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Finding Aid

HENRY HOSPERS FAMILY COLLECTION

c. 1800 - 1990s

MS 3

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- Introduction
- Historical Notes
- Related Materials
- Arrangement and Series Description

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Introduction

The Henry Hospers Family Collection documents the life of Henry Hospers, his parents, his wife, his children, and other relatives. The collection includes correspondence, speeches, photocopies of newspaper articles, and photographs. Also included are psalm books, penmanship books, newspaper clippings, handwritten notes of information, family trees, and other objects. Collectively, these records provide evidence for the origins and development of the Dutch-American settlements of Pella and Orange City, Iowa, in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Further, the records document the activities and interconnections of a Dutch immigrant family important in Iowa, in the Reformed Church in America, and in other places and institutions.

Size: 92.5 cm

Provenance: Creators of the records, or their successors or appointees, have preserved these materials. They were gathered by Nelson Nieuwenhuis, curator of the Northwestern College Archives, in the 1970s.

Restrictions: No restrictions.

Copying: Single photocopies may be made for research purposes.

Permission to Publish and Citations: Written permission to publish material in these archives must be requested of the Director of the Library. Citations should include the following information and acknowledgements:

Identification of item; date, if known; Henry Hospers Family Collection, box and folder number; MS 3; Northwestern College Archives and Special Collections.

Processing Notes: Significant gathering, organizing, and translation of this collection was done in the 1970s by Nelson Nieuwenhuis; further accessioning and processing in the 1980s-1990s was done by Nella Kennedy. Translations by Alida Sewell were made in 2007-2008. The collection's arrangement and this finding aid were completed in May 2010 by Doug Anderson. Revised April 2015.

The translations and this description, rearrangement, and reprocessing were made possible by an HRDP Grant from the State of Iowa, 2006-2010 and by Northwestern College.

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Historical Notes

Henry (Hendrik) Hospers was the eldest of 10 siblings. Born in 1830 in Hoog Blokland, Province of Zuid Holland, the Netherlands, he emigrated to the United States in 1847 with the 800-plus colonists who settled Pella, Iowa under the leadership of the Rev. H.P. Scholte. In Pella, Henry worked as a surveyor, teacher, notary, and a newspaper editor. He was also elected to multiple terms on the town council and then as mayor. In 1850, he married Cornelia Welle; after her death, and while still in Pella, he married Hendrina Overkamp (see the Hospers Family Tree below).

It was while Hospers was mayor of Pella that he joined with those interested in establishing a new Dutch-American colony in northwest Iowa. He helped select Sioux County land in 1869, arranged for the platting of Orange City in 1870, and after spending two months in the Netherlands promoting immigration to Iowa, moved to Orange City in 1871. In Orange City, he established a store, a land office, and, in 1880, a bank. The St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad named a station for him in recognition of his work as a land broker and mediator between their corporation (and others) and Sioux County settlers. Hospers also spent much time as Chair of the Sioux County Board of Supervisors in the 1870s-80s sorting out various irregularities and financial scams earlier boards had engaged in. In 1882, Hospers led in the founding of Northwestern Classical Academy, the institution which eventually became Northwestern College. He served as treasurer of the board of trustees, donated the original land for the academy, and made a major financial contribution to what became Zwemer Hall (1894). In addition, Hospers founded *De Volksvriend* (The People's Friend) in 1874, a Dutch-language weekly which continued publication until 1951. He served one term as Mayor of Orange City (1885-1887), two terms as State Representative (1888-1891), and one term as State Senator (1896-1899). Henry Hospers died in 1901.

Hospers Family Tree (simplified)

PARENTS OF HENRY HOSPERS	HENRY HOSPERS' SIBLINGS	HENRY HOSPERS' WIVES	HENRY HOSPERS' CHILDREN
Jan Hospers (1801-1888)	1. Hendrik/Henry (1830-1901)	m. 1850 Cornelia Welle	1. Jan (1851-1900) 2. Geertruida (1856-)

m. 1829 Hendrika Middelkoop (1808- 1887)	2. Maaïke (1832-1849) 3. Cornelia Gertrui (1833-1849) 4. Pietronella Hendrika (1834-1836) 5. Nicolaas/Nicholas (1836-1916) 6. Teunis DeGelder (1838-1928) 7. Eva Evangelina (1841-) 8. Willem Hendrik/William (1844-1909) 9. Pieter Hendrik (1847- 1849) 10. Cornelius (1851- 1946)	(1826-1863)	3. Pieter (1858-) 4. Hendrika (1860-1910)
		m. 1864 Hendrina Overkamp (1837-1907)	1. Gerrit Hendrik (1864-1949) 2. Maaïke/Maggie Cornelia (1867-) 3. Henry (1869-) 4. Aafje/Effie (1871-1955) 5. Eva Evangelina (1873-1914) 6. Aartje/Arta (1875-) 7. Isaac (1878-) 8. Hendrina/Drina/Etta/Henrietta (1880-1968)

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Related Materials

See the Northwestern Classical Academy collection of the Northwestern College Record Group for material on Henry Hospers' role in founding what became Northwestern College. (There is a finding aid for the collection.) The Academy records also contain information about Hospers' children who attended the school.

For published translations of some of the letters in the collection, see:

- Stellingwerff, Johan. *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the Iowa Frontier*. Ed. Robert P. Swierenga. Trans. Walter Lagerwey. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004.

Many of the photographs and some of the other material in the collection are on digital display under Henry Hospers at [NWCommons](#). (See also a digital collection for [Hendrina Hospers there](#).)

Also, see Henry Hospers' Orange City Dutch-language weekly, *De Volksvriend* (1874-1951), digitized and searchable at the National Library of the Netherlands. We have instructions and a link [here](#).

Also see the following volumes/links for biographical material:

- [Anderson, Doug, Tim Schlak, Greta Grond, and Sarah Kaltenbach](#). *Orange City*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014.
- [Beltman, Brian W.](#) "Henry Hospers." In *Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, edited by David Hudson, Marvin Bergman, and Loren N. Horton. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008.
- [Cook, Henrietta Hospers](#). *My Family Story*. Vol. II. Brent & Garth Hospers, 1981.
- [Nieuwenhuis, Nelson](#). *Henry Hospers—The People's Friend*. Iowa City, IA, 1978.
- [Rozendal, John Keith](#). *Our Family History*. El Cajon, CA, 1970.

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Arrangement and Series Description

The Henry Hospers Family Collection is an artificial collection. That is, it did not grow organically from the life of Henry Hospers himself nor from any of his relatives or descendants; rather, the collection was largely gathered by Nelson Nieuwenhuis. It is divided into six series in eight boxes.

Series 1, Jan Hospers: This series features correspondence, a diary, and an autobiography of Jan Hospers, the father of Henry Hospers. Some of the correspondence is between Jan and Henry, when the son was helping establish the Dutch settlement in Pella, Iowa. Much, but not all, of the material is translated. Further, only some of the material is in its original form; much is in typescript and/or photocopy form.

Series 2, Henry Hospers: Henry Hospers is the focus of this series. A significant portion of the material is miscellaneous information about Henry, in the form of clippings, handwritten notes, photocopies, and memorials. The single most important item by Henry himself is his manuscript of his speech on the 50th anniversary of the settlement of Pella. This series also has typescript translations of this speech and of his writings about the settlement of Sioux County published in *De Volksvriend*.

Series 3, Hospers Family: This series represents collected miscellany on many of Henry Hospers' siblings and descendants. Notable materials include reminiscences by a brother and a daughter of Henry; original correspondence from four relatives; a file of miscellany on daughter Hendrina, focusing on her decades of work as a mission worker of the Reformed Church in America with the Chiricahua and Jicarilla Apaches; a book of World War II-related poems by Jackson Hospers, a grandnephew; and a detailed family tree.

Series 4, Books: This series consists of two New Testament and Psalms books, in the Dutch language. Each psalm is set to music. One copy was owned by Henry Hospers, the other was owned by his youngest daughter, Hendrina.

Series 5, Mementos and Photographs: The mementos in this series feature penmanship books of Henry Hospers and his sister Maaïke and the 18th century citizenship papers of two ancestors of Henry. Photographs feature Henry, various family members, and Henry's Orange City house and grounds.

Series 6, Objects: Various objects of the Hospers family comprise this series, including engraved silverware and a cane head, a small scrapbook of newspaper clippings, and genealogical charts.

SERIES 1, JAN HOSPERS MATERIALS			
BOX	FOLDER	CONTENTS	DATES
1 (half box)	1	Letter, Emigration Diary, and Autobiography. a) Jan Hospers to H.P. Scholte, March 30, 1847. Photocopy of typescript of original letter. Dutch. b) Jan Hospers, "Diary of a Journey from the Netherlands to Pella Iowa in 1849," originally published in <i>The Iowa Journal of History and Politics</i> , 10 (Jan-Oct. 1912): 363-382. Stencil duplicate (?) of typescript. English translation. c) Jan Hospers, "Diary of a Journey from The Netherlands to Pella, Iowa in 1849," <i>The Iowa Journal of History and Politics</i> , 10 (Jan-Oct. 1912): 363-382. Photocopy. English translation. d) Jan Hospers, Autobiography, 1886. Stencil duplicate (?) and photocopy of two typescript formats. English translation.	1847, 1849, 1886
	2	Documents of appreciation to or from Jan or Hendrika Hospers. Mostly poems. In Dutch. Two translated into English.	1832-1875
	3	Jan Hospers notes and letters to Willem Hendrik Hospers (son, younger brother of Henry Hospers). In Dutch. English translations.	1845-1887
	4	The Last Days of Jan Hospers, Sr. Typescript, in Dutch, by son Nikolaas. Two English translations.	1888?
	5	Jan and Hendrika Hospers letters to Henry (Hendrik) Hospers. In Dutch. English translations.	1848-1887
	6	Henry (Hendrik) Hospers letters to Jan and Hendrika Hospers and other family members. From Pella, IA. In Dutch. Keyed to translations in <i>Iowa Letters</i> , with some additional translation.	1847-1849
	7	Letters from Pella, from G.H. Overkamp, Naatje	1846, 1848,

		Overkamp, L. van Bergeyk, E.Aanen, and Henry Hospers to Jan (John) Hospers. Typed copies of English translations. Typed copy of Dutch letter of G.H. Overkamp of August 1, 1848.	1849
	8	Miscellaneous letters to Jan or Henry Hospers. Typed copies of Dutch originals.	1848, 1849
	9	Miscellaneous letters between Jan and Henry Hospers. Typed copies of English translations.	1847-1849

SERIES 2, HENRY HOSPERS MATERIALS			
BOX	FOLDER	CONTENTS	DATES
2 (half box)	1	Miscellaneous biographical materials. English.	20 th century
	2	Miscellaneous clippings or copies of newspaper items on Henry Hospers. English.	1872-1936
	3	Writings about settling Sioux County by Henry Hospers. English translation typescripts of Pts. 1 & 7 of A Concise History of the Settlement of the Dutch Colony in Sioux County, Iowa. Photocopy of Pt. 1, from <i>De Volksvriend</i> . English typescript of dedication address, school opening.	1874, 1882
	4	Letters. English. Photocopies of original correspondence between Henry Hospers and Banner G. Bowen and Barlow Granger. Photocopies of letters about Hospers by James Easley. Original letter by Hospers, IA State Senate.	1863, 1868, 1889
	5	Miscellaneous notices about Henry Hospers and the Northwestern Classical Academy. Mostly typescripts, mostly English.	Misc. undated, 1886, c.1899, [1901], 1970
	6	Pella's Fiftieth Anniversary speech. Original Dutch ms. English translation, 2 typescripts.	1897
	7	Bank and Academy miscellany. Photo of 1872 Hospers Bank, in newspaper clipping. Typescripts of newspaper notices.	1872, 1972, 1883, 1884
	8	Memorials of Henry Hospers. Dutch and English. Originals, typescripts, clippings, photocopies.	1901, 1941
	9	Iowa Board of Immigration. Photocopy of report, missing pp. 18-19. Henry Hospers was a board agent to the Netherlands in 1871.	1872

SERIES 3, HOSPERS FAMILY			
BOX	FOLDER	CONTENTS	DATES
3	1	Cornelius Hospers (1851-1946) miscellany. Brother of Henry Hospers. Notice of 55 th wedding anniversary. Notice of 92 nd birthday. Iowa settlement memoir, 4 parts. Newspaper clippings, multiple copies. Mostly English.	1934, 1943, 1962

2	Nicholas Hospers (1836-1916) miscellany. Brother of Henry Hospers. Letters to brother Willem. Dutch. Translations by Alida Sewell.	1883, 1888, 1902, 1909
3	Willem Hendrik Hospers (1844-1909) miscellany 1. Brother of Henry Hospers. Letters by Willem Hendrik, mostly to parents. Dutch. Some translations, by Alida Sewell.	1882-1887
4	Willem Hendrik Hospers miscellany 2. Mostly correspondence related to the Kortewegs. Maria Helena Korteweg married Willem Hendrik Hospers. Dutch. Notes by Alida Sewell.	1873-1898
5	Letter from Naatje Overkamp (1830-1855). Typed English translation (3 ½ copies). Describes Pella revival. Overkamp married H. Wormhoudt; their daughter, Johanna married Teunis De Gelder Hospers, a brother of Henry Hospers.	1848
6	“A Tribute of Esteem” by the Rev. J.A. De Spelder. A poem written on the occasion of the death of Kittie Hospers Mieras, granddaughter of Henry Hospers. Newspaper clipping.	n.d.
7	Letters from Hendrina Overkamp Hospers (1837-1907) to her children. Hendrina was Henry Hospers’ second wife. Dutch originals. English typescripts.	1900-1907
8	Gerrit H. Hospers (1864-1949) miscellany. Son of Henry and Hendrina Hospers. Letters to Bertha Haverkamp Hospers (m. 1887). Typescript of excerpts from Reminiscences. Clippings of 50 th wedding anniversary, death. Obituary notice of daughter Hendrine Hospers Royce.	1884, 1887, 1937, 1949, 1971
9	Eva Evangeline Hospers Schultz (1873-1914) miscellany. Daughter of Henry & Hendrina Hospers. Handwritten note of a newspaper notice of Eva’s wedding.	1900
10	Aafje (Effie) Hospers Rozendal (1871-1955) miscellany. Daughter of Henry & Hendrina Hospers. English typescript Reminiscences (1 full copy, 2 partial). Handwritten notes of 1900 wedding notice. Clipping of obituary of the Rev. Anthony Rozendal.	1900, 1949, 1960
11	Hendrina (Drina, Etta, or Henrietta) Hospers (1880-1968) miscellany. Daughter of Henry & Hendrina Hospers. Photographs, articles, eulogy, clippings, etc., mostly related to Hendrina’s missionary work with the Apaches on behalf of the Reformed Church in America.	1897, 1907, 1962, 1968, 1984
12	Maaïke (Maggie) Cornelia Hospers Duiker miscellany. Daughter of Henry and Hendrina Hospers. Correspondence from Marion A. Duiker providing	1972

	biographical information on the children (Marion's siblings) of Maaïke and William Duiker.	
13	Isaac Hospers (1878-19??) miscellany. Son of Henry and Hendrina Hospers. Letter to sisters Eva and Arta. Typescript.	1893
14	Gertrude Klein Fisher miscellany. Granddaughter of Henry and Cornelia Hospers. Photocopies of wedding announcement and of Northwestern Classical Academy material. Title page of a magazine stamped with Henry Hosper's name.	1909, 1914
15	Henrietta Hospers Cook miscellany. Niece of Henry Hospers, daughter of Nicholaas Hospers. Correspondence regarding Hospers family.	1963-1971
16	Jean M.M. and Henry Hospers Kuyper miscellany. Grandsons of Henry and Hendrina Hospers, sons of Aartje (Arta) and Apie P. Kuyper. Partners in Kuyper's Music House, Pella, IA. Letter and clipping.	1972
17	Muriel Hospers miscellany. Granddaughter of Henry and Hendrina Hospers, daughter of Isaac Hospers. Correspondence with Nelson Nieuwenhuis about Hospers family.	1970s
18	Bust of Henry Hospers, created by Marion A. Duiker. Clippings about Hospers and the donation of the bust to Northwestern College.	1970-1972
19	<i>A Short Collection of War Poems</i> , by Jackson Hospers. Pamphlet. Grandnephew of Henry Hospers, grandson of Willem Hendrik Hospers.	1944
20	Cornelia Welle Hospers (1826-1863) miscellany. The first Mrs. Henry Hospers. Mostly photocopies of Welle family materials.	Late 18 th , early 19 th century
21	Hospers Family Tree. Two copies. Also photocopy of an 18 th century segment of Hospers genealogy.	n.d.
22	Hospers genealogical miscellany. Includes genealogy booklet on the family of Willem Hendrik Hospers, brother of Henry Hospers.	various

SERIES 4, BOOKS		
BOX	CONTENTS	DATES
4 (half box)	Nieuwe Testament & Psalmen Boek. Annotation indicates that this was Henry Hospers' "Psalm Book."	1857
	Nieuwe Testament & Psalmen Boek. Annotation indicates that this was Hendrina Hospers' "Psalm Book," a Christmas gift from "mother," 1902.	1884

SERIES 5, MEMENTOS & PHOTOGRAPHS			
BOX	FOLDER	CONTENTS	DATES
5	Envelope 1	Penmanship exercise book, Henry Hospers.	1837-1839
	Envelope 2	Penmanship exercise book, Henry Hospers.	1841-1845
	Envelope 3	Penmanship exercise book, Maaike Hospers.	1837-1839, 1841-1846
	Envelope 4	Hospers family members, Pella. Photographs.	19 th cen.
	Envelope 5	Hendrina Overkamp and relatives. Photographs.	19 th cen.
	1	Amsterdam citizenship oath of Hendrik Hospers and Anna Mooy/Mooji. Dutch.	1791
	2	Miscellany. Photocopies and clippings of Hospers family and Henry Hospers houses and garden.	various
	3	Henry Hospers. Photographs.	19 th cen.
	4	Hospers family, groups. Photographs.	19 th cen.
	5	Hospers family, individuals. Photographs.	19 th cen.
	6	Hospers family, individuals. Photographs.	20 th cen.
	7	Hospers house and land. Photographs.	19 th cen.
	8	Hospers family reunion. Clipping.	1982
	9	Hospers family crest. Framed.	n.d.

SERIES 6, OBJECTS		
BOX	CONTENTS	DATES
6	Stamp collection of Warner W. Schultz, grandson of Henry Hospers	1996?
7	Paper weight	?
	Pocket watch in box	?
	Needle & unfinished tatting	?
	Envelope of calling cards	?
	Silver head & part of cane; head inscription: "To my dear husband in memory of our silver wedding. Mrs. Henry Hospers, Orange City, Iowa, November 11, 1888."	1888
	Small scrapbook of newspaper clippings about Henry Hospers	ca. 1899-1901
	Box of silverware and a set of cufflinks. "H" on some silverware. Serving spoon engraving: "Papa."	?
8	Hospers family charts (2)	?