared in the paper, and that was the end of that. We do not wish to criticize what they did, but where are those "Quiet ones in the Country"? Fortunately, they do not need that kind of "notoriety". We had neighbours in the old days for whom benefaction to others had become a habit, and the opportunity for doing a good deed was a reward in itself.

That seems almost impossible in these present days. But, Volksvriend reader, history repeats itself. The history of a county in miniature is the history of the world. Please do understand us!
We do not wish to delude you and tell you that Sioux County, or another county, produced "Saints". And yet, we want to state that we met the "greats in the world" in this county, during the more than half a century I lived here. Not, of course, in their own eyes - no Alexanders, no Caesars, no Plato's, nor Cicero's, but still "greats".

How many lessons can be learned in half a century. A few years of unlimited prosperity. Two years are enough for us mortals to turn our heads. There the grasshopper comes, and then comes the history which repeats itself. We, who seemed to think that the path to Paradise lay open to us, saw that the path was blocked. Where can we go to now? To church, of course. The church is always filled when man is "beaten". I recently read about a town in the south, where the Boll Weavel threatened to destroy the cotton harvest, where the people streamed to church. This, Volksvriend reader, is what happened in Sioux County. After the grasshoppers had left, there was steady progress. The leaders in the colony were again considered to be worthy men, although for a time the people had turned their backs on them in the anxious days. But prosperity did not always bring out the best in us. It happened frequently that somebody, whose goods increased rapidly, thought that he had accomplished this all on his own. That is what we can call the "history of man". Education also produced a variety of useful men, who served their country and their fellow men faithfully, but also produced a herd of scoundrels, who soon began to pick the fruit of the faithful. That scum had learned to talk, and our pride is flattered so easily. That is why thousands, yes, millions of finely printed documents were traded for hard-earned money. Again, "history". Our fathers and mothers danced around the tree of liberty with the French; the sons followed the glory banners of the French and . . . died on the snow fields of Russia.

"But," you say, "where does this all lead us? Tell us a bit about Sioux County." Fine! But first, I am taking the liberty to use the words spoken by some of our first settlers who are still living. We, men, live by the day, by the hour, and we would like them to approve or to criticize this account.

In answer to many questions: "Was Sioux County ever under the rule of an Orange?" As far as I can tell, this has been explained extensively in the former "Abstract of Sioux County". So, we can repeat: Yes! We will quote a few items here:
Chapter 8 of the Fourth General Assembly, approved January 12, 1853, entitled "An Act organizing certain Counties therein named," provides for the organization of the County of Wahkaw (Woodbury) and the holding of a special Election for that purpose. Section 14 of said Chapter reads:

(Section 14.) That for revenue, election and judicial purposes, the Counties of Ida, Sac, Buena Vista, Cherokee, Plymouth, Sioux, O'Brien, Clay, Dickinson, Osceola, and Buncombe are hereby attached to Wahkaw and the election for said County shall be held at Sergeant Bluffs and as many other places as the organizing Sheriff may designate in his notice of Election.

Since 1860, O'Brien, and undoubtedly the other counties mentioned above, ruled themselves.

Now, in order to clarify the Orange-part, we have to go back quite a number of years.

2. Massachusetts Bay Company's Charter

The Council established at Plymouth, England, granted to Sir Henry Roswell and others, all that part of New England in America extending along the Atlantic Coast from three miles north of the Merrimac to three miles south of the Charles River, westward between the latitude of 42° 2' and a point three miles north of the most southerly bend of the Merrimac, to the South Sea.

This grant gave to the Massachusetts Company that part of Iowa lying between Parallels passing through the north edge of Clinton County and the south part of Clay County. King Charles I of England granted March 4, 1629, to Sir Henry Roswell and 20 others, a Charter similar to that of 1628, with the exception that no parts of the lands therein granted were, on the 3rd day of November, 1620, inhabited by any other Christian Prince or within the limits of the Southern Colony of Virginia. The associations were made one body politic and corporate in fact and name; by the name of the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay in New England.

In 1652, the General Court of Massachusetts extended the northern boundary of the province three miles north to the Merrimac. Latitude 43°, 43', and 12" and west to the Pacific. This extension of boundary placed all of northern Iowa under the Claim of Massachusetts.

1691. William, King and Queen of England, granted a Charter, uniting the Colonies of Massachusetts, New Plymouth and others under the name of Province of Massachusetts Bay in New England. This Charter included the same territory in Iowa, as did that of the Charters of 1628 and 1629.
Willem and Maria could not grant that on which they had no legal claim. A few historians describe that Willem had his big battle with "Le Grand Monarch", Louis XIV of France, who had already penetrated the heart of the Netherlanders and had made camp in Arnhem. It seemed that all hope was lost, and William is supposed to have said that he intended to open the dikes and then would move to Java with his faithful. Others say that he had America in mind, which we would prefer to accept. But this does not matter, nor does it matter whether he possesses a part of Iowa or not. It is remarkable however, that of those de-throned heads who lost their crowns in the recent struggle, those descendents of William of Orange are still in power. Every Volksvriend reader may draw his own conclusions. Dr. K. Von Behr's Genealogie der in Europa Regierende Furstenhauser (Genealogy of European Reigning Monarchs), and Groen van Prinsterer in his Archives d'Orange Nassau (Archives of Orange Nassau), Utrecht, 1857-61, show us meanwhile, that the bullet which removed William of Orange in 1584 did not bring about the results which his enemies had envisioned.

3. Plans for the Future

We will translate (unrequested) the story (in Sioux County Atlas 1908) by H. J. Van de Waa, and hope to continue it with a translation of that of A. Van der Meide. Both stories are so characteristic and clear that no improvement could be made, at least not by us. Both contributed their share. Van der Waa had already served his Fatherland in the dark days of the Civil War. Van der Meide served the colonists in a different way. By the way, we are indebted to the members of the committee, who commissioned us to write the sketches; doubly grateful, since we know that among those who voiced their opinion were a number of friends, whose education allowed them to do this better than we could.

We did not think that we should begin with Sioux County before giving a general overview, however short and incomplete, of land and state, and what the large Family of Strugglers, who settled before we did in the northwest, had to live through.

Saying that we did not intend to translate, as it is only the two articles written by Messrs. Van De Waa and Van der Meide, I do not mean to slight anyone who so ably set forth their doings and the doings of others; their efforts will help us on to make us see things as they are. Mrs. James Brewster tells us about what happened in Grant. Without her, I would not know a thing about it, except for what I got of my old friends, John Morris and Lewis Brewster, recently departed. The friendship of both stern Scotsmen I highly value. I do not think there is any one of those old standard bearers living in the county, be he a former inhabitant of the Netherlands, or any other country. Our German friends have been considerably abused during the late war.
I have lived with them for over 50 years and do not hesitate to call them, today, anything else but "high grade citizens". The friendship of which, in times past, they have given such abundant proof, I value highly. We have, until now, written our "Sketches from the Past" in our Mother language because we have in a way lived with De Volksvriend so long, but in these writings our motto is "the Union first".

H. J. Van de Waa

After having rented land for about three years for a third of the harvest, I came to the conviction that it seemed difficult for me to buy a piece of land for myself. Land in Pella was in our view already highly priced. My spouse and I decided to hold a "sale" and to leave for Northwest Iowa where a homestead still could be had. (According to the law, a soldier was entitled to 160 acres homestead; that was, therefore, also so for Van de Waa, but for us, who had not born the sword of the Union, only 80 acres could be had.) I had already corresponded with a land agent in Storm Lake, Mr. Harlan. Yes, there was homestead land enough for me and all my friends. The next step was to have my "sale bills" printed. Mr. Henry Hospers, journalist/publisher of Pella, asked me about my plans. I explained to him my correspondence with Harlan, and he asked whether I thought if there was enough land there for a colony. I thought so. Mr. Hospers wished to ascertain whether there was enough land in that district, and if he were to receive a favorable answer before the sale and our departure, whether we could organize a meeting to see what could be done with the founding of a colony. After a week, Mr. Hospers received a reply and he showed me Harlan's letter. We decided then to call a meeting for those interested, to be held in Mr. Hospers' office three weeks after this date. In the meantime, we could discuss, with those interested, one thing or another.

Mr. Hospers (a man of action) had published the meeting thoroughly and advised the necessity of cooperation. After the three weeks had passed, the interested people came from near and far. The meeting was called to order and Mr. Hospers was elected chairman. (Van de Waa told us that the office was bursting with people.)

Now a Committee of Investigation was chosen, which consisted of: H. Muilenburg, S. A. Sipma, J. Pelmulder and H. J. Van de Waa. The necessary funds were collected to pay for the costs of the investigative trip, and Van de Waa offered to provide carriage and horses at no charge.

With zeal, people went to work to get the "prairie schooner" ready, and to buy a chest with supplies and tent. We thought to be gone for about four weeks if the well-filled chest with supplies could provide us with food long enough.
At the morning before our departure, says Van de Waa, he had exchanged his horses for a team of mules, supposing that these would be able to withstand the discomforts of the trip better. (The fact that the animals had never been harnessed before was not objection for a soldier.) For quite some time, it seemed that he was not going to have success in harnessing the mules. Whenever we had put the harness on them, they took it off again. It lasted about two hours before we had convinced the animals that we were serious about it. "We left Pella in quick time and kept it up for several miles." In order to prevent further problems, the mules remained harnessed until the group returned to Pella.

All the Things Connected to a Journey of Discovery

The spring of 1869 was particularly wet. Rivers and brooks were filled to the banks. Wherever there had been bridges, they had been washed away. We rode on for eight miles from Pella, where we spent our first night with the family of Jelle Pelmulder.

The next morning, early, we continued our way to Newton, and from there to Fort Dodge, where we stayed two days to view the land in that area. But not one of us were pleased with it there; we continued our trip, consequently, to Storm Lake. No roads and no bridges; the compass and the stakes (which indicated where the railway was to be laid) served as guides. Among one of the discomforts was the crossing of a river, which was not only without a bridge, but which had steep banks on both sides. In haste, a commission of three was elected who shoved the mules into the water, while Van de Waa served as coach man. The men had to jump into the wagon as quickly as possible once the resisting animals were in the water, otherwise those men would have to return to Pella on foot. But when we came on the other side, the animals could not pull the heavy wagon up the steep incline. A chain was attached to the pole, the wheels were dug out and at last we made it work. We continued our journey, arrived in Storm Lake on Saturday evening, and decided to spend the Sunday there.

We overnighted in the manse of the Methodist missionary in the northwestern part of town; the building was a sod hut. On Monday morning we continued our trip, taking the Government road from Storm Lake to Cherokee. We saw no settlers along our route. The bridges over the Little Sioux had been washed away. There was, however, some sort of ferry, and for $5.00 we could cross. Well, it's better to sail than to swim.

There were a few houses and an old stockade, where for a time soldiers had been housed. (We presume that that was in the days after Inkpadutha's bloody work in Spirit Lake.) Here we bought some food and continued our journey.
Then we arrived in a beautiful area. The Commission thought: if we could buy a few townships of land here, that would be a good place for a colony. For half a day, we occupied ourselves with the investigation of the sub-soil, drainage, etc. We observed everything as carefully as possible so that, when we came to the Land Office in Sioux City, we would consider ourselves knowledgeable about everything. It was Saturday evening when we arrived in Melbourne, a small hamlet at the banks of the Floyd River. At the Floyd, we set up camp. The wife of the German dominie gave us some religious tracts when she saw that we had the intention to rest on the Sabbath Day, and invited us to attend the religious services in their church the next morning. We all visited the church and listened to the sermon of her spouse. It was in German, and even though we did not understand the language, we understood enough to be able to opine that it had been a good sermon.

On Monday we arrived in Sioux City, just two weeks after we had left Pella. On Tuesday morning we proceeded to the land office, which opened at nine o'clock in the morning. A "mob" had already gathered by the time we arrived, ready to storm in as soon as the door opened; sometimes two parties for the same section of land. Disappointment

Fights were not rare and races about who would be able to plant his banner on such and such a section of land happened often. About midday we got to speak to the "Boss" at the office and we were requested to return that evening. At the determined time, we came back. The man let us in through the back door and gave us all the information we wanted. We promised to give him a report to our headquarters in Pella and to propose a petition for 15 miles west of Cherokee on both sides of the staked-out railroad track. We found out that land could be obtained in Cherokee, Sioux, Lyon, and O'Brien Counties, where a good colony could be established. After having obtained all possible kinds of information, we returned to Pella, where we arrived four weeks after our departure from there.

After the receipt of the report of the Commission, there was great interest in the new enterprise. At the time, it was still possible to buy land from the government for $2.50 per acre, every other section. The in-between sections belonged to the railroad and could be put up on the market as soon as the rail line had been completed.

At a meeting where interested folk had gathered, it was decided that everyone, if they were so inclined, could homestead 80 acres and preempt 160 acres which later could be bought.
It was also decided to buy half a section for a town, or "town-site". Several folks wanted to buy land, and several thousand dollars were deposited to that end. 120 names were registered of people who were intending to take "homesteads".

A commission was appointed to buy a "town-site" and to buy land for those who wished that. The commission consisted of Henry Hospers, L. Van der Meer, D. Van den Bos, and H. J. Van de Waa.

Henry Hospers was to travel by train to the site to be chosen and established, while the other fellows would go by mule train. (We suppose that also those faithful animals had learned much in those four weeks.) The commission was charged to carry out a kind of balloting and everything possible was going to be done to keep mutual families together as much as possible.

But at our arrival in Sioux City, we became sadly disappointed. All that land which we chose had been seized and would have to be bought second hand, of course with a large profit. We also were made aware that the government itself had taken land out of the market. So to buy that "town-site" was not possible right away. Nothing more was left to us but to take along a surveyor with us to Sioux County.

When we arrived at the place which is now LeMars, we found a building where Blodget and Flindt had a store at that time. In the neighbouring Seney, the family Reeves had already settled, and a certain Dayton. When we left the last-mentioned place, we ended up in Sioux County soon. After having arrived, we began to occupy ourselves with the beginning of the land survey and returned to the land office after ten days.

4. THE FIRST SETTLERS

When we returned to Sioux City, L. Wynn, our surveyor, relinquished his office to us in order to put in order some incomplete tasks; n.l. the balloting for the land, at which time as much as possible opportunity was given to keep families together who had an interest in the matter. (A legitimate matter, which Mr. Van de Waa explains clearly in his writings; see the Sioux County Atlas of 1908 from which we are translating this sketch.)

The township was called "Holland" by the commission. And when their labours had been completed, they returned homeward.

In Pella, another report was presented about the activities. At the next meeting, decisions were made with regard to the "breaking" of a section of land according to the law, which again was directed to Wynn, of course. With 18 to 20 teams (two-horse teams) the necessary "breaking" (the ploughing of virginal prairie sod) was done that fall. That took about two weeks.

Early in the spring of 1870, the first colonist left Pella. Five families. H. J. Van de Waa with his mules, who together made the journey for the third time to Sioux County, was the scout and lead in the front. After him came G. Van de Steeg, Sr.,
A. Van der Meide, H. J. Luymes and the brothers Beukelman, and mother and daughter Beukelman. These were the first women who settled here. The daughter was united in matrimony with Gerrit Draayom by the Rev. Bolks in December, 1874.

The second train left from Sandridge; their leader was Jelle Pelmulder. This train consisted of several families, generally, as I recall, from Friesland originally.

The third train left from Amsterdam, three miles south of Pella, and was led by L. Van der Meer and D. Van den Bosch. There were from 20 to 25 teams. Every wagon was pulled by two to four yoke of oxen.

Other trains followed during the summer from Pella and surroundings. I also remember two of them which we met on the way, who had come all the way from Chicago with their teams. These were tired of the long journey, but we helped them along. They were Wm. De Vos and Simon De Bruin.

The old soldier Van de Waa ends his report here in the Atlas of 1908. At present (1923), he is still among us, which can be said of only very few of the pioneers. May the spry man still walk the Orange City streets for many more years! Also in you, aged veteran, one can immediately detect the American who does not dread to risk a journey of discovery with a team of untrained mules; a journey which was so important. Yes, even now we find dare-devils among the Dutch. But it still beats me to risk a trip just like that across bridgeless rivers. Even if a steady and sober man such as my old friend, S. A. Sipma, consented to it and thought it was possible, you would still suppose that an aged school master, such as Mr. Pelmulder would have warned against that reckless undertaking. Or that the positive, well-meaning H. Muilenburg would have said: "No, Hendrik Jan, those are soldier tricks; it is not possible this way; with a couple of tame horses it might be possible, but not with unbroken mules." But also H. Muilenburg seems not to have protested. Even though Muilenburg was not a soldier, he was a soldier's son. His father fought under Perponcher at Waterloo. But we will meet the foursome again some time and I will now call upon Van der Meide.

5. A. Van der Meide

I have read the account of H. J. Van de Waa; since we were present there ourselves, we do not think it unsuitable to add to it some of our experiences on that journey of 1870.

H. J. Van de Waa, who had made the trip already once, was considered to be the leader, of course. He showed, however, little generalship at the beginning of our trip at the crossing of a little river in Polk County. Our group consisted of five teams: that of H. J. Van de Waa, G. Van de Steeg, Sr., who died some years ago, and his three sons, Gerrit and Gerardus: the second son lost his life in a railway accident. (This is written in 1908.) About three years ago the oldest son died.
The youngest, Gerardus Lambertus is still living. Also, H. J. Luymes and his three sons, Robert, Johannes and Teunis. (Robert and Johannes, as well as father Luymes, have died since 1908.) Teunis is presently still custodian of the Sioux County Courthouse; if anyone knows a courthouse which is kept cleaner, we can hardly believe it. Arie Beukelman and his mother and sister, who have since exchanged the temporal for the eternal, made our fourth team. And the writer of this article, A. Van der Meide, led the fifth team.

As we have already said, we all followed one another at the crossing of the little river in Porter County as close as we could, in a zigzag way. Four teams were able to cross the bridge. The fifth team was driven by Arie Beukelman who had not been here more than a year. He drove three horses which together had only one eye, two hitched and one tied behind. The others followed the curves of the bridge, but Arie rode into it straight. Since the floor of the bridge was not nailed down, and the boards had probably shifted, Arie had the misfortune to tumble from the bridge, falling twelve feet. Nevertheless, there was only two feet of water. Expecting to find corpses of some of them at least, we were agreeably surprised to find them all alive. Mother Beukelman and daughter had fallen outside the wagon, and Arie had hurt himself quite a bit. Only the chickens had died; they had drowned before we could rescue them. That was the forenoon of the second day of our trip. The rest of the day was spent repairing Arie's wagon and drying the clothing. Mother Beukelman dried the "greenbacks" (paper money) by spreading them on the grass; they were all there. The next morning we were able to continue our journey and we saved Polk County thousands of dollars in damages.

(Well, cousin Arie, where this poor general fits in, I don't understand. But if the battle does not turn out well, according to the wishes of the soldiers, then the general is generally blamed.)

But hear what Van der Meide says: After the trouble, we had no better general than Mr. Van de Waa. From that time on, it went well, but we did not risk unsure bridges again; the land we crossed was marshy, but we took our time.

It took us nineteen days to make the 250 mile journey. One of those days we only covered three miles and laboured from daylight to darkness, to load and unload, at the transit of each slough and marshy place. It did not make the impression on us which it had on the Jews of the old days; no complaint nor wish for return was heard. We had faith in what our leader had said about the land of our destination. "There is no fairer and better land under the sun than Sioux County." And after we had reached the goal of our trip, we all agreed that Van de Waa had spoken the truth.
The first night in Sioux County was spent in what we now call the Orange City slough, three quarters of a mile north of Orange City. The next morning we moved on, with the map in our hands, northward and northwest, following as closely as possible the section lines. After having marched over the prairie the entire day, and having convinced ourselves that the land was good, and we had seen our "claims", and the sun had almost set at the horizon, we hastened to our camp.

After having covered a few miles, we discovered horses grazing along a slough. Curious to find out who, apart from us, had settled in Sioux County, we discovered that the man who was guarding the horses was one of us, and that we had marched southeast and south instead of northwest and north. So if we had not met our man, it would have been difficult to imagine where we would have landed, may still be traveling southward. After our arrival and stay in the camp, the colonists arrived and we made a beginning with our summer labours. The winter was mild, and early in the spring we could resume our labour, and that year we had a good crop. In the fall we proceeded to the Rock River for building material, better housing for the cattle, and at the same time fuel; at the banks of the Rock River, there was quite a bit of wood at that time.

It was our opinion that everything there belonged to "Uncle Sam". But there were in that area, already, a few settlers who declared that the trees were located on their land and belonged to them therefore. Some of our people were driven away with pitch forks by the settlers near those banks; others were wounded by an ax; and one, although incapacitated for several weeks, recovered from his wounds.

(De Volksvriend reader will not find it unsuitable to add something here for further clarification: The man who was wounded by a certain Wilson was Arie Van der Weide. "Modestly", he avoids speaking about himself. From a reliable source I know, however, that he forbade to harm the man who had given him the blow. If he had not done this, we would not be able to mention here that the perpetrator had lived to an old age.)

Despite this, all the obtaining of lumber at the Rock River continued. The owners, or rather presumed owners, had thought they had the means to stop it by putting gunpowder in the sawed or felled lumber, which, when in contact with fire, brought about all kinds of undesirable effects. But, also, that did not deter the settlers.

During the winter, the Courthouse war began, which would last about 30 years. The county seat, when we arrived here, was Calliope. Tjeerd Heemstra had been elected a member of the Board of Supervisors of our district and served a year. Henry Hospers, chosen the second year in Heemstra's place, was sworn in on January 2, 1872. J. W. Greattrax was the treasurer and A. J. Betten, Jr., Auditor.
A Visit to Calliope

On January 21, 1872, Henry Hospers was sworn in as a member of the Board of Supervisors, as we saw already. The bonds of Treasurer Greattrax and Auditor Betten were not accepted by the Board; only Mr. Hospers approved the security. The bonds of aforementioned persons were not legal according to the Board, and for several reasons: not signed properly, amount of security not sufficient, and a few other things. Everything with the purpose to keep Messrs. Betten and Greattrax from their function. Undoubtedly, the gentlemen saw that their days were counted, that they place people like these (not of their calibre) in their respective seats.

Meeting after meeting were held, but nothing was solved. In every part of the county, it was made known what was going on. On January 22, 1872, the Board was going to meet again, and it was decided that a group of interested people would make a little trip to the county capital. The purpose was to make an end to what Americans describe as a "deadlock".

Twenty or more teams gathered in Orange City and, together, the "dissatisfied", in the middle of winter, (and 1872 was a severe one) set out for Calliope. In the first place, they were intending to attend the meeting of the Board of Supervisors to see whether they had voted for Greattrax and Betten in vain. This is what they wished to know. The meeting was already in session when the chairman saw the arrival of twenty odd teams through the window of the court of justice. A proposal was made to postpone again. But, the meeting did not terminate as usual. It was seen as the beginning of the end by the members of the Council. And the gentlemen who had considered themselves safe near the banks of the river (separating the two states) not so long ago, made good use of the frozen ice to seek refuge in Dakota.

The chairman was just harnessing his horses before the sleigh in order to escape to Dakota when some of the undesirable visitors pointed out to him that he had forgotten to do something: n.l. to approve the bonds of the Messrs. Greattrax and Betten. The dignified man entered, therefore, again, the warm court of justice instead of the free field of the Dakotas.

The boys, who had taken care of the horses in the meantime, reminded him repeatedly of his incompleted work; but he was not able to see that right away. Judge Pendleton had been appointed by the undesirable visitors to enforce their request. But also, Henry Hospers did his best to persuade his colleagues to approve the bonds. The entire day was spent on this.

Nature demands her rights everywhere, and the boys became hungry. But fortunately they discovered a barrel with bacon and ham which was immediately fried. In America one can find anything! A barrel of bacon in a court of justice! But although we were not there, since we did not come until the next spring, we believe that everything transpired in the same way as friend Van der Meide is describing it.

But the chairman refused to sign and Judge Pendleton called out: "Boys, it is all up!"
That was enough. The uninvited guests had loaded the books and papers in their sleds in no time and were prepared to return home. But somebody said: "Lads, we do not have the safe yet!" That was true. In a corner of the court of justice the safe stood against the wall. "Block and Tackle" was not an unknown thing to the colonists, but not often in use. The fellows were not in quandary very long. A sled was pushed against the outside wall of the building. A hole was made through the walls of the court with ax and saw and the safe was put on the sled.

6. Triumphal Procession

In the cold night of January 22/23, 1872, around midnight, the prairie heroes arrived in Orange City. The safe was delivered only the next day by Hyman Den Hartog. The "treasure" had been left at the banks of the West Branch. The wind blew homeward that night of the triumphal procession - (according to Mr. A. Van der Meide) 60 miles per hour. At the return of Marathon "Calliope", (Says V. d. M.) a thousand shots were discharged. (Fear of being manhandled by our friend and fellow veteran at our first visit in Orange City prevented me from using the word "cannon". Besides, who would dare to assert that there were already a number of cannons in Orange City by January 23, 1872.)

Yes, the battle had been won. Safe, papers and everything were in the hands of the conquerors, but even the two Napoleons had by turn their Waterloo and their Sedan. This was also the case here.

Van der Meide says that only a few days later, Thomas Dunham, so well known to us all, appeared in Orange City. He made it known that the bonds of Betten and Greattrax had been approved by the Board of Supervisors, but that the safe with the papers had to be returned to Calliope. That he had the backing of the laws of the state was proved in his papers. That he had all intention to execute his orders was evident in the various yokes of oxen which he had taken along to again place the "cabinet" with contents back in the court of justice at Calliope.

The next summer, sympathizers went around with a petition for the replacement of the county seat to Orange City. That all the North and East siders signed this stands to reason; that the Westsiders did not was equally clear. In the next election, Orange City again gained ground. Repeated attempts after 1872 to replace it failed. Thus, Orange City, to this day, is still the county seat. When the people were asked for a permit for the building of a courthouse in later years (as it is standing at present, 1923), the issuing of the bonds to pay the $60,000 was voted in, while Orange City individually vouched for $15,000.

The building amounted to $100,000 and is a jewel for the county. We thought, in those days, that was wasting an awful lot of money. But when somebody told us recently that the costs of paving three miles of county roads also cost $100,000, we
thought differently. Friend Van der Meide is, and always was, a sensible man and would not have made such a remark. Just only recently, the courthouse (which looks more like a court of justice than that of Calliope) has been fixed up again, or should we rather say: restored. For, although friend Luymes does all possible to keep the building good-looking inside and out, even he could not prevent the gnawing of the tooth of time.

7. Grasshoppers and Blizzards

After this, all the grasshoppers came. Many of you will still remember this. On a Sunday afternoon, while the worship service still was taking place in the old schoolhouse, it seemed, by looking through the windows, as if a snowstorm was approaching. As soon as we came outside, we found out that these were grasshoppers. The next morning (Monday) we found the fruits of the field eaten away, at least stripped. They only stayed for a few days, but visited us again in the fall. The following summer, the eggs, laid in the fall, hatched and young grasshoppers appeared. As soon as they had matured, the fruit again was the victim. The same thing was repeated the next two years, although many means were used to battle the grasshoppers. These various methods, good as they might have been, had little success. The large host did not only eat, but destroyed at the same time. To give somebody any kind of an idea about their numbers: on one side of a cornstalk not less than 387 grasshoppers were counted. The result was that numerous colonists left Sioux County. Some sold their land for a small price; others merely left it. In one instance a man sold land, and of that bought a mule team, etc. for $225.00; the team of mules was only worth $200.00. Those who stayed were, of course, not sorry later on.

A lot has been said about blizzards. No one who has not experienced one personally can imagine what they are like. The sky could be completely clear. Suddenly, a little cloud appeared in the northwest or west, and an hour later one could find oneself in one of the worst storms; so bad, that it would not be possible to see ahead for six feet. At a certain time, five teams had left for LeMars to buy necessary supplies. On their return journey, eight miles south of Orange City, the storm surprised them. The front team had made the journey several times; the others were tied to the wagon of the leaders, while the drivers followed the wagons. Two of the teams stayed overnight with A Van Wechel; the others arrived safe and well in Orange City. There was a barn in Orange City which could house about ten horses. That night the barn contained twenty-five horses or oxen. The owner of the barn, Mother Mouw, as we call her, was going to walk from her house to the barn
holding a lamp in one hand, a distance of about sixty feet, to see whether the horses had good care. As soon as the men heard that the old woman had left the house, they sent to look for her, calling each other constantly. It lasted about an hour before she was found, still holding the lamp in her hand. Her fingers, ears, and toes were frozen, and in such cases it does not last very much longer for death to follow. Several people perished that winter in the terrible blizzard.

8. Antonie J. Betten

The article of Mr. A. Van der Meide was written in 1908. We had thought to hear of the experiences of various persons from now on, to follow it with our own. But there is one article of Antonie J. Betten of September 19, 1895, which we would like to use in its entirety for the simple reason that it has been written concisely and compactly. No one of my ability can improve on that, and the more so, since the writer of the article is still with us. Not long ago, I saw him at work in his garden. That he has done this more than once this summer is proven by the absence of weeds. For us, personally, it is quite easy; in such a case, one does not have to do anything but copy, since no translation is needed.

A correspondent once wrote me, writes Mr. Betten: In the year 1856 I lived in your county. At that time the land was still a part of Woodbury County. The first work there was done by me, Mr. Bills, and a hunchbacked fourfooter. We did not do anything else but mow grass and haying. We have never definitely decided which of the three was the dumbest.

According to statistics, in the year 1860, there were then inhabitants in Sioux County: nine men and one woman. In 1865, the number had increased to twenty. In 1869, the population amounted to more than 100 souls. From the history of these first years, little is known; only this, that the so-called administration issued quite a few debentures, which the inhabitants who came later had to pay.

You probably would like some sort of information about the pioneers in the first years of the colonization here. In a short article, such as this is, no justice can be done to the subject. As far as I am concerned, it would be better given to one of the first pioneers who has been a witness (with also the mother of this colony, Mrs. Vennema) to all that which the Homesteaders experienced here.

One should also pay attention to the fact that it could storm fiercely here in the first years, so that one or the other significant fact might become lost out of the Old Box during the blizzards.
The writer of this article established himself here in the year of 1871. Already, 70 to 80 families were living here in this colony. Many of them lived in a fairly decent clapboard house by this time. Others inhabited a sod hut, or a so-called "dug-out" (a hole dug out of the side of a hill). A small percentage of the land was cultivated already. A little bit of corn and potatoes had been planted.

By 1870, Tjeerd Heemstra had already begun a small store to aid the pioneers. In October, 1870, he was elected as a member of the "Board of Supervisors". On January 1, 1871, he was elected to be chairman by that same Board.

In August, 1870, one of the first pioneers, Jelle Pelmulder, for whom the first clapboard house had been built, was appointed as clerk of the court already. He maintained this function until 1887, chosen by legitimate vote. Besides, he was the first schoolmaster in this colony. From December, 1870, until March 1, 1871, he was the teacher of youth in the schoolhouse in Section 10-95-44.

In 1870, three people passed away. The first one was an aged woman, widow Rijsdam; she was buried on the homestead of the family. In the family of Chris Nieuwendorp, there was the first joy about the arrival of a new citizen, called Hendrik. The first worship service was held in Section 14, T.95, R.44.

9. H. Hospers Arrives

A surveyor of Sioux City had measured the place destined to be Orange City. In the year, 1870, a residence and a schoolhouse had already been built there. The population of that area consisted of three persons, namely, a carpenter, H. J. Lenderink with wife and son, Hendrik, who in later years became County Auditor. The first winter had not been very cold, with exception of the last week in December. The first colonists had already survived a year of anxious experiences when we arrived. As it seems to me, some of the settlers don't appear to be poor, yet, for the majority, that wealth seems to exist in the rich soil, and the capital in the hope of a good harvest. (Mr. Betten wrote this in 1895; keep this in mind.)

Mr. Henry Hospers lived in Pella, still, in 1870. In a certain sense, he was the leader and councillor of the colonists. In the spring of 1871, he sent a contractor to Sioux County (Mr. D. Gleysteen, later a prosperous citizen of Alton), and had a store constructed on the north side of the town square. Before the building was completed, it was torn from its foundation by an enormous storm; the carpenter very quickly, however, had it back on its foundation. That same day, the barn of Rijsdam's yard burned down; a team of oxen perished in the flames. Within a short time, the store in the new premises was in full swing.
The first shipment of goods which were received consisted primarily of food supplies: groats, barley, rice, peas, flour, fish, coffee, sugar, syrup, etc. The manager, who probably did not have an all too large capital at his disposal, or in most likelihood was not acquainted completely with the business to know what is desirable in such a new settlement, did not give credit. Butter and eggs were taken in exchange for goods. Actually, many did not even have anything to exchange.

The owner of the store and business came from Pella shortly after the store had been opened to the public, in order to settle here permanently. When he entered the store for the first time, someone made the following observation to the author of this article: "There comes the Father of the colony, now everything will proceed much better." It did not last long, therefore, or he found a means for exchange. He did not lack paper and ink. He filled the vacuum by circulating so-called "store-orders" from time to time, which were as acceptable in Orange City as any other kind of "fractional currency".

The father of the colony accepted employment as payment for these "orders"; in ploughing the prairie land. Furthermore, he had to find his way in obtaining his money.

The settlement expanded; the population increased steadily, and about 8 houses were built in Orange City during the summer. Within a short time a smithy was established in the town; and a shoemaker and barber settled in the "city". If the services of a butcher or baker were needed, one could find these just a little bit outside of the town boundaries.

Every farmer set apart from one to five acres of his farm, which in due time, after planting of trees, would provide protection against the hard northwestern wind, and avoided immediately the payment of a portion of taxes.

More buildings began to be erected on the homesteads, and the already cultivated land appeared to be fertile.

In the month of June, the Rev. E. Winter of Pella preached in the Orange City school house on a certain Sunday. It had been quite dry. Yet, during the early afternoon religious service a violent rain storm broke loose, and the land was enriched by a mild rain.

10. Founding of Two Congregations, and a Trip to Calliope

The First Reformed congregation in Orange City was established on July 12, 1871. In this year, also, the Christian Reformed congregation began with about thirteen families.

In the capital, Calliope, the first number of the Sioux County Herald was printed on July 13, 1871.

The fall election was approaching. The colonists had good relationships with their neighbouring settlers in the county.

A convention was held on September 29. The candidates were made public. Election day was on the second Tuesday in October. The Board of Supervisors met on October 16 and declared that the following persons had been voted for their respective functions:
Henry Hospers, member of the Board of Supervisors
A. J. Betten, Jr., Auditor
J. W. Greattrax, Treasurer
T. J. Dunham, Sheriff
H. Jones, Supervisor
John Newell, School Superintendent
J. O. Beal, Coroner

A severe winter began. The homesteaders, who had to make far trips from now on to procure fuel, were often in danger in the blinding snowstorm and extreme cold. In December, the clerk of the court and the newly elected auditor went to the capital on foot. It was a road which was impassable most of the way, and covered with a deep layer of snow. It was only twenty-five miles. Now and then we would tumble in the downy snow up to our arms; but sometimes that would provide a nice opportunity to rest a little bit. The clerk would smoke his big Dutch pipe while lying in the snow.

We reached the place of our destination by starlight. After a short stay, we returned home again.

All the newly elected officers and some of their friends again proceeded to the capital on January 1, 1872. It is quite cold. The board is meeting. Mr. Hospers, after the swearing in, is accorded a seat. (He was invested till 1887, when he was elected as a representative.) The other officers, who had been elected, did not have the privilege to accept their functions. Two members of the Board refused to give their approval to the proffered bonds. On January 9, there was again a meeting of the Board with the same result. The new county-father tried with his fatherly wisdom, to protest, but he had only one voice and the opposition had two.

On January 10, Klaas Jongewaard, with one of the new officers, left for Orange City. They lost their way, however, and wandered till midnight. At one time, they arrived in a field with haystacks, where they took cover and rested a little bit. After having investigated the area for some time, the journey was continued and they managed to arrive unfrozen at the home of the waggoner.

The Board had postponed the meeting til the 21st of the month. People wanted to be present at the meeting. A judge had gone along to plead the cause. A large number of colonists came on the 22nd in order to be present at the meeting. When no decision was reached, Mr. Hospers left for home. The people considered the rejection of the bonds unsubstantiated, and that they were rejected because there was something unfavorable about the officers now serving. Later, it appeared, that those considerations were not unfounded. Again, the people met and discussed.
After a while, it became a judicial matter. New legislation was passed so that it became possible to appeal a case. And it was appealed. In due time, the newly elected officers were installed in their office.

January 13 will probably be remembered by many as the day in which a violent blizzard raged over us, and which lasted for three days.

During this blizzard, a son was born in the cabin of the town smith, who has lived through that one and subsequent storms up to this day.

At such a snowstorm during the same winter, the clerk of the court almost got lost on the way home. He returned and was able to get back to town with his face covered with ice and snow. (Mr. Betten does not mention whether he was still smoking when he returned.) In that same storm, a widow left her house in town and got lost. After some time of anxious searching, she was found in the manse (being built then) and rescued.

More such cases could be reported; but they are all of a similar nature. Notwithstanding these dangers, it is remarkable that the colonists have been spared all those feared and dangerous storms. Not one of them perished in those first years.

A large number of families again settled here in the spring.

In this year, the Sioux City and St. Paul Railway was built. That made far journeys more convenient; and the opportunity for transportation of grain and building materials, fuel, etc. was improved substantially.

The Sioux County Herald, Number 50, Volume I, is published in Orange City and is beginning to talk a little Dutch.

The field of the farmer appeared to be fertile; his labours were rewarded with a good harvest that year.

The election result turns out according to the colonists' wishes.

For the first time, on October 16, 1872, the Circuit Court met in Orange City, with Hon. Adison Oliver as judge. On November 11, the Board of Supervisors met and declared Orange City the county seat as a result of the election. The books and belongings were transferred to Orange City after a few days.

Till this day, there has been steady progress. The pioneer still has limited means, but with prudence and industry there appear to be good prospects. One still had to face many hardships, yet generally speaking, there was one other privilege, the peace which could be enjoyed. From the beginning, there were the amicable relationships, the bond of unity and the concern for one another's welfare. Even the most poor hut provided generosity and hospitality most of the time. Quarrels of a serious nature hardly ever occurred then, and if they were there, they were amicably settled in most instances. The one assisted the other with counsel and deed; litigation hardly ever took place.
Religion was honoured by the greatest percentage of the population right from the beginning. The Book of books was considered the indispensable guide of life. Education and religion had a place in the home and in the heart. Who would not appreciate these privileges?

The worship service was first held in private dwellings. They were led by one or another brother, unless a visiting preacher was present. Later the schoolhouse was used for the services.

The First Reformed Church was organized on July 12, 1871. A preacher was called in due time, a Rev. Bolks, who accepted the call and settled here in 1872. He served the congregation till July, 1878. An extraordinary revival arose in 1872, which lasted for quite a while.

12. Ten Mill Tax. Grangers

Many elected to belong to the congregation, which was established by approximately forty members. By the end of the year, 1872, the membership had increased to more than three hundred. It was thus, as Mr. Betten states, that a precious good was received and enjoyed. Many hearts were strengthened by grace, before times of stress and hardships began.

At the end of 1872, the colony amounted to more than 1500 souls.

On January 6, 1873, The Board of Supervisors met for the first time in Orange City. Mr. Henry Hospers was elected chairman of the Board. On January 13, the court met for the first time. The county was threatened with a sentence of $10,000 for fraudulent debts. This was contested and parried.

The prospect of the farmer seemed favorable again in the spring; till June, the crops grew well. Yet, in this month, a winged host of gluttons landed on the field; June 23, 1873. They were grasshoppers. In their voracity, they seemed to spoil all of the grain. Man can do nothing against this army. Those were days of prayer. Not long after this, the plague stops. Quite a bit was destroyed, but enough was left to thank the Giver of all good.

On May 19, 1874, there is an election about the question whether ten mill tax shall be levied yearly till all the debts of the county will have been paid. It was voted down 149 to 117.

The First Reformed Church was granted a sum of money to construct a church building. It was decided to build, with Otto Rouwenhorst as contractor. The materials were taken from East Orange (Alton) to Orange City by the people, voluntarily.

On June 2, 1872, a new county courthouse was contracted, with Gerrit Dorsma as builder.
The grasshoppers fly over us in numerous hords. Now and then they descend in clumps, as on July 27, 1873, and there is occasionally damage.

On June 20, the first number of De Volksvriend appears. The grasshoppers descend in masses on the third Sunday in July and cover the entire land. The Thursday following, they ascend with great rustling and disappear even faster than they had come. Quite a bit is destroyed. Again some is left, however. This catastrophe is the beginning of a time of stress for many. The damage is very uneven; for some, it is more, for others less.

In the West Branch area another sad incident took place on September 25. Two of the colonists, Kleuvers and Wesselink, had gone to the Rock River to get fire-wood. They crossed the Rock in a dangerous place and drowned.

The Herd Law was approved by popular election on October 13. Aid was requested by another state in February, 1875, to help people in distress.

There is some talk to buy a section of land, to cultivate it and to use the proceeds for education in a future academy in due time. Some thought that this should wait for a while; more of the winged eaters could conceivably come again.

From time to time, building a windmill was discussed. A meeting was held in March, 1875, in the court house, to discuss this. $800 was subscribed for that goal. The corn mill was built in the southeast part of town. The field of the farmer reaped a large harvest. Due to abundant rains and stormy weather, much grain is damaged. In the fall, much damage is done to grain cuttings by rains. Some considered the population of mice too numerous on the land. The first Sioux County exhibition is held in the beginning of October; the latter part of the month the first exam at the medical school is administrated. Prairie fires cause great damage in that fall.

The Board of Supervisors awards $2,000 on January 6, 1876, to anyone discovering coal in this county.

A farmer organization is formed in this month. They meet on Saturday afternoons and debate various subjects: e.g., "Is the elevator a curse for the farmer?"

"Wheat cultivation, the best profit for the farmer."

"The pulpit exercises greater influence than the printing press," etc.

Young people visit the "Spelling School" zealously during the winter months.

A free Christian congregation is organized in May.

The crop looks good. A rumour is circulated on June 3, that several hundreds of Red Skins are heading this way. This, of course, made people anxious, but they did not come, so than the arms could be laid down again.
13. Grasshoppers Again

Two weeks later, the grasshoppers appeared in great numbers and stayed for about ten days. Damage is very uneven; in some places much has been damaged; in other places, less. Much grain survives. Yet, for those who are hit repeatedly, it is a matter of tensions and certainly discouraging.

In the north of the county, many people decide to move elsewhere. Among some of our settlers there are some who want to leave, yet all that is possible is done to encourage one another. Only a few actually leave. "John Credit," who had become a prominent figure in the meantime, also became a nuisance.

The Board of Supervisors decided to build a prison. It was contracted by Jan Sembke on September 6. The building of a poor house was contracted by W. S. O'Keep. Contractor of the barn on the "Poor Farm" was A. J. Lenderink. F.E. Hewitt was the first workhouse father. In 1876, only one destitute of the colony was cared for there.

The County was threatened with a court case of about $37,000 fraudulent debentures. Henry Hospers was authorized by the Board of Supervisors to go to Dubuque and was successful in adjusting the entire amount to $700. This case had been brought up in court several times and had cost the county already much money and trouble.

Two Reformed congregations are formed in May of 1877; one in Alton and one in Sioux Center.

The grasshoppers of the previous year had left behind eggs, especially in land ploughed that summer. In the month of June, the grasshoppers hatched and did much damage. All kinds of remedies were used to destroy them, or to drive them off. There is, however, more advice than result. During the next month, the grasshoppers from the north pass by and take along the company from here. In spite of the voracious eater, there is still much to harvest.

Earth tremors are felt in Orange City on November 15.

The farmer had a thick crop. Much damage ensues by an abundance of rain. Many are forced to mow their grain with the grass mower, rake it together and make "haystacks". Due to extraordinary heat and rain storms, a portion of the grain fell on the ground and could not be bound. In the month of September, the grasshoppers returned, not doing much damage, but leaving numerous eggs. In October, prairie fires cause much damage. Cattle were dying, which was presumed to be caused by "smut" in the corn. (Mr. Betten did not know, nor did the writer know this at that time, that this was not the case, and became clear a few years later. My neighbour, Joseph Pohlen, had taken out all the "smut" from the corn and thrown it on a heap in the yard. The cows broke out that night and feasted on the "smutty" corn without having any bad effects.)
The Brass Band, organized in Orange City, received new instruments.
Complaints about a drought are heard in the spring of 1879. The Sioux County Bible Society is organized in the month of May.

The young grasshoppers appear again in mass and damage much. All possible means are used to destroy them; it is a sad and tiresome work, with only partial results.
The Rev. A. Buursma is called on the last Sunday in June to become pastor of the Reformed congregation and is invested by the Rev. Warnshuis. A large number of people are present.
We had heavy storms and thundershowers during the last part of June and also in the month of July, causing much damage and mischief. Small grain was still being consumed by the grasshoppers. Not much remains of wheat and oats. The grasshoppers move away in the latter part of July.
The farmers have meetings with the intent to devise means against the spreading of glanders among horses.
In August, there was a storm which raged like a hurricane. Wind and hail damaged the West Branch and the Rock River. The harvest of grain and flax is disappointing. Corn is a good crop.
During the last year that the plague visited this area, much was written about the grasshoppers. Views about it vary. The one painted it all too lightly; the other painted it too darkly. That may be. In the midst of adversity and worrisome years, the hand of the industrious was always blessed. The bond of unity, the helpfulness, the willingness to bear one another's burdens, has been a great blessing. We speak in generalizations; it was not that there were no exceptions. We do not boast of men, what does man have which he has not received from a Higher Hand? Let us praise the Lord for His goodness. The expansion of this settlement, despite the adversity, continued slowly and steadily, so that the population of this colony numbers almost three thousand souls at the end of the year 1879.

14. W. Van Rooyen

This finished Mr. Antonie Betten's account, in September, 1895. He is still among the living, as we already said. This is not the case of our old friend and neighbour, Wouter Van Rooyen, from which we hope to copy some statements which can only be significant. Already, several years ago, he exchanged the temporal for the eternal life.
In the spring of 1869, Mr. Van Rooyen wrote in 1895, a movement arose in Pella to found a Dutch settlement in northwest Iowa. After several considerations, Sioux County was singled out, and lots were drawn in Sioux City where everyone's homestead was going to be. It was decided that W. Van Rooyen, Anne Jansma, and Mrs. B. Van Zyl (who are still alive) would
settle northeast of Orange City. Steps were taken immediately to plough the land and to build houses. The latter caused some difficulties since the wood had to be transported from Le Mars and since money was scarce. Therefore, some had to do with sod huts. There was much joy, however, among the people, when it was discovered that wood grew at the Floyd River suitable for firewood.

In a year, several settlers came to increase our number. From the beginning, there was a great desire to come together on the Day of the Lord. The first worship services were held in a sod hut which was inhabited by Maarten Verheul. This was kept up for a few years till the arrival of Father Bolks, who lead the service of the Word, meeting there steadily.

It was he who was filled with a prophetic spirit; he pointed out the place where the House of God would once be built. That he was not wrong has been proven now. It was several years, however, before that took place.

East Orange Township

They did not proceed to organize a Reformed Church until the time was ripe, but it took place on October 2, 1882, under the leadership of the Rev. A. Buursma and the Rev. A. W. Warnshuis. The Rev. J. West, D.D., then Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, suggested the name, "The Reformed Congregation of North Orange". It was approved at the meeting. The congregation then numbered thirty souls.

Through the kind offices of the Rev. A. Buursma and Mr. Arie Van der Meide, C. L. Davidson and Company, the congregation was presented with five acres on which a little church of $500 was built. Later, the name of North Orange was changed to Newkirk. On September 26, 1883, the congregation obtained the first shepherd and teacher, the Rev. L. Dykstra, who served the congregation and preached the gospel until December, 1886.

After having been vacant for almost two years, the congregation rejoiced again in the possession of a shepherd and teacher, namely, the Rev. A. Van den Berg. Under his ministry, the need for a larger and better House of God became a necessity, so the congregation decided to build a new church. This new building was dedicated on November 19, 1891. In June of 1892, the Rev. Van den Berg moved to Overijssel, Michigan. This minister was succeeded by the Rev. J. W. Lumkes.

Under the ministry of the Rev. Dykstra, the congregation had been aided by the Home Missions. The minister's salary was paid by the Board up to $1087.50, and for the building, the sum of $1,465 was granted. During the ministry of the Rev. Van den Berg, the congregation was self-supporting. The congregation, at present, consists of eighty families, with 162 attending the Lord's Supper. (Remember, Volksvriend reader, that my old friend wrote this is 1895.)
In the beginning, letter and goods and such necessities had to be bought in LeMars, and later in Orange City. At present, we can purchase here and we can receive our mail every day. Newkirk is located seven miles from Alton, eight from Orange City, nine from Boyden, and four from Hospers. We have a good-sized church, manse, two stores, post office, smithy, and a dozen residences. In comparing the past with the present, we may give utterance to the Ebenezer with boldness.

Since Mr. Van Rooyen wrote this, the Reverends Schuurman, Van Duine, G. Douwstra, and Veldman have served, and the present shepherd and teacher is Ter Louw. Only a few of those, who with Van Rooyan, worshipped in the sod hut of the friendly family Verheul, are still alive. We got acquainted with many in those days of stress, yet those are the days that true friendships were forged. In later years, I did business with many of those Newkirkers, and the relationship with various of those departed folk was of such a good nature, that we can apply the beautiful lines of the poet, Longfellow's "Departed" to them:

...And departing left behind them,
Footprints in the sands of time;
Footprints that some shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, may take heart again.

And also, with this group, which is still living here or elsewhere; we figuratively shake hands.

15. Maurice

The settlers of 1847 had their grievances against the House of Orange; and since the Sioux County colonists were sons and daughters (partially) of the Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa settlers of 1847, our love for the House of Orange must seem strange. As far as we are concerned, that as long as the Netherlands exists, the original Netherlanders and their children would always try to see the best in the heirs of Orange for the sake of the great William of Orange. That is why Maurice was named as it was. Maurice is not dealt kindly with by many historians. We do not intend to combat this. Congratulate the colonists, whoever they were, with the choice of the name. Did he not defeat the best army of Europe with a handful of Gelderland farmers? Was he not almost the only general whose life's aim always was to guard over the soldiers as if they were his own children? But enough; we are now in Sioux County. Listen for a moment to what one of our respected colonists has to say: George Van Peursem at the time of the 25th anniversary of the existence of the colony:

"It will be a pleasure for the heart of the old settlers to help to commemorate the 25 years' existence of our
settlement. How much has happened: the dark clouds which have passed over us and the deliverance out of many needs. To remember how we were comforted on Sundays in the old school house in Orange City. Comforted and strengthened by Father Bolks, who for us old settlers, is unforgettable."

The author (Van Peursem) will never forget the time that the Reverend, at a certain occasion, had us sing Psalm 99, verse three.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Bolks, congregational expansion occurred. This way, Alton and Sioux Center were founded. And under the leadership of the Rev. Buursma, other congregations were founded. For the work of those two, we always ought to be grateful. What we could not have foreseen in the beginning has been realized; namely that the people who lived eight or ten miles from Orange City would be able to have a congregation in their own area.

In connection with this, I remember, (I think it was in 1880), that being on the Board of Trustees, I had received authorization by the Board of Supervisors to tax Section 16, which was then school land. According to the law, we could not evaluate the land for less than six dollars, and I agreed with Mr. Heemstra that it would remain fallow till our descendant's time. This is the section bordering Maurice, and for which at present, $50 dollars is asked and taken. (De Volksvriend reader take note that Mr. Van Peusem wrote it in 1895.)

The laying of a railway has been a great help to us, which has been the case in the West in most cases.

Father Bolks had said more than once that something needed to be in the southwest, and the Rev. Buursma formed a committee to chose the right location. Members of this committee were the Rev. Buursma, F. LeCocq, and Dirk Van der Meer. At first, it was thought that the church should be built near the area of Gerrit De Jong. But when Mr. Hospers came to congratulate us on the news that a railway would be constructed a little more to the west, the location of the church building was decided soon, and the new town was given the name of Maurice. On November 6, 1884, a Reformed congregation was founded here under the leadership of the Rev. Buursma, the Rev. Warnshuis, the Rev. Dykstra, and elder H. Muilenburg. The members, which numbered thirty-eight, came mostly from Orange City and Alton, together twenty families. Aided by the Board and from money within, a church was built. Everything was very primitive. The benches were boards laid on top of nail barrels. The lectern on the pulpit was a store box, behind which was a chair of fifty cents for the minister. And although it became very cold and we did not have a stove, and although the building had not been painted yet, and that there were no stables for the horses, we were still so thankful for all the good that we had.
Four consistory members were chosen: Elders, G. Van Peursem and C. De Boer; Deacons, H. Mensink and G. Brink. With the exception of one who has left, those members then chosen are still serving the congregation (1895).

George Van Peursem

Of those who joined the church then, (Mr. Van Peursem continues), six have been laid to rest and sixteen have left (1895).

Father Bolks often ministered to us until we received the Rev. H. K. Boer as our pastor. He came on Oct. 28, 1885 and remained until April, 1890. After that, we received the Rev. Pieter Wayenberg, who was our pastor from July 4, 1890 until August 5, 1893, and whom we had to carry to the grave. The Rev. H. Straks became our pastor on February 25, 1894 and he is still working in our midst up to the present (1895). (It has been several years already since the Rev. H. Straks has exchanged the temporal for the eternal, and had as his successors, the Reverends Ihrmans, Van der Beek, and J. Straks. The latter is still serving up to the present, November, 1923.)

Our congregation became self-supporting in 1894. Seventy families belong at present. Much has been done from a material point of view and, we believe, also according to spirituality; and when we see the upcoming generation, which numbers 200 in Sunday school, we often say: What a blessing that our leaders were inspired to found congregations.

Maurice is a town of various nationalities: Americans, Dutchmen, Germans, and Irish. The Dutchmen are most strongly represented. Everyone lives peacefully with his neighbour. Two stores are owned by Dutchmen, a third belongs to a German, the fourth by an American who also manages a lodging house or hotel. The smith is a German and the doctor is Dutch. Also, the apothecary is Dutch. The saddler's shop, hardware store and photographer's studio belong to Dutchmen. Maurice has four elevators and two rail lines. It is no wonder that those who like politics cannot but calculate that Maurice will one day be the capital of Sioux County.

So far, friend Van Peursem in 1895.

We just want to mention one incident which is worthy of the man after whom the town of Maurice is named.

A plan was put into action by a few men (trained in that profession) from Sioux City this past winter, to rob the bank in Maurice. Mr. John Brandts, the night operator in Sioux Center, reported that communication to and from Maurice had been cut off. Sheriff Hugo Synhorst was alerted, of course, to possible mischief, and like Maurice of yore, he decided to attack the enemy (if there would
happen to be enemies) at the "vital point". Going with him in the car were Deputy Sheriff Dykstra and Dr. C. Vernon Fisher. The threesome immediately sped to Maurice. After having arrived there, their suspicions were confirmed that they were dealing with bank robbers here. It did not last long as bullets and pellets were flying in all directions. The three men, whose only protection was their car, were more or less wounded by the time the bank robbers had fled. This article will not permit the mention of everything about the account of how the fled bandits were found, nor about the court case. All persons connected to the case cooperated fully in maintaining the law, instead of pursuing a profitable court case. Profitable court cases, and the lack of upholding the too numerous laws, have undermined the strength of the Union in the last years. Many a well-intended citizen may fear for the right of her existence. I have read in the "Bank Journal" how the names of the courageous threesome have been omitted in the article related to the Maurice bank robbery. We, Sioux County people, are proud of men like these and would like to repeat this refrain:

"Of men in war,
Of men in peace,
Old Holland, you may speak of these
And did your sea call, or your land,
They did their share."

I must say that such examples of initiative are seldom found in these days. But yes, I am recalling something right now about the Sheriff (Tuinstra, I think) of Bonhomme County, South Dakota. The above refrain can also apply to you. Let us hand out the flowers as long as those pillars of the country are still with us. We need them very much. Despising the laws and prosperity of our land, Sioux City opens the doors of the exhibition on Sunday and we, farmers and townsmen, attend it and put our seal of approval on it. Would it be true what the "Camera Obscura" writes?

"He who deserts the Great God, is deserted,
Country and people, Church and State,
The small and the great
Deserted is he who deserts God,
He who rejects Him, is rejected.

16. Report by Mr. Hospers

According to Henry Hospers, the following colonists had already settled in Sioux County:

Jelle Pelmulders; H. J. Van der Waa; D. Van der Meer; D. Van den Bosch; W. De Haan; L. Van der Meer; A. Noteboom;
Mr. Hospers' report agrees largely with that of H. J. Van der Waa and it is therefore unnecessary to repeat it. I do not need to make mention of his merits; we have experienced his sympathy in times of suffering and stress, personally. He was sufficiently acquainted with all matters. During the days of catastrophe in Sioux County, nobody did more to soften the misery of the colonists where and whenever they were able to do this, then Henry Hospers and the Rev. Bolks.

During their lifetime, this was not always the case. In the days of prosperity, we always boasted in our own merits; that is, my reader, our nature. In those times of adversity, Henry Hospers was cursed, because he, and only he, of course, had enticed the people to the land of wind and grasshoppers. Yes, he probably had known about this, they said; such a learned man must have known that those large areas of grass were subjected to repeated grasshopper visits. That is what was taught us through sacred and secular history. Those simple farmers would not know these things, but an educated man ought to know this.

One argued in this vein. For the philosopher, the grasshopper was not a plague or task master, but something very natural and everyday. It was therefore much easier to put the burden on the shoulders of Henry Hospers, and much easier to hold the philosophical point of view. For, if we colonists look into our own hearts, then we will find where our natural instinct has been followed: Often to increase our goods, by pre-emption of land or otherwise; an irreverent deed against the oath. It was just like that in the days of the grasshoppers, when creditors made life miserable for us. Trust in God was also not fashionable, so many did not hesitate to bequeath our property to another,
while we solemnly swore that such was "bona fide". Many paid their debts, but others, although prosperous in later years, forgot to do this.

Henry Hospers was, of course, not perfect, but we, the colonists, owe him too much gratitude for advice and assistance not to regard him as Father of the Colony, and to make this known, at each opportunity, to the descendants. We have met heroes and heroines, in the full sense of the word, during the more than fifty years of our stay in Sioux County. But never a perfect person. We have been acquainted with people who undoubtedly would have left Sioux County, had it not been for the help of Henry Hospers, if this had been possible, and who scolded him when business was not to their expectations.

17. Our Neighbours at the Sioux and Rock Rivers

Buncombe is the content of a well-presented program which may sound quite good to the ears of the hearers, but from which nothing profitable can be expected. For example, if one hears a buffoon talk at the time of elections, many a one will say: "I believe, boys, that it is complete Buncombe." How our fellow citizens came to give Sioux County's first township that name, I don't know. I cannot remember, either, that anyone of that name lived anywhere in the area. But it does not matter, clothes do not make the man.

Well, on the western boundary of the county, a few men met on February 20, 1869, elected to take care of matters of the first township in Sioux County. As long as no other township had been baptized, all of Sioux County was named "Buncombe". The minutes of the aforementioned meeting read:

Calliope, Sioux County, Iowa.
Feb. 20, 1869.

Buncombe Township Board of Trustees met pursuant to notice.
Wm Maulam, A. St. Clair, and J. L. McCrery.
Board called to order by J. L. McCrery, Chairman.
Ordered that an election be held on the first Saturday in March, to elect three sub-directors, for School District Number One, Buncombe Township, Sioux County, Iowa.
R. R. McCrery, Clerk.

We read that Rufus Stone replaced R. R. McCrery as clerk at the second meeting. At a third meeting, we read that Peter Romine is stated as member of the Trustee Board. The records do not indicate Romine's official installation. That last meeting was held on June 7, 1869.
My old friend, C. B. West, who had served the Fatherland during the Civil War (as well as his brother, also a settler of Sioux County), tells how a member of their company (consisting of brothers West and Eli Johnson) made the following remark when they rested their horses on a hill five miles south of Calliope: "How beautiful is the view from here into the beautiful Sioux Valley."

Volksvriend reader, many after them undoubtedly uttered those words, also. No lover of nature returns from the beautiful valley on the western boundaries of the county without feeling that. No Buncombe here, but the real thing. Borger might have said the same thing here, perhaps, as what he has said about the environs of Dieren, Arnhem and surrounding towns:

O! Elizian region, in this privileged land,
How can my rigid lyre proclaim your inevitable praise!

(May the reader permit me a little alteration.)

The town of Calliope at that time consisted of a few houses. This name, as you know, was elegant enough; certainly chosen by Rufus Stone, a learned man and good student of ancient history.

Our Rufus was loaded with offices. We have seen that he was township clerk, recorder, auditor, clerk of court, and how many more offices he held, I don't know. Treasurer Bolkema was so busy last week that he permitted himself hardly any time to talk a while. Well, we appreciate that zeal. But, say, Albert, if you had held all those offices at the same time, you would be busier then.

But I am hearing you say, "Lad, you may write these things down, but in that time there were no cars and the Sioux County farmer did not pay taxes." Albert is probably correct. The inhabitants of Sioux County were, according to West, Rufus Stone, Mrs. M. A. Stone, D. O. Stone (who represented us in the House of Representatives in later years, and died in his post), Miss Emma Ames, Alexander Johnson, Eli Johnson (unmarried), Andy St. Clair (a Frenchman), Peter Romine, and Charles Boone. There were three block huts in Calliope, and a house of fourteen feet wide and sixteen feet long, which served as a court of justice (in the Netherlands we would say: Palace of Justice). Sam Bellerfield lived fifteen miles further north, at the Rock River, and a mile further upstream lived Wilson's son, Ira.
18. Our Neighbours in the West of the County

Whoever of you old colonists, is still alive would not remember the Runion block house, four miles from the Wilson's. How many colonists have stayed there overnight, after not having been able to return home because of the snowstorm, after having gone for firewood near the Rock River?

But let us return for a moment to the town of Calliope. In August of 1869, the George H. Root family arrived there, well-known to many of us: Albert Root, G. R. Root, H. H. Lantz, and A. C. McDonald, a carpenter; our western neighbours call him the first carpenter in the county. The aforementioned families came from Appanoose County. The brothers, Lambert, came from Cherokee County, and more other ones.

West had made plans to get his team of horses from Harrison County, Iowa. But before his departure, he had already put a number of logs into the river to make them float to the Otis Saw Mill. During his absence, Otis was to saw boards and "dimensions" of them. Volksvriend readers, those fellows at the Sioux and Rock Rivers were way ahead of the Dutch colonists. Apart from the beauty of nature in the summer, they also had firewood and building material in the winter. That building material was, of course, not of the best quality, but much could be made of it. West claims that all the land which had been cultivated in 1869 consisted of a piece of twelve acres (near the dwelling of H. H. Lantz. During harvest time (the oats were excellent), a daughter was born in the Lantz family. Lantz says that the happy occurrence took place when he was making grain stacks. The farmer was, however, quite late with his harvest, if we may judge this by the name he gave her: Effie September Lantz. Effie, according to West, was the first girl born in Sioux County, and if she is still living today, she is called now Mrs. T. E. Granger of Eagle Grove, Iowa. West obtained the building materials for the first schoolhouse in Sioux County after he returned. That schoolhouse was changed to a dwelling in later years, and the first seat of Minerva can still be seen today.

Reader, please permit me to use West's actual words in his report:

"In the spring of 1879, a large colony of Hollanders came into the east end of Sioux County, and went to work with a will to make of the fertile prairies of Sioux County, what it is today. The best part of the best State in the Union."
Thank you, friend West. In those days it was not customary to call our fellow countrymen Hollanders; generally it was "Dutch". What the word meant, I don't know to this day. Perhaps it ought to be "Netherlanders", but we can manage quite well with the word "Hollanders".

More colonists of various nationalities settled also in the west during the spring of 1870. The names of most of them are well known to the older among you. Who of you would not know Sam Heald, inn keeper and postmaster in Calliope? I think from 1873 until 1888. Then, there is Tom Dunham, sheriff of Sioux County for a number of years; Charles Whalen and Jan and "Doc" Whalen, unmarried. The families of Albert Sargeant, W. H. Harvey and Charlie Tarbot, S. A. Hammond, and the family L. Sherman, the entire family so well-known. Also, J. L. Chenowith and "Uncle" Burket with his numerous family, and Selah Van Sickle (called and addressed as Seel Van Sikkel).

Apart from Heald, the aforementioned persons lived already for some time in Washington and Reading Townships. As we have remarked before, before this Sioux County only consisted of one township, Buncombe. Later, various Congressional townships were given names.

In 1872, the brothers West settled for good on their pre-emption claim of eighty acres. The winter before, the United States Congress had passed legislation that each soldier who had served in the Union Army from 1861-1865, would be eligible to receive 160 acres homestead, whereas an ordinary citizen had to be content with eighty acres.

Even though our friends there live somewhat isolated in the West, they were surprised, already in 1875, by getting a railroad, the Sioux City and Pembone Railroad.

But, West says, on January 22, 1872, the Hollanders came, numbering 150 men, with Judge Pendleton of Sioux City as leader, to pay us a visit, unannounced, of course. They took, unopposed, the safe and all the books, which included the county records. That happened on one of the coldest days of a very severe winter. The district court disapproved the action, and books and safe were returned to Calliope. The seat of the court moved to Orange City, however, at the next election. "From this time on, old Buncombe began to prosper as never before."

19. Our Neighbours in the West and South

Also, the west part of the county was visited by grasshoppers, but friend West also remembers that they visited Sioux County in 1868 and 1869, also.
A few months after the grasshoppers seemed to have left us for good, the brothers Close, English capitalists, settled in the neighbourhood of Le Mars, Plymouth County. They also bought many farms in Sioux County, especially in the west, which they also cultivated. It also contributed to the prosperity of the settlement.

In 1882, the C. & N.W. Railroad was laid, and, a little bit south of Calliope, the town of Hawarden arose, called for the beloved country home of England's greatest statesman, W. E. Gladstone. Of the former county seat, Calliope, nothing remains, not even the name. At present, it is called "Heald's Addition", named for Samuel Heald, whom we mentioned already. Hawarden, at present, is a prosperous town.

We have seen that Sioux County already had a population in 1868, not very large, but yet a little more numerous than the person claimed who indebted the county for several thousands of dollars (namely that the population of the county consisted of two white people and one Negro).

We saw that the Wilsons, father and son, had settled already in 1868 at the branch of the Sioux, the Rock River. The families left for Sioux City for the winter, however. Apparently Jack Smith had settled already a few years before that on the other side of the picturesque town of Fairview.

The Rev. John Runyar (or Runion, as we Dutchmen pronounced it) settled Section 22, northeast of the present Rock Valley with his two sons. But they spent the years of 1868 and 1869 in the woody Doon. How important it was to live near woods, a colonist can tell you, whose fate it was to have to come from far for a load of wood.

William Brewington and his two sons, Sidney and Benjamin, settled in Section 18 in 1869.

In 1870, settlers from any direction moved in. A post office, Royal Ridge Post Office, was settled on Section 14, with John Sorg as postmaster. That was, if I well remember, in 1872. If I am correct, then Sorg, who was still there in the spring of 1873, was visited by my boss, Carl Oelrich. A little while later, Sorg was replaced by Samuel Markel, or Markle; and in 1876, J. L. Finch (so well-known among us), moved the post office half a mile north of the present Rock Valley. Mr. Finch's dwelling was known as Rock Mills.

Postmaster Finch in company with a certain Spencer, built a grain mill in 1875. The mill was in operation until the flood of 1881, which destroyed it completely. At that time (if I am right), the business was owned by Rowe and Francher. Rock Valley, as a town, was laid out in 1879, on the farm of A. J. Warren.
The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul completed the railroad tracks up to Pattersonville (the present Hull) in the fall, and reached Rock Valley in 1879. This was a nice place for a town. Dr. Plumbe moved his paper, The Sioux County Independent, there, too. The Independent remained in Rock Valley until perhaps December of 1880, when Rufus Stone, the "Walking Dictionary", moved her to Calliope. Under the able leadership of the doctor (so well known to us), and Rufus Stone, it became a very interesting paper. After the death of Rufus Stone, his son, O. D. Stone, was the editor (the same son who represented us later in the House of Representatives in Des Moines, and who died there, also.

The first minister in Rock Valley was probably Farmer Jan Runyun, who, apart from being a good farmer, also appeared to be a good minister. That combination could be found often in Sioux County. Martin Verheul, for example, could convict sinners in Sioux County thoroughly, even though he was a farmer. Both were also loving men, and during the sad days of the grasshoppers, when sympathy was so needed, both did good work.

The Rock Mills Post Office was re-baptized again, this time as the Rock Valley Post Office and placed in Rhodes' store. Mr. Finch submitted his resignation and Mr. Rhodes was appointed as postmaster.

Mrs. D. O. Plumbe, the spouse of the doctor, was the first (if we are correct) teacher in Rock Valley, in 1879. The doctor built an apothecary in 1881. Jim Parden (well known to us all) was postmaster in 1885 (I think), and the well-known Thomas Dunham kept a hotel in the town for a while.

Almost all the people I have mentioned are not living anymore. The brothers Large, bankers, are still alive. John has moved to Sioux City and is president of the First National Bank. C. W. Carter was the first mayor, and is also still alive, but has moved to eastern Iowa.

Also, in and around Rock Valley, Dutchmen were soon to be found. A Reformed congregation was founded in 1890 by the Reformed Classis of Iowa, represented by the Rev. James DePree, the Rev. A. Van den Berg and elder, Wayenberg. The Rev. Huizenga of Holland, Nebraska was called. Also, he and his spouse are no longer living. In 1873, he was still a relatively young man; and the Rev. Stuart, in his "Six Months in America" gives us a very interesting account of him. He found the minister in the woods of Virginia that year, and baptized his children there, who also have changed the temporal for the eternal. Our short acquaintance with the minister was very agreeable. After staying in Rock Valley for several years, he accepted a call as classical missionary. The Rev. J. Engelsman of Randolph, Wisconsin, became his successor in Rock Valley. Later, the Rev. Engelsman was called by the Reformed congregation in Orange
City, where he is still ministering zealously.

A Christian Reformed congregation was founded in Rock Valley in 1891. The first minister was the Rev. A. Van der Velde Van der Bok, who was succeeded after his departure by the Rev. H. J. Heynen, in 1904. The Rev. Heynen is serving the Christian Reformed congregation in Middleburg, presently.

We would like to request the reader now to accompany us to Pattersonville (Hull). The first settler probably was Merrill, who built a log house in Section 6 in 1868.

21. Our Northern Neighbours

A number of men had settled north of Orange City in Lincoln Township. They had followed the flag when President Lincoln called them and made use of their homestead rights after the Peace. The Merrills and Pierces were perhaps, the first in 1868. In 1871 and 1872, Sawyer, Kenyon, Burdick, Gardner, M. Kuhn, Arthur Lang, Weatherwax, Ben Wise, Fred Satrum, Chris Hocker, B. Sullivan (big and little Jerry Sullivan as we knew them) came, and numerous others, unknown to us then (1873).

The first settlers had their post office in LeMars. H. L. Dearborn, one of the mail riders of former days, died the other day in the Sheldon hospital. He delivered freight, letters and papers between LeMars, Iowa and Luverne, Minnesota.

Severe prairie fires raged in 1871, which caused great damage. The winter of 1871-1872 was a very severe one. We lived in Wisconsin at that time, near Fairwater. There, in the woods, it was bad enough, but on the barren prairie it was worse.

The house of "Jim" Walters, as he was known to us all, was built in 1870, in October, on the southwest quarter, Section 2, Range 97, Township 45. Jim's house also functioned as a school building the next winter. Mrs. Walters was the teacher. The first floor was kitchen, room, and bedroom. All of this was used as a school during the day. Mrs. Walters received three dollars for the use and she received $100 for three months as a teacher. And what happened to us all the time, also happened here. On a certain day, unexpectedly after a beautiful winter day, a blizzard began. It was impossible for the children to go home. Toward nightfall, the storm worsened. But Mother Walters' pantry was well supplied and when all these children had partaken of their evening supper, they were laid side by side in the attic and covered with coats, blankets, bags, and whatever else could be found. They woke up rested the next morning and stepped right back into school. The food was already prepared for the little ones. After having eaten an enjoyable breakfast, all helped to transform the
eating place back into a learning place. This storm lasted for three days. How long Mrs. Walters' pantry remained full, is not known to us.

The post offices gradually moved closer in. The MayDelle Post Office was set up quickly in the southwestern portion of Lincoln, in Section 12, Althol, and on the other side, they received the mail from Sheldon.

In the spring of 1873, Carl Oelrich (the man for whom I worked) and I had gone out to get some young trees at the banks of the Rock River. The trees were plentiful there. We had left quite early. Suddenly one of the horses began to rear, and when I stepped down from the wagon to investigate the cause of the uproar, it appeared that smoke came up from the ground.

"Well, Gerard, what is it?"

"A volcano, Mr. Oelrich, the smoke is coming up from the nether world."

I had barely spoken, when a man came toward us from the side of the hill where we stood.

"Gerard," Oelrich said, "a man is coming from the earth, although he barely resembles a man."

Our sub-terranean friend must have heard the half German, half Dutch conversation, for he smiled. Both of us were convinced, however, that he had not used a shaver on his head for at least two years. That explains Oelrich's doubt about his origin. It looked very neat around his stables, and it was very clean in his sub-terranean dwelling. No one of us ever met our friend of that beautiful April morning of 1873 ever again.

Our neighbours to the north were plagued even more by grasshoppers than we were, if this is possible. Mr. Newell states that they already had them in 1872, while we are of the opinion that they came down for the first time on June 23, 1873, in Holland Township.

A Neighbourly Call

The mother of C. C. Sawyer (you all know the homestead, near Perkins) got the impulse to visit her neighbour lady, Mrs. Whalen, in the afternoon of the beautiful day. Nothing was more natural, and the good woman had the pleasure of having a friend who only lived a mile and a quarter from her. Very few had that privilege. So mother Sawyer left, using the trail. Using this, she could not lose her way if she paid attention to the trail which would lead her to the homestead of Whalen. As many who knew her can testify, she was an attentive woman, but, as is the case for many attentive people before and after her, she did lose the trail, but she kept going on the trail she was on.
Most of our readers know what a trail is. For those who do not know: it is a track which leads to a certain destination, and is even easy to track in the prairie fields if mounted people have gone over it. There were several trails in Sioux County. The Indian and Military Trail, which ran west/northwest of Hospers, split in O'Brien County or Osceola County, and split again. One led to Spirit Lake and the other to the Minnesota River. There were several other trails used by traveling Indians. Then there was the ordinary prairie trail on which mother Sawyer walked.

She would end up somewhere. That decisive Amazon of more than a half century was not frightened quickly. After having walked for a long time, she thought she could detect a light in the distance, which disappeared out of sight from time to time. She left the trail and thought to walk straight to the light, which would disappear from the horizon in the low places and appear again as a star of hope on heights. At last she reached a cabin, which looked a little like that of her neighbour, but turned out to be the cabin of "Web" Merrill, as we called him. He lived in Section 6 of Lynn Township. The good woman must have walked about twenty miles. I also remember that Major Jones died in that cabin, after having been cared for by his comrades there. For in these parts, many soldiers from the recent Civil War abounded. When death came to the first of them, his comrades constructed a coffin and interred the body. They dug it up in later days and put it to rest in the "Hope Cemetery" in Hull.

Also, the Dutch colonists gradually moved north, when Pattersonville became the terminus of the Milwaukee Line in 1878. They would take their grain there to market during the winter. The prices which were paid there were slightly higher than elsewhere, and those were the days that one would travel a little bit further for one cent. The quality of the grain was not too good that year, and the grade was generally rejected. Father Luymes, my old neighbour in the days when I still worked for Carl Oelrich and whom I loved for good reasons, called out to us one time when we met him at the road: "Gerrit, today it is terribly bad; the wheat has been rejected, "jack", completely.

On September 29, 1885, under the leadership of the Rev. DePree of Sioux Center and the Rev. A. Buursma of Orange City, a Reformed Church was founded in Pattersonville (now Hull), with, I think, twelve members. The Rev. A. Zwemer of Holland, Michigan served at the same time, the Reformed congregation in Middleburg, until April 11, 1888.

During the April Classis meeting, it was decided to place Hull and Boyden under one shepherd. These two congregations called the Rev. B. W. Lammers as their pastor, who accepted the call and who served the congregations from August 23, 1888 until April of 1891. The Rev. Lammers ministered to the Hull congregation alone until October of 1892.
The Congregational Church graciously allowed the Reformed congregation to use her church building until 1890, when the congregation herself obtained her own church building. That structure was enlarged in 1899 and 1903. After the departure of the Rev. B. W. Lammers, the congregation had no ministers until May of 1893, when they extended a call to the Rev. Kriekaard. He accepted it and served the congregation until 1896. After him, came the Rev. Broekstra, who, I believe, served the congregation from 1897 until 1900, when the Rev. Koster took his place from 1900 until 1905. He was replaced in 1905 by the Rev. A. W. DeJonge, who was succeeded by the Rev. Bouma. At present, the Rev. Kregel is serving the Reformed congregation.

The old church building with its red brick, which was used at first by the First Reformed congregation, is presently used by the Second Reformed congregation, which is using the English language in their worship services. The Rev. Dykstra, presently in Hinters, was the pastor of this congregation for a while. At this moment, the Rev. Stoppels is the shepherd and teacher there.

In 1893, a Christian Reformed congregation was organized there. Among the teachers who have served, are the Reverends W. Greve, H. J. Heymen, P. Jonker, Sr., and J. J. Weersing.

The educational institutions are a public school and a Christian school for elementary education, and a public high school and Western Academy for secondary education.

We may not linger too long with our northern neighbours, and will therefore leave the friendly academy town and Lincoln Township, and will visit the well-known old colonists in the neighbouring Sheridan and Grant.

In baptizing the Civil Townships (townships there were already, but existed as Congressional Townships), one was a little more patriotic than had been the case in naming the first one, Buncombe. Here, for example, those three men of peace, Lincoln, Sheridan and Grant, have been named. They keep an eye, figuratively, from the northeast corner of the county on Sioux County. Yet, it is not totally figuratively. In the neighbouring Sheldon, a number of Grant's soldiers and officers were living and the old Mr. U. S. Brown (who left a year or so ago to live with his children in New Mexico) had been Lincoln's bodyguard for some time. He was promoted to colonel for meritorious deeds on the Gettysburg Battlefield. He never mentioned his deeds; real Americans have others do that for them. What united us together the most, was our mutual dislike for "World Leagues, World Courts" and such other things as long as the principles underlying them were not right.
The first colonists of Sheridan Township were, as had been the case in Lincoln Township, a great many old soldiers. Patrick Murray, called "Pat" by us, was probably one of the first settlers in the township. A surveyor Hyde, of Sioux City, a few people from Canada, the Prices, father and son, and Burris and our friend, Pat, were all eager for a piece of the great prairie. I think that Pat had protested. They had already plodded through so much grass, which in the year of 1870 was unusually long, that it seemed unnecessary to proceed further. Price went across the line into Lyon County. Pat laid his anchor in Sioux County, in Section 4, Sheridan Township. It is said that Augustus Edes built the first house in the township, in Section 10.

Pat went back to Sioux City with Mr. Hyde, and from there back to Wisconsin where Mrs. Patrick was living, and together they returned to Sioux County where the son and daughter of Erin lived for many years in a sod house. There stable was of the same material. Together they bore the burdens of the sad years and shared the days of prosperity. Those Irishmen are friendly folk. That was probably the reason that Mr. and Mrs. Pat's sod hut served as a prairie hotel for a long time. That is where Jack Gentry stayed after he had spent a night in the blizzard, when he tried to return home with a load of wood from the Rock River, and got lost.

It was also there that a certain painter stopped, who also had a farm in north Sheridan, but who was totally out of food supplies. The painter reported that the last of the food had been eaten up that morning. "I have got an oxen chain here," the painter said, "that is, apart from my clothing, about the only thing which I can trade for a bit of food." Those old (then still young) Prairie Amazons (blessed be their memory) were inventive.

"Hey, Pat, can't you give this fellow some corn in exchange for this chain?"

"Yes, wifey, but I don't need the chain, but I do need the corn. But still, we have to help them."

The family discussed it and it was decided, in that sod kitchen, to give the painter seven bushels of corn for the chain. The family was saved. The family: mother and father Painter and three children lived that winter of the seven bushels of corn, and looked well and healthy the next spring. Breakfast in the morning consisted of cooked corn, and in the afternoon it was cooked corn, and before they went to bed, for the third time each day, they feasted on cooked corn.
In 1870 or in 1871, Thomas Murray was born in the sod hotel. The settlers in Sheridan in 1870 were: Patrick and his wife, Nelson Shaffer, August Edes, and John Lemky. The next year, Timothy Shaffer, Tom and Beman Murray, Coenraad Muller, an old cavalry man in the Civil War, Wm. Brown, Pieter Klap, Herman Meines, Hendrik Winter, Oelrich, Heitritter, John Holmes, Sr., and John Holmes, Jr., Steven Baird, James Vickers (you all know him, for many years he thrashed grain in all parts of the county) and Mrs. Mouw, who, when she was proprietress of the hotel in Orange City, always called Mr. Vickers, Mr. Englishman, since she could not always remember Jim's name. There were also the Tuttles, the Jensens, the Beckleys, Webb, Cottell, Lanning, and Story. For a year, Boyden, which, just like Pattersonville, was always renamed, was the terminal of the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. At present, it is a prosperous town with churches and schools, with also a German church on the north part of Boyden. Many of those, with whom we have had such good friendships, have already passed on; the others we are greeting in this article.

22. Grant

In 1870, W. Brewster, W. Greattrax, and Issac Follett settled in Grant Township. W. Greattrax settled on the southwest quarter of Section 28 in that township, better known now, as the Vaandrager place. Wm. Brewster and Vaandrager are no longer with us. The Greattrax and Follett families were the only ones who spent the winter of 1870-1871 in the township. Brewster returned to his former location in Canada during the winter.

In the spring of 1871, a number of colonists arrived and lodged with the Follett family. When they had erected a hut, which usually only took a short time, each moved into his own house. Those stalwart Scotchmen hammered and dug until late in the night, and often would not come home at night. When I will mention their number shortly, you can easily surmise that not all of them were able to lodge in the Follett Hotel. Robbert Allen and family slept at night in their covered wagon on Section 10.

The sun set beautifully on the evening of that eighth of April. Those who are still alive know what a beautiful April day entailed. On waking up, one heard the cooing of the partridges; birds of the farmers were not as plentiful as they are now.

At midnight of the tenth of April in 1871, the feared northwestern wind suddenly began to howl, blowing the falling snow into the covered wagon and covering Mrs. Allen and the children. Fortunately, father Edminister, who had arrived in Grant in the spring of 1871, had his sod house almost completed and was able to shelter the Allens. You must
Grant and Lynn Townships

In the summer of 1872, the iron horse appeared in Sioux and was part of the daily traffic of our friends in Grant Township.

Since they lived so close to the railroad tracks, it caused quite a change. One did not need to go to the smith Frank in Osceola to have the ploughshares sharpened. Shaw, the grocer of Osceola, could not sell coffee beans anymore. Actually, that occurred rarely anyhow; burned wheat or corn generally took the place of coffee.

Suddenly, as if out of the ground, Sheldon arose, and until now, one of the busiest towns in Northwest Iowa. Not only did Grant get a railroad in the east, the Omaha, but six years later the Milwaukee Railroad was laid in the south, and in 1888, a branch of the Illinois Railroad was laid through Grant. In the same year, the town of Maurice was founded. It did not last long or the name was changed to Matlock, after a town in England. This was the birthplace of Robert Allen, the same man, who, as we saw, had to dig the passengers out of the snow-filled wagon in the morning of April 10. Already in 1888, a Presbyterian Church was built, which came to be the Baptist Church, later. Descendants of Dutchmen formed a Reformed congregation a few years ago, and built a very smart little church. The Rev. J. W. Kots, presently in Clymer, New York, ministered to the congregation for quite some time. At the moment, the Rev. J. W. Te Selle is shepherd and teacher of the Reformed congregation in Matlock.

The first death in the township was probably the youthful Lottie Wolff. The piece of land where the remains had been interred was surveyed later and bought, and is known presently as Greenwood Cemetery, southwestern corner of Section nine, Grant Township.

A German Baptist congregation was organized, I believe, in 1885, in the western part of Grant. The congregation is served by the Rev. Ralston and has a smart church building.

By 1872, several fields were already in cultivation here and there and the harvest was good. The winter of 1872-1873 was again a severe one. There was not as much suffering as in previous years; prospects for a good harvest in 1873 were again quite good. But suddenly, in 1873, on June 23, the spoiler fell again out of the sky in the form of grasshoppers and frustrated the hope of the farmers, and kept on frustrating that hope for several years, so that we would ask each other the question "Will this be a recurring plague?" Despite this all, more and more settlers came. Those who had come with a good supply of money were often not as able to cope with adversity as those who were not as privileged, even though many used it sensibly. In the long run, everyone ended up with just about the same.
Lynn Township, just south of Grant, better known to us at that time as "96", had no homesteads. That's why no one thought of it to settle there as long as he was able to get a farm for nothing. That land had been bought up years ago by speculators. Many of our readers, who live there or who own property there, can read this quite clearly on their abstracts. We have already given you an abstract of Iow and Sioux County, having learned it from the "Annals".

Hendrick Hollenbeck and August Dahlman probably were the first ones to build houses, Hollenbeck on Section 11, Dahlman on Section 15. Both fellows left Germany the same year we left the Netherlands. All of us settled in Wisconsin, removed from each other by only a couple of miles. In the spring of 1879, we met in Hospers. Hendrick, namely, had become the new trustee of Floyd Township (separated from Lynn in 1878), and we were the new trustees of Floyd Township. In Wisconsin, it was possible to vote for the presidency as soon as one obtained the first papers, and I let Hendrick know that I had voted for Grant. "And I voted for Greeley," said Hendrick. Our fellow trustees of both townships, as appeared, were all Democrats. Henry Hollenbeck and Barney O'Kane for Lynn, both have since died. Henry Ramacle and Mathias Harens of Floyd: Henry Ramacle passed away a long time ago, but Mathias Harens, an ex-soldier of the German Army and already then an invalid, is still living. It was our job that time, to divide half of the tools, formerly belonging to the united Floyd and Lynn. Whether there were funds left or how much was still there, I don't remember. I do remember, that in the next eighteen years when we were trustees of Floyd Township, our expenses rarely would exceed four hundred dollars.

My fellow trustees in both townships were all Democrats. Willem Schultz, if I am correct, cast the first Republican ballot in Lynn Township. Dahlman died and was buried in Section 15 in the spring of 1881.

The winter of 1880-1881 was a particularly long one and severe, and the roads were impassable. From Hospers, we were not able to find a road to Sheldon till we came to the William Snyder, Sr. farm in O'Brien.

In 1877, the Dahlman and Hollenbeck families came to Lynn Township. I am not able to name the other families in succession. But Frank Hollenbeck settled in Section 24; August Stabenaw in Section 15; Frank Williams in Section 9; Wilmer Ess in Section 14 and William Walker in Section 6. Increasingly, Dutch colonists settled in the southwestern part of Lynn. One of these built the first house in the southwest corner: Bunink or my old friend and fellow countryman, Jan Olbekkink. We used to say: "It will last a little while before that "96" will ever be populated."
As was the case in the neighbouring O'Brien County, the Townships "96", Omega, Center, Summit, and Carroll, it was similar in Sioux County with Lynn, Capel, Welcome, Plato and Garfield. In these townships, in the east and west, a colonist could not get free land. It had been sold in earlier days, but when the "free" land was gone, people began to look at "96". "But," one argued, "is it possible to get a legitimate proof of possession?" Many claimed "no" and stayed away from "96". Others risked it. But they presumed, with our Transvaal brethren, that everything would turn out all right. It was indeed a fact that much needed to be straightened out about title-deeds. The firm, Van Der Meide and Lohr, both still living, who had an abstract firm, can recount the many difficulties. Now there are a number of able lawyers who can show us why such and such a title-deed is not correct. In the forefront, is the firm of Pitts and Kessey. Mr. Kessey is no longer living, but Mr. Pitts, although quite aged now, is still a master in his profession.

The Close Brothers, who had their headquarters in LeMars, had also bought land in Lynn Township, which was immediately cultivated by them. That land was then rented out for a third of the proceeds, and in 1883, Matth. Dodsworth, an Englishman, supervised this. The author of this article bought grain at that time in Hospers, and received the third portion. Mr. Dodsworth was a cultivated and strictly honest person and we became good friends in our manifold contacts, which exist still today on our side. But, I have heard from him only from afar, for since Mr. Dodsworth had been called home, when the eldest son of the family had died, he left for England.

Section 34, Lynn Township, or the greatest part of it, was sold to Eliza Hanemeyer in 1882. We found that contract recently among some of our papers. At present, the old Dodsworth farm is inhabited by Daniel Allons.

Many of the inhabitants of Lynn Township are again children and grandchildren of the first colonists from Floyd and Holland Townships. For example, in Sections 33 and 28, the widow, A. Ross, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Van Es; although she herself is living in Hospers, the children live on the farm.

The northeast quarter of Section 28 was inhabited by Mr. A. Van der Velde. Both Mr. and Mrs. Van der Velde are children of the first colonists. Mrs. Van der Velde is a daughter of Wiekamp. Mr. Van der Velde is a son of Martin Van der Velde. H. Vos resides on the farm now. Mrs. Vos was another daughter of A. Van der Velde.
In Section 21, the southern portion of the southeastern quarter, lives Pieter Dyk, and on the other quarter, Nicolaas Dyk, both again sons of old colonists. In further looking on the map, we see that on the same road where the aforementioned people lived, we find the name of Gerrit Hoeven in Section 16: a son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Hoeven, early colonists, both since deceased. This farm was recently purchased by Jan Holtrop.

We have been a little detailed here, but we thought it might be good to point out how the children of the old settlers settled northward. One finds children of Dutch colonists not only in "96", but also in 97, 98, 99, 100, and 101.

During the first years of the population of Lynn Township, it seemed that flax was the main crop. Seed was imported from Russia (the "herrink" as we used to call it in the Deventer area). It grew just as abundantly and lusciously here in Lynn as it did in Overijsel in the Netherlands and in Russia. At a certain time of the year, a great part of Lynn seemed like a gigantic flower garden. The Dutch and German farmers began to find out, however, that although they loved flowers, one can have too much of a good thing. Gradually they began to be involved in cattle raising and corn cultivation, and it is difficult now to find a "herrink" flower (called "mustard" here) in the summer.

Bordering on the west side of Capel Township, the following people settled here at that time: Jan Olbekkink, the brothers Hoog, Cornelius and Pieter Langstraat, J. B. Hyink, Jan Mulder, G. J. Te Grotenhuis, H. Harmelink, Emil Hanson, Peter Vos, J. B. Miller, Van der Wall, August Ditman, J. E. Robinson, Cornelius De Bruin, J. De Kraay, Thomas Carey, R. Roeofs, John O'Kane and others.

We have spent a lot of time in Lynn. I hope that the reader is not annoyed with me. We conducted business with all those people and with many others in the area. We still do, and we look to the past with pleasure.

24. Capel Township

My first visit to Capel Township was, I think, in December of 1873. At that time I worked for Karel Oelrich in Section 8, Holland Township. Oelrich had spoken with the old Mr. Pleun De Zeeuw, who worked on the Verbeek farm in Capel Township at that time. He had heard from him that a big parcel of cornstalks was available there. We could pick them up gratis, if we would be careful not to cut them too high, for then it would cause difficulty in the spring with the sower and the harrow. But when Oelrich indicated that he would have his farm hand do the cutting, the old gentleman shook his head and said: "He is probably a green-horn;
those boys generally do half work." - Oelrich assured him that this was not the case. I must add that both Carl Oelrich and Pleun De Zeeuw were very smart farmers.

The following morning, I was on the way. Not all of us had a thermometer, but we had one, and it showed 28 degrees below zero that certain morning. Mother Oelrich thought that it was too cold. Fuel, however, was needed (we had cut down our corn in the fall and those stalks did not want to burn), but Oelrich did not want to let me go. But lads do like something new and I thought I should try to go. In the late afternoon, Oelrich would come with the hay wagon to load up the fuel material which I was going to tie with slough grass into bundles.

"Where is your knife to cut down those stalks?" Oelrich asked.

"I don't have any, but my tools are in this bag."

Oelrich understood me. Father De Zeeuw had insisted to him that he, Oelrich, had to guarantee that his stalks would be cut neatly close to the ground. Carl had seen me use a spade instead of a knife. So, he understood that I had a spade in that bag instead of a knife, and that I was not intending to show father De Zeeuw my tools.

The place where the cornstalks were located was (if I am correct) about where the Middleburg cemetery now lies, and the distance from the old Oelrich homestead in Section 8 of Holland Township amounts to four or more miles. I had hidden my bag and spade behind the barn. Whenever it is 28 degrees below zero, one ordinarily finds the farmer inside after he has taken care of his cattle. After having observed everything in the yard, I became convinced that a good farmer lived here.

When I knocked, father De Zeeuw himself opened the door.

"You are not by any chance the farm hand of Oelrich?"

"Yes, I am the man."

"But whose knife will you use?"

"Behind the barn, Mr. De Zeeuw, I put my tools."

"Dull probably, he?"

After I had convinced the old gentleman (who, by the way, was a good man) that I would be able to manage, and that I would take care of it so he would be satisfied with my labours, I closed my coat and was going to leave. But, no. Those old prairie mothers did not send lads into the field without giving them a warm cup of coffee. That was the case here, also.

It was too cold, so nobody followed us to the field which had been pointed out to us from afar, and from behind the barn I picked up my bag with tools and went to work.

Oelrich came with the wagon later in the afternoon, and we left to go home with our load.
It was possible to cut down those cornstalks close to the ground. Apparently father De Zeeuw had been satisfied with our labours. When we came to thresh there the next fall (for, you see, that was in the neighbourhood), Pleun, Jr. asked, "Well, lad, with what did you cut those stalks?"

"With my jack-knife."

The old gentleman laughed. He must have known how it was done. He answered only, "Because of the long stalks, which I was afraid to find, that would have been unnecessary poverty, you see."

Many times already, we have followed acquaintances and relations to the corn field of more than fifty years in the last years. Where the Middleburg graveyard is located, and where in those days, which we described, not a tree or shrub could be seen. Except for the dwelling of the spouse of De Zeeuw, Middleburg arose in later years, an industrious inland little town with two churches which were well frequented. There were also stores, a smithy, and whatever else can be found in a town.

Just as we boys were wont to divide both banks of the Ijssel into this or that side, we were accustomed here to use the western branch of the Floyd in that way. He or she lives across the Branch; this or that lives in the neighbourhood of Bell's Lake, a little lake near the present Middleburg. It seems that not much is left of the lake. It had been named after lawyer Bell, who had a lot of farms in that area.

In Capel, just as in Lynn Township, the names Moret, Rensink, Harmelink, Van Wyk, De Kraay, Van Oort and Oelrich indicate that many of the descendants of the colonists settled here, even into the third generation.

25. Welcome Township

Just like Lynn and Capel, Welcome (in 96 Township) is a speculator's land; no homestead, and subsequently populated later.

The name "Welcome" is chosen well, and although clothes do not make the man, "Welcome" does always sound better than "Buncombe". The township leadership was organized in 1882, including J. Van den Berg, Tamplin, Hulsteins, Hunt, Auperee, and others. Jan Van den Berg, who formerly lived a mile west of Newkirk, settled in 1879 on the eastern half of Section 34. The families Link and Hunt settled in Section 36, presently known as the Egbert Sneller farm.

Charles Sawyer, I believe, was the teacher of the first school house in Welcome. Charles presently is living in Sioux Fall, South Dakota. If I am correct, the building was located in Section 27, although later moved away.
On November 22, 1882, those who could vote met in the house of McClain, where the general election took place.

Welcome cannot boast of a town, but is located between two prosperous towns, Hull and Sioux Center.

In 1879, the family Bauman, shopkeeper and grain dealer, moved to Pattersonville (Hull). They had lived in Hospers for seven years, but Pattersonville, at the end of the Milwaukee Railroad, was a particularly busy town. In America, one does not think for two or three months about the advisability to move or not. And mother Bauman said, "If one wants to be in a good location, you have to move there." That had been her motto when they moved to Hospers, and now it was done with speed. The boys had loaded a wagon with goods; for some reason however, there was no waggoner, and it was already late afternoon. Mother Katherine always knew what to do.

"I will ride the freight train to Pattersonville."

"No, that is not possible," argued one of her sons.

"But it is possible," retorted the mother, and she won.

Still in 1879, and even in 1880 and 1881, it was possible to hear the howling of the wolves along the west branch and the east branch of the Floyd River. And also, mother Bauman, even before she reached the western branch of the Floyd River (about Section 20 in Capel Township), came to the realization that the wolves followed her. There was good reason for this, since a load of bacon and meat was included in the freight. Whether that was for their own use or for trade, I don't know. Also, she was a real Amazon, and a wolf more or less was not bad company.

Hendrik Van den Berg, presently living in Sheldon, was certainly one of the first who broke the prairie (breaking the prairie was a term used then for the ploughing of the grassy field) in Welcome. His brother Jan had bought land there, and if I remember well, Hendrik was busy doing this in 1878. Hendrik recounts that at night the wolves ate the belt which he used to pull water out of the well. This made it necessary for him to bring the belt and pail into the cabin at night. If I am not wrong here, Hendrik broke the land in the summer and was paid for his labours with land at the end of the year.

As had been the case with the other townships, Capel and Lynn, colonists settled there who formerly had lived in Holland or West Branch Townships or elsewhere: Van den Bergs, Van Beeks, Frankens, Kuhls, Cleveringas, and numerous others - old pioneers who suffered from the grasshoppers in Welcome Township, but nevertheless had born their burdens already in other places.
Already in 1878, it was possible to cross the "Branch" on bridges. Those were not the best kind, and now and then some were carried away with the current. It, nevertheless, looked better than in the spring of 1873. Then I was given the order to help move a new neighbour across the "Branch" - into Section 4 of Holland Township. Already the Luymes and J. Van Oort families had settled there. That new prospective neighbour was Meindert Dykstra and his family. Also ordered to do this were my co-workers: Arnold Van der Wilt, presently living in Orange City, and Hendrik Van den Berg of Sheldon. Both are still living. Of the Dykstra family, whom we helped and got to know as decent neighbours, not many are with us anymore. As far as I know, Mr. and Mrs. Dykstra and their oldest son, Simon, have died. Jacob is living now in Douglas County, South Dakota; Sietske married Pieter Mars in later years and is living in Hospers. It would be possible for me to inquire about the other members of the family from neighbour, Pieter Mars, but that is not our subject. Our subject is "Crossing the West Branch under Difficulties".

It was possible to do it in the morning, without a load.

"Well, lads," Arnold Van der Wilt said, "that is going well; we will be able to manage with a good load."

Although I did not share my friend's enthusiasm, I remained quiet.

When we stood before the Branch again with the load, Arnold said jokingly: "Come on, Gerrit, you are in the forefront, ride into it; it will go fine."

Yes, I was in front, that was true, but to say: "All right, lads, just follow me," was a bit precipitous. Arnold had a good team of horses. The author did, too. But the poor Hendrik had a horse and a donkey of Maarten Verheul. That donkey was good, but he had the habit to rest whenever he decided it was time. It was possible he could get the sudden notion to do this in the middle of the waves. That, to say it most positively, would delay the trip substantially. But neither Arnold, nor Hendrik, were slackers, even though they were young. Bits of prairie grass were going to prove who would dare to be in the Branch first. I don't know who pulled out the shortest piece of grass, but I remember this for sure: The one who was first had a chain in the wagon which, if it proved to be necessary, could pull number two and three out of the muddy Branch. But everything went well. Verheul's donkey did not do less well than any of the horses.
26. The Grangers

After the visit of the grasshoppers, the colonists were generally dismayed. The school church in Orange City was, therefore, always filled to overflowing. But as it is today still, not everyone proceeded there in the same mood. Humility was lacking among many of us and the minister cannot produce good Christians out of rebellious ones just like that. He did try, that old servant of the Lord. And although I did not understand him in those days as I do now, we nevertheless will hasten to tell you several things about that servant. That's why we leave off from our plan to return home via Plato, Garfield and Buncombe. We may be interrupted suddenly in our labours. (The honorable writer was stricken by an illness recently, which gave cause for concern. Yet, he is able to continue his work again, through the goodness of his God. Editor.)

As we said already, that old gentleman was not able to get us all into the right frame of mind. During the days of Octavianus, the wise men came out of the East; in Sioux County, they came out of the west, from Calliope. Whether we had ever heard about the Grangers? Yes, of course. After all, we did read the "Chicago Inter-Ocean" and "Iowa Homestead". There we read about the disturbances which seem to be similar to those disturbances right now among our state personnel. Then it had nothing to do with oil and gas, but the "Belknap" story of 1873 and the general panic is known to all. If you don't know, read a history book, or "The Kansas City Star" - the latest edition of February, 1924. Was it a good thing to establish a Grange or more in Sioux County? It was certain that the land could not perish. The Grangers, with their headquarters in Washington, had been organized systematically from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific.

It was a change again and attracted especially the younger ones. I could not control my own time as a farm hand of Oelrich. But that was no issue. Carl, I felt, should do something for my adopted Fatherland. Another youthful Granger was called: Andries Van der Velde, younger than I was then. He actually was only a boy, but you all know, he became a proper farmer later. He already was fastidious in his youth. I can testify the same for the majority of them. There was Jan Sipma, about of our age, also a stalwart fellow and a good farmer. Sjoerd Sipma, who had already served his fatherland for many years, married Marie Verheul just that spring of 1873. Mr. and Mr. Sjoerd Sipma, uncle and aunt of the previously mentioned couple, and Jan, their son, presently living in Colorado; Mr. and Mrs. Maarten Verheul; Mr. and Mrs. Luymes, the parents of our court house janitor and his brother, who died while still young;
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Oelrich; Arie and Kees Beukelman; Louis Wynia, the Hospers hotel keeper in 1873; Pieter Ellerbroek and others, all of them useful members of society. Not without faults, but "prairie diamonds", nevertheless. Pieter Ellerbroek, schoolmaster by profession, was our leader. I think back with great pleasure to those Granger meetings.

The public thought otherwise, for they felt more negatively about the organization. First of all, as far as Sioux County was concerned, it had found its origin in the "West", and nothing good could come out of Calliope. On top of that, it was a secret society, even worse than the Freemasons, and other such organizations. They were supported in this opinion by their ministers. Young fellows tend to talk precipitously, and the writer of this article had done this, too. A few days later, it was rumored that the farmhand of Oelrich was not only a Granger, but also a Freemason and unbeliever. We had invited this ourselves by defending the honour of a friend who lived at that time across the Branch. It took place outside the church building on a certain Sunday. The only satisfaction I received from this was the preservation of the friendship of my friend at the Branch forever afterwards. (He, by the way, is also no longer living.)

"Well, what did you accomplish?" might a reader ask. "Little enough." A mutual organization, if it is properly managed, can hardly be doubted by anyone. But, in 1873-1874, the Sioux County farmer generally had no money, and without that, as we all know, we cannot do much. As far as the other things are concerned, as far as the sin is concerned, I have forgotten the lines. I have never belonged to any kind of lodge or club; we cannot judge those who belong to those, nor do we wish to do so. But in the true sense of the word, I am actually still a Granger.

My neighbour Graff says that he has so many friends on election day that it really would be a balm for the heart if it were not the case that that friendship is of short duration. Also for us Grangers, a time came when our vote was sought for, and that friends from outside came to solicit. There was going to be a vote taken for a ten mill tax. On a certain evening, when our meeting had barely commenced, a legislator stepped into the schoolhouse in which we held our meetings. "Whether he could not become a member also," he asked. But thanks to remarks by Robert Luymes and Carl Oelrich, nothing came of the joining that evening. Now the pulpit was being used. It was so that Grange clubs had been formed in various places in the county, and on Sunday all of them could be reached. How much the Holy Spirit played a part in the work of the clergy, we may also not judge. It might be that the shepherd of the congregation only aimed to save the lost sheep, but we must remain quiet in this.
It was certain that anathema was pronounced on those who did not wish to confess a sin which they had not committed. The farmer organizations of today are only what the Grangers were fifty years ago.

27. Life on the Prairie

A building was erected on the ruins of the Grange a few years ago, completely similar to the Grange, which is called the "Farmers' Co-operative Association" now. It is true that in 1873, very little could be accomplished from a financial point of view, and I admit that we lost a few hours now and then. Nevertheless, after half a century, so many incidents come to our minds which lead us back to those days. Many are not with us anymore. Even our hall, the schoolhouse in Section 10 of Holland Township, has disappeared. But I do want to call out a greeting to those members still living. Prairie diamonds they were, even though they were hurt by the misunderstanding of those who thought otherwise.

On a certain morning in June of 1873 or 1874, I received orders by Oelrich to put the plough on the wagon and to help plough Maarten Verheul's land in which he was going to put corn.

"Mr. Verheul" (man and wife rationalized on the morning of that beautiful June day), was always ready to help others, why should we not help him?" We, after all, were finished with the corn, and that man did live in the "wet district of Pelmulder" (which is what we called that land; the water had stood on the land for almost the entire spring).

"But, Gerhard, is your plough in good order? The land is still half wet and half dry."

I assured them that the plough was in good order, for that we had learned by experience earlier. In the Netherlands and in Wisconsin there could be a little spot on the plough without doing any damage; this was not the case in Sioux County.

There were already more plowmen who had gone there with the same aim: Sjoerd Sipma, who presently lives in Alton, and Teunis Luymes (custodian of our courthouse now). Teunis might have been too young then to be a Granger, but he was old enough to help in neighbour Maartens" cornfield. If I am not mistaken, also my old friend, Hendrik, was there with his horse and donkey. Also, Hendrik was still a relatively young man and certainly not a Granger. I don't believe that father Van den Berg was inclined to be friendly to the Grangers, but I might be wrong. Whoever else was there, I can't remember, but everyone laboured industriously. Oelrich was right; it was important that day to keep the plough clean and therefore "tearing". Yet, despite all this, neighbour
Verheul was able to plant his corn a few days sooner.
We arrived in the company of Joseph Kleinhesselink, 
D. J. Smith and the family of J. Grevenhof in the 
spring of 1873, early in March. The Grevenhofs settled 
at the Branch. Although the good people have passed 
away already, everyone will still remember where they 
lived. When I served Oelrich, I often visited my 
 fellow travel companions after church on Sunday. Greven­
hof had forty acres that year; his first crop. The 
people were poor, but the prospect of the harvest was not 
bad. It was so that forty acres had been damaged by the 
grasshoppers, but not so badly that ten or more bushels 
of the acre could be salvaged. But Grevenhof became ill. 
Marie, his spouse, told us that Sunday that she had 
ridden the mower and mowed grain the entire Saturday, 
with the baby on her lap. Marie was convinced that re­
lief would be in sight when need was at its highest 
point. And, Marie had said, the baby had been so content 
the entire day, and she thought that was meant to be that 
way. "And see, Gerrit, in Wisconsin we had to rent, and 
here we could get the land for a small price and we may 
keep everything." What a trust, what courage and 
Christian example. For much more was said by this honor­
able woman to which a worldly youth was not paying 
attention. Two or three little ones were sitting around 
the "cottonwood" table, on chairs of "cottonwood". The 
sod hut had been swept neatly, but it was still only a 
sod hut and within the corner a helpless, yet industrious 
family man. Why was this woman still so cheerful? 
When I came home that night and told Mrs. Oelrich about 
it, she said (I can still hear her say it): "But, Gerhard, 
that cannot be true?"
"Yes, Mrs. Oelrich, it's correct."
"Well, Carl," she said, "We have to help there."
Carl did not reply, but if the eye is the mirror of the 
soul, I could read the answer in it: "Yes, certainly, we 
need to do something here." Carl was not very talkative, 
but every inch "a man".
Oelrich had that year 71 acres of wheat, barley and 
oats, which needed to be bundled. Everyone knows that this 
is not a small matter for two people, who also have to do 
the moving first. I had served with farmers in Wisconsin 
who knew the art of bundling in every aspect. D. Bruins, 
Wm. Stelsel (still a boy in 1871) and J. Lockin (near 
Brandon, father of Senator Joe Lockin) were all three very 
good at it. Why a good farmer may not have a D.D. behind 
his name, I don't know. We just want to say that if someone 
wanted to learn, he could learn there. And, if we did not
take the opportunity, it was not the fault of the teachers, therefore, that we did not dread the bundling of 71 acres of grain. We still had a few days left to bundle. But, according to mother Oelrich, that probably could take place in one day, if she herself would help and by getting up earlier. Not a single word came from their mouths such as: "But would it not be possible for such and such a person to help also?" Nothing of this at all. After all, then helping in the Christian sense would lose its meaning. It was still dark when we went to the field the next morning, but that Monday evening our grain was shocked.

So Tuesday morning, again very early (Oelrich and I were both still young), we went to Jake Grevenhof.

"Gerrit, what are you doing here so early with that German man?"

"Well, Marie, what else, but to bundle wheat. We have no work today."

"But did you ask those people to help us?"

"No, Mrs. Grevenhof, a real German does not need that, and as far as our own labours are concerned, it I get something to eat and drink from time to time, I don't care for which farmer I work."

After a few days, a number of neighbours came to help. Jake improved slowly. And the baby who sat on Marie's lap when she rode over the field must be more than fifty years old now, if she is still in the land of the living.

28. A Blizzard

In our youth we do inexplicably dumb things and often it does not get any better with the climbing of the years.

In the beginning of December, 1874, I became a farmer. We settled in Section 18, Floyd Township, where Mr. Nieuwendorp is living at present. A certain morning, when I prepared my sled and hayrack, neighbour Van Rooyen stopped by and asked what I was intending to do that day.

"To get hay from the West Branch, neighbour."

"But, good man, you could have bought that closer by; isn't that unnecessary work?"

It was all too true. I had paid for my hay perhaps too early; but I was not inclined to inform my good neighbour of circumstances which could not be altered any longer, and our conversation was terminated by Mr. Van Rooyen, who advised me to leave as soon as possible. It was a particularly mild morning. The thought of a storm with all this quiet seemed unlikely. After having filled my feeding trough with meal for the oxen (an excellent remedy to revive the ambition of these lazy rascals), we departed.
It was indeed a beautiful day; but in late afternoon, there was a complete change. Hans Plooster - if I am not mistaken - helped us load the freight. A heavy tree covered the freight, tied firmly in front and behind. We went home. By that time, the wind began to howl already from the northwest, and very soon the blizzard began, which made it impossible to see more than the length of the freight. The oxen stopped repeatedly, and since the whip's encouragement did not help, I investigated if there was something wrong. Yes, the animals had their eyes full of snow, and stopped because they were not sure of the tracks. As soon as the eyes were free of snow, the oxen moved ahead. This convinced me that the oxen knew very well that they were on the right way home. From then on I let the oxen have their own way, and when they realized that they could stop whenever they chose, they did so whenever it was necessary. I cleaned their eyes repeatedly, climbed back on top of the freight and had to surrender to the oxen to find the track home. I knew that they had taken the way southwards at the northwestern corner of Section 8 of Holland Township. It was a road I seldom took, but had used that morning. When the animals turned westward at the southwestern corner of Section 8, I was fully convinced. How they could trace that old trail is still a mystery to me. The only thing that Buck and Lyon needed was the cleaning of their eyes. I knew that we had passed the schoolhouse in Section 8, the house of De Wilt and Wiersma. But we could not see any of these three buildings, however; only by the turns I could surmise that we were on the right track.

We still had to make another four miles in a straight easterly direction. Very attentively I strained to see anything of Albert Mouw's house on the southeast corner of Section 8. But no, nothing but the terrible driven snow. Should I unload the freight of hay (not overly large anyhow) and rush home without the freight? But also, this would not help us very much. I had to clean the eyes regardless. The wind was at least in our favour now. And I needed the hay at home. So onward we went.

The day had long since been spent. What a disagreeable feeling it is to be all alone on the prairie in such a frightful night. Only those who have experienced it know what it is like. Once it had been necessary for me to shovel a snowbank in a slough between the farms of S. Sipma and Leen Moret.
When I was clearing the eyes of the oxen again at the location approximately where Andrew De Graaf is living now, I thought I heard someone behind me. I continued my activity. Yet, there was someone there who asked me: "Hey, friend, what are you doing there? Are your oxen sick?"

I did not need to guess who it was, although he did not seem to recognize me. "No, Dominie, the oxen are not sick, but I need to clear their eyes all the time, otherwise they lose their trail. They stop when this is necessary. They are not tired and they know that their trough is filled with meal at the end of the trek."

"Now I see who you are: the farm hand of Oelrich whom I united in matrimony a few days ago."

"Yes, Dominie, and that unbendable Granger."

The good man patted me on the shoulder without paying attention to my remark.

"Dominie, I am very glad to find you here. (I had seen his buggy now, drawn by two horses, and probably Jan Brink held the reins, although I could not see him.) "I know now that we are on the right track."

"Let me give you my coat; I have a big supply of blankets in the buggy, and you are not dressed for such a terribly cold night."

"Thank you, Dominie, I have a heavy Deventer duffel on top of the freight; but I am taking it off every time I step down."

"But don't you feel awful, all alone on the prairie?"

"No, Dominie; for I have only a little more than a mile anymore, just west of Van Rooyen."

"Continue then on your way and watch out for the corner where A. Vos lived formerly, and now Jan Moret. A lot of snow has drifted there. When we passed it a little while ago, a lamp was burning which perhaps is still on. I hardly dare to leave you here all alone in the prairie in this condition."

"I know, Dominie, that you mean what you say and I am obliged to you, but do not worry about it. Are you thinking about yourself and that you are far from home, and that you have to travel against the wind?"

"All right then, good fellow, I'll see you again and I wish you a safe return. - and after having shaken hands with me again, two opponents separated, the stubborn Granger and the Dominie."

When the man of God left us, I hurried to climb on top of the freight, and I went forwards again. The "man of God" you might say: "Isn't that a bit strong?" "Are we making the minister equal to Elijah or Elisha?" Certainly, it is not by the sermon that we measure the Dominie. Was he not on one of his journeys of mercy, to help suffering humanity? I had not asked him where he had been. His field of activity was not limited to his congregation, but reached far, very far outside of it, in fact it had no limits. A man of God? Certainly.
Did he not offer his own coat to his opponent, the stubborn Granger? And I know that he would have given it.

After having stood still a few more times, the last time in front of the house of A. Vos (occupied, as we mentioned before, by Jan Moret) where the lamp burned just as the Dominie had said, we arrived safely at the farm. After having tied Buck and Lyon next to their meal trough, I went into the house, where I found my wife somewhat worried, as I had told her I would not stay at the Branch overnight.

29. Graffers in 1873. "The Calfskin Boots"

All of us earthlings would like to have something for nothing, or at least for a little bit, and to obtain great gains for hardly any kind of effort.

On the certain evening, C. Beukelman entered the Grange Hall (schoolhouse in Section 10 of Holland Township) with something resembling a map under his arm.

"You are late, Mr. Beukelman," our leader, Mr. Pieter Ellerbroek, remarked quietly. Pieter had that way of saying everything quietly.

"That might be, Piet; but I've got something here which will surprise you. Look here, lads, how we have been cheat-ed by the storekeepers. According to this paper, you can buy a pair of calfskin boots for five dollars. Those heavy things I am wearing now cost me the same, and you should get what you pay for. We only have to pay a quarter and then they will send them."

That was something which concerned us all. There were not many quarters in those days. And how to pay for the entire thing we did not know. We charged with those "greedy" shop-keepers, but in this case it was "butter with the fish". But at least for the moment, it was only a quarter. A young man in East Orange collected the quarters and sent them to the Union Furnishing Company in Chicago, Illinois.

We should say that neither the young fellow (still living today), nor we, doubted or wondered if the whole matter was indeed bona fide. Yes, 1873 was the year of the grasshoppers, the year of the overall panic, the year of General Bellknap's terrible slips. Not dissimilar to the oil grievances of to-day. But, we Grangers were at least doing better! Calfskin boots for $5.00. Our Hospers innkeeper did not share our general feelings.

"I have sailed for years," he said (Uncle Louis Wynia was a sailor). And although I have not quit learning, I have ex-perienced quite a lot. If I check the prices, and the method of collecting those quarters, I would almost say, as the Yankee expresses it: "There is a bad apple in the barrel."

It stands to reason that we paid no attention to the good man: the "cowhide" boot would soon replace the "calfskin" boot, in spite of uncle's prediction.
Whenever someone tries to go against the feelings of the entire group, there is often a second one to follow. "Yes. Wynia, you are right," said a man, whom we only want to identify as "D" at the moment. If the reader approves, he may use our name.

"I would like to know, Mr. Ellerbroek, when those seeders will arrive. They were to arrive so long ago, but I don't hear anything anymore about it."

A few of us had sent for agricultural tools. Those merchants were not as benevolent as the Union Furnishing Co., but it was possible to buy a little cheaper there than from merchants in "town".

"Yes, D," says Ellerbroek, "but you should know that when the seeders arrive, you have to pay for the freight first of all."

"I had thought that already," D replied. He had been in the colony only for a little while. "I told my wife this morning, 'In America everything is money, money.'" Saying this (I still see him reach for the door knob), he grabbed the door, closed it violently behind him, and that was the last we saw of D.

Maarten Verheul, a man of peace, was going to call back the irritated Granger, but Luymes thought that we could do well without the likes of him, and we have not seen D. again in the hall.

We had looked for our calf skin boots for several weeks already, and some other necessities, but ......nothing came. One would say: "Do these fellows have to yet produce these products in Chicago?" Another one said: "Could it be that Uncle Louis is right in the long run?" A few went to East Orange (Alton) where that young man lived who had sent the quarters. After all, he would know a little more about it. But, no. He did not know more than we did. The quarters had been sent to the Union Furnishing Company, plus the commission which was to come to him.

After the duration of some time, Oelrich arrived from Orange City with the "Chicago Inter-ocean". "Gerrard, we want to show you something."

"What is it, Oelrich?"

"That Union Furnishing Co. does not exist at all!"

"Those scoundrels! Then we have lost our quarter, and also those of our fellow Grangers!"

That we were all a little dismayed and embarrassed at our next meeting, can be guessed. Only father Verheul laughed. Wynia, showing him for the wise man he was, did not speak. He had warned us, that was all. And as before, we had to make do with our "cowhide" boots.
30. Plato, Garfield, and Center Townships

1. We used to think that Plato had been named after the Roman /sic/ philosopher of that name, but we heard later that Mr. McArthur, one of the first colonists in Plato, had named it after a township of that same name in Kane County, Illinois. All these townships in 1866 were populated after the grasshoppers had left us.

Not much had been cultivated in these townships through 1882. After that, it was filled quickly with industrious settlers. (If I am correct, the township board was organized in 1885.) Star Thayer - and who does not know him? - was undoubtedly the first boy born in the township. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Thayer. "Ed" left us a short while ago.

In the attic of the cabin of Joe Roberts, the first public school was opened. If the school building, and to be more specific, the attic part, was not ideal, it had an excellent teacher, Miss Lundy.

Already in 1891, the Germans founded a congregation in Plato. In July of 1897, a church was built, although the town had been established two years before and the place was called: Carmel. The theological student, J. W. Te Selle, ministered, I think, the congregation for a few months, and was called as minister after that, and ordained on July 1, 1897. If I am correct, he served the congregation until January 30, 1900, when he accepted the call to Hoppers.

Many of our fellow "clansmen", I think from Deventer and Diepenveen, are living around Carmel. Doris Feekes, also already departed, and I served together in close proximity to one another in the Netherlands. I was already acquainted with the family Meylink in the Netherlands (the grandfather of auctioneer Meylink). And every time when I visit that area, I am finding new acquaintances. But often it happens, after a period of time, when I ask whether so and so is still living somewhere, that I hear the answer: "No, died already."

2. Garfield Township is located west of Plato, called after our martyred President, a victim of the fatal "spoil system". Garfield Township was organized on June 3, 1884. It was the home of our (and I presume all of our) friend, Samuel Bellesfield. Pieter died and was buried in the same Section 34, and I think perhaps the first death of a white man in Sioux County. We might be erring in that supposition. For if the old Durion was traveling in these parts around 1785, then it is possible that, except for the young Durion, more whites were found among the Sioux Indians.

Thoren Anderson, still alive a few years ago in Hudson, South Dakota, settled in Section 16 of Garfield Township in 1877. Anderson was a real cattleman and had sometimes close to 1500 cattle, so that was a farmer of substance.
In 1882, he bought a piece of land of a certain H. O. Bode, who lived in the eastern part of Iowa and who sold his possession for a trifle to Anderson. Who was really interested in settling in that grasshopper's nest, was probably thought by many. Yes, they had not come for the last three years, but it was certain that they would re-appear.

It was not necessary anymore in 1879 to get lumber from afar. Mr. Spencer had a sawmill in Fairview. It is true that those cottonwood boards could not be used on the outside (for, exposed to the sun, they soon became warped), but for cross-beams, they were put to good use. They also had a mill at the Big Sioux; Struble and Thorpe, if I am not wrong, were the owners. The flood of 1881 carried away the mill.

The first school building was made of sod. Cecilia Fauske, the teacher, had nine pupils. The second school-house, or rather the first building which resembled a schoolhouse, was built in Section 6, and was transported three times from one location to another. During the first years, we could create quite a furor about where the rightful place of a schoolhouse ought to be. As if the rise and fall of the United States depended on it. A cross-grained fellow could become a nuisance in such a case. Dutch settlers settled in Garfield in the 1880's, and in it there is presently, and has been for some years, a large Christian Reformed congregation in Section 26. The last time we were there was in 1909, and the Rev. Haarsma was serving the congregation then.

3. Little is left of Township Buncombe. Buncombe once meant all of Sioux County. There is a wish to re-create a park in that part of Sioux. That's fine; apart from the roads, the park is already there. Others are of the opinion that it is even more beautiful where the Rock and the Sioux join together in Garfield Township. That's all right, too.

It is said, or rather the old records say, that already on May 23, 1856, a homestead had been taken in this same township in Section 4, and again on the 30th of May of that same year, in Section 29. Presumably everything was confiscated in the year of 1857-1858. There were so many ways of confiscation. But the regular settlement of colonists was in 1882. Already in those years, Center had a Methodist Church.

31. West Branch

West Branch received its name from the western branch of the little Floyd River, and had been already completely taken by 1871 and subsequent years by my Gelderland and my fellow Overijssel men. My mother language was still spoken there, and is up to this day. Was that not also the Dutch language?
It was supposed to be so, but if you saw the dialect in print, you might doubt it. Well, then speak about the mother dialect. How attentively we listened whenever someone spoke with "ie" or "oe". We had already become acquainted with many Gelderland and Overijssel colonists in Alto, Wisconsin: the Van den Bergs; the Schuts, Sander and Peter; Grevenhofs; the Frankens; J. Vermeer and family; T. Wayenberg and others. Wayenberg wrote during that time: "Even if the prairie were covered with gold, I could not stand it there." Gradually, when the family gained more neighbours, they would change their views in the long run. I think that a number of them left Alto by land in the autumn of 1871.

Of course, not everyone came from Alto. Very soon, a number of colonists who had come from all areas in America and the Netherlands settled in West Branch Township. Also, Friesland, the Netherlands, was represented in great numbers. Not only did the brothers and sisters of West Branch share all the weal and woe we experienced together, but in 1902, (I think that it was the first days of May), a tornado struck. This terrible visitation caused horrible destruction and cost the lives of several people. We thought that only grasshoppers could hurt us. From then on, it was not "grasshopper country", but "tornado country". A group of migrants (who wished to try their luck in another place) had even nailed posters to their railroad cars in which they pointed out to the public that they moved to land where there were no grasshoppers, no snowstorms, no tornadoes or storms. It turned out fairly quickly that, also there, not everything was easy. In later years, the tornadoes (or, if you wish to call them cyclones) also appeared in various townships: Lynn, Floyd, and Baker Townships in O'Brien County. I used to laugh at my neighbour Lampman, who had dug a "cave" or storm cellar: a hole in the ground, covered with tree trunks and earth in which he and his family hid when the dark clouds gathered and a storm was announced. But, after the West Branch storm wind, almost all of his neighbours followed his example.

Till 1877, or thereabouts, the colonists belonged to the Orange City congregation. If I am informed well, a congregation was founded in that year with between 25 to 30 members, and a little church was built in old Sioux Center. In 1880, the Rev. J. De Pree was called, who served the congregation for a large number of years as shepherd and pastor, and who is still living in Sioux Center with his spouse (a daughter of the late Rev. Bolks).

In 1890, or thereabouts, a Christian Reformed congregation was founded. Although the Rev. H. Bode served the congregation as home missionary from 1892-1894, she received her own pastor in 1895. The Rev. Henry Beets served until 1899. Sioux Center has several churches at this time.
The name of "Sioux Center" indicates that they had the right to expect having the courthouse there, but that did not happen. A disappointment in a certain sense. Nevertheless, Sioux Center is one of the busiest towns in this settlement.

Very few acquaintances in West Branch are still living now. A Franken, J. Franken, Beernink, Kempers, Kosters, Van Beek, Peter Schut and Ben Mouw are, I think, still alive. Wesselink, E. Van de Brake, Gerrit Van de Brake, J. D. Wanscheer, Jacob Oolman, G. De Vries, Pekelder, the Jansens, with their spouses, are no longer living. The latter, and with this I mean the better half of the aforementioned persons, had indeed the lion's share in the promotion of the growth and prosperity of the settlement. So now let's move in thoughts to the other side of the Branch. It is better to cross that on paper than with a freight, such as in 1873, in company with Meindert Dykstra, A. Van der Wilt and Hendrik Van den Berg.

On the trip to the east and west through the various townships, we have arrived again in Holland Township. Since we have already spent considerable time in Orange City at the beginning, we hope to spend a few moments in Floyd Township. Since we had our home there since the fall of 1874, we might tell you a few of our personal experiences, although they are known to the reader in this area as well as to us. Perhaps we have good reason to spend some time in Floyd. If we still have time, we can still visit other parts of the county.

32. Floyd Township

Floyd Township is, just as the Floyd River, named after Sergeant Floyd, who breathed his last in the arms of his captain where the river flows into the Missouri. That was in August of 1804. It is generally presumed that he was the first white man who died in this area. There is not absolute proof for those who claim this, for we have read of several Frenchmen who were already wandering about here around 1780 with the Sioux Indians. One of them lays buried on a hill near Yankton. In 1804 already, he had an adult son, which makes us deduce that he was already here in 1780, or thereabout, and before the accepting of the Constitution. His description of Lac Esprit (Spirit Lake), Petite Riviere des Sioux (Little Sioux), Riviere Grand des Sioux (Big Sioux), and Riviere des Moines (Des Moines River) indicates that he was no stranger to this area. The trails of the Sioux are carefully marked on a map, used in Fort Sioux City. One of the trails led to the place of the brutal slaughter of the settlers on the banks of the Spirit Lake. It was, therefore, both a military and Indian trail.
Fifty years ago, the trail was still complete. On the western half of the northeastern quarter of Section 3 of Township 95, Range 43, I hammered in an iron pin before I ploughed the prairie, and I planted a triangle of trees, which have already been cut down to provide fuel and where again a grove is located. A few years ago we put a cement block in the ground, which does not only indicate the trail, but also the place where the Indians were accustomed to set up camp while traveling to their friends at the Des Moines River, or traveling to surprise their enemies somewhere along that river, or to battle on the plains if they were not short of personnel or supplies. If they were not certain of victory on the open prairie, they would often have a surprise attack at night. Only they would not fight at "Lac Esprit", for that was unilaterally considered holy terrain. It was also the same for the Pipestone district in Minnesota. As far as we know, that was observed strictly as an unwritten law. That they did not apply that law to white folk can be seen by the horrible deeds of Inkpaduta and his warriors who committed these atrocities on the whites on the banks of both lakes.

"How can you be so sure that the Indians had a regular camping spot in Section 3?"

A few years ago (I think it was in 1886) I bought a pony and a foal from a group of traveling Indians, camped on the road between Section 2 and 3, exactly where the bridge over the Willow Creek is now located. When I took the purchased pony and foal with me, the mothers and children began to emit some dreadful howls, which made me think that they did not gladly part with their animals. So we tied the little horse and foal to the wagon again and asked for money back. But no, that was not what they wished. A man of about 40 years old, the only one of the group who spoke understandable English, told me that the howling group did not wish anything else but a promise "not to torture the animals". When I told them that I had bought them for my children, who were animal lovers, everyone seemed satisfied.

I asked the man who understood our language whether he had come over this road many times. The answer was in the affirmative, but his father in the wagon knew more about it than he did. The father, however, was sad that all the roads had been constructed in a grid. All the Indians were now in particularly good moods. The friendly man waved his arms, made a square, pointed to Willow Creek and to the place where I had planted already three or four acres of trees. I hardly understood anything of that sign language, but the son translated his father's gestures, which boiled down to this: On ordinary trips, the Indians camped where Willow Creek flows into the Floyd River. He also said that at the foot of the hill, not far from Willow Creek, on the southside, there was a well. He wanted to know if that well was still there. The well, or spring, referred to by the old man, was still there...
in 1873, and we used it until we dug a well. Wonderful and cool that water was, just like the son said. That was for me clear evidence that the father knew what he was talking about. Oliver Francis, Logan and others talked about the trail, but not about the well or spring.

Hospers, and Floyd Township

The above name indicates after whom Hospers has been named. Hospers was the first town in Sioux County on the railroad. The first settlers, Duus and Christiani, had a general store. Duus was the first postmaster, presently still alive and living in LeMars. H. Bauman was a dealer in grains and agricultural tools. Louis Wynia was the innkeeper. Those were the citizens in 1872. The town increased markedly in late 1873. Henry Frantzen was an inn and saloon keeper and Robinson was the smith. Those all, except for Duus, with their spouses, have exchanged the temporal for the eternal.

Already in 1870 and 1871, several settlers had settled in Floyd Township. In Section 6: Evert Hoeven, J. Logterman, D. Van Groningen, Lubbert Boeve, and others. In Section 4: Lubbert Boersma, Harke Boersma, Klass Wieringa and Jakob Roelse. The latter had served his country in the Civil War and was therefore entitled to 160 acres of homestead; he took the southwest quarter of Section 4 of Floyd Township. About thirty years ago he left for Oklahoma with his son, Pieter, and Pieter's family, and then further on to Texas, where he died. Adam Haag, Jan Settle, and Dominie Moos were all old-soldiers who had fought at that same time for the preservation of the Union and who had used their homestead rights as soldiers. They have all died. Except for Mr. Settle, who died abroad, they are all buried right here. The former Roelse's quarter is presently inhabited by Pieter Mouw, son of the Rev. Mouw, and by Henry Postuma. Only one of those colonists from Sections 4 and 6 is still living: L. Boersma of Bemis, South Dakota. The others and their spouses have all passed away. The same can be said of the settlers in Section 8, L. Dyk and Pieter Roelse, who (and I am not totally sure of the latter) have died. The same can be said of the settlers in Section 18: Jakob Koolbeek and family and his mother, the widow Koolbeek, whose husband lost his life on the Yuka Battlefield in the Civil War, which entitled her to a homestead. At present, L. Van't Hof is living there. Later the Walter Van Rooyen family settled there and the Van Iperen family. (A few years later, toward the end of 1874, the writer of this article settled there himself in the same section). Everyone has
since departed. Henry Van Rooyen is living on the old homestead, and the old Van Iperen's homestead is inhabited by Arie Van Kley, who married the widow A. Van Iperen, so that remained, at least partially, in the family.

Many of you will wonder why we have not included the Menning, Van Es, Van Zyl, Vos, and Van der Velde families, and others as well. They did indeed live in the Hospers' area, but were actually in Holland Township. Also, all of them are gone now, men and women. We had close relationships with all those sons and daughters of the prairie (in Holland Township - our first place - as well as in Floyd Township, and we lived and shared alike). Only a couple of them are still living: Mr. and Mrs. A. Vos, who are living in Pella at the present, and both, according to reports, are still spry. I hope that, upon reception of this number of De Volksvriend, they will be able to do what my 83 year old friend, Adam Van Beek, of Waupun, Wisconsin, can testify: Namely, to read De Volksvriend without glasses.

E. J. G. Bloemendaal took his homestead in Section 30. He has also died, but his widow is still living in Orange City. B. Smith and spouse have long since died. I do not know when several settlers settled in Floyd, and I hope they will not take it ill that I have not grouped them among the first settlers. So much has changed in those fifty years. The Hofmeyers and Lyzens and many others settled (just like we) there in 1874 or later, if I am correct.

If the west side of Floyd Township were settled by Dutch colonists, the east side of the river was occupied by Germans, but principally Luxemburgers. Also, they - we have to admit this after relationships of more than a half century - are excellent citizens of the Union, even "high grade citizens", and are so no less than our fellow countrymen. More about this in a next article.

"But," I hear you say, "you have not told us anything about Hospers yet." We hope to do this next week.

Hospers

Well, Hospers has four churches and three schools: Public, Roman Catholic, and Christian.

The Roman Catholic Church was organized already quite soon, and the Rev. Meis of Le Mars conducted the services there at first.

The Presbyterian Church was organized in 1878 and the Rev. Wiensma was the first shepherd and teacher.

Eight years later, in 1886, the Reformed Church was begun. The Rev. Dangremond was the first teacher.

The Christian Reformed Church was organized in 1894.
The Rev. De Haan or Haan, as far as I know, was the first shepherd and teacher. Hospers was incorporated as a town on January 16, 1891. The late Jakob Koolbeek was the first mayor and he was assisted by Councilmen A. Vos (in Pella now); Homer Folger, in Pullman, Washington now; Gerrit Draayom of Hospers; T. L. Dyk, Joseph Keuhle, John Tiemens (the latter three have died some time ago); Treasurer J. H. Nieuwenhuis; Marshall and Street Commissioner Nicolaas Vos; and Assessor Jan Selig.

At this time, Hospers has three grain dealers, two cattle dealers, and several stores, all of whom are busy. The town and area supplied, including the volunteers, their set quota in the latest war, and not all of them returned. The Reuter, Popma and Uittenbogaard families, and perhaps others, only saw the lifeless bodies back. Let us hope that the time has passed that a dozen diplomats are able to put an entire world to flames. And may the slogan, "Make the World Safe for Democracy", be replaced by the cry, "Beware of Foreign Entanglements". This fatherly warning by the Father of our Fatherland had been completely lost in the bloody drama. Hospers, or rather, the designer and executioner, can boast of a masterpiece, a memorial, devoted to those who carried arms when the Fatherland called them. It is located on Main Street and draws the attention of strangers and of those who are qualified to admire the artistry of the designer. I have even heard someone say: "This is perhaps a master work, unique in its kind in the state." Fred Reinders, our furniture dealer, is the designer and executioner and was particularly happy in the choice of his models.

In and around Hospers, heavy windstorms, called variously cyclones or tornadoes, created havoc. In June of 1882, the Presbyterian Church was destroyed in one of those storms: not a single board survived. The author found a one and a half foot board driven into the ground a mile east of the location of the church, in the southeast Section 2-95-43. The house of Mathis Speltz, then under construction, was wrung out like a piece of cloth. A few years later, in a similar storm, a house was destroyed in Section 2-95-43, northwest of here, and, as the story goes, a child in a cradle was catapulted into the air without causing harm to the little one. A few years ago the family of H. Hoogterp escaped as if by a miracle. This was also the case with the Dyksterhuis family. Jan Leemkuil, who attempted to take both of his children to safety, was covered by his house. Neighbour William Snyder, living in Sioux City at present, made his way to the house, carrying
an axe, in order to save the lives of the father and his children. The courageous man succeeded in pulling out the living form of the father, but the children had already died. Also, when the entire house of G. J. Rensink had been pulled off the foundation, the mother and children, who had found refuge in the basement, were found alive. It was a miracle that their lives were spared since much in the basement had been completely destroyed.

Already, quite early, the school board had a stone storm cellar constructed. Many farmers and citizens followed suit. It is remarkable that everything can be forgotten so soon; at least there is not much demand for the building of a "cyclone-cave".

As we saw, Hospers in the first years was a German village, except for the hotelkeeper. The Dutch settlers, however, crossed the little river and mixed with their German friends. This living together has been a success for half a century.

Cora Eernisse was perhaps the first daughter of Dutch descent; and Bertus Draayom was the first son - born in the spring of 1878. Of the first buildings of 1872, only the hotel and the late Presbyterian parsonage are still standing.

33. A Difficult Crossing

Theodore Gehlen founded a Luxembourg colony in 1870 at the east side of the Floyd River. Mathias Harens, a German soldier of the Danish and Austrian War, and Jan Parlot built their first houses. Mathias Harens, seemingly a worn out and crippled man already forty years ago, is still living. After the formation of the township in 1877, we were both trustees of that township for about eighteen years. Possibly, Mr. Harens' term was even a little longer. It is perhaps of less importance to mention all the names of our German settlers. We only wish to state that they showed, by word and deed, to be excellent Americans, to make this beautiful part of the state what it is today. Don't forget, reader, that we include all the mothers where ever this is applicable, because it seems that without them, this colonization would have been a total failure.

I have already told how we had been able to cross the western branch of the Floyd River in 1873. It won't be too disagreeable to the reader to hear about the time I had to
cross the eastern branch in 1877. In 1876, General Custer with his crew lost their lives in the Black Hills, in fighting with the Indians. The next year, in 1877, people rushed there in order to dig for gold.

In 1877, there was a partial failure of the crops in southern Minnesota. Because of that, a lot of people of that state moved through Hospers early in the summer. They did this in order to go to Sioux City and to form groups there on their way to the gold fields of the Black Hills. Many of you might still remember the "Klondike Craze", but then it was not prompted by need. In 1877, that was the case for many. The only place where one could earn ready money was on the railroad. The one who was able to procure work there was thought to have a good job.

And that was not strange. To earn a dollar and a quarter a day was no small matter. Only the Sioux City and the St. Paul Railroads paid that kind of money. The Illinois Central paid only ninety cents a day. Because there was much competition for each job, the confidence of the section foreman increased. If he happened to be a reasonable man, it did not matter, but if it was not so, he could heap a lot of trouble on a laborer. For if he would resign, ten would already be waiting in the wings to fill his place.

I had left the farm in 1877 and made a contract for a year to work on the railroad. I had dug a hole already in 1876, very cheap, to keep the new master in a good mood; that was on the west side of the track where G. De Kruif is living now. On the southwest corner of Section 3, on the homestead of Jacob Roelse, stood a house which Roelse rented to us for a year. It was possible to keep a cow and a few chickens there. That seemed very fine. But often in life, when fortune seems to smile on us, we find stumbling blocks on the way. That was also the case here.

We had a lot of snow during the first days of April, 1877. After that a couple of warm days appeared, and on the morning of April 4th, when we woke up, we saw a Floyd River which was a quarter of a mile wide in some places. A strong wind blew from the north which made for an over-all wild appearance. It was not possible but to use a horse to reach the other side. But a horse was lacking, and my wife said: "Even if you had a horse, I would not allow you to cross it." But what could be done? There was no other place where someone could make money. My wife thought that something would show up. My faith was not as strong and I promised to be careful. I always boasted of my competent riding, and in the end she gave in. I intended to go to Harke Boersma, in Section 4; there, I thought, I would have success. "Bill" was a fast horse. "Name" was stronger, but not so handy. That's why I stopped by this couple who were still in their bedroom.
"What now, lad, already here so early in the morning?"
"Yes, Boersma, you know I have to go to the section and cannot cross the river; the Floyd has flooded over its banks. Can I get Bill?"

Husband and wife began to speak in Friesian with each other, a language in which I was not yet proficient. But I heard enough: "Don't do it, Harke; the lad will drown; hear the roaring of the wind."

After talking back and forth a little while, I heard the answer. "No!"

"But, Mrs. Boersma, if you were in this predicament, what would you do?"

"I would not know, but I would not drown myself in the Floyd."

The persistent man often wins, and I got Bill. I had to pass by my house, but I did not have the courage to do so, to see who would be standing outside. The old grading, as is still visible in Mrs. Versteeg's meadow, was perhaps not half as high as presently, but there was a grading and also a bridge. The grading was under water, but quite a bit of the bridge was sticking out of the water, and so far everything went fine. Bill shook himself well; the storm came from the north and a horse has then (in his prime) not much patience. The current on the west side was, however, so strong, that even Bill hesitated to continue the trip.

The faithful animal seemed conscious of the danger of that senseless trip. I cannot remember all the thoughts that played through my head. We were in the water now, from the bridge to the west side. After leaving the bridge only a short time, I saw immediately that Bill did not have the strength to go to the other side through such a strong current. In April, the water can be quite cold, especially with such a cold north wind. Bill and I were able to keep our heads above the water, but that was about all. Swimming downstream was easy enough, but when Bill noticed that there was no willow wood on either side of the river, he took an opportunity to climb on the bank.

I had already understood that Bill did not need reins and also now I made no attempt to prevent him from doing so, although the chances for a good outcome were small. Bill's courageous attempt did not have the desired consequences. Both of us tumbled backwards into the river. Both of us must have gone down under the water, but I remember little about it. What I do know is that both of us continued our drifting down the Floyd. Before we reached the canal which was dug in 1872, Bill made another attempt to land on the westside - in which he was successful. The brave horse was trembling all over. Apparently that second attempt to find
land in that strong current was worsened by the strong wind; probably a third effort could not have been repeated.

Even though I was always a lover of horses, I considered Bill among the most noble of them all. A little stable, with a stack of hay next to it, stood where the willow forest of Jungers is at present. I took Bill there, dried his wet skin, fed him food and water, and hurried to the Section car house where the boss and my mate, Jan Olson, and another two or three others were present.

Olsen and I worked together on the railroad, so I understood well what that third and fourth man signified.

"What are you intending to do?" the boss asked. "You are not intending to work on the railroad today?"

"And what if I don't?"

"Then another man will take your place."

"For how long?" I asked. Yes, that was the crucial point for me. The answer was not long in coming, for the man thought that he had rid himself of me for good; for, as I later heard, my prospective replacements had made a deal with the boss, so he wished to send me home. The answer came:

"Then you can stay home tomorrow, and the whole year. I cannot count on people who live on the other side of the Floyd."

"If that is the case, Olson," I spoke to my friend, "let's put the handcar on the tracks; it is still only five minutes to seven, so I am still in my rights. Tomorrow I hope to see to it that my family is residing on this side of the river."

Thoroughly wet, and shaking of the cold, I climbed into my handcar. My friend was white with anger about the inhumane treatment, and when we were half a mile further on the track, he called out loudly to the boss: "Brute, we will throw you off the car here, regardless of the consequences. I can find work everywhere." I probably felt the same way as my Norwegian friend. But Billy and I had come through the Floyd in order to keep a place in the Section and circumstances silenced me.

I was thoroughly cold and wet when we reached the end of the tracks in Alton. There my boss ordered me to remain until I was called again. He probably was a bit frightened by the threat of the Norwegian or perhaps was sorry for his brutal treatment. When I found myself alone, I poked up the boiler really well. I hammered a nail before the door in order to prevent undesired guests from coming in. I took off my wet clothes, hung them around the boiler, and looked probably like a gorilla with my tangled hair, and not much like a human. I sat there till about the afternoon. Then my mate called me and we went to work together on our daily routine.
I can never pass Alton, past the water tank, without thinking of that struggle for the daily bread, and inhumane treatment. I used to think that the celebrated author, Jan Van Lennep, in his *Brinio*, went a bit far in his story about the painting of the Caninefarians by the Romans. But when I underwent the fury of a man who was used to being obeyed in everything, and who saw his plans thwarted, I saw how far a person can place himself beneath the irrational animal. That we became very good friends later, and that he showed this friendship in deeds many times, may strike the reader as a little funny. That, however, has nothing to do with the story. The whole story gives us a picture from the human life; what he can be, and sometimes is, when he allows himself to be controlled by his passion.

### A Victim of Helpfulness

The winter of 1880-1881 was very severe. We already had a heavy snowstorm in the middle of October, 1880. In some places, the snow remained on the ground until May of the following year. In the middle of October, the author had put potatoes in a hole just behind a shrub. This was on the day just before the storm. Those potatoes were covered by the snow the entire winter. When he opened the hole, most of them had perished due to lack of air.

During the winter, the roads in many places were impassable. Transport by train was slowed in such a way that in several places no provisions, especially flour, could be bought. People borrowed from neighbours as long as there was something to be borrowed, and that of course, did not last long. Hendrik Schnee (father of Willem and Joe and Mrs. Gerst, who are still living in Alton), who lived on the west side of the Floyd, in Section 22, and who had a large family (a true son of "Herman"), had been told on the previous day by Mother Schnee that the flour bin was empty. The neighbours had borrowed about two or three hundred pounds of flour, but this had not yet been returned and there was little hope that this would happen. Everyone knew the willingness of that large-hearted German family and this was both used and misused, depending on the stretchability of each conscience.

Mother Schnee found her husband getting a little sleigh ready.

"What are you doing, father?" the woman asked.
"I am going to Sheldon today to get some flour, wife. The road has not been cleared, so I cannot go through it with the oxen or horses, but I can easily pull fifty pounds on that sleigh. Do you need any more things? Write them down on a slip of paper and then I can be on my way."

That's how Hendrik went on his trip, traveling fourteen miles to Sheldon – that Hendrik whom we all know, that stalwart German. Otherwise, you might say, it is pure foolishness to travel with a little sleigh to get flour. But for us who knew him, that was not the case. He returned safe and sound after having covered twenty-eight miles in one day. It probably was not advisable for any neighbor to go there the next day to borrow some flour.

Also with us, on the west side of the river, the flour barrel was empty. We had borrowed and lent, and still all means of transportation were stopped. At last, we, a dozen farmers, decided to make the trip to Sheldon together. We cleared the snow heaps by turn, to make the road passable. A day was set, and according to the agreement, we would meet at a certain hour on the farm of A. J. Rensink, on the west half of the northwestern quarter of Section 8. My brother-in-law, M. Van Wyk, who was never reluctant to help with similar difficult trips, and who lived in Section 13, Holland Township, was the only one who showed up at the set hour at A. J. Rensink's farm. After having waited for a time for the others who, as you call that in America, probably had gotten "cold feet", we began our journey. In front was A. J. Rensink, who led a couple of beautiful horses. Both were men who did not recoil from difficult work, whatever nature it was. Number three was the author, who led a team of three-year old horses. With him was R. Van Zyl, our ex-supervisor, who accompanied us so he could buy a pair of rubber boots in Sheldon. The trip went well till Hospers, about five miles away. Having arrived there, the road to Sheldon seemed completely closed. Rensink took us to the corner where the Hospers Savings Bank is now located, and said: "If I can come through the Willow Creek, over the old trail, follow me." Van Wyk was going to see if one or another shopkeeper in Hospers had flour left.

A. J. Rensink and his team of horses were soon lost to the eye, and when I went out to check, I found him in the Willow Creek, just north of Hospers. The snow was at least seven feet deep in the creek. Rensink succeeded in
getting the struggling horses out, and after a short dis-
cussion, on the same corner as mentioned before, we decided
to continue our way eastward till we would find a passable
road - that is, a track, which had been made by others. In
that winter, you see, no one went out on his own.
About where the present Philby is located, on the farm
which was owned then by Enoch Philby, and presently by his
son, Enoch, we found the desired track.
We had already used up a good portion of the day and
Rensink and Van Wyk proposed wisely to make the horses run
a little faster. Both of them had strong, courageous horses.
My horses, however, were in good condition, but still too
young to spur them on to a higher pace, especially after
they had struggled through snow for ten miles. I chose to
continue my trip at a slower pace. Rensink and Van Wyk also
considered this prudent. They would wait for me at the mill
in Sheldon. Mr. Van Zyl continued on his way with those two.
When I reached Sheldon, my friends had already loaded
everything and were ready to return home. After having fed
my horses, we went homewards. No cup of coffee that day.
Also, a dinner was out of the question. The whole caravan
had not even thirty cents. We had already eaten our sand-
wiches on the way. We came home late at night. Rensink,
the most good-natured man I had ever known, was however, not
very happy about the attitude of the "slackers", who had
promised to accompany us and who had "forgotten" it.

35. January 12, 1877

Many of us will not forget that day. Of course one was
not used to those winter hardships anymore of the old days.
Yet the night of January 12 to 13 caused a great many
victims in Iowa, Minnesota, and both Dakotas.
A number of people found their death in the neighbouring
O'Brien County, while, as far as I know, no one lost his
life in Sioux County. In Dale Township, northeast of
Hospers, Mrs. Anderson, her aged mother, and her ten year
old son, lost their lives at only forty decametres from
their house. Their goal seems to have been to flee to the
neighbouring Danish neighbours. In this sad case, we saw a
striking image of child-love. Mrs. Anderson had taken off
most of her clothes and wound them around her mother, and
during that labor of love, the youthful prairie queen gave
up the ghost. The positions of the corpses indicated that
the ten year old boy had stumbled a little farther, but had
succumbed, apparently almost at the same time.
It appeared this way to the neighbours who found the re-
mains during the morning of the thirteenth. Then, and
only then, dear reader, the world may see the end of the
mass murder which is called war; if the majority is in-
spired by the reflection of the love of God which is re-
vealed in the last effort of the noble woman, who was
ready to die so that only her mother could live.

At a distance a little bit closer to Hospers, on the
northeast side, two girls lost their lives. Willem Bis-
land had gone for business to Primghar on the beautiful
morning of January 12, 1888. Four miles from Willem's
house, where Willem's sister did the housekeeping, his
parents lived. So Mathilda and Jennie, the latter a
teacher, accompanied Willem to the parental dwelling be-
tween Primghar and Willem's farm. The intent was to re-
turn home at night when Willem had finished his business
in Primghar. About halfway between Willem's and his
father's house, the wind came up and it did not last long
or Willem could not have made the horses go on in the wind.
The animals turned around immediately and broke the tongue
of the sleigh. The accident made them decide to return
to their father's farm. After having walked a mile and a
half, the girls were exhausted to such a degree that
there could be no question about continuing the trip.
Willem proposed that the sisters would go home by horse
and he would follow on foot. But the horses were unmanage-
able by this time, and nothing else remained but for Willem
Bisland to make the trip himself, and to leave his sisters
there until he could come back from his father's house with
help or means of transporting them. After he had dug a
hole in a snowbank and placed his sisters in it, and en-
veloped them with his own hair coat and other parts of his
clothing to keep them warm, he left them behind and under-
took his way home. The wind blew terrible, and Willem,
without the most principal parts of his clothing, was
numbed by the cold and could not rein the horses, so it
was necessary to let them go. Bisland stumbled on in the
direction of his father's house, but if anyone reaches the
goal of his journey in a terrible storm like that one, it is
an exception. "As dumb as an ox," we Netherlanders often
say. I mean, we have indicated in a previous article how
the oxen had taken me home safely by only having to remove
the crusts of snow from their eyes. But I have never
heard about a human who could do such a thing. This was
also the case with Willem; when he had lost his horses, he
did not reach his goal, but wandered the entire night and
landed far from the paternal home on the farm of Barney
Snyder in Carroll Township the next morning. On this
morning it was bitterly cold, but the worn-out boy immediately went, in company of several others, again on his way to pick up his two sisters. But . . . the two, locked in each other's arms, were . . . dead!

That Friday morning when Willem intended to pick up his sisters, the thermometer registered forty degrees below zero at 6 o'clock in the morning. D. A. W. Perkins, in his history of O'Brien County, on page 128, writes: "A recital of thrilling experiences of those who were lost in the storm, but who survived the terrible ordeal, chills the blood in one's veins." The agony endured by those lost and perishing, must be imagined.

In Baker Township in O'Brien County, near Hospers, Mrs. Kjarmoe and the sister of Thos. Kjarmoe's wife, were found dead in a snowbank only forty decametres from their home. They had perhaps tried to flee to neighbours during the storm. E. B. Pike had begun his trip from Sheldon to Hull in the afternoon. Four miles west of Sheldon, just over the Milwaukee Railroad crossing, he lost his way and wandered about in the storm the entire night, found a haystack and warmed himself by picking hay till the morning.

It is very remarkable that so many people lost their lives in the neighbouring O'Brien County during that terrible night of January 12 to 13, and we cannot give an explanation either. The author, at that time, managed the elevator in Hospers, presently owned by Hubbard and Palmer, Mankato. It was a beautiful January day, that 13th day of the month, but exactly on those still, beautiful days (we, settlers, learned that by experience) one could expect a sudden change. Nobody took grain to market. I had given some instructions to Johan Waanders in the afternoon, and helped him by filling the holes in the stabling, because, as I said, we did not doubt but that a storm could be expected. Then I proceeded to go to the elevator because there a number of holes needed to be filled also. I would not have liked to see snow on the flax seed which at that time was still grown a lot and with which the elevator was filled. Toward evening, I had drawn up my report in the depot, which served as my office. Modern interiors we did not have then and to have a stove in the elevator was not possible. Mr. Green was then the depot agent.

When I was finished with my labor, Mart Ingold (then a carpenter, presently a merchant in St. Paul) dashed into the depot (it had snowed already for a while then) with the exclamation: "Storm! Sixty miles an hour."

I had heard the wind howl, but was concentrating on my work; maybe I had discovered a mistake in my bookkeeping, or something like that, and that can make a person forget what is going on outside, although one knows what is coming.
Mr. Orton, of Maurice, a cattle buyer for Thomas Daltry, also of Maurice, had stated just minutes ago that he was intending to return to Maurice. He changed his plans, however, when other old colonists made the remark that such a plan was perilous.

Every moment the fury increased, and I thought that it was getting time for me, too, to return home. After having taken good care of the horse at the elevator, I left for home. Since we were living close to the railroad, and were often visited by vagabonds, we were in the habit of keeping a good dog. We had two of them at that time: "Watch" and "Hector". The latter, as soon as I left the elevator, went for home immediately, but that was not the case with Watch. We lived about where the farmhouse near Hospers is now standing, so I did not give it a thought that I would not be able to find the house, despite the fact that the storm at that time was already so violent that one could see only a few steps ahead.

After having walked for an hour, we had not yet reached the house. I could see that the dog also knew that we were not on the right track. Although we were the best of friends, he could not talk and point out my error. Ordinarily, it was not more than ten minutes from the elevator to the house. After having walked for more than an hour, the storm increased in intensity and also the cold became sharper, but Watch did not leave my side.

At last, after having walked maybe three, four or more hours, I sat down in a snowbank to rest a little. I was tired, but I had one thought: the dog might leave me all alone if I went to rest. I therefore got up again. Watch stayed right with me and after a while I again sank down in a snowbank and was so tired (I had had a busy afternoon with making those flax bins snow tight) that I thought I needed a little rest. I know very well that the irritation level had been reached; if I would make it safely home, I certainly intended to move to the southern part of the Union. I became more and more content; the thought that Johan would certainly come to look for me made me disquieted; although he was a good, industrious lad, he was not as nimble as I was (then). (Presently, he would win quite easily in a running match!) Also, my inquietude did not last long and a certain heaviness or laziness overcame me. Watch, however, began to become impatient and to bark and whine. I can still hear this faithful animal while I am writing this: the barking and the howling of the elements. Still, I made no move to leave my resting place; I was sitting there so nicely. Now Watch changed his tactic; he continued to bark, but at the same time he jumped in my face and I felt his
sharp paws scratch me. That attack was repeated. Since he ran away a safe distance, he caused me to think. The pain, caused by the sharp paws, also contributed to it that I got up, and thought to get up, but as soon as I tried to raise myself upright, I felt that my legs were numb. One can believe on good authority that the step from numb legs to death is a small one, and that death in those cases is not painful. But my thoughts did not go that direction at that time.

When I followed Watch on hands and knees, the barking stopped. I had dragged my legs not too far, and after I had rubbed them thoroughly, I was able to get up again. Now and then, I would fall again, but my efforts were to Watch's liking. He seemed happy in my effort to follow him.

But what was that? Only a few decametres from the F. H. Peavey grain bin, where the Klein Bros.'s elevator is presently located, I had sat in the snowbank which was caused by that building. This building stood a couple of feet from the ground, supported by poles. I came upon one of those poles and now I could follow the railroad tracks, walking and crawling, and reached the station. The door was open and the stove still had a fire. Green, the agent, would have come back to the depot around 10 o'clock; that was his habit.

I lit the lamp and placed it high in the wide, second window sill. According to what he said later, he would no doubt have missed the depot. Watch protested loudly when Green entered, but when he saw that he was a friend, he was content and wagged his tail. He spread out on a bed I had made for him behind the stove and slept the sleep of the righteous, even though it was in a dog's world.

Professor Horndyke must have said that the dog surpasses mankind in faithfulness often, if not most of the time. I believe he is right. I, personally, consider the affair a miracle and can testify on the good grounds that those still happen today if we are astute enough to notice them. Watch died twelve years after this happened on January 12, at 10 o'clock at night. This is, in itself, already remarkable; the faithful animal, worn, was fed in the barn; he could not walk anymore and was covered up every night with a sack. He was buried in the woods next to the track.

When I went home the following morning (January 13, 1888) with Watch, I found the whole family together. I was glad to find that Johan had not followed me, because I had worried about that the entire night.
The winter of 1877 was very severe. Already in the beginning, on November 4, the toes of one of my fellow workers on the railroad froze. Jakob Louis, who died in Edgerton, Minnesota a few years ago, had arrived in the summer of 1877 from Zeeland, the Netherlands, and very soon found work on the railroad. On the morning of November 4, it was terribly cold. Since people fresh from the Netherlands have no idea about frozen limbs, and since he did not complain about his feet, I asked him, "Jakob, how are your feet?"

"This morning they were very cold, Gerrit, but not anymore."

"Take off your boots, Jakob, or rather, let me do it."

Jakob sat down to take off those boots, but that was not easy. When I put those bare feet in the cold snow, Jakob began to doubt if I was all right. To take frost out of those toes, as hard as a marble, with cold snow? Jakob had vacation for some time after that, and that it had not become worse was probably due to the bath in the snow on the prairie.

While Jakob had to cease work on the railroad due to his frozen toes, and my regular partner had gone for a trip to Minnesota, I had to make the trip to Alton by foot alone, with my shovel, pick-axe and wrench. The section boss, who had become ill as well, in the meantime, thought that too risky; a man should not go alone. So it was that neighbour and former fellow laborer was asked to accompany me for a couple of days.

Stoll, although already then not young anymore (in his youth he had worked in the copper mines in Wisconsin), would nevertheless like to earn a few cents. In those days, it was necessary to keep an eye on the "little ones".

That is why Stoll and I went on our way, on that November day, never to be forgotten, and very early in the morning. It was mild and still, but after half an hour, the wind came up and we both imagined what we could look forward to. Simon Stoll, my friend till death, was a very selfless man who would rather sacrifice himself than ask for a favor. But it did not last long and I saw that the old gentleman had a hard time carrying his tools.

"Stoll, shall I carry part of your equipment?"

"Nein! Nein!"

Since my German friend repeated that word with emphasis, we continued our trip silent for a while. The wind howled to such a degree that we could not have understood one another anyway. The first railroad bridge we had to cross was at the "cut off", a mile from Hospers. The ties on the bridge were placed two to three feet from each other at that time, so it was necessary to take care where to place one's feet. Since it was very difficult to see where the next tie was, in that heavy storm, Stoll had the misfortune to slip. Quickly, like an acrobat, he was able to grab a beam. There my friend, like one condemned to hang, was hanging, with no support under his feet. Stoll hardly ever lost his sense of humor even in precarious circumstances.
"Draayom, it's perhaps better that you help me a little."

Yet, not only a little, but a lot of help he needed. I thought that the chance to save him had passed, for the man was hanging now by one hand only. But I was able, with united efforts, to get Stoll back onto the bridge. I went down, gathered Stoll's tools, and the trip to Alton was continued. Simon Stoll, from now on, climbed down each time we had to cross a bridge, even the long bridge near Alton. He was too afraid to fall again like on the bridge near Hospers. It was already then late in the afternoon when we arrived in Alton, and our sandwiches tasted delicious. We put our noon meals on sticks and warmed them that way on the station stove.

"That is the best dinner," Stoll said, "that I have eaten in a long time." No wonder.

Before our return trip, we decided to buy a cup of coffee after all. Unfortunately....the necessary two nickels were found lacking and after having investigated our pockets, the nickels still did not show, and bravely we began our return trip to Hospers. Mr. Stoll lumbered downwards at each bridge, just like in the morning. The fear of slipping had scared him to such an extent that the event of the morning remained a memory for him his entire lifetime. The wind howled just like in the morning, but it gradually became more frigid and we were walking against the wind on this return trip. Stoll asked me repeatedly to carry at least part of the tools. The old man had all he could do to drag himself onward. The last mile was more dragging than walking. It was late in the evening when we arrived in Hospers. We parted with the agreement to repeat our trip in the morning.

The Section boss was very ill that day and when I told him about our trip and the possibility that Stoll would not be able to accompany me the following morning, he tossed on his pillow and said, "But who is going to look at that crossing in Alton? Those flanges fill soon."

"Don't worry about it; if it is necessary, I will go alone."

The following morning I waited a while for Stoll. There must be trouble, for my German friend was a man of his word. At last the little Heinrich came. "Draayom, father is not coming."

"What is the matter, Heinrich, is father ill?"

No, not ill. But after the boy, who knew that father was not ill and tiredness was not known at his age, had thought about it, he came out with the following: "Nein, he was not "krank," but he could not get out of bed."

So that was it. He was not used to work anymore, and his body refused to cooperate. The little Heinrich, still my neighbour, is now a grandfather.

For eleven days, I made that trip, going and returning, only with a small load of tools, and on foot, but that first day turned out to be the most difficult.
I will come now to the last series of Congressional Townships of Sioux County. In the southeast corner is the East Orange Township. It is peculiar that although the township is almost totally populated by Germans, the name never has been changed. It is very difficult to change the name of a Congressional Township. This does take place with a town or village: Alton used to be called East Orange; Newkirk used to be North Orange.

The town of Granville is located almost on the borders of the county: It was called Ricker in 1882. Although the first name, that of my old friend, Henry Ricker, would be more to my liking, the population seems to have made a choice and chosen the name Granville, so well known in the annals of history. It is very peculiar to find the names of two men who had such a great role to play in world history: Granville and Orange.

The first, a faithful servant of his master, Philip II, who was instrumental in making him a cardinal - a reward for his services. The latter, the Taciturn Fighter for the rights of man. - Dead at the still youthful age of fifty-one by the murdering lead of Balthasar Gerhards, on July 10, 1584. Although dying, he lived long enough to pass on his talent, his "commission", to those who had given it to him. Those words, from the dying lips, and which bear the stamp of one who is redeemed, were: "Mon Dieu! aie pitie de mon âme et ce pauvre peuple" (My God, have mercy over my soul and these poor people).

Dear reader, you are probably saying: "Why that remark?" Simply because every time I visit this friendly town, this thought enters my head, and is reason for much thought, especially in these days.

In 1882, the Northwestern Railroad reached the place on which Granville was built. In 1886, if I am not mistaken, a church was begun there, and in 1888, the congregation (Roman Catholic) obtained her own teacher. Also, a Protestant church was begun later. The majority of the population, however, consisted of burghers, who were of the Catholic religion, and that is still the case up to the present time. I have learned to know the citizens of the town as faithful friends and solid Americans on several occasions.

The inhabitants of East Orange shared the same fate as we did concerning the story of snowstorms and grasshoppers. I got acquainted with several farmers in this area in my business associations, even before the Northwestern Railroad had reached the place which now is called the industrious town of Granville. That was in the days of flax cultivation. In the spring, it was necessary to sow again.
Many were forced by need, to sell their flax seed (kept in order to sow it in the spring) for food, debts, illness, or other things. Then the merchant had to supply them with seed. We have not lost one dollar in those transactions, neither in Floyd, or in Baker or in East Orange Townships, although the I.O.U.'s often ran into the hundreds. The flax cultivation stopped gradually: also the wheat stopped, since it rapidly moulded (not sure if this is the translation for "veraaden")* in Sioux as well as in O'Brien. The "five-wheat", after having been moderately successful for a time, was replaced by "See Island", which in turn was replaced by the "Lost Nation" after several years. Also, this soon began to show decreased yield and had to make way for the "Blue Stem" variety; that was the last one. After that, it was for a time: corn, barley, and oats. Although the barley cultivation stopped for a while also, at present the latter three grains are more desired in these parts. There is talk that also the beetroot cultivation will draw the attention of farmers here shortly, but corn, oats and barley can be divided among the cattle, pigs and poultry. The industrious farmers in the four northwestern counties seem to prefer these primarily, at the present time.

38. Nassau Township

Nassau was named after one of the Nassau boys who gave their lives for the sake of Dutch freedom, or rather for the liberty of the nations: Jan, Willem, Lodewijk, Hendrik, and Adolff; only one of them was destined to die in bed, but he gave all that he possessed for the cause.

Here, as was the case in East Orange Township, no change was made in the name. The town of East Orange was re-baptized Alton in 1880, which name it still carries. Looking at the map, one can find, except for Alton, another market town: Carnes. Near Carnes, the Christian Reformed Church is located. The Orange City grain and cattle market is also located in Nassau Township. If Hoppers is the oldest town in Sioux County on the Omaha Railroad, Alton is the second oldest and also was second at the Northwestern Railroad, which was laid in 1882-1883.

There was no agreement in this busy town about the name. One was not satisfied with East Orange. Jan Meyer, if I recall correctly, had a list of names which was debated. East Orange was, of course, a good name: the tomb in Delft contains many Nassauers who fought under the freedom vane and fell. But one cannot make a small Holland, or a small

*The author writes that this term was used in the provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel.
Germany out of America, and one of the inhabitants, I think it was Alexander Beach, suggested to name it after his firstborn, "Winifred". This did not suit a portion, but the proposal by Dr. Owens to call it Alton did; the name, Alton, after all, was not very common. Yes, I believe that there was not another Alton in Iowa at that time. Alton it was, therefore, under which the town was incorporated and is still called so to this day.

Alton, at present, has a Roman Catholic Church (a large congregation); also, Reformed and Presbyterian Churches and congregations, and is populated by Germans and Dutchmen. They are faithful to the flag of their adopted "Vaterland", as a town in the Union, which appeared clearly during the Civil War and in the latest World War. One who scorns his motherland and language can hardly become a good American. So, reader, permit me to quote one verse from the beautiful poem of Koenraad Krez, the well-known lawyer:

Land meiner Vader! langer nicht
das meine,
So heilig ist kein Boden, wie der
deine;
Nie wird dein Bild aus meiner
Seele schwinden,
Und knupfte dich an mich kein
lebend band;
Es wurden mich die Toden an
dich binden
Die deine Erde deckt, mein Vater-
land!

Land of my Father! no longer mine,
No soil is as Holy as yours;
Your image cannot be removed from
my soul,
And if no living being ties me to you,
The dead bond me to you,
Those who are covered by your earth,
My Fatherland!

In Alton, as well as in Sioux County, there were hard times. Here, as in other places, one had to pay 24% interest on borrowed money, and was glad to get it. But, I hear you say, no one could pay that kind of money! It was a very hard thing, but we learned to do without many things which today we think we cannot do without, partly because a neighbour has it and uses it, and partly because
if it does not work one can go bankrupt and clear the ledger that way. Everything according to the law, but morally it is wrong.

I do not apply the foregoing remark to any of my brethren in Alton, but to ourselves and others. That solid struggle, fellow settlers, which was fought half a century ago, is no longer fought anymore; but that seems to be repeated in history. The days of Samuel and the Maccabeans are beautiful pages in Jewish history.

As elsewhere, also in Nassau, there are still old settlers living, but few in number. Of the few still alive, is the old Mr. Rexwinkle, who transported us from Alto to Chester in the spring of 1873. He is still the same cheerful man who drove us by sleigh over the rail fence since the highway was completely covered with snow. As it would seem to me, he must be getting close to ninety years. Then there is my old friend, Laurens Ketel, who must be far into the eighties. Sjoerd Sipma and spouse, old acquaintances and friends from the Grange Hall, 1873, in Section 10, Holland Township, and, I should say, many others, are still living. It is true, I may speak of many. Well, my wish is that those few still may pass many more days among their loved ones in this friendly town with their friends.

A few years ago, quite a battle took place, of course only with mouth and pen. It had to do with the fact whether the courthouse should not be moved to Alton. Sioux Center had already laid a legitimate claim before the voters of Sioux County a few years before, but without success. Also, Alton did not succeed. All that turmoil about this question seems to have dissipated and the various towns and villages are working together again. And, if it would be possible to organize a "World Court", without it (which I don't believe), and they humbled themselves, I believe that we could find quite a few good members for it in Sioux County.

39. Sherman and Reading Townships

We have said already something about Maurice, the little town in Sherman Township, that it seems redundant to say much more about Sherman and Reading Townships - they had the same experiences as the other settlers. My old friends, Gerrit and Jakobus De Jong, lived and worked in Sherman Township. I was very good friends with Gerrit; I submitted pieces to him for his judgment, thinking that one or the other might possibly hurt someone and I was always assured of his honest judgment. The gentleman had an extensive knowledge and deep insight into matters.
His sudden death made me feel lonely, and every time when something came up which required support, I missed my honest critic.

The Van Peursems also settled there, as well as the De Brinks — good neighbours who contributed to the rising of Sherman Township. The De Brink family settled a few miles south of Le Mars after arriving on the prairie, but they went to Sioux County very soon. The old father and mother Brink, with whom we were already acquainted in Europe, have long since gone, as well as several of their children already. The same must be said of the De Jongs and the Van Peursems. I had already become acquainted with the Duvens in Wisconsin in my youth, but that is with another generation. The Van der Stoeps, Wassenaars, Niemantsverdriets, and, in the northwestern corner of the township, the family Meylink, old friends from the Netherlands, the Van Peels and others.

If we would attempt to look for that mass of old friends, we would look in vain; only few of us are fated to reach the age of ninety-four in this world, which is the age which Mr. N. Jongewaard reached before his passing. We read this in _De Volksvriend._

Sherman Township obtained her town, Maurice, in 1882, as we already noted. A very prospering town at present and she expands steadily. Whether the township was named after the Sherman family who settled in Reading Township, I cannot say with certainty. I do think, however, that it is named after General Sherman, who did his duty so admirably in the Civil War in order to save the Union.

Reading Township obtained a town within her borders at the same time as Sherman Township. The township was named after the township of the same name in Vermont. The first settlers were Germans, Irishmen, Scots, citizens from the Eastern states, and all were excellent burghers. Later, also numerous Dutchmen settled there.

Reading Township was organized in 1872, in September. C. D. Allen, who settled in Section 34 in 1870, was undoubtedly the first settler of the township. Provision was made early for a school; already in the fall of 1870, a school building was erected in Section 33, with a certain Jacobson as teacher, and he was a good teacher according to the testimony of those who knew him. A competent teacher of the youth is certainly a blessing in a new settlement, although it is that everywhere and at all times. The female counterpart of the teaching staff was still dressed up in those days, and had not been shorn of her hair, following "la mode". Eli Johnson was school superintendent then, and a nephew (or cousin) of the teacher mentioned above. In 1870, also, worship services were held in the classroom. The Rev. Batcheller of the Methodist Church usually led the service.
Already in 1876 a German (Lutheran) Church was organized and the meetings were held in the classroom in Section 14. Our German brethren were able to manage this arrangement for about ten years, after which they bought a piece of land, forty acres in Section 15, Reading Township, in 1884. A parsonage was built in 1888. A Christian School was built next to it in 1894. In 1882, as I mentioned before, the Northwestern Railroad cut through the township, and the town of Ireton arose, which is an industrious little town now. Ireton is probably named for Cromwell's son-in-law.

Timothy O'Brien and family were probably the first inhabitants of that town in 1882. The first postoffice was opened in November of 1882 with our friend, Levi Black, as postmaster, an office which he held for a number of years. Levi was a servant of his fatherland in the Civil War, and if our old friend is still living (which is likely since I have not heard of his death), he must be a very old man by now.

The town has several churches: a Presbyterian, United Presbyterian, Methodist, Reformed, and Christian Reformed. B. Knapp published the first edition of the Ireton Clipper in 1884. The town can boast of a very good school system. The first congregation (Methodist) was founded in 1884. The grasshoppers also found Reading Township, just as they had Floyd and others. A farmer in Reading expressed it in the following way in 1875 (most likely without dissenting opinions): "I'd rather have a sow with seven piglets near Des Moines than eighty acres of land in Sioux County."

40. Conclusion

I have already made a few remarks about the Townships Washington, Logan, and Bunscombe in the beginning. The first is named for the Father of the Fatherland; Logan for a meritorious general in the Civil War, known among us as "Black Jack Logan". Of the ninety-nine counties in Iowa, Sioux County is certainly one of the best. And we may say that of the forty-eight states in the Union, Iowa is one of the best; no one will speak against this. We should, however, try to tone down and not speak of this or that as the best. Our neighbor might have the tendency to protest. We know how many like to hear: "Britannia Rules the Waves," and "Deutschland uber alles". There is only one way to keep a neighbour as a friend and that is to curtail the "I" and "is" often.

An author would have written in his preface: "Dedicated to the Fathers and Mothers of Fifty Years Ago". I wish to do this to the end, feeling that I cannot be counted among other authors, but only had the aim to make a sketch of one or another thing, or to tell the story of the experiences of the first settlers.
In the first place, I would like to thank the members of the meeting, held in Orange City in 1920, who gave me the kind commission to write several things, either in the form of a history or sketches of the lives of the first settlers. I was especially gratified by the commission since I did not even belong to the first settlers. Expressions of satisfaction by many (even though our efforts remain at best imperfect) struck me deeply and should give me cause for rejoicing, of course.

What a long time, this glance backwards for half a century! When we celebrated the Battle of Waterloo in 1865, we boys thought it was almost impossible to go on living for another half century after so many experiences, looking at those ex-soldiers who were still alive from that world battle. That was really something!

Now, in 1924, it seems only a dream. What a mass of prairie heroes and heroines (let us not forget the latter) pass in front of my eyes from that half a century. We still remember Mrs. Emery. Her husband, who had gone to the Rock River to get a load of wood, was surprised by a snowstorm, and since he could not return home, had to spend the night at the Rock River. Home alone, she saw how the storm, at its most violent, lifted the roof of the sod hut repeatedly, and realized that the roof would be torn off completely and expose her house to the fury of the elements. What do you think, my reader, she did? Crawl into a corner? No! No daughter of Scotland does that. Rope or ox-chain was fastened to the beams of the roof, and tied to the bed, and she loaded everything on that bed that weighed a lot (except for the stove), and that law of gravity held the roof on the house. And when the storm subsided somewhat, she laid down beside the bed to rest a little. Hundreds of those kinds of things can be recounted in order to verify the ingenuity of the Amazons of the past. Space does not permit this, and I am already too verbose.

What a change in that period of more than half a century! The oxen wagon was replaced by a wagon drawn by a couple of fiery horses. Soon one or the other settler purchased a buggy, and when the times became better in 1884, the buggy became more general. After several years, the automobile made its entrance; for many - pleasure, for others - a trap, which the car still is to this day.

Then came the days of luxury and only strong legs can bear that. In the grasshopper time, all positions and classes were eliminated. Even though complaints were heard, yet society was free of that affectation which was revealed later and much was wanting, in that we knew ourselves.
After that came the destructive World War. Our boys were called to fight. Many returned, but a portion never came back. During that time, productivity rose. Also, the prices of the farms rose. If anyone doubted that Northwest Iowa was the best land of the world, the price was inflated, mechanically, far out of line with the law of supply and demand... and, the fall was inevitable. Huge sums of money were won and lost, made in the days of prosperity; positions and classes, formed in the days of prosperity, were broken once again. Mr. So and So, who had lost everything, did not receive the attention anymore which he formerly had had, and the thin one took the place of the fat one. But, despite all this, caused by ourselves, God's hand was not withdrawn; we had good crops in the last years.

It seems now, that all interest in Sioux County has stopped. Rest assured, dear reader, social conditions do not change in our time. It is necessary that we do not know this; this was made clear from our fanatic love of speculation a few years ago. The consequences of the foolish tulip trade during the time of Frederik Hendrik in the Netherlands was followed by a period which put servants on horses and which made princes go on foot. The reaction of the pedestrian prince was slow in coming, but it did come. That "Mississippi Bubble," that trade several years ago in worthless farms, did not only make pedestrians of the entire nobility in Paris in general, but also of the then reigning Duke of Orleans, in particular. It also sent many persons, formerly bathing in luxury, hungry to bed. And also, there it lasts a long time, much too long for those who were involved in it. But even the frivolous French brothers and sisters saw the times; that is, some saw it return to normal. And several years of industry and strict frugality require patience; but nobody should doubt to a return of interest by the merchant in the farms of Sioux County.