West Lawn Cemetery Tour, Orange City, Iowa

Nelson De Jong

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This is the 3rd day of December 1983. This is Nelson De Jong talking.

I have been asked whether I could make up a tape telling all about the original owners of the Orange City cemetery of that time, now the West Lawn cemetery and the Orange City Association. And so I have decided to do so. I have thought I should go and see some old people and see if they had any knowledge. But it so happens that I am one of the older ones of Orange City. Yes, there are some people that are older than I, but they just did not pay any attention as to the origin of this cemetery and so forth and they know very little about it. Having lived right near the cemetery for nearly eighteen years I have become very interested in its operation.

I have found out that cemeteries, like anything else, do not come of themselves. Somebody has to be in charge of it. And I have also found that there is also more to it to have a cemetery in the right kind of condition and a beautiful condition and so forth than we think. It is quite a thing for the caretaker to take care of all those monuments and to see that they are cleaned. If one would just watch and see them as they mow the grass and trim them lawns and so forth and trim the grass and flowers and the trees and what have you, that it is a tremendous pile of work.

And especially so in the wintertime to find the gravesite. That requires a special knowledge when the snow is very, very deep. As of today, as I am talking, there is a depth of snow on the cemetery very deep and only this past week the caretaker had to find three grave plots and it is not too easy of a task when you can scarcely see the tops of the monuments. Ah, it is a very
difficult time and believe me it takes a person who knows the cemetery real well to handle a situation such as that.

Now we are going to tell you the origins of the cemetery, as how it came to be the Orange City Cemetery and how they obtained the grounds. Now I have a feeling, and I don’t know for certain, but that when Orange City was platted and surveyed that they laid aside this special place exactly four blocks west of the First Reformed Church. That is where the cemetery is located and I have a feeling that the First Reformed Church being at that time the only church in Orange City was given the authority to be in charge of it, to sell the gravesites and lots and so forth. And so they were in charge of the Orange City cemetery for a long time, for more than 37 years they were in charge of it. And as I said a moment ago, the first marked grave was that of a Mrs. Dirk Vander Meer buried in 1872.

First of all, I have here a deed that was given to my grandfather [unclear] on March 13, 1894. And then I have a deed here that was given to my grandfather Gerrit De Jong on the 23rd April, 1907. And it was signed by elders and so forth of the First Reformed Church.

Then apparently, in the year 1908 or 1909, they felt that it was just too much for the church to be in charge of something like that besides it other things it had to take care of. So they had an organization made up that is called the Orange City Cemetery Association. At that time they sold shares, I am not certain but I think that each share was supposed to be $35.00. I know that my father bought one on the 31st day of August of 1909 and that my grandfather Gerrit De Jong bought one also on the 31st day of August of 1909. So they both had shares in the Orange City Cemetery Association. I cannot tell you the year it was not necessary to have shares and how many shares they sold I do not know. I would not be able to say that for sure.
And then for the longest time they sold, what you had to pay, for perpetual care. For an average lot of 6 to 8 graves, it would cost $50.00 and that was supposed to be for perpetual care of the gravesites. Now that is all included in the price of the grave. You are no longer given the choice of having perpetual care. It will all be in there because the care is given there regardless. Because there are so many different methods now, and that the cemetery has become so very, very large that it is almost impossible for individuals to take care of those gravesites because some of those gravesites are so very, very old and no longer are there any relatives living. And so perhaps they might not have perpetual care, but we would still have to have a caretaker take care of the cemetery proper. So it is included in the cost of the grave.

Each grave at that time came to, approximate, $10 or so per grave per piece. No of course, the cost of the grave has increased a great, great deal. More than 15 times that price just about. And of course in those days the cost of opening and closing a grave came about $5.00. Now that has come up to more than $140.00.

I do not exactly know when the rules were changed so you did not a share in order to be a board member, or whatever you might call it, of the Cemetery Association. I do know that if you are interested enough and feel like you would like to be one, and there is a vacancy, anybody can be a board member. And it is perhaps a lot of volunteer to be doing things that one would be doing and if only people would be a wee bit more interested in the cemetery itself to what is going on and learn more about it, as to how they operate it would be a greater interest to them perhaps.

And so now, we know that we live in a world of changes, price wise and in other ways, for instance, perhaps, when the first funeral procession of more than 110 years ago came to that cemetery on the road to no return going from the First Reformed Church to the gate of the West
Lawn cemetery. Perhaps that procession was done by use of horse drawn wagons, in fact, I am certain of it. I am certain of it that there was no hearse. And if it was in the wintertime, there was not a doubt in the world. But it could have been horse drawn bobsleds. And sometimes people had to come from a great distance because at that time the body of the departed one was always kept at home and never placed in a funeral home. And when there was a death, at that time, the undertaker after he had been there he would hang a purple veil on the front door knob so in town people could always realize that there was a loss of a loved one in that particular home. That custom, of course, is gone.

And in those days, the custom was that the pallbearers were chosen and that they were given armbands and that is still the custom in Holland – the use of armbands.

And then of course there is the hearse, later on a little bit, was a horse drawn hearse – sometimes two horse drawn – two horses were drawing the hearse. My very, very earliest recollection of 1907, that was my first recollection in my memory, I was a wee bit more than 3 years old, was at the death of my mother in April 1907. We were living out on a farm 3 miles west and 3 miles south of Orange City, and I picture in my mind yet, that horse drawn hearse with a man with a top hat, sitting high and lifted up, and driving two horses that were draped in black, that had even blinders on and their heads were draped in black. The man wore black all around. The women all wore black clothes and veils included. The men wore black hats and ties and so forth. And so, my recollection is of that.

And then there were a long line of carriages and buggies. And of course the immediate family, they had some neighbor drive their horses, so that when they would come to the church, the driver of the horse would leave them at the church. Then drive the horse to the place and
when the services were almost to the end, they would go back out and hitch up the horses and be standing and waiting for the relatives to come out of the church.

Then they would slowly, but surely, make their way on the road to no return to the cemetery. That to me is my first vivid memory of a funeral. And when they got to the cemetery, there were no such things as lowering devices. There were six pallbearers. There would be three ropes under the caskets. Each pallbearer would take hold of an end of one of the ropes. And when the time came for the casket to be lowered, and the committal services to be had, the pastor – or whoever was doing the committal services would say, “Dust to dust” and so forth and so forth. And seeing that there were no flowers, later on they would use petals of flowers. But in those years, there were no such things as flowers on caskets or in homes at the time of the loss of a loved one. No, one by one, dust to dust, and clod would fall on that casket. Needless to say, that as the casket was being lowered into ground, there was a tremendous lot of emotion shown. Today, that is not done. The family leave and the casket is lowered by the undertaker and the man who brings the vault. In those days, there were no such things as vaults, just so called rough boxes. Now a days they use very expensive vaults.

In those days, there were no embalming. Now everyone is either embalmed or cremated. But, in Holland that is not the custom of doing that. They still do not embalm. They still have the custom of waiting 4 days, which was the custom here any years ago also. And neighbors would come and would sit up all through the night at the home where the loved one had been taken, and sit in the room where the loved was. Why they did it, I do not know. I can perhaps imagine that because there was no embalming they might be wondering whether per chance the loved one was only in a coma or something like that. Because there were no absolute certain means of finding out whether a person was or was not gone. And that was the custom at that time, friends and
neighbors would come each and spend the night and stay awake all night. Well I guess you would almost call that a wake. I do not know. What I do know, they did that.

As I have said, the times have changed, customs have passed, and there is another custom that is in Holland. There is another custom, oh yes, not too many years ago, we did see a horse-drawn hearse. And it came down the street, just very slowly, the difference was the pallbearers were still having armbands. The undertaker and the driver still wearing black top hats and black coats and suit. The hearse drove up to the church. It was followed, that’s where the difference came in, it was followed by the relatives in automobiles. It came to the church.

There the casket was taken from the church and carried into the church after the relatives were in. And then it was carried in and then the hearse left. And I noticed that after the hearse left there is a little cart standing right near the church with bicycle tires, four of them, and when the casket was carried out of the church it was placed on this little cart with very narrow wheels. And then it was preceded by two policemen on bicycles and the whole family – all the family – and friends and so forth came behind the casket which was preceded by the policemen of course and the little vehicle of four-wheel bicycle cart was pushed along by the pallbearers. And when we got to that cemetery, which was located almost in the midst of the town, I noticed the reason why it did not have a hearse there; it could not, there was no path wide enough for a horse-drawn vehicle to go through that cemetery. Their cemeteries are not large. Their walking paths are very narrow, just wide enough for two people to walk side-by-side. And as we came to the gate of the cemetery, there were the caretaker of the cemetery also dressed in black met them and took them to the gravesite. I lingered on after that and walked through that cemetery after the relatives had left, then a few moments after the relatives had left I noticed that the caretakers had changed their clothes and they were wearing their wooden shoes to take care of the gravesite afterwards.
The next morning I went down there again and it is hard to believe how beautifully they had carved the ground in such a way that it made such a beautiful topping on that grave. Done by hand practically and it really was something to notice what a special precautions they had taken to make it look neat. But as I have said, no flowers even there at that time 17 years ago, perhaps there are flowers now I do not know.

But one thing I know for certain, which is still a custom in Holland, and that is the fact that when a lady gets married she does not lose her identity name. She just doesn't lose that and I found that to be so very true this past spring. Her maiden name is not lost, and after all, when one gets married we take a vow and we simply say ‘til death do us part and that is just exactly what the maiden name I guess being not being forgotten. So when death did part this young mother from her husband, the name of her maiden name was on the memorial card as a certain Barbara Schrader not her married name Barbara [Bloomberg]. Her husband Henry [Bloomberg]. was listed as one of the survivors and two daughters – one was Eva in the other Lucine.

And so that custom also came over to this country the first many years. The first one was the oldest marked grave that Vander Meers wife's name is also on, maiden name, is also on there. Then newest one was this past summer when Fern Smith Rowenhorst passed away. Her maiden name is also on the monument. The maiden names are always found on the monuments in Holland. It makes it much easier when some days our descendants, the second or third generation, might be coming down the cemetery road lanes. And they might be looking for great-great-grandfather, and when they get to the monument it was perhaps we'll be saying but who was great-great-grandmother? Who was she?

And now this past summer I was very interested to find out how many more people had done the very same thing as that custom in Holland, and I found more than 65 monuments with a
maiden name of the husband’s wife. And so I think that is a beautiful thought and I do think that if it comes to the time that my family has to buy a monument for my wife and I that they too will do likewise. After all the mother of our children is just as big a half of those children as I am if not more so. And her name is fully is important and why should that be lost because I know that in genealogy, we personally have a genealogy book going back to the year 1200. And in most, many instances the maiden name of the great-great grandmother and so forth is in that book also, which could would be very difficult to find were it not for the fact that they’re on markers.

But, that's another custom in Holland that quite frequently other gravesites do not remain in the family's name unless every so many years they pay the whole price of the grave again. I think it once in twenty years and if the family is gone and there are no more descendants around, then there's a great chance of that that gravesite will be sold to someone and there would be someone else buried there. But in their Town Halls, they have a very, very perfect record for anybody who wishes to look back on their genealogy to locate what they want. A number of years ago, a man from New York try to locate the genealogy of the DeJong people. And he found out that [ he went through the dusty books, old books and so forth, that it had gone back nearly 800 years to the year 1200. And that is a long, long time. And so it's, sometimes the spelling has changed little bit, but there are many, many families who cannot trace their ancestors for the simple reason that it has not been too long time ago that many, many people in Europe did not have a surname. That custom was absolutely passed when Napoleon took over. He insisted that everybody have a surname. And so especially so in Holland, for certain, why the people were forced to find a name and a lot of them grabbed hold of the first name that they could think of, and so you do have some very, very strange names.
For instance, my wife's grandfather's name on her mother's side was Druyvesteyn. Now he did, they did not change that, because of Napoleon. But maybe four or five hundred years ago, his forefathers went to the city of Haarlem in Holland and there they bought a wine making factory (whatever you wish to call it) and so they took on a new name they called it Druyvesteyn, which means a stein full or a glass full of wine. Beautiful colors it was, blessed clusters of grapes around it and that is what is considered their coat of arms, the *familie wapenschild* that is called, and that has been hanging now also as a part of a great big window in a large church one of the Haarlem’s Church, largest churches in Harlem in the Netherlands. High and lifted up it takes a very, very tall ladder to reach it. And a lot of people did that. They had coats of arms and then they were very proud of their coats of arms. They even had them above their particular chairs where the men sat when they went to church. The husbands at that time and fathers with sit at least a foot higher along the side of the wall on their chairs and then just beneath them would be a row of seats and that is where their family would sit. He would not sit with a family, and so that custom even came over to this country in the first years of the settlement, the fathers and husbands did not sit with their wives and some of their children. They sat in another row of benches.

I remember a couple of towns, I went to more than one church as a boy, where that was the case. My father and I sat in one place; my mother and my sister sat in another place. That was really seeming a very strange custom indeed, but that we have been drifting off the cemetery stories haven’t we? Oh yes, we might drift a few more times, because we're talking about the things of the past which some of you who have not lived this long perhaps you would like to listen to the early times of the settlement of Orange City. And I'm talking to you now from my own home. I made a tape before this and I walked through the cemetery lanes and I found it to be
very, very difficult and breathtaking to walk and talk and carry a tape recorder at the same time. Believe you me, it was very, very tiring and after I had talked for nearly one hour I found out that my voice was getting very, very weak. I tell you right now that this time I will not talk more than 30 minutes on this side of the tape, and then I will rest my voice so that it'll be a lot stronger when I complete – or hope to complete this tape.

But as I have said, it will not all be about the cemetery customs and that they had in those days. But they certainly do keep very, very neat as they do all over in Holland with the flowers and everything that they have they raised. The flowers naturally right there on the cemetery to and Holland is just loaded with flowers in people's windows in the homes and so forth it is all flowers. And that is the way it's at the cemetery grounds too, but no flowers at their funeral. That is seemingly not the custom and so when I begin to talk again on the other side I hope to bring you some of the people of the history of Orange City that are buried there. Because like I've so often said, a great deal of Orange City's history is at the Orange City Cemetery where the of the people buried there made the history of Orange City in the very, very early years. The stories of the people who came here in 1869 and the 70 and the early 70s. The people who took their mules and wagon and came here to find out where to place Orange City. And the people who decided to call this the town of Orange City which is named after the House of Oranje – the House of Orange of Holland – and that is why we have the town of Orange City. In Dutch we don't say oregonia – o-r-a-n-j-e – and that is how the town of Orange City got its name. And these four men that came, from Pella, Iowa. Orange City at first was strictly a settlement made up of people who were either born in Holland or who had parents been born and raised in Holland and come to Pella Iowa in 1847, which my great-grandfather did too. And my great-grandfather came here in 1870. My father was born here on a farm 3 miles west and 3 miles south of Orange City in
1873. So and I was born there on that same farm place in 1903 so it being December 3 today, about a week ago today, I was 80 years of age. And so as I said at the very beginning, I am one of the older ones in Orange City and have tried to remember some of the things that have happened and now when I talk again I will tell you about some of the people whose lives were spent in Orange City and who are buried at the cemetery.

Now we are on our way to cemetery gate on the road of no return. We will go when we get there down the lanes where there is a great peace and a great quietness. We will try to tell you a little more as to those that have been buried there. First of all, we are entering the gate of Westlawn Cemetery coming in from the East.

The very first place that goes to the right, we turn right and one of the first gravesites we find are the Draayoms and the Maris families. The Draayoms brothers married Maris sisters. The two brothers buried there. Two other sisters also married of people of this community who were well known, one was your grocer, operate the grocery store, his name was John Eerkes and the other one was Charlie Dyke who originally operated and implement shop and so forth here in Orange City. He, later on, when he retired he wrote the book of Sioux County. The Draayam brothers, their father, many years before that wrote the story of Sioux County in the Dutch language. He did not have nearly as big a book, but there were no pictures and not a great number of stories. Just absolute mostly it was history. He, too, had written the book as I have said I have read it and I have given it to the Historical Society.

We are going down a little further. We come to the Cambier families. They were in business to a great deal. Two of the brothers were in the implements, one of the brothers was in the implements shop, the other one sold Chevrolets and Fords and so forth.
Then we go a wee bit further and there we come it to a long row of footstones and the headstone name on there is Van Oosterhout. There are several generations buried on that plot. Originally, the great-great-grandparents of the Van Oosterhout’s were buried in a mausoleum, which is north of there. After a bit, we will be coming to that. But they were taken out of that mausoleum because it did not prove satisfactory. It was made up what brick and was some more or less like a cave with the door on the north end of it. How well as a boy do I recollect that mausoleum because it is less than 100 feet away from my mother was buried in the northeast corner of our local cemetery. And these Van Oosterhouts, they were lawyers and they were judges. The last one to be buried there, the last one bearing the Van Oosterhout name, was buried there a few years ago by the name of Martin Van Oosterhout. He was a judge in the court of appeals at St. Louis [unclear], I have known that family for a great many, many years.

We will go on a little further as we go to the north and we will come into a large marker and the name of it is craving on that marker is Van Roekel. This man had a young bride and they were expecting their first baby. They were living in a beautiful farm place homes. And they had, looking forward to having this child, and suddenly came the great flu epidemic of 1918 and 19. That flu epidemic took the lives of more soldiers than the battles that we had during World War I. And she was one of the victims because many a mother who was to be, a woman who was to be a mother, was taken. One of them was my father’s sister and so that marks the gravesite of her and the little baby.

We can we go on to the farthest to the lane at the farthest north of the cemetery. And there we turn to our left. But before we turn to our left, there is a special role of markers there too by the name of Van Der Meer. The brown granite marker marks the gravesite of Dirk Van Der Meer and he was married twice. His first wife was the first one who has a marked grave on our
local cemetery. She is buried in the northwest corner of our local cemetery and he about 30 years later was buried in the northeast corner with his second wife. Why she was buried where she was and why he was buried where he was buried, is something that we just do not understand and do not to know, because there was plenty of room around the gravesite of his first wife. And there still is approximately 40 to 50 feet with no marked graves whatsoever. And he, this man, was one of the wagon train leaders at the time when the people came to Sioux County in 1870 and so forth. And he was one of the leaders and so he was one of the first ones to come to Orange City.

We go on a little further. We go and turn to our left. One of the first markers you find is that of my grandfather Gerrit De Jong. Right next to it is the grave of my mother placed there already in 1907. We go on a little further and we come to the gravesite Noordhoff that is where my father and stepmother are buried. Also Jean Noordhoff who was a sister to my stepmother and she had been a missionary in Japan for many, many years and was forced to return because of World War number Two.

But then, we cross over from there slightly to the southwest across this lane, and we find the gravesite of Henry Hospers. He was the man who helped the people with their Homestead papers. [He] came to Orange city in 1870 and he helped doing all the paperwork. He was an attorney, but it turned out also to be the banker. He was a fine man. He was well-to-do, but somehow or other some people borrowed money from him and did not return it. And so the bank could not handle it. It was many thousands of dollars that they had borrowed and it was not returned, so the bank went bankrupt. But he was a man of a great honor and he sold his belongings, and the greatest part of his belongings went to pay off the people that had money in that bank. But, the bank was closed from then on.
Then directly south of that, maybe about a hundred feet, is a brown marker and that marks the grave of the man who had his name was Vander Waa and he had a pair of mules. In 1869, with three other men, they found a place in Sioux County where they thought would be a good place to have a Dutch settlement. They came from Pella. Most of these people were born, some of them were born in Pella, but a lot of them were born in Holland, most of them, in fact. My grandfather was born there too but he came to Pella, Iowa in 1847 as a boy of three, and they settled around Orange City. But these four men came and they were coming from the LeMars and Sioux City territory, and they came to the Northeast and when they came and saw the location where Orange City is now, they said, “We have found it!” And so they found this place and staked it out and they called it Orange City, which is named after the house the ruling class of Holland, the House of Oranje, William of Oranje. So that is O-R-A-N-J-E. So they called it Orange City. And so you would find in Orange City that lots of the town's equipment is painted the color of orange, as is also the water tower and many other things that are painted the color of orange.

Just added there, there's a tree there standing, where there are two tall markers. They are strangely shaped and they mark the gravesite of a man and his wife who operated a feed mill - windmill powered - that was placed about just directly east of where the college auditorium is now.

But just south of those two markers is one marker and that is facing south. There is only one other marker like that on the cemetery and that is to the Northeast and that marks the gravesite of Judge Hutchinson who was the judge in Orange City for many, many years from the 1800s to 1920 something.
And then just east of that Judge Hutchison gravesite is another marker of the Reickhoff and that too is a strangely different kind of a marker. It has a sundial on top of it. The Reickhoff family too were well-known in Orange City.

Well, we must keep on a going. We are going to come to another marker that is made of white metal or bronze, or whatever you might call it. It's grayish and is very, very well kept. The inscriptions on it are very, very easy to read even though they were tiny. These markers are hollow and there's an amazing lot of space in these markers. There are a plaque is bolted on four sides and on there the inscriptions are placed. These plaques are even today after nearly one hundred years are very easily removed, because the bolts that hold them are not even rusted. And they were used many years ago in the 1920s, by bootleggers, perhaps not in Orange City, I'm almost certain of that, but I do know they were used in the county. I do know they would put some of their liquor which was illegal in there and that is where the customers would come to pick it up so they would not be detected. But there was a wise minister in the county here and he was really death on bootleggers, and he saw flickering lights in the town where he was and he went and investigated, and of course the people were caught. So that is what that kind of a marker could and would be used for.

Just directly, slightly to the northwest of that marker, is a gravesite that marks the grave of a man who had three wives that he lost. And they are all buried on his plot and he of course to. And that is the one man in the cemetery that's, who is buried with more wives than any other set aside beside him.

And then we go to the northeast, northwest of that, and there is another marker and that marks the grave of the cook. He, too, was a familiar businessman in Orange City. He is buried with two wives. His second wife was my father's sister and she is buried next to where my
mother is. And he had, as I said, three wives and he was one of those people who placed the maiden names of all his wives on their gravestones. I personally think it really was wonderful, because we know who they were and that is too of great importance, who they were before they married.

We go on a little further to the west and there is a marker of my great-grandfather, just a white slab. It is the oldest marker on the grave, not the oldest marked grave, but the oldest marker. In addition, beside that there are two little gray stones made of this self same material is bronze material, hollow they are. And they mark the gravesites of two little girls and two little boys. They are cousins. The two boys were brothers, the two little girls were sisters. And they marked, they were there, in the course of a very short time. Because in those years, of the many years ago, there were epidemics that hit children, that hit grownups, that you don't hear of today. Diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever, smallpox, you name it and it hit, and it was quite frequently was very, very fatal. Many illnesses that some of those people died of are today almost extinct. They are no longer, because they've been brought under control and they know how to handle them, for instance, since my mother had pernicious anemia and there are so many things nowadays that can be done for problems such as that. And so, how well I remember that for many, many years in those days when you have scarlet fever or anything like that the families in whose home the illness was had to be quarantined and it was my duty in our Township to do that job. And many, we had all kinds of plaques to do that with yellow, green, red, you name it all kinds of colors. Each one designated as to what the type of illness was and they were placed on the side of the house where it could be seen by anybody coming there. They were placed there by orders of the physician and they were removed only by the orders of the physician. People came there but they were not supposed to come in especially if it was diphtheria or smallpox. Anybody
that entered those homes could not leave it and so it was really very strict in those days and now one very rarely, as I have already said, hears of something like that.

And then we go slightly to the south and then we see a marker that to me is a great interest. It marks the gravesite of a man who was only twenty-seven. He had just come from Holland not too long before that. He was a day laborer and he was going to clean a well for Ada’s [wife of narrator] grandfather. The well was located in the east end of the alleyway of the barn. And so he came one day to do that job. There is one thing that he was forgetful in, he did not, when you opened the cover of the well, he did not put a lantern down in there and being inside of a building, that was very dangerous not to do that. The lantern was lowered to see if perchance there might be gas in the well. He neglected it to do that. He went down into the well and suddenly, his life was snuffed out. It was very dark in there. It was very dark in that barn. There was no way that they could get that body out. There were no flashlights. There were no other means of putting a light down the bottom, cuz they be snuffed out before they never hit the bottom by the gas that was in that well. So they waited until the next morning and the well, being on the east side of the barn, right inside of where there was a door. The sun came and rose and with the use of mirrors, they flashed light down into the bottom of that well and that is the way they were able to locate his body and get it out of there. He was a man of only less than 27. He left a widow with four little children and a baby to come. In those days it was very nasty for any woman to be left with children. There was no such a thing as ADC and help for the widow and so forth. And no, it was the very difficult to have that.

And so then, just beyond, just a little bit slightly northwest of this gravesite, that marks the gravesite of the first pastor of Orange City of the Reformed Church. His name was Reverend Bolks. He came there in the early 1870s. He was a pastor there for several years. He was not only
a pastor but he was also a doctor and he served many, many and was have helped to a great, great
many people. And that is kind of unusual to have a combination of pastor and doctor.

We go on a little way in across the alley or lane, we come to a marker that marks the
gravesite of the first auditor in the courthouse in Orange City. His name was Betten and that was
a very well-known name here in the town of Orange City for many, many years.

When we bit further on that north lane, in there is an unusual marker. It looks like a tree
stump with branches on it - maybe about two inches in diameter - and then on that tree around it
what it's made of I cannot tell you, but it's certainly resembles a tree that has been hardened with
[unclear], you know with age. And there’s a rope on there. Now many, many years ago there was
a story of a man in the in the late 1800s who had taken his life. Now whether that marks that, I
do not know for certain, but it certainly could possibly be, because in those days something like
that was very, very unusual. Scarcely ever even heard of that.

Then a little ways further, we come to that marker that marks the gravesite of this lady
who was the first marker, marked grave, oldest marked grave in the cemetery, Mrs. Van Der
Meer. And her maiden name is also inscribed on there.

And they're going west of that, we have a row of markers and the name on there is
Roghairs. It was quite a family, maybe there's about six or seven markers there, and they were all
either the women were Roghairs or the man was too. Well, at any rate, there's some unusual
inscriptions on there in Dutch and one of them is as follows: Read prayerfully as you pass by, as
you are now so once was I, as I am now so you shall be, so be prepared to follow me. How
fitting those words are, as one looks at that. How well it tells us that someday we too, we too will
be as there are. And so it simply tells us very forcefully also in that self, same place and so be
prepared to follow me. Those are words that gave, really can take along with us, as we walk on these lanes here.

Well, we're going to get a bit further and we go around the bend and we go around another road that just a little bit south of there. We come across some special gravesites. One of them is the Rowenhorst. There is another gravesite there where the maiden name of Herman Rowenhorst’s wife is on, Fern Smith Rowenhorst. She was the [unclear] Fern Smith girls dormitory was named after her. And by the way, sometime before this, I told you about Henry Hospers, the man who helped the people with all their paperwork when they came to Sioux County, with their homesteads and so forth. Well, Hospers Hall in Orange City, also a girl’s dormitory, has also been named after him as was the town of Hospers to the northeast of Orange City was also named after him.

We keep on a going a little further and we find the name of Virgil Rowenhorst also. He was, as his father, president of the Northwestern State Bank. He retired from that at a very youthful age and he also became president of Northwestern College, but for only a few brief years when cancer took his life.

We go on from there and we come across some tragic places of markers. For instance there are four girls buried around in there. Two of them were sisters, Muilenburg sisters, and Elsie Herwijnen and another girl and their teacher, Blackburn. They all had gone to the lake more than 50 years ago, just about 50 years ago. And they there they went into the Lake Okoboji. They came to a rocky ledge. They were bathing and they lost control of themselves; they fell off the ledge in the water. Four girls plus the teacher drowned, but a tragic thing that was in Orange City. How well everyone who lived at that time can remember it. It was quite something to see four lanes of the procession coming down the street from the south to the First Reformed
Church. Behind each hearse were the families of their respective girls. It really was a picture that one can never, never forget. And in those days, the custom in the church was such that the bodies were taken into church and then their services were held, and it was a lengthy service, and then the people can view the bodies. And there was such an enormous crowd inside the church and outside the church, so that it was after 5 o’clock in the afternoon before the committal services were able to be held at our local cemetery. Yes, it was something.

We go to the South and we come to the flag pole. That is where the soldiers who passed away on the battlefields, or with illness, or whatever it was, but they were in services, where many of them are buried. The memories of those boys, in the memories of all the other boys that have lived and died so that we could enjoy life in this country. It really is, I think back of all the memories that I have of those boys; it's really quite something to be thinking about. We cannot cover all of the gravesites. How I wish that those of you who perhaps listen to this tape could have been with me. It would have been much more of interest to you as it is to me every time I walk on this cemetery. Every time I do volunteer work here, I think of the people who have gone before. Let us remember that after one reaches the age that I’ve reached, a baby hears the memories of people who have gone before. There are many more people there who are buried whom I have known then I actually know that are alive. And so it's really quite something as one walks these lanes, these paths on the cemetery of Westlawn Cemetery of Orange City. That those memories come back to a person. Precious memories they are. And to know that someday, hopefully, we are going to see each and every one again. Someday we will understand why these things in this life have to be as they are. Yes, we all do know that the little bird of time for many of us has but a little way to flutter. We all know that. But, there are lots of people much younger
than I for whom that little bird of time can flutter to. And then I go back to that inscription on the
cemetery marker, be prepared to follow me.

[…then we come to another family, the Oggels, and each and everyone has the
inscriptions and the names of their wives on it, their maiden names and I think it's wonderful. I
must stop now.]