1936

Dutch Novelty Program

Roeland Van Cavel

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Staff en studenten van de forty-sixth Street School. Ik ben zoo bly dat ik hier ben, en zoo ik nu aangekleed ben gevoel ik my hier geheel thuis. Ik verdwondert myn eigen of dat je weet wat ik nu zeg.

I might as well tell you what I said. Faculty and students of the Forty-Sixth Street School. I am glad to be here, and the way I am dressed at present I am feeling perfectly at home. I wonder if you know what I said.

Dutch is different from German. This is "Moonlight and Roses" in Dutch. That was a popular song here in California, ten years ago. Will I sing it for you.

Sing "Moonlight and Roses" in Dutch. (Once)

The popular song that we have here, they have them fourteen days later in Holland, and they sing them in Dutch.

While I was in school in Holland I read about the nice things you had in California. Nothing but sunshine and movie stars. I thought that everybody was so rich that the gold pieces were lying on the streets. I came here to pick up the gold pieces, but I haven't found any yet. I read stories about cowboys, and I thought that all the school children dressed in cowboy suit. But I have been a few years in the United States, and I know exactly what you
think about Holland. You think that all the Dutch children wear funny clothes, and that they eat nothing but Dutch cheese. Yesterday somebody asked me if the Dutch washed their necks with Dutch cleaser.

Holland is a little country in Europe. Here is California, and Holland is put inside. California is ten times as big as Holland. There are more people in Holland, than there are in California, and that isn't counting me.

Holland is a country where the water is higher than the land. This is a big map of Holland. In this blue part the land is lower than the water. They keep the water between dykes. They haven't had a war in Holland for one hundred and twenty four years. When they get a war, they break the dykes and drown the enemy. They don't always drown them, but they always get them wet up to here.

Do you see this black line here. They have a dyk on each side. When the enemy comes, they open the dykes here, and make a river here twice as wide as from here to downtown Los Angeles. The enemy has to stay on that side, and the Dutch stay here and laugh at them.

I have taken so much about dykes, and I know you want to know what a dyke is. They are pumping dry this ocean now. They build a dyk here on the outside and pump the water out. The dykes are made out of dirt. If we could cut this dyk in two and look on the inside of it.
It would look like this. This is the dyk. This all made out of sand and dirt. This side is made out of rock so that the water can't eat the dyk away. You see how the water is higher than the land. Here on top of the dyk is always a road with two lanes. So they have a road along here, and roads on the outside of those pieces. So most of the roads in Holland are on top of the dykes.

A long time ago there was a little Dutch boy, who was coming home from school. And as he was walking along the dyke he saw a little stream of water coming through a hole in the dyk. He knew that if he let the water run, the hole would grow bigger and bigger, and the dyk would break. All the people would drown. So he put down his books, and stuck his finger in the hole. All night long he kept his fingers there in the dyk. The next morning all the neighbors went out hunting for the little boy. They found him half frozen, but still holding his finger in the dyk. The neighbors saw that he alone had saved the whole country from drowning. So they gave him a big party and a great big badge. He was a dutch hero. Would you like to see that boy. You see, I was the one who stuck his finger in the dyk. It was this finger. You can still see the dirt on it. I think you don't believe me. Well it was a good story anyway.
Before the Dutch had any dykes, they use to build small hills so that they wouldn't drown. When the water came up to high everybody ran up the hill. The Dutch call those hills dams. Have you heard of the city of Amsterdam. That is the biggest city in Holland. That is build around one of those dams. Here is a picture of Amsterdam. The dam is in here, and those are all canals. and they have a street on each side of the canal. Along the canals there are no fences. It seems that it is only the boys who fall into the canal. I use to make sail boats out of my wooden schoes. One day while I was playing boat, I fell in three times., and did my mother dry my breeches.

Out in the country it looks like this. Those are outside canals. This is the dyk, and here are the inside canals. Those are all little plots of land, and they too have a canal around them. The wind mills stand on top of the dyk, and pump the water from this canal into this one. That is how the land can be lower than the water. This outside canal goes into the ocean.

Did you see the wind mills on the Van de Kamp bakeries. They look exactly like real Dutch windmills. Van de Kamp build them out of shingles, and in Holland they are build out of tiny yellow bricks.

You see that they have no fences in Holland. If this school was in Holland you would have a canal around the playground. You would have to go over a bridge, where
the gate is now. Holland is a cold country. In winter all those canals are frozen over, and everybody goes ice skating. You go to school with your skates. As long as there is ice, they have no school in the afternoon. Than they have all kinds of skating races. "Hans Brinker" or "The Silver Skates" is a good Dutch story about a Dutch boy who won a pair of silver skates at one of those races.

On those little farms, they grow vegetables, and flowers. I should have painted a few Dutch cows on here so that you could see, where the Dutch cheeses come from.

I went through high school and college here in California, and I know exactly how much you like schools. This is a Dutch school. Do you see the canal here and the bridge. The Dutch are very clean people. We had a women in the neighborhood who scubbed her floor so often that one day she fell through the floor into the basement. This school has two houses in front, the house of the principal, and the house of the janitor. Every little Dutchman has to go to school till he is fourteen, and that means the girls too. They go to school at nine O'clock in the morning. At half past ten they get a half hour recess, and at twelve o'clock they get two hours for lunch. Everybody goes home to eat. You see in California some people live in the cities, and other people live out on the farms. In Holland all the people
live in small towns, and the school is in the center of the
town, so they all can go home to eat. At two o'clock they
go back to school and stay till four. There is no school
on Wednesday afternoon, and neither on Saturday afternoon.
They learn the same arithmetic, and the same multiplication
tables as you do. Did I have a hard time learning those
multiplication tables. One day my father said, "I give you
a nickel for each multiplication table you learn. I learned
them all in one week. I made sixty cents. I had to learn
Dutch like you learn English. You read in your books about
Dutch children, and how funny some of them dress. In Hol-
land we read about California and cowboys. And I thought
that all of you went to school in cowboy suits.

Around the school the children play, but they have
no physical education teacher, and they don't have the
swings and things that you have. The girls skip rope and
they have a great many games where they play in a circle.
They always sing songs with them to keep time. The boys
play football, but not the way we do it here. They play
soccer. They have to kick the ball, and they can't touch
it with their hands. The boys get most of their practice
kicking tin cans along the streets.

Do they have bicycles. Everybody rides a bike.
Along side of the roads, they have special paths for bikes.
They have all the kinds of cars that we have here. But
there is only one car for every hundred bicycles. Every
bicycle has to have a license plate, that cost three dollars.
They have a big lantern on every bike. If you ride in the dark without a light, they put you in jail for a couple of hours. They know that it is dangerous to ride a bicycle without lights. They all have to have tail lights too.

On Sunday everybody goes to church, and to Sunday School. They all like to go to Sunday school. You see during the summer vacation the whole Sunday school goes on a camping trip. They might go to the beach, and they go to see the palace of the queen. When the queen is there she shakes hands with them. They all love the queen. She is a smart. A few years ago the Dutch were going to have a revolution. They queen went riding through the country in an open carriage with two horses. In all the places she came the people began to sing and to cheer, and the revolution was over.

The Sunday school is still good for something else. In Holland, they have Christmas twice a year. Here Santa Claus and Christmas come at the same time. In Holland, Santa Claus comes on the sixth of December. California is a warm state so Santa Claus comes from the North Pole. Holland is a cold country, and Santa Claus comes from Spain that is a warm country. Santa Claus rides on a big white horse over the roofs of the houses. He always has a little colored boy with him. The boy came from the United States three hundred years ago. Everybody puts his wooden shoes by the chimney, and put a little straw in it for the horse.
The colored boy come through the chimney, takes the straw out of the shoes, and puts presents in them. He has to be a colored boy. If he goes through the chimney, he would become a colored boy anyway.

I know that all of you have seen pictures of funny looking Dutch people. I am one of them. Here is another old fellow. There are only two little towns in Holland where they wear this kind of clothes. When I went to school I wore the same kind of clothes as you do, but I always wore wooden shoes. We had to set them in rows in back of the class. When anybody ran of with my shoes, I grabbed an other shoes and knocked them on the head. When I dressed up I always wore leather shoes. Old farm women wear all kinds of odd looking clothes. You didn't believe me when I told you that I was the boy who stuck his finger in the dyk, but this is true. This is a picture of my mother. When she was a little girl she dressed that way too. This is a very expensive lace cap. That comes to here. Underneath of that lace cap she wears a black cap, and on the black cap is a gold band that comes out in front with those spirals. They look like big cork stews. Than she wears a heavy velvet jacket, and seven or eight heavy woolen skirts. There is only one little town where the elderly people wear this kind of clothes. In the next little town it is a little different. Thirty miles away they wear this. The white cap is standing out this far, and those are gold plates. This is the way they comb their hair. All the little
children wear the same kind of clothes to school as you do.

People in the cities, they see the same Hollywood movies as you do. They have the English sound, and the English music with it, but they have Dutch reading underneath so that people will know what it is. All the people in the cities get their clothing styles from the movies. This is a Dutch newspaper. Do you see how those are American styles. They might not be able to see it in the back. Can you see this one. This is the statue of liberty.

This is a Dutch moving picture page. I know you can't see the pictures very well, but I'll read some of for you. Here is Mickey Rooney. Here is Shirley Temple. Here is Nelson Eddie and Jeanette Mac Donald. You have heard them over the radio. And here is Popeye.

People have radios. They get Dutch language on the radio, English language, German, French. And all on the same radio.

So you see that not all the people in Holland wear funny clothes. No more than you all dress like cowboys. I had a letter from my sister in Holland yesterday. She wrote me that they had a cute little song that had just come from the United States. Have you seen "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs". If you haven't I know that you are going to see it. You have heard that song, "Just Whistle While You Work". Here she wrote it to me in Dutch. Will
I sing that for you in Dutch.

Fluit now terwyl je werk
Fluit
Lach nu goed, begin met spoed,
Te fluiten luit en lang.
Hom een vroolyk gezang.
Hom
Doet uwe best
Dan neemt een rust
En zingt je eigen een zang.
Daar is te veel te doen,
Laat het geen moeite zyn.
Voorgeet verdriet en
Tracht te zyn net als een vroolyk chic-a-dee
En fluit terwyl je werk
Fluit
Kom aan ben wys,
Toon op je Gys,
En fluit terwyl je werk.

The Dutch always did sing and whistle a great deal, and now they can whistle while they work. I know you all would like to wear wooden shoes. I wore them for nineteen years. They are as light as your shoes. Will I show you how I can tap dance in them.

Tap dance, exit: