INFLUENCE OF THE HOLLAND BACKGROUND ON EDUCATION
IN THE PELLA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS,
1847-1966

by

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INFLUENCE OF THE HOLLAND BACKGROUND ON EDUCATION
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by
Merlyn E. Vander Leest
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of the Dutch heritage of the inhabitants of the area upon the public schools of Pella.

Many communities in America today reflect the heritage of old world lands. Several different countries are typically represented in a single community. The community represented in this study was unique with a single-country background. It was founded by Dutch settlers and throughout its existence a large percentage of the area’s citizens were Dutch or of Dutch ancestry.

Some characteristics basic to the motherland have influenced the education of the individuals of the community. This influence was reflected in the curriculum and behavior of the students. The home and church life of the student and his family affected the various aspects of his educational life. The language spoken in the home and community were also a form of influence upon the student.

These influences were reflected in the curriculum and behavior of the student. The writer felt that teachers and administrators should be made aware of the kinds and extent of the influences of the Dutch heritage upon the
II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several limiting factors were found while conducting the study. Much of the past history of the community was not recorded. Therefore, the writer had to depend a great deal on interviews. Many of those interviewed were elderly people, making lack of memory a possible limiting factor. Much information on the study was lost by the death of individuals who could have contributed a great deal to it. Being so much a part of the Dutch way of life, it was hard for many of those interviewed to see that certain influences were peculiar to the Dutch way of life. The writer, coming from a similar background, was also limited in this way. Much of the recorded history was written in the Dutch language. The writer was not able to read the Dutch, thus making some information inaccessible to him.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Dutch. The people are known as Dutch in English-speaking countries. It is also the language spoken by the people of the Netherlands.

Holland. The country of the Netherlands is often called Holland, although this is really the name of the two western provinces.
The Netherlands. The "Netherlands" is a small kingdom lying in the North Sea in northwestern Europe. It means "low country." In this report, both the Netherlands and Holland were used to refer to the same country.

IV. PROCEDURE

The study was conducted to determine the influence of the Dutch background on education in the Pella Community Schools, 1847-1965.

The first step in approaching the problem was the gathering of information from the various sources. The sources used in the study included books on the history of the county, local and county school records, newspapers, archives of Central College, a history compiled by Pella Historical Society and the Marion County Historical Society, personal accounts written by people living in the area past and present, and interviews. The material for the study was gathered from a variety of sources--mainly local.

Pertinent facts were sifted and organized from the information gathered. These data were reviewed and compiled. Descriptive paragraphs were written about the information obtained. This included material from both oral and printed sources. Statistical information was organized into the form of tables. These were discussed in the text of the thesis. Conclusions and recommendations
were made—utilizing the extent and kind of influence of Dutch heritage and relating it to future use by teachers and administrators.
CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND INFLUENCES ON EDUCATION IN PELLA

To better understand the influence of the Dutch heritage on the Pella Schools, it seemed essential to take a deeper look into the background of the settlers of the community and conditions that existed at various times in their history. It was also important to include information of various present-day factors that influence the people of the area. Without this information one could not fully appreciate conditions as they exist in the community at the time of this writing. It was through its colorful history and background that the community had developed as it exists at the time of this writing. To obtain this information, written historical material was gathered and analyzed. Sources used were local and state history books, interviews with community historians, newspaper files, and pamphlets.

This chapter deals with education in Holland, Marion County history, Pella community history and a description of the present community.

I. PAST EDUCATION IN HOLLAND

School education in the Netherlands dated from Charlemagne. The Norsemen destroyed churches and monasteries and the attached schools. The restoration opened
anew the opportunity for learning. Until the eleventh century no other than church schools existed. Beginning with the twelfth century temporal lords erected schools and acquired the right to appoint the schoolmaster, who was also the church sexton. School privileges were granted by them to towns which opened "Latin Schools."

The distribution of school books was greatly increased by the invention of moveable type, although block print books were used for a long time. The Reformation and the revolt against Spain brought, in the beginning, chaos. The Synods of Dordrecht in 1574 and 1618 insisted that Calvinists teach doctrine but recognized the civil authority of towns, provinces and the States-General in temporal matters.

In the eighteenth century progressive deterioration of the schools caused even thirty-year old persons to lack elementary knowledge.¹

State interest in Dutch education began in 1606 during the French occupation. The state wanted the schools removed from the influence of the Church but the Catholics and Protestants greatly opposed this. State support was finally given the denominational schools during the nineteenth century.² This school law was remarkable for the

¹Education in Netherlands (Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences, 1960), pp. 9-10.
modern definition of the "aim of public education." The school instruction was organized so that "through the teaching of appropriate and useful knowledge, the mental capacities of the children will be developed and all social and christian virtues acquired."  

After the fall of Napoleon and the establishment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, comprised of Holland and Belgium, a decree was issued in 1815 which ordered that the school law of 1806 should be "the basis for further regulations concerning public instruction."  

In 1857, an Education law was passed to "embody the liberty of education." A distinction was made between elementary and higher grades, the training of teachers was improved and regular salaries were guaranteed. A pension plan was introduced and many modern methods and subjects were demanded. 

In 1963, the Secondary Education Law caused a complete reorganization in the secondary school system. 

The Compulsory Education Act in 1900 distinguished between school and home education. When a child reached the age of seven, he had to go to school for seven consecu-

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1Education in the Netherlands (Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences, 1960), p. 11. 
3Ibid., p. 417.
The Constitution of 1917 recognized the complete equality of public and private education. This principle was the foundation of the present Education Act of 1920 which had been amended several times. In this law the privilege of parents to determine in which spiritual direction their children should be educated was recognized. The practical results were that the denominational schools had a mixed population while the teaching staff had to share the religious convictions of the school board. Another result was that the public school was more general in its cultural aims and did not neglect the traditional view so ingrained in the character of the Dutch.

Education in Holland of early settlers. The following are reports on the education of a few representative citizens among the early settlers of Pella.

P. H. Bosquet had a thorough preparation for the law profession and practiced law for many years. He organized the Pella Savings Institution, which is now the Pella National Bank, and held the position of President.

H. L. Bosquet was apprenticed to a blacksmith according to his father's wishes. Later he learned the

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printing business and then resumed his studies for one year at Central University.

Barney Buerkens learned the wagon-making trade as an apprentice.

John Hospers enjoyed excellent educational advantages in his youth and spoke fluently the English, French and Holland languages. He was a teacher in South Holland but farmed when he came to America.

It was also reported that James Muntingh and John Nollen received excellent educational advantages in their youth and were for some years engaged in teaching. "Mr. Nollen had taken a deep interest in educational matters, and his advice, counsel and good judgement have gone far towards raising the standard of the Pella Schools."¹

Isaac Overkamp also received excellent educational advantages in his youth and followed the occupation of teaching. He was the first teacher in Pella and was always interested in the educational matters of the community. "There was no one in the city whose life has been more closely identified with its interests."²

Henry Peter Scholte was educated at Amsterdam. He

¹History of Marion County, Iowa (Des Moines: Union Historical Company, Birdsall, Williams & Co., 1881), p. 664.
²Ibid., p. 666.
passed a literary examination in the University of Leyden, studied theology in the same institution, and was licensed to preach. He was active in the ministry until he came to America because of religious persecution.

S. H. Viersen had taken a great interest in educational matters and was an efficient worker on the school board.¹

N. J. Gesman learned the carpenter trade at an early age from his father. He studied at home and was a teacher for several years in Amsterdam and also in the Pella schools. He was editor of the Pella Gazette for one year and then took up the study of law. He had a large family so he would work all day and study until early in the morning. He practiced law for twenty years.

Kommer Van Stigt was one who took a leading part in the educational and religious life of the community. He attended school in Holland for five years. He also attended school here and learned the shoemaker's trade.

Dingeman De Haan received his education in the common schools in Holland and continued his education in Pella in the English language at the Central University of Iowa.²

¹Ibid., pp. 645-684.
II. PRESENT DAY EDUCATION IN HOLLAND

Education in the Netherlands has always received very close attention. From the total population of 9,850,000 in 1948, 2,000,000 were educated at official schools and colleges. In consequence, the percentage of illiterates (about 0.2 per cent) is the smallest in the world.¹

Public primary education is organized by the municipalities. The municipal council appoints the teachers in consultation with the State Inspector for Primary Education. The curriculum was drawn up by the College of Burgomaster and Aldermen in agreement with the State Inspector. It indicated the scope of the education and the allotment of the subjects to the classes. It also gave the number of hours to be devoted to each subject per class. The salaries of the statutory number of teachers in these primary schools are reimbursed to the municipalities by the government. The municipality itself bore the costs of founding a school building and the material operating costs.²

In 1952 a new act concerning the training of teachers for primary education came into force. The training was divided into three phases. The first phase lasted two years and gave a general education. This phase was con-

¹Facts About Holland (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij), p. 45.
sidered to be the same education as the pupils of secondary schools have had. The training proper as a teacher lasted three years, two of these being devoted to the second phase and one to the third phase. The second phase consisted of pedagogy and teaching methods in general. The third phase gave more advanced courses in Dutch language and literature and in the social and cultural life of the Netherlands. Since there was such a great demand for teachers, the first and second phases sufficed for the awarding of a teacher's certificate. However, such teachers could only teach at schools for ordinary primary education and their salaries were lower than those of teachers who are fully qualified.

Education is compulsory in the Netherlands and covers the years from seven to fifteen. The subjects taught are: reading, writing, arithmetic, Dutch language, Dutch history, geography, nature study, singing, drawing, physical training and needlework for girls. Many schools also taught handicrafts and in the higher grades French and/or English was taught during or outside normal school hours. ¹

The great majority of Dutch children went to the primary schools from the age six to twelve and then went to one of the schools for postprimary education, such as a grammar school, an elementary technical school, an agri-

¹Digest of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences), pp. 9-10.
cultural school or a domestic economic school. However, a large number stayed in the primary schools for a seventh and possibly an eighth scholastic year. About sixty per cent of the children admitted to the first classes of primary schools reached the sixth class without missing regular promotion; fifteen per cent do not reach the sixth grade but leave school from lower classes after having at least attended for eight years or on reaching the age of fifteen when attendance is no longer compulsory or to enter a school providing a specialized form of primary education. ¹

The school buildings in general were in very good condition and were regularly supervised and inspected by medical and building inspectors.

Normally there was one teacher for the first thirty pupils in a primary school, with an additional teacher when the figure reaches thirty-one and a further teacher appointed for every group of forty-five pupils over the basic limit of thirty-one. The average size class was about thirty-five pupils.

Teachers in the secondary schools are either university graduates or have been trained at private institutes. In the secondary schools each teacher specialized in a specific subject.

Secondary education in the Netherlands followed the

primary, although it was marked by a great variety of school types, including the grammar school, the modern grammar school, the lyceum, the secondary school for girls, and the commercial schools, each of which has its distinctive pattern of studies.

Those who went on to a university had to have a diploma from one of the high schools, Latin schools or Lyceae (combination of the first two). The courses in these schools are five to six years in duration.

Between the universities and the secondary schools are the technical colleges. Each school specialized on one particular subject such as engineering or agriculture. A minimum of at least three years at a High School is required before admission.

There are special Vocational Training Schools for children who do not attend Secondary Schools. These training schools prepared children for their future careers such as industry, dairy-farming, etc. Many of the industrial schools are sponsored by large manufacturing concerns.¹

The Netherlands have six universities and four academies. The oldest Dutch university is at Leyden.

Attention is also given to the education and training of the physically and mentally deficient. There are one

¹Dutch School System (Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences, 1960), pp. 9, 14, 23, 26, 43, 44.
hundred seventy-seven special schools and many educational centers for the deaf and dumb.

The quality of education has steadily advanced and people have long learned to appreciate the value of good tuition. The thirst for knowledge is not so much a natural trait as a necessity. Because of her geographical position, Holland's contact with other countries is direct and manifold and a knowledge of foreign languages is essential to her economy.

III. MARION COUNTY HISTORY

There were two periods of early settlement in Marion County. Possession of the part lying east of Red Rock was given by a treaty with the Sac and Fox Indians in 1843, throwing this section open to white settlement. The rest of the county was obtained and opened for settlement in 1845.

During the year 1843, settlements were begun at seventy points in the county. They were then known as settlements such as the English Settlement, the Tong Settlement, etc., until the county was divided into townships.

The early settlers were from the Eastern States and from several countries in the Old World. Some of those who

1Facts About Holland (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij), pp. 44-45.
settled were those on their way west looking for a home for themselves and their families. There were many industrious natives of Germany, the British Isles, and France. A group of Hollanders came some years later.

George Henry was probably among the first settlers of the county. Others were John R. Welch, Landon J. Burch, Levi Nossaman, Wm. M. Stone.

The early settlers experienced none of the hardships inflicted by Indians on many of the settlers in other parts of the country. The Indians gave them no serious difficulty. They were an industrious group of people who weren't afraid to help each other and were very happy with what they had.

The county was surveyed to be divided into fifteen townships from 1845-1847. The land was then subject to transfer and offered for sale.

The county was organized in 1846. It was not organized until it was named after Francis Marion, a favorite character among the early settlers. The progress and development of the county was largely due to the same energy and self-denial that Marion practiced. Knoxville was chosen as the county seat and the first election was held. A building was erected known as the court-house but the present court-house was built in 1858. The doors of the old court-house were always open. School was held there, preachers came to talk of religion, and many a weary traveler found a
resting place there.

The first railroad projected through Marion County was the Philadelphia, Fort Wayne and Platte River Air Line Railroad. The railroads were quite an aid to the people of the county, moving their crops and hastening the development of the county.

The organization of the first church was almost contemporaneous with the first settlement of the county. The early settlers had a simple and earnest faith. The Methodists were the first to form church organizations, then the Baptists, and then the Presbyterians.

The first schools in the county were held in houses to suit the times. Marion County educational affairs were said to be in very good condition.¹

IV. MARION COUNTY TODAY

Marion County is located in the southeast part of the state. The counties bordering Marion are Jasper on the north, Polk and Warren on the west, Monroe and Lucas on the south, and Mahaska to the east. It is composed of fifteen townships and contains 576 square miles. The population of

The county according to the 1960 census was 25,886.¹

The total number of school-age students in the county under the jurisdiction of the office of the county superintendent is 6,866. The five main school districts of the county are the Knoxville Public Schools, Pella Community Schools, Pleasantville Community Schools, Melcher-Dallas Community Schools and the Twin-Cedars Community Schools of Bussey.

The towns in Marion County are Pella, Knoxville, Otley, Pleasantville, Percy, Durneath, Swan, Harvey, Tracy, Pershing, Dallas, Melcher, Attica, Columbia, Marysville, and Hamilton.

A 1540 bed Veterans Administration Hospital is located in Knoxville. This neuropsychiatric institution is the fourth largest west of the Mississippi.

Marion County is predominantly a farming county, although Pella and Knoxville possess several fine industries. It also produces more coal than any other county in the state of Iowa.

Nine thousand acres of water fifteen miles long will soon be formed between Pella and Knoxville. The Red Rock Dam is a federal flood control project. It is expected to

change the economy of Marion County in future years. It will provide unlimited recreational facilities and water supply, invite new business, and very likely a new way of life for the Pella area.  

V. PELLA COMMUNITY HISTORY

Other white settlements. In 1843, white settlers began to settle in what is known now as Pella. The first settlers were Thomas Tuttle and his wife. They built the first log cabin in what is now Garden Square, a little west of the center.  

The Buffington families, William, James, Samuel, and Abram were the next to settle in the fall of 1843. They settled three miles north of Tuttle's forming what was soon called "The Buffington Settlement." For a year these families were the Tuttle's nearest neighbors.  

The next family that settled in the Pella neighborhood was the Jacob C. Brown family. They came from North Carolina.  

Two of the most valuable men in the early history

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1Pella Chamber of Commerce, *Pella, Iowa Profile*.  
were Wm. Welch and his son-in-law, Wellington Nossaman. Welch came from North Carolina and settled in the timber about four miles south of Pella. Nossaman was from North Carolina and took up a claim in the Des Moines River, three miles south of Pella. He built the first horse mill for grinding corn in the county and in partnership with Welch started the first pottery kiln in 1845. Nossaman along with Joseph Porter built the first steam sawmill in Pella, which was also the first machinery in the county run by steam.

The pioneers of American birth who were more closely connected with the Holland colonists and whose service in the early days was invaluable to them were the Nossamans, the Hamiltons, the Welches, I. C. Curtis, Green T. Clark, and others.

Van Stigt's history speaks of these families in terms of the highest esteem, giving them credit for receiving the Hollanders with open armed hospitality, and of vying with each other in rendering help and advice that made the first years of sojourn in a strange land much easier for our fathers.¹

Van Stigt gave especially high tribute to the character and worth of this community to Dr. James L. Warren, who settled in Mahaska county, six miles northeast of Pella. As a physician he enjoyed a large practice among the early

settlers and had great zeal in religious work. Dr. Warren was one of the first ministers of the Methodist church to preach in Marion County.

Green T. Clark was a man of great energy, ability and foresight, and was called upon to fill many important positions. He was the first county assessor, a justice of the peace, and a member of the county board of supervisors. He was also a successful farmer and a large livestock raiser.

The list is quite long of the American pioneers who settled here in 1843-1844 and who were here when the Hollanders came. A number of these sold their land to the Hollanders in 1847 and moved to other parts of the country. Many of these were prominently identified with the growth and development of the community.¹

Hollanders' arrival. A group of Dutch immigrants settled in Pella in the summer of 1847. There were several reasons why they felt they had to leave their country and look for a new home to raise their families. "Religious toleration had become intolerance. A state supported clergy had gradually clothed religion with temporal power."² This group of people were separatists opposed to the established

¹Stout, op. cit., p. 20.
²Ibid., p. 5.
church, because they felt it had become an institution of form, instead of being an expression of faith. The Separatists had to suffer all the penalties imposed by law. H. P. Scholte, one of their leaders, underwent military watches, imprisonments and payment of many fines and also taunts and ridicule. The Separatists wanted to find a place where they could worship as they pleased. They wanted Christian education for their children. They desired the privilege of educating their children in their own schools as the state offered only a general education in morals. But the government looked upon special schools with disfavor and prohibited the founding of them.

Another reason for looking for a new land was the economic conditions throughout Holland. The laborers in Holland at this time lived upon the verge of starvation. They were being crushed by a system of taxation devised to liquidate the enormous national debt which had been a result of years of wars.¹

The Hollanders under the leadership of Dominie Scholte nearly all came from the well-to-do agricultural classes who owned and tilled their own land. The leaders considered several places before choosing Pella as their

¹Jacob Van Der Zee, The Hollanders of Iowa (Iowa City, Iowa: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1912), pp. 32-35.
destination. Borneo was considered, but the government was not favorable. Texas held out such liberal inducements that the cautious Hollanders were afraid. Missouri was rejected because of the existence of slavery within its borders.

In April, 1847, the group of Hollanders set sail for America, landing in Baltimore almost a month later. Despite terrible storms and discomforts, peace and satisfaction reigned in the community life on board the ships. Several lost members of their families on the way.

The journey inward was a tiresome one. Traveling by the early American railway, then to be packed into dirty canal boats down the Ohio River made quite a hard trip. While the Separatists rested in St. Louis, they sent out spies to find a location for the colony. Three of these men were Isaac Overkamp and Teunis Keppel and Domini Scholte.

The colonists received a very warm welcome in America. The Americans were very willing to help, kind and obliging.

The spies reached Fairfield, Iowa. There the death of the daughter of the register of the land office played an important part in the location of the colony. Scholte met a Baptist missionary at the funeral of this child. Post led them to what he called the finest tract of land in the state. The commissioners bought the claims and returned to St. Louis where the news of their purchase was received with much rejoicing.
The journey was resumed by steamboat from St. Louis to Keokuk. For the journey inward some hired and others bought wagons and horses or oxen. As they traveled inward, the houses grew farther and farther apart and finally almost disappeared. It was a curious procession that made its way up the Des Moines river valley. All along the way many people came to stare at the strangely-carved chests that were supposed to contain fabulous riches. There were more than seven hundred colonists in strange garb and speaking a strange language. Many, both men and women, walked in their wooden shoes. The men wore velvet jackets and the women wore outlandish caps and bonnets.

After several days they came to the site selected by the committee. They arrived on August 26, 1847. Great must have been their disappointment to find that only a pile of boards, two poor log houses and a hickory pole with a shingle nailed to the top with the word "Pella" on it marked the spot where they were now to settle.¹

It was indeed a unique experience for these Hollanders to come from a foreign land, where they had spent their lives closely confined in cities and towns and on small well-kept farms, to the solitude and isolation of life upon the American frontier.²

An account written by a Professor Newhall, a

²Van Der Zee, op. cit., p. 68.
traveling writer of that time, tells of a discovery of a new race of beings. The men in blanket coats and jeans had been replaced by a broad-shouldered race in velvet jackets and wooden shoes. He wrote that they were all Protestants who left their old country because of political and religious intolerance and persecution. They appeared to be intelligent and respectable, quite above the average class of European immigrants that had thus far landed on American shores.1

Growth of the community. When the Hollanders arrived in Pella, the first thing they had to do was provide immediate shelter. Then they proceeded to erect more permanent, substantial dwellings to protect them against the approaching Iowa winter. Simple sheds were constructed for many families from the inadequate quantity of lumber which they found. Other families were housed in the log cabins and other buildings as quickly as possible. But a majority of the immigrants lived much after the manner of primitive people. But the Hollanders were not satisfied with these crude dwellings so much like Indian tepees. Dug-outs or sod-houses with roofs of straw were soon constructed, and the settlement was soon called "Strawtown."2

1 Van Der Zee, op. cit., p. 68.
2 Ibid., p. 73.
Shortly after the Hollanders arrived, a surveyor was engaged to lay out eight blocks of a new town. The streets were named Columbus, Washington, Franklin, Liberty, Union, Independence and Peace. The avenues were named Entrance, Inquiry, Perseverance, Reformation, Gratitude, Experience, Patience, Confidence, Expectation, and Fulfiling.\(^1\) The streets still bear these same names. The town was laid out in order that all persons who wished might build houses at once. The Hollanders took full advantage of the forests of fine hard-wood trees. But the supply of lumber to be obtained from American-owned sawmills on the Des Moines River was so limited and the demand so great that Scholte began to manufacture lumber for the Dutch colony.\(^2\)

Farming was the first thing to come into notice among the Hollanders. The farmers tilled the soil with a great willingness.

A post office was opened with the luxury of mails three times a week. Scholte was the postmaster.\(^3\)

The first business was a store of general merchandise operated by Wouters and Smink.\(^4\)

\(^{1}\)Stout, op. cit., p. 12.
\(^{2}\)Van Der Zee, op. cit., p. 76.
\(^{3}\)Stout, op. cit., p. 12.
\(^{4}\)The History of Marion County, Iowa (Des Moines: Union Historical Company, Birdsall, Williams & Co., 1881), p. 438.
No material considerations were allowed to take precedence of religion and education. At first they worshipped in "God's temples" and then in Overkamp's log house until the first church was built. The first schoolmasters were Isaac Overkamp and James Muntingh. Education was at first under the control of the church and in the Holland language, but both features were soon abandoned. Education was soon in the English language. The first teacher in the English language was Benjamin Sturman.  

The religious and educational liberality of these people was shown when the Baptists of the state gave them Central University in 1853. The University had been brought to Pella largely through the interest of Dominie Scholte, who gave generously, as did other Hollanders to secure this institution now known as Pella national institution for the new town. It didn't receive much financial support from the denomination which founded it and it struggled for survival until the Dutch Reformed people took it over. Then it began to grow and prosper. Central University attracted many Americans to Pella. In fact, by the year 1860, the population of the city was about evenly divided between Dutch and Americans.  

Pella was fortunate to have Scholte as its first editor. In 1855, he founded the Pella Gazette. At this

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1 Stott, Ibid., p. 12.
2 Van Der Zee, op. cit., p. 107.
time the Gazette was the most western paper printed in Iowa. The paper was independent in politics, but leaned toward the Republican party. In 1860 Henry Hospers founded the Weekblad, a paper printed in the Holland language. C. S. Wilson founded the Pella Blade in 1865.¹

One expectation that came to naught was the navigation of the Des Moines River. The Dutch were accustomed to traffic by water so the prospects of river commerce strongly appealed to them. A company was formed but it did not prove successful.

Domonie Scholte provided the first banking accomodations for the community. In 1857 a regular banking institution was organized known as the "Central Exchange and Land Office." The name was soon changed to the "Pella Savings Institution" and is now known as "Pella National Bank."²

Undoubtedly, no event of more far reaching effect on the life and commerce of Pella and vicinity has occurred than the completion of the Des Moines Valley Railroad. For six years the terminus of this road had been at Eddyville, but in 1866 it was completed to Des Moines.

By 1881, the business district of Pella consisted of

¹Stout, op. cit., p. 13.
²Ibid., p. 99.
two exclusive dry goods stores, eleven stores carrying
general merchandise, six exclusive grocery stores, two
hardware stores, two dealers in stoves and tinware, three
harness shops, two furniture stores, three dealers in boots
and shoes and four drug and book stores. There were three
grain dealers, two banks, two lumber yards, two grist mills,
two woolen mills, one livery stable, two elevators, five
hotels, six saloons and three weekly papers. At that time
Pella boasted on one university, three public schools and
twelve churches. ¹

Up-to-date public improvements were made in 1910.
Modern municipal water, light and sewer plants were installed.

Sebritje, an early pioneer, was very interested in
establishing a public library in Pella. She made a visit
to Andrew Carnegie which resulted in a grant of money to be
spent for books. When she retired, she donated a city lot
and $6000 to erect the present Carnegie-Viersen Library.²

VI. DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT COMMUNITY-1966

Location and topography. The city of Pella, covering
1100 acres, is located in the northeastern part of


²Leonora R. Scholte, A Stranger in a Strange Land
(Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,
1942), pp. 64-65.
Marion County, Iowa. This county is located in the south-eastern part of the state. The counties bordering Marion are Jasper on the north, Polk and Warren on the west, Monroe and Lucas on the south, and Mahaska to the east.

Pella is located in a prosperous agricultural area, on the divide between the Des Moines and Skunk rivers. The topography is rolling and has a very productive black soil. Industries and bountiful resources of coal and water play an important role in Pella's economy. Bituminous coal, gravel, clay, and limestone are found here. Forest resources are mixed hard and soft woods.\(^1\)

Pella's stimulating climate is characterized by frequent weather changes. About seventy per cent of the annual precipitation, approximately thirty-two inches, falls during the crop season months, which is a favorable factor for the abundant production of corn, oats, wheat, clover, and alfalfa hay.\(^2\)

**Occupations.** Pella's citizens enjoy an ample life, sustained by a balanced agricultural and industrial economy. Processing of farm products and rural trade contributes substantially to business in Pella. Pella's growing indus-


\(^2\)Pella Chamber of Commerce, *Pella, Iowa Profile*. 
tries provide occupations for many of the inhabitants. Pella Rolscreen Company and Vermeer Manufacturing Company are the two largest industries. The Rolscreen Company employs six hundred ten employees and manufactures building products such as window casements, rolling screens and folding doors. Vermeers employ one hundred twenty five and manufacture farm implements. Clothing is manufactured by the Pella Manufacturing Company which makes overalls, and Pella Products Company which makes children's and infants' wear. The Pella Publishing Company does commercial printing and publishes a semi-weekly newspaper. Van Gorp Manufacturing Company fabricates a complete line of pulleys and custom metalwork. Fruit juice concentrates are processed at the Pella Canning Company. The Pella Construction Company employs thirty-three carpenters.\(^1\)

Pella's four meat markets and two bakeries are famous for their Pella bologna and Dutch pastries, both products shipped throughout the United States. Three greenhouses, two nurseries, a modern hotel and motel, two dairies, four grocery stores, and eight cafes contribute also to Pella's business. The community's clothing needs are provided by five clothing stores, one dry goods store and one shoe store. There is also a dry-cleaning establishment and two self-serve laundries. A jewelry shop, a book shop, a

\(^1\)Ibid.
gift shop, a music store and a photographer are also in business. Three shops are in the radio and television business. Five real estate agencies handle real estate transactions. Farm, automotive, and mechanical services are provided by four feed dealers, ten trucking and hauling companies, five hatcheries, one livestock sale barn, six automotive repairing businesses, four hardware stores, fourteen oil distributors, two tire shops, two welding shops, three well drillers, and four car dealers. Home builders and furnishers may utilize the fourteen building and excavating contractors, four lumber yards, six electrical, heating, and plumbing dealers, two upholstery shops, three furniture and floor covering shops, and six painting contractors. Pella has two financial institutions. They are the Pella National Bank and the Marion County State Bank.

Pella has a new thirty-one bed hospital completed in 1960 and offers the most modern equipment. The hospital also has an addition of a thirty bed nursing home and is at this writing, in the process of building an addition to this nursing home. The town has five dentists, four medical doctors, two osteopathic physicians, two chiropractors, and two optometrists.

Pella has always been a city of churches. Presently, there are thirteen churches with eight denominations represented and a total membership of 6,230.
Civic and fraternal organizations are very well represented in Pella. They include the American Association of University Women, the Chamber of Commerce and Junior Chamber of Commerce, Eastern Star, Hospital Auxiliary, Izaak Walton League, Kiwanis, Masonic Order, PEO, Rotary, Women's Federated Club, and various youth groups.

Pella offers a wide variety of recreational facilities and activities under the direction of a full time salaried recreational director. There are seven public parks with installed playground equipment and one eighty-acre park in natural state used for established nature studies. One of the parks has a newly remodeled swimming pool and also a newly erected shelter house. The Pella Golf and Country Club maintains an eighty-acre nine-hole golf course.

Pella's transportation facilities are the Greyhound bus lines, the Rock Island Railroad, and an airstrip adequate for private aircraft.¹

Population. According to the 1960 census, the population of Pella stands at 5200. Pella's population growth has averaged about seventeen per cent over the past twenty years. The population of the adjacent area within a sixteen

mile radius is approximately 50,000.¹

VII. ESTABLISHING OF SCHOOLS

Dutch colonists of New Amsterdam in 1621 were often credited with having founded a little school which became the model for an enormous public school system covering the United States and all its territory. Dutch immigrants to America came from a country which had long been proud of the high standards of both its lower schools and its universities.²

One of the reasons assigned for the emigrations of 1846 and 1847 was the desire of many Hollanders to educate their children in the principles of the Christian faith. Not only the Dutch government but also the mass of the Dutch people were hostile to the new Separatist congregations which chose to worship God according to the Bible rather than by government regulations. When the Separatists insisted upon their right to educate their children in Christian schools in the fear of the Lord, they found strong local opposition. When the enjoyment of real Christian liberty became futile, they had to look, because of years of persecution, away from the intolerance of Holland to a land of

¹Pella Chamber of Commerce, Pella, Iowa Profile.
²Jacob Van Der Zee, The Hollanders of Iowa (Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1912), p. 256.
civil and religious liberty. ¹

The early settlers wanted to provide a Christian education for their children. This was, in fact, one of the reasons they immigrated to America. But, when they started working on their farms in Marion County, they found their first need was to help bring nature under control. Every one who could provide manual labor was called to work. The Hollanders felt that for the time being it was not so much religion and religious education as the struggle for existence that demanded the best efforts of everyone, old and young. Scholte even complained that "the things of this world" and "the new, strange, and busy pressure of life in our present unsettled condition contribute much to shatter our ideals." And he also stated: "Nearly everyone appears to be so taken up with his own strange environment as to be lost in it," and "the American love of material things is more attractive than heaven." Thus the Dutch people spent all on their needs and had only their hands and bodies left. A Dutch farmer who had several sons felt very lucky. There was much work to do and little money. Thus the boys were called upon to provide their share of labor all at the expense of education.

The beginning of the public school system was in the

¹Van Der Zee, op. cit., p. 258.
²Ibid., p. 259.
James Muntingh log residence for three years. To help the settlers become more self-reliant, translation of lessons was required. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were stressed but geography, history, and music were taught also.\footnote{Kryn Van Stigt, Geschiedenis Van Pella, Iowa en Omgeving, Derde Deel (Pella: Weekblad Drukkerij, 1897), pp. 8-9.}
The first two schoolmasters were Isaac Overkamp and James Muntingh. Muntingh taught children during the day and other people by candlelight.\footnote{George A. Stout, Souvenir History of Pella, 1847-1933 (Pella: The Booster Press, 1922), p. 12.}

Henry P. Scholte was elected the township school inspector in 1848. There was no one better qualified for this position. He was a graduate of the famous Dutch University of Leyden. He worked hard at his duties. He divided the township into five school districts and organized the Pella district where Muntingh's private school had been in existence for a few months.

The colonists of Pella built in the spring of 1848 a school building that also served as a church. This building had an unplanned board exterior and a rough interior with cross-beams of forest timber. It had crude backless pews of boards and some school benches from a Dutch pattern.

More families moved to Pella and the city grew larger. The citizens had thus to decide what kind of a schoolhouse
should be built. As late as April, 1855, any kind of make-shift accommodations were used. A local editor exerted pressure for the Union school pattern of organization. This plan involved having a large schoolhouse with a principal in charge. Under his control was placed a group of efficient teachers. The pupils were put in classes according to their ability.

In 1856, being without a good school building and adequate instruction, the people of Pella were glad to know that a large two-story brick schoolhouse was being built. The common schools were dependent on taxes and tuition money and getting a share of the school fund, which was a set sum for each student taught.

In 1858, there was a new school law in the state of Iowa. The heavy tax placed on the people for payment of school teachers and tuition costs was abolished. Parents were told that since there were now free schools, there was no excuse in not sending the children to school because of poverty. To make certain that good teachers were secured, all applicants had to obtain certificates from the county superintendent, a new office.  

The Webster building was completed in 1876 at a cost of $22,000. It was the first school building with any modern equipment.

1 Van Der Zee, op. cit., pp. 259-265.
In 1904, because of increased school enrollment an additional building was built. This was the modern Lincoln building, built at a cost of $22,250. There was an addition to Lincoln in 1961. This involved six classrooms, lunchroom and kitchen, and a small multi-purpose room.

In the year 1915, at a cost of $52,514, the high school building was constructed. The high school building was three stories high, plus the gymnasium which is in the basement. Additions were made in 1935 and 1954 to the building thus increasing the capacity to 350.

The voters of the Pella Community School District met the challenge of the increasing enrollment when they approved a bond issue in 1959 for a new high school at a cost of $775,000. This provided an adequate physical education unit, unattached agriculture and industrial arts building. There were eleven special rooms, modern library, cafeteria, study hall and eight interchangeable classrooms. This building was used starting in 1962 with the old high school building used as the junior high building.\(^1\)

When the Pella Community School District was organized in 1958, it was confronted with the replacement of thirty-three rural schools. The Pella Community School

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\(^1\)Stout, op. cit., pp. 240-242.

District had an area of 186 square miles with an elementary enrollment of 1575 students for the year 1965-1966 in the public schools.\(^1\) This district was composed of former rural districts and small attendance centers at Leighton and Otley. The Otley school completed a two-room addition in 1956, making a total of five rooms, lunch, kitchen, and a small multipurpose room.

The Leighton attendance center was completed in March, 1962, with three rooms, a small kitchen, and an expandable community center.\(^2\)

A six-room addition to the Lincoln School will be completed in the fall of 1966.

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\(^1\) Information supplied by C. S. Thomas, County Superintendent of Marion County.

\(^2\) News item in the *Pella Chronicle*, May 10, 1962.
CHAPTER III

DUTCH HERITAGE INFLUENCE ON
EDUCATION OF INHABITANTS

I. CURRICULUM

To distinguish the amount of influence on the education of the inhabitants, it was, of course, essential to make a study of the curriculum from the early days of Pella to the present time.

Music. Music was included in the curriculum from the very beginning. As reported by Gesman in an article on the first schools in Pella, "While the fundamentals, reading, writing, and arithmetic, were emphasized, instruction was also given in geography, history, and music."

According to an interview with Elizabeth Kempkes, who could recall things her father had told her, psalm singing was everywhere in the early schools. Then in the days after the Park School Building was established, they sang "America" and gospel hymns. She recalled her first songs of 1880 as being: "Jesus Loves Me," "When He Cometh," and "God Sees the Little Sparrow Fall." There were also nature songs such as "A Little Boy Went Out to Shoot One

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"Day" and "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."¹

According to Henry Cox, Dutch songs were also sung in the early schools of Pella. The children learned the words but those who were not Dutch did not know what they meant. A majority of the children were Dutch. Outside of singing of the psalms in the churches, little music culture was brought to Pella by the Dutch pioneers. As for pure music culture, John Nollen who married Dominie Scholte's youngest daughter, Johanna, probably brought more of it in himself than any other Hollander among the pioneers. There were no musicians among the Yankees who preceded the Hollanders. The patron-saint of music during the first fifty years of Pella's life was J. M. Cox, the father of Henry Cox. He came to Pella in the 1850's. Henry Scholte, son of Dominie Scholte, played the flute, modestly but beautifully.

Henry Cox used to go to the church and listen to the singing of the Dutch psalms. There was a man called a "voorsinger" who sang the tone before the group sang.

Dominie Scholte's wife, Mareah, played the accompaniment for Henry on his violin. She was trained in a Paris convent although she was not a Catholic. She was a gifted cultured pianist.

¹Interview by letter with Elizabeth Kempkes, a former Pella school teacher, from Everett, Washington, November, 1965.
After the War Between the States, a band was organized in Pella. There was no pipe organ until the 1890's. All the organs in the early days were reed organs.¹

In 1907, Miss Carrie Cox was elected Supervisor of Music. At first it was difficult and progress was slow. But at the present time, owing to the diligent effort of Miss Cox in building the foundation of the work, every room is up to standard and the music in our schools is second to none. In fact, the pupils seemed to have a special gift along musical lines and when they are singing one can scarcely realize that three years ago most of them did not know one note from another. Pupils in the primary grades now sang their simple songs by note. In the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh grades most of the pupils will read music, intended for their grade, at sight, and sing it for the first time without mistake.

In the high school the work is largely confined to singing the better class of music and the pupils do it well.

The pupils all enjoy this feature of the work and the singing hour is one of the most pleasant of the day's work. At the end of each year a cantatta has been given by the pupils.²

Many of these who were interviewed told of singing hymns in the schools. These were sung in English with no connection to the Dutch. There were also reports of patriotic songs and ditties such as "Froggie Went a Courting."

In the early 1900's a man by the name of Groet had a choral club in the community. This group of young adults was an outstanding group as far as singing was concerned.

Ann Tysseling was hired as music instructor of the Pella schools in 1931. She taught all of the music in

¹Interview with Henry Cox, a Pella musician, November, 1965.
²News item in the Pella Chronicle, June 5, 1909.
the school system. In 1936, she produced an operetta called "Tulip Time." This program was a great success and was one of the origins for the idea of the "Pella Tulip Festival." This operetta was given at the first Tulip Festival also. In succeeding years several operettas with a Dutch theme were produced.

Near the beginning of Tulip Time a school program produced by Miss Tysseling was begun. All school children through the sixth grade participated in this program. They wore their Dutch costumes. Each program had a theme with appropriate scenery. Each year Dutch songs and Dutch dances were produced. Various other activities were included in the program at different years. Among these were Dutch readings of nursery rhymes, Dutch roller skating, and performances of Dutch games.

In high school Miss Tysseling taught her groups Dutch songs for use in parades and on floats. She said that it was much easier to teach the children Dutch in early years because some of them would speak more Dutch at home. In fact, some of them spoke solely Dutch in the home. Miss Tysseling reported that she still uses Dutch words to various songs, such as at Tulip Time. A fourth grade teacher teaches her children "Silent Night" every year at Christmastime in Dutch.

Miss Tysseling said that music was a very important
feature of Dutch culture and feels that Pella citizens have an above average interest in music. ¹

Foreign language. A report on the first school of Pella stated that:

What made the system of teaching exceptionally effective was that they taught both in the English and Dutch languages, so that while the students were mastering the language of their adopted country, they also improved their knowledge of their own language. As they were required to translate the lessons from one language into the other, it greatly added to their proficiency in both languages. ²

John Stubenrauch started school in Pella in 1851. He said that at that time while the Holland language was taught in the school, it became necessary through legislation for the school to teach English or be prohibited from receiving state aid. Several years later another school teaching only the English language was started in the center of the square.³

Elizabeth Kempkes told about living in the western part of Pella in a "Little Holland in America." They spoke no other language other than the Dutch; they learned Dutch nursery rhymes and Dutch games. The merchants scattered around the residential district were Dutch. When

¹ Interview with Miss Ann Tysseling, a Pella music instructor, December, 1965.
² Stout, op. cit., p. 64.
³ News item in the Pella Chronicle, May 30, 1929.
they entered school a new world opened to them. She said, "Happily our first teachers were masters of the English language, or odd indeed would have been our plight."¹

Frush, Pella Superintendent said in 1931 in the *Pella Chronicle* that twenty-five years previous one had to be well-versed in the Holland language to teach in the primary grades, but that it was no longer necessary as all understood the English language at that time.²

In later years the teaching of the Dutch language was excluded from the curriculum, as all persons interviewed reported that no Dutch was taught in the schools.

Latin was introduced in the high school a little after 1900. German was also taught in the high school until World War I.³ Today Latin is still being taught at the high school level. French was started in 1962.

Dutch was requested by the parents in fourth grade in 1959. It was started and continued for two years. It was also extended into the fifth grade the second year. Dutch records and Dutch-English dictionaries were purchased for use in these grades.

**English**. All of those interviewed reported having

¹ News item in the *Pella Chronicle*, June 11, 1931.
² News item in the *Pella Chronicle*, June 11, 1931.
³ Interview with Henrietta Ver Heul, November, 1965.
English as a subject. Many of those who attended the schools could speak no English until they went to school as only Dutch was spoken in the home. This was especially predominate in the rural homes. This created many problems. One of these Elizabeth Kempkes explained, saying that the oral recitations in school required translations. This made the lessons in composition an arduous task. She said:

We thought in Dutch, then our English recitations and composition lessons were translations. For instance, in history, we were asked to recite on a topic, for example, "The Siege of Yorktown." (Recite in your own words) Give central thought. That was where we lacked English sentence structure and vocabulary. It was really a study in language rather than in history. We were bilingual. Later in life in taking up languages, it was a great asset."

Of course, the English is still taught today following the requirements of the State of Iowa.

Religion. One of the main reasons for the immigration of the early settlers to America was the concern of the people to educate their children in the principles of the Christian faith. These people belonged to Separatist congregations who elected to worship God according to the Bible rather than government regulations. In Holland they were prevented from doing this by the government. Thus, they took their journey to America.

1Interview by letter with Elizabeth Kempkes, a former Pella schoolteacher, from Everett, Washington, November, 1965.
In November, 1848, the schoolmaster at Pella, Isaac Overcamp, taught his pupils what the parents desired in the way of Christian principles for the development of Christian character. Every morning the opening exercises consisted of prayer, the singing of a psalm, and instruction in Biblical history. Many years afterward, it was asserted that as a teacher of Biblical history for children and of doctrine for adults, Isaac Overkamp had never been surpassed in Pella, and that during Pella's first twenty years he did more real good than most ministers do in fifty or sixty years of service.1

Religious instruction was always considered a part of the curriculum in all grades. The pattern of religious instruction in the Public schools had changed from time to time. The amount of time devoted to teaching the Bible had changed. There was a time when Bible was taught every day in school by a minister. Later, lay people came in and did the teaching. For a while the students went to church for instruction and then secular subjects. In the rural schools, circuit riders, usually lay people or retired ministers, assisted with the Bible instruction. The pupils whose parents objected to the instruction were either allowed to go home or go out and play during the Bible class. Many of the lay people and, in some cases, ministers were not able to cope with the discipline attached to their teaching duties. Pressure from the parents did not always solve the problem. This made it necessary for a change away from the church building and back to the school house where the teachers could help with the discipline.2

In the elementary grades from one to six a permit slip had to be signed by the parent before the child could take Bible. On the permit slip the following information was required: name, date, church preference, and signature

1Van Der Zee, op. cit., pp. 260-261.

or parental consent. Those who returned the slips, and they constituted nearly all of the students, were then allowed to take Bible. Those who did not return the slips were not allowed to stay in the class during Bible class. They and the teacher of their respective grade went to another room for study or free reading time. Following the Bible class, the teacher and students not taking Bible returned for the regular class work. In recent years, Bible was dropped in the Junior High because of low registration and lack of time.

Workbooks were used to study the course. These were purchased from the local book store. Those who could not afford the books were provided them by the Ministerial Association. The emphasis of the course was non-denominational, based on Biblical content, church history, broad and general, and character building.

Bible was taught as an elective literature course for one or two years in the 1940's. For about twenty years previous to 1962, a short devotional period was held on Monday morning including such things as reading of the Scriptures, a short message, and prayer.

The community believed that the idea of local control of its schools is a right to be upheld. The teaching of the Bible in the Public schools was necessary as a part of the over-all educational program. No one had objected officially to Bible being taught in the Pella schools as it was taught. Each year the Board of Education of the Pella Community Schools
authorized Bible as a part of the course of study on a voluntary basis as requested by parents of children who were taught.

Other. All the early schools were modeled after the Dutch schools in the Netherlands which were church schools. Therefore reading, writing, and religion were the major subjects. This was during President Tyler's administration.

George Ver Steeg reported that the course of study of the early schools was reading, writing and arithmetic. These were rigidly adhered to and it was sinful to have anything of genuine human interest in a textbook. School was work, and the harder the better.

Lily Viersen was asked at this time about methods of teaching. She had taught in the Pella system for fifty years. She said that the schools had always used the word method in reading instead of first learning the alphabet, and that they often read as many as fifty supplementary readers during the school term. She said that in 1904:

Reading using the Aldine method was taught. This was teaching the children to read by using catchy words, rhymes, action words and easy sentences. By the end of the year the pupils read the Aldine primer, the first reader and many supplementary books. Other things included were numbers, addition, and subtraction

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1 Reith, op. cit., p. 34.

2 Interview by letter with Elizabeth Kempkes, a former Pella schoolteacher, from Everett, Washington, November 1965.

3 News item in the Pella Chronicle, April 28, 1938.
to ten inclusively, mentally from the board, working from the board daily and also much oral work; spelling using the sound and letter method using word sentences; writing using the board and penmanship books; language, correcting mistakes, original stories, stories for reproduction, easy rhymes and worth while short poems.  

Miss Vierson said that one time she and Miss Mae Bennick were in charge of two hundred pupils in the first and second grade. She said she could not understand how they handled such an "army of light infantry."

She said that at one time school officials wanted to put her in charge of the music department of the system, stating it was wicked for her to stay with those little tots, but she said she was so attached to them and their work and wanted to continue in that area.  

The Chronicle reported in 1921 that an effort was being made by teachers to secure a wider reading of the better class of books from the public library. It said that one of the greatest hindrances to good work in the Pella schools was that the children had not read and had not been encouraged to read the select English literature. The matter was left largely in the hands of parents.  

On this same topic, a Mrs. Tysseling said her folks

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1 News item in the Pella Chronicle, May 30, 1929.
2 Ibid.
3 News item in the Pella Chronicle, March 3, 1921.
brought many books with them from the Netherlands. These books were in great demand around Pella, as there were few newspapers then and good literature was very scarce. The neighbors borrowed them and seemed to receive great enjoyment from reading them.

Bessie Brooks, teacher in the Webster School in 1902, stated in the Pella Chronicle in 1929 that the change in the method of discipline was substituting milder means for the rod, and though it allowed greater freedom, the pendulum had swung too far in that direction. She said that the curriculum had become one hundred per cent more interesting by the adding of handwork, drawing, music, citizenship, and nature study to the standby three R's.1

Henrietta Ver Heul reported in 1930, that since she had started teaching fourteen years before, she had seen many changes in the teaching of art. She had especially noticed a change in the interest on the student's part in relation to dramatic art, contest work, and domestic science.2

Buerkens a former superintendent of the Pella Schools, reported that vocational agriculture was slow to start farming methods and conservation.

1News item in the Pella Chronicle, May 30, 1929.
2News item in the Pella Chronicle, October 30, 1930.
Buerkens also said that the Pella people were very slow to accept vaccinations. In athletics he felt that Pellans were slow to reach out for physical education. Golf and tennis were slow in coming to the community. Many parents would not allow their girls to shower. Some would not let their children wear short pants.

Facilities for introducing the new vocational homemaking program were added in the summer of 1938.1

Various curriculums through the years were as follows:

1897-1898

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<th>11th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>9th Grade</th>
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<td>Federal Govt.</td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
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<td>Physics</td>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>Iowa Govt.</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
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<td>Gen. History</td>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
<td>Word Analysis</td>
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<td>Physics</td>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>Bus. Forms</td>
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<td>Geometry</td>
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<td>Physiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Botany</td>
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1910-1911

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<th>10th Grade</th>
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<td>English</td>
<td>Botany</td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
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<td>Plane Geometry</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Bookkeeping</td>
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<td>Latin</td>
<td>Gen. History</td>
<td>English</td>
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1 Interview with G. C. Buerkens, a former superintendent of the Pella Community Schools, March, 1966.
### 1920-1921

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1. Information from records of Pella Community Schools.
II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Each year since 1935, the Pella Tulip Festival has been held. From a desire to commemorate the sacrifices of these founding fathers and to keep alive the ideals which they cherished, the citizens of Pella came to celebrate Tulip Time. An operetta given in April of 1935 was the direct inspiration for the annual festival. The first year's affair was held for one day in May. Pella was not yet a tulip town so the city people used potted tulips and had one hundred twenty five four foot tulips made to decorate the streets. ¹

The students have participated in or observed many different facets of life in the Netherlands. They performed until 1962 in a school program of Dutch songs, Dutch dances, etc. Each year the elementary children of all the schools in the city marched in the Volks Parade in their colorful Dutch costumes and wooden shoes. Girls from junior high through college age, performed in Dutch dances following each parade. Authentic Dutch articles and antiques were displayed in each store window during the festival. In the parade, held twice each day for three days, were many Dutch

¹George Ver Steeg and Henry Vande Keift, "Tulip Time in Pella," The Palimpsest, XLV (Iowa City: Iowa State Historical Society, April, 1964), 147.
articles such as the old vegetable cart, milk wagon, and the scissors grinder. Many familiar Dutch folk like the "whole Dutch family," the town crier, and the Burgomeester were seen in the parade. A Dutch provincial float with ladies in traditional Dutch costumes depicting each Dutch province was in each parade.

Each year the school displayed a miniature Dutch village. The set was originally built by a local individual and was sold to the school. The school made use of many of its different departments in running the display. The manual training department repaired and painted the display, scenery, and background. The physics department took care of the lighting and wiring. The speech department directed the tours with from ten to fifteen guides. Some of them learned to use a little of the Dutch language for this project. The commercial department took care of the finances and handling of tickets. For a year or two the home economics department had girls dressed in provincial costumes explaining certain Dutch customs. For a number of years, slides were shown of early historical sites of Pella. Many thousands of people viewed this exhibit and learned a great deal about the Netherlands.¹

¹An interview with C. C. Buerkens, former superintendent of Pella Community Schools, March, 1966.
A guided tour of the city is conducted each year by the Rotary Club. They highlight their tour by pointing out historical sites in the city.

Buerkens, former superintendent of the Pella Community Schools, encouraged teachers to do some reviewing in the Holland history of the community at Tulip Time.

There are many books available at the local library about the history of the community. A handsome mural is found in the local post office depicting the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by the Hollanders.

The Chamber of Commerce was trying to promote a plan for the merchants of Pella to build Dutch fronts on their business establishments at the time of writing. Several of the businesses had already done so and others were making plans to do so in the near future. The Chamber felt that this would do much to add to the old world atmosphere of Pella.

The restoration of the birthplace of Wyatt Earp was also being completed at the time of this writing.

III. IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

The parents of Pella children stressed education, especially reading, according to Elizabeth Kempkes. She said that, "many considered only reading, spelling, and writing, with the addition of simple arithmetic, were neces-
sary for the average person." These were completed by the sixth grade. Thus there were many dropouts at age twelve. There were many reasons for the dropouts. Some had to work at home on the farms or at other jobs. Some quit to learn a trade. Others had to work to help supply the larder. To drop out of school meant WORK.

Even after the Webster building offered a three year high school very few took advantage of it.¹

In a 1915 Chronicle the following article was written:

The high school shows some increase in enrollment, but as far as statistics are available to show attendance in other schools this year, Pella has the smallest high school enrollment of any town in the state in proportion to our population.

There are three causes for this condition. First—we must have more people here than they do in other communities who do not appreciate the value of a high school education for their boys and girls; and so permit their boys and girls to drop out of school. Over and over again the statement is made to teachers 'I do not have to attend school a single day unless I want to! Father says I may quit any time and start to work!' Second—Crowded condition in high school. Third—We are on the division between two rivers, larger towns, and equipment with easy access. The last condition will probably not be overcome. The trouble is a geographical one, as well as due to the custom of the people.

The expression is often made to those interested in education that it does not pay to send girls and boys to high school, unless they expect to become teachers, or to enter college, and in these words "it does not pay" is found the real reason for the small school attendance.

¹Interview by letter with Elizabeth Kempkes, a former Pella school teacher, from Everett, Washington, November, 1965.
Judging by these standards there are a lot of parents in Pella making a foolish, and in some instances, a fatal mistake with their boys and girls.¹

Jennie Harmsen reported in a 1930 Chronicle that after twenty-eight years of teaching in Pella she thought Pellers had "come to a new day compared to that of the early nineties." She said that in the early days, even following the passage of the compulsory school law, parents didn't consider the educating of their children seriously. This became a "kind of second nature" to the children and many would stay home from school for that reason and offer very poor excuses for doing so.²

Buerkens, superintendent of Pella schools from 1937 to 1964, reported that Marion County, in which Pella is located, had one of the lowest percentages of eighth grade graduates going on to high school in the state in the late thirties. He felt that Pella's rural area was a major cause for this. The Dutch felt that they needed the boys on the farm to work. Also, there was no bus transportation and it cost them to transport the children or to pay for room and board in town.³

Many persons interviewed felt that education was not

¹News item in the Pella Chronicle, May 11, 1915.
²News item in the Pella Chronicle, October 30, 1930.
³An interview with C. C. Buerkens, former superintendent of Pella Community Schools, March, 1966.
stressed by the Dutch in years past. It did depend a great deal on the family background. Very few went to high school. Those that did were usually from the higher class of people. Poorer people and rural people did not send their children to high school. Many quit school in the upper grades between sixth and eighth grade.

Today, there are seldom any dropouts between eighth grade and high school. This trend has developed in the last six or seven years. Previous to this, from about seven to fourteen years ago, there were two to four dropouts from eighth grade to high school each year.¹

Dropouts from high school have decreased greatly today. In 1918, only nineteen of forty-one students completed high school.² Dropouts in 1960 numbered twenty-three or 12.6 per cent of the student body. Dropouts in 1965 numbered six or 6 per cent of the student body.

Table I presents the number of graduates, the high school enrollment, and the total school enrollment of various years from 1876 to 1965. The class of 1876 was the first class to graduate from the Pella Public High School. The graduates of 1898 represented 2.7 per cent of the total

¹Interview with Jean Wilkins, Principal of Pella Community High School, April, 1966.

²A news item in the Pella Chronicle, May 30, 1918.
### TABLE I

Number of graduates from the Pella Public High School in various years from 1876-1965, high school enrollment, and total school enrollment.

<table>
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<td>14</td>
<td>20.9</td>
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<td>1905</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>83</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>156</td>
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<td>1965</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>475</td>
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*Percentage of the total school enrollment was not included for the years 1960-1965 because reorganization increased the enrollment total.

1 Information taken from Pella Public School records and the Pella Chronicle.
school enrollment while the class of 1940 represented 10.5 per cent of the total school enrollment.

The graduates of 1905 represented 7.2 per cent of the high school enrollment while the class of 1965 represented 25.5 per cent of the school enrollment.

Students going on to college or other training has also increased in the later years. In 1961, 26 per cent of the graduating seniors went on to further education. In 1963, 50 per cent of the class went on to college and in 1965, 37 per cent of the graduating class went on.

A very interesting finding was the per cent of graduating boys going into farming. In 1961, 3.7 per cent of the boys farmed and 2.2 per cent in 1963.¹

IV. RETENTION OF LANGUAGE

When any group moved to a new nation where a different language was spoken, there was certain to be some retention of the former language spoken by the people. Even one hundred nineteen years after the founding of Pella, there was strong evidence of the retention of the Dutch language. There are very few of the younger generation, though, that speak Dutch. As time goes on, the Holland

¹Statistics from the guidance department of the Pella Community High School.
language may gradually disappear completely from the Pella scene.

**Idioms and expressions.** After careful research, the writer found there were many words and expressions being used that were Dutch. These had been passed on from parents and accepted as part of the regular vocabulary. Some of these words are:

- doekje - head scarf
- broekje - pants or diaper
- snijbontje - cut beans
- tober - one who is not very capable
- vies - dirty, finicky, squeemish
- benouwd - close, stuffy, tight, stifling, timid
- misselyk - sick, nauseating
- dom kop - dumb person, stupid person
- fris - fresh
- dominie - preacher
- broetje - bread
- gehakt - sausage
- worst - bologna
- grote bek - big mouth
- hou je bek - shut your mouth
- allemaal - everything
- jonge - boy
- meisje - little girl
- kapot - fall apart
- kleine - little
- ruzie - quarrel
- muzie - upsetting circumstances
- asjeklieft - please
- uprieling - avenue
- Zanik - griper, bother, nag
- stroop - molasses
- spek - pork
- suf - dull, sleepy
- kmoer - a person who messes
- throep - a mess
- vetbollen - round pastry ball with raisins
- liev ding - sweet thing
- teut kous - one who talks too much
klets - gossip
koffie klets - a gathering of women for coffee

Many of the people said that the Dutch words and expressions can be expressed much better than the English. Elizabeth Kempkes reported that she "often falls back to a Dutch expression that seems more applicable than any English." For instance, she said:

"When I hear someone speak ill of some one, at once--De pot verwigt de ketel dat hij swart is--comes to my mind and spoken it could just as well be said in English--the pot calleth the kettle black--but Dutch comes to my mind first."

She reported that in Pella they still make use of many, many Dutch sayings. Some expressions commonly used were:

Die aanhoudt die went.--If you keep at it, you win.
Sje sucken die wint.--If you hunt for it, you can find it.
Vilenopijel--a fictitious folklore character
Beter een half ei, don een lege dop--better a half egg, than an empty shell
Hoe onder, hoe gekker--the older you get, the crazier you get
Hunderd pinnen, honderd zinner--hundred people or hundred choices
Al tijt wat.--It's always something.
Dot is so vat?--What is that?
Bent u gek?--Are you crazy?
Het smaakt lekker.--It tastes good.
Op gestaan, plek ver gaan.--If you stand up, you will lose your place.

1 Interviews with various Pella residents.

2 An interview by letter with Elizabeth Kempkes, a former Pella school teacher, November, 1965.

3 Interviews with various Pella residents.
In 1938, the Chronicle reported:

It's wonderful, the Dutch tongue. Have you ever noticed that when you have something to say that calls for a word that just describes your thoughts that you have to go back to the old tongue for the word. We must be like the Greeks! We have a word for it!

For instance, when we describe one who is dirty in person or habit, can we find a word like "smeerlop" or "smeerpas" in the English? Does any English word describe a heartless gossip as well as "tang." Then there are the descriptive words as "sprinkhantje" for a nervous chap, "clapbus" for a talkative person or an old automobile, "beest" for a vicious character, and many, many, more--some, it is true, are not so nice--they are not listed in a dictionary. And when we translate literally as "come here once" and "stick you for the crazy" to name but two do you wonder folks get a laugh out of our English? Only in pulpits and at the college and perhaps a few homes is our Dutch spoken as it should be--but boy, ain't it a grand language when your choosin' words?!

An old expression said, "take a Dutchman the way he means it, not the way he says it." This was certainly true as there are so many expressions which we translate literally. Some of these were:

took so long before he came by--regained consciousness having fallen through the basket--change your mind Will you please look him through the fingers?--Will you excuse his absence?
The business firm went out of each other.--The business firm had ended.
She all the time sits in her mouth.--She must be cutting teeth.
The older the cheese gets, the more come the yellow out. Come out from under--Come from beneath something Take care of your own socks.--Tend to your own business.
I went the whole town over for butter.
I have to first make Bertha to sleep.
Three thumbs wide
I'll hit you for the face.

1 A news item in the Pella Chronicle, June 2, 1938.
I'll throw you with a rock. 
you'd better think shame of your self. 
We'll make work of that. 
The door goes open. 
. . . by my Grandma 

In Dutch, the word "bringen" was used for the English words "bring and take." This, of course, creates a big problem for the students. It is very evident in the students of today as this is used incorrectly much of the time. The students are always "bringing things away." Another error often made was using redundant words such as "under through" and "yet too."

Another very common problem of today, inherited from Dutch ancestors, was the incorrect use of prepositions such as "I have to go two streets over." Another was using a preposition at the end of a sentence.

Another peculiarity of the Dutch is the method used to refer to relatives. They speak of "Aunt Liz of Uncle Pete" referring to Aunt Liz who was married to Uncle Pete or "Henrietta of John" referring perhaps to Henrietta who was the daughter of John.

There have been many fun-filled times in the past and will, undoubtedly, be in the future in working with the problems of translation of the Dutch.

A questionnaire regarding the amount of Dutch spoken

1Interviews with various Pella residents.
was given to all the sixth graders and their parents of the Pella Public Schools.

The first item was:

How much Dutch can you speak?

___ none ___ little ___ much ___ very much

Table II indicates the results of the questionnaire.

**TABLE II**

RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING HOW MUCH DUTCH COULD BE SPOKEN, SIXTH GRADERS AND THEIR PARENTS, PELLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1965-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response:</th>
<th>none</th>
<th>little</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>n=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Grader</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It shows that 62.6 of the sixth graders could not speak Dutch while only 28.6 per cent of the fathers and 39.5 per cent of the mothers could not speak any Dutch. Twenty five and nine tenths per cent of the fathers and 16.7 per cent of the mothers could speak much Dutch while only .9 per cent of the sixth graders could speak much Dutch.
The second item was:

How much Dutch do you speak at home or elsewhere with your family or other individuals?

_____ never _____ seldom _____ often _____ very often _____ always

Table III indicates the results of the questionnaire.

TABLE III

RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING HOW MUCH DUTCH WAS SPOKEN AT HOME OR ELSEWHERE, WITH THEIR FAMILY OR OTHER INDIVIDUALS, SIXTH GRADERS AND THEIR PARENTS, PELLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1965-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response:</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>seldom</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>n=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Grader</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III showed that 53.5 per cent of both fathers and mothers never spoke Dutch while 81.7 per cent of the sixth graders never spoke the language. It also indicated that 16.1 per cent of the fathers spoke Dutch often, 10.5 per cent of the mothers, and only .9 per cent of the sixth graders.
Most of this area was covered in the preceding section on religion. There were a few interesting highlights to be related.

All boys in the high school in 1915 had signed a pledge not to use tobacco for the remainder of the year. A request in the local paper asked people who were interested in the boys to "do all in their power to help the boys keep their promise."¹

Superintendent Frush stated in a 1909 Chronicle that only one boy used tobacco. He had never heard of any drinking among the boys. No improper language was used and there was seldom an oath heard on the playground.²

As a result of two revival meetings held in Pella during one winter, nearly every student in high school, so far as was known, was definitely affiliated with some church. This, it was stated, does much for the school and strengthens the work of both the boys and girls. Many Pellans were not very interested in school, even high school, but they did consider education important for a boy if he was considering the church academy.³

¹News item in the Pella Chronicle, November 11, 1915.
²News item in the Pella Chronicle, June 5, 1909.
³An interview with H. W. Pietenpol, former Dean of Central College, December, 1965.
Most parents wanted and expected the Bible to be read. The home influence on education was very strong. One could spot the home training in the way the child acted at school.¹

Many parents carefully observed the teaching of certain areas, particularly science, to make certain that evolution was not being taught. The very mention of the word made them shudder.²

One characteristic of the Pella people was that of bringing up their children with a knowledge of the Bible and its teachings. They were taught reverence of the Bible, the church and the Sabbath. One afternoon a week, the children were given catechetical instruction in the church, in school houses and other places where children could be assembled.³

In many homes the Dutch Bible was still being used as older people said they could get more inspiration and understand it better when it was read in their native tongue.

In the school, Wednesday night was set aside as

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¹An interview with Henrietta Ver Heul, former teacher in the Pella Community Schools, November, 1965.

²An interview with Jane Gosselink, April, 1966.

³A news item in the Pella Chronicle, April 28, 1938.
church night. Dancing was unheard of in the past in the school and still is not sponsored by the local high school.¹

The home of any community is reflected in schools. Hollanders are a home-loving people, who take pride in their families, their houses, their neatness and cleanliness. Most children respect their parents, and parents are willing to sacrifice for their children. In some cases, however, one sees rebellion against a too strict upbringing, and in a few cases parents think it is rather useless to go to school. They think children should be taught to work.²

In 1960, Pella's population was 5200. There were twelve Protestant churches and one Catholic, with a total resident membership of 6230. This was surely one of the nation's highest percentage of church membership for a community of its size. Many a visitor was greatly amazed to see the congestion of traffic in town on Sunday morning.³

A statement that is definitely backed up by the facts is that Pella is the greatest church going city in the state, according to population. No one can think of the citizenship of Pella apart from the inspiration and sustaining influence of the churches. The men and women of Pella were of high ideals, lofty purposes, and noble aspirations. The leaders in the civic affairs were also

¹An interview with C. C. Buerkens, former superintendent of Pella Community Schools, March, 1966.
²Interview with Jane Gosselink, a teacher of many years in the Pella Community Schools, April, 1966.
leaders in the churches. The people of Pella were quiet and peaceable, and not given to misconduct or violence. This has been true of this city from the very beginning.¹

VI. AMUSEMENT AND RECREATIONS

The Pella citizens participated in many activities and games through the years. Among these were dominoes, knitting, crocheting, checkers, and skating. There were party games such as "Skip to My Lou," "Post office," and "Virginia Reel." There were other games such as "Annie, Annie, Over," "Blind Man's Bluff," and "Run, Sheep, Run." They also played ball a great deal.

Jacks, made of pigs' knuckles, were brought over from Holland by one family. Another game brought over from the Netherlands was a dice game with moves and penalties. It was called a ganzen board. Still another game was trictroc, a dice game.

As a pasttime, some people told ghost stories and some told stories of life in Holland. A widely known hobby among the Pella people has been an interest in flowers. This could easily be detected by the beautiful flower beds throughout the city. Many Pella people were very interested in antiques. They never seemed to throw things away.

¹A news item from the Pella Chronicle, April 22, 1937.
Many of the residents told how dancing was taboo in Pella. Cards were "of the devil." These were taken from the children and burned.\(^1\)

In one rural area a literary society was formed. It was composed of Americans and Hollanders from the prairie area. The group would have debates and plays.\(^2\)

In pre-school years, games that were played were those that came from the Netherlands, many accompanied by Dutch singing. At school, until the third grade, they still played and sang Dutch verses. They also played baseball, marbles and jackstones. They also jumped rope without using the rhythms of later years. In the homes, checkers, dominoes, "ganzen board" (parchesi) and snap were played.\(^3\)

One lady of the rural area said there was not much recreation. Household and farm chores took their time.\(^4\)

One fellow commented:

Our parents were quite strong against most sports and games as not only a waste of time but leading to wrong habits. Family devotions were held before and after every meal with a reading of the Bible.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) Interviews with various Pella residents.

\(^2\) Interview with Kate Thomas, the daughter of an early pioneer of Pella, November, 1965.

\(^3\) An interview by letter with Elizabeth Kempkes, a former Pella school teacher, November, 1965.

\(^4\) An interview with Mrs. M. M. De Reus, a lifelong citizen of the Pella community, November, 1965.

\(^5\) An article from the Pella Chronicle, June 11, 1931.
The Dutch have never approved of certain kinds of amusements. No dancing was done in the homes and schools. The high school, at the time of writing, still did not sponsor dances. There were dances in the school but these were sponsored by the City Recreation Commission. Many families were also opposed to movies, card playing, etc.¹

Pellans were slow to "reach out for physical education." Golf and tennis were slow in coming to the community. They were not very interested in contact games.²

At the time of writing, Pella had a very full and diversified recreation schedule both in the school and city. They played football, baseball, basketball, golf, and track at the high school. There were intramural sports for both boys and girls. There was a Girls' Recreation Association for the girls.

Pella is one of only two towns of comparable size in Iowa that has a full time recreation director. He is a college graduate with a Master's Degree. The recreation program is tax-supported and is for all ages. The recreational facilities of the city include seven beautiful parks and playgrounds, one of the largest swimming pools in

¹An interview with Jane Gosselink, a teacher of many years in the Pella Community Schools, April, 1966.

²An interview with C. C. Buerkens, former superintendent of Pella Community Schools, March, 1966.
Iowa, lighted ball fields and ice skating rinks, an eighty acre golf course and club house, and under development is a three hundred acre national park and recreation grounds.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS INfluences

Residents from Pella have been noted for being very careful with their money and material possessions. This has certainly been true of many Pella people. Yet when there is a worthwhile project in the community, such as building a new hospital, church buildings, or support of Central College, they are very good about supporting it. They were also known for being good credit risks. Very few losses occurred in Pella. Pellans were noted for paying bills on time. Bank deposits were very high. Students of Pella obtained jobs, if possible, during school and summer vacations. Many of them had savings accounts.

Many of the vocations of Pella are very characteristic of the Dutch. Included in these are the bakeries, butcher shops, cabinet makers, and shoe cobblers.

Pella was noted for many years as being one of the cleanest towns in Iowa. This certainly came from the Netherlands as the Dutch were traditionally known the world

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1 An interview with Jane Gosselink, a teacher of many years in the Pella Community Schools, April, 1966.
over for their cleanliness. 1

One lady reported:

Speaking about patriotism, I often wonder if we as Dutch-speaking children, reading the language and associating with everything pertaining to a Dutch atmosphere, were often not more patriotic than our American neighbors. In reality, we also were Americans, yet reared in a combination of Dutch and American customs, it seemed as if we were richer in folk lore and more versatile in the understanding of foreign-born people.

I speak, read, write, and understand the Dutch language in the purest and most perfect sense and the older I grow, the more I appreciate its value. My father, though born in Pella, even had the benefit of Dutch schoolmasters, as well as English teachers, so that he, too, was traditionally blessed.2

An unusual characteristic of many Pella students was that parents often wanted them excused from school for funerals, even though the students were not necessarily closely related to the deceased.

Three-fourths of the names of the pupils in the school were of Dutch origin. Some of these have an interesting history. When the Netherlands were under Napoleon's control, many Hollanders did not have surnames. However, during Napoleon's time they took names. For example, some took "Van de Voort" or "from the ford" because they lived near a ford in a small stream. A stubborn Dutchman may

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1 An interview with C. C. Buerkens, former superintendent of the Pella Schools, March, 1966.

2 An article written by Mrs. James M. Tracy, taken from the Pella Chronicle, June 11, 1931.
have had a strange sense of humor and to defy Napoleon's rule some took humorous names. For example, the name "Naaktgeboren"—literally, this meant "born naked." Another one is "Niemantsverdriet" which meant "no man's sorrow."

It may have been funny at the time but their descendents were saddled with cumbersome names.

To this day the "Dutch filing system" is used in the high school, and until a few years ago this was also true of the listings in the telephone book. This "Dutch filing" meant that the "Van" and "De" which prefixes so many of the Dutch names has been dropped, because a large proportion of the names would otherwise be listed under the "V." Therefore Van Gorp is listed under "G" instead of "V."  

An important influence on the education of Pella Public Schools has been the presence of the parochial schools in Pella from the early years. These schools were supported by the people of the Christian Reformed Churches. These schools, of course, have caused enrollment to be lower in the public schools and have also lowered the tax rate.

The establishing of Central College in the early years by the early Hollanders has been an important influ-

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1Interview with Jane Gosselink, a teacher of many years in the Pella Community Schools, April, 1966.
ence on the education of the public schools in Pella. The college library and faculty have been a wonderful resource for parents, students and teachers of the school. Various college athletic and cultural events have done much in upgrading the education of Pella youth.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine the kind and extent of influence of the Dutch heritage of the inhabitants of the area upon the public schools of Pella, so that Pella Community teachers and administrators could have a better understanding of the students and the community.

A background study of the area and its inhabitants was made to better understand the developments of the present day community and its citizens. Present day information was included to present the community as it existed at the time of this writing. Influences on various phases of the curriculum, retention of language, importance of language, home and church and other influences were thoroughly studied and reported upon.

The statistics and information came from many different sources. Material came from books, newspapers, archives, historical accounts, pamphlets, school records, and interviews. Living in the community for eight years, and coming from a similar background provided much information.

Pertinent facts were sifted and organized from the
information gathered. These facts were reviewed and compiled. The information was written in the form of descriptive paragraphs. Statistical information was organized in the form of charts and explained in the text of the thesis.

II. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of research concerning the influence of the Dutch heritage of the inhabitants of the area upon the public schools of Pella, the following conclusions were made:

1. The citizens of Pella have always provided excellent educational opportunities for their children.

2. Music has always been a necessary and important part of the curriculum.

3. English has always been a necessary and important part of the curriculum. Dutch was dropped from the curriculum as soon as possible after settlement.

4. One of the main reasons for the immigration of the early settlers to America was the concern of the people to educate their children in the principles of the Christian faith. Therefore, religion has always been considered a part of the curriculum and has been stressed in community living.

5. The curriculum has developed from a fairly narrow
range of subject matter offerings in the early beginning to a very wide and comprehensive listing at the time of writing.

6. Students in the Pella schools have had a marvelous opportunity to learn about the historical background of their ancestors.

7. Pella students today are completing more years of education than students of the past.

8. Students are learning many expressions, idioms, and single words of the Dutch language but can not understand or speak it fluently.

9. Dutch usage of certain words produces incorrect English.

10. The speaking of the Dutch language in Pella will soon be a thing of the past.

11. The influence from the church and home were very strong.

12. Dancing was not approved by the general citizenry of Pella.

13. Many vocations in Pella came from the Netherlands.

14. The presence of the parochial schools have caused a lower enrollment in the public schools.

15. The presence of Central College was a valuable asset to the public schools.
III. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis of the results of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Provide Dutch as a language at a certain grade level.
2. In music, continue to include as much Dutch material as possible.
3. Continue to provide a comprehensive course of study for the students.
4. Make as much use as possible during Tulip Time or any time during the year the opportunity to participate, review, and learn more about the community heritage.
5. Continue to stress the importance of education.
6. Make pupils aware that they are using Dutch expressions and mannerisms so they will know when they should or shouldn't use them.
7. Be aware of various English-Dutch problems such as use of bring and take and correct use of prepositions.
8. Be aware that the people of Pella, almost unanimously support Bible reading and some religious instruction in the schools, or at least in weekday church school of some sort.
9. Be aware that dancing and card playing are looked upon with disapproval by many parents.
10. Provide vocational training in many areas including the typical Dutch vocations as bakers, butchers, etc. for those interested along with the regular curriculum.

11. Stress the availability of Central College as a material and cultural resource.
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Dear Parents,

As part of the requirement for the master's degree at Drake University, I am engaged in a study of the influence of the Netherlands on education in the Pella Community Schools.

A brief part of the study will include a survey of all sixth grade students and sixth grade parents of the Pella Community Schools dealing with the amount of Dutch spoken in the home and elsewhere.

Your response to the questionnaire is vitally important to the study. Please send the completed form to school with your child. Your signature is not necessary for the study.

Thank you for your cooperation in this project.

Sincerely yours,

Merlyn Vander Leest
Sixth Grade Teacher
Lincoln School

How much Dutch do you speak at home or elsewhere with your family or any other individuals?

Mother-check one
___ Never
___ Seldom
___ Often
___ Very Often
___ Always

Father-check one
___ Never
___ Seldom
___ Often
___ Very Often
___ Always

6th Grader-check one
___ Never
___ Seldom
___ Often
___ Very Often
___ Always

How much Dutch can you speak?

Mother-check one
___ None
___ Little
___ Much
___ Very Much

Father-check one
___ None
___ Little
___ Much
___ Very Much

6th Grader-check one
___ None
___ Little
___ Much
___ Very Much