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Douglas Firth Anderson

Northwestern College - Orange City, firth@nwciowa.edu

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“We Are Now Americans”: Henry Hospers, Sioux County, Iowa, and Dutch Settler Acculturation

Abstract

Henry Hospers (1830-1901) was the leader of the Dutch *kolonie* (colony) of Sioux County, Iowa. When Hospers named and platted Orange City in 1870, Hendrik P. Scholte of the Pella, Iowa colony was dead and Albertus C. Van Raalte of the Holland, Michigan colony was nearing the end of his life. Compared to the more famous Scholte and Van Raalte (who settled their respective Midwestern colonies in 1847), Hospers has received little critical attention as a significant Dutch American immigrant leader. Hospers' relative historical obscurity is understandable. Scholte and Van Raalte were clergy, while Hospers was a layman. Moreover, he was a second-generation leader. Further, the surviving records related to Hospers are spottier than those related to Scholte and Van Raalte. Even so, there is plentiful evidence of Hospers' significance. This study of Hospers as a colony leader documents that he was a tireless promoter of the colony in particular and Sioux County more generally, particularly as a land broker, banker, and owner of the weekly *De Volksvriend* (The People's Friend). He was also an office holder representing all settlers, especially as Chair of the Sioux County Board of Supervisors and as a member of the Iowa House and then the Senate. Finally, he was a founder of “church and school” (*kerk en school*) for the colony in his work to organize Northwestern Classical Academy (later Northwestern College) and First Reformed Church of Orange City. His experience helps fill out the tapestry of Dutch Protestant settler acculturation: retaining Dutch identity and becoming American amidst the fluidity of modernity.

About the Author

Dr. Doug Anderson specializes in the history of the American West and American religious history. He earned a doctorate in the latter subject and spent a year studying at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming.

He is co-author of *Pilgrim Progression: The Protestant Experience in California*, and his articles and book reviews have been published in *Western Historical Quarterly*, *Religion and American Culture*, and *Fides et Historia*, as well as in encyclopedias of the Great Plains and American West.

He has also teamed with other religion scholars on a comprehensive and comparative study of the impact regions have on religion's role in American public life, which resulted in eight geographically based books.

In 2014, Dr. Anderson co-authored a history of Orange City, Iowa, the town where Northwestern College is located. Part of the “Images of America” series by Arcadia Publishing, *Orange City* traces the development of the town from its founding in 1869 through the present.

“We Are Now Americans”:

Henry Hospers, Sioux County, Iowa, and Dutch Settler Acculturation

by Douglas Firth Anderson, Ph.D.

Henry Hospers (1830-1901) was neither charismatic nor one who sought the limelight. As the leader of the Dutch *kolonie* (colony) of Sioux County, Iowa, his personal reserve could have been a liability. This reserve, however, was only part of what distinguished him from the two earlier leaders of Dutch Protestant settler colonies in the Midwest: Hendrik P. Scholte of Pella, Iowa and Albertus C. Van Raalte of Holland, Michigan. Scholte and Van Raalte were clergy, while Hospers was a layman. Moreover, he was of another generation. He turned seventeen the year he arrived from the Netherlands with Scholte and the colonists of Pella in 1847—which was also the year of Holland’s founding. When Hospers named and platted Orange City in 1870 as the center of the new Iowa *kolonie*, Scholte (1803-1868) was dead and Van Raalte (1811-1876) was nearing the end of his life.¹

I thank readers in advance for their indulgence. I am under a great handicap writing about Dutch immigrants: I cannot read Dutch. Besides relying on various scholars (see my footnotes), I use Google Translate, supplemented by hardcopy dictionaries. Moreover, I hereby especially thank Earl William and Cornelia B. (Bill and Nella) Kennedy, former colleagues and continuing friends from afar; they know more about things Dutch and Sioux County than I ever will.

¹ On the mid-nineteenth through mid-twentieth-century Dutch immigration to the United States, see Hans Krabbendam, *Freedom on the Horizon: Dutch Immigration to America, 1840-1940* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009). On Orange City, see Doug Anderson, Tim Schlak, Greta Grond, and Sarah Kaltenbach, *Orange City* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2014).

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Hospers’ reserve, though, didn’t mean he was taciturn. In early 1872, when he and others from Orange City and elsewhere in Sioux County were described in the *Sioux County Herald* as “that drunken Holland mob,” Hospers responded at length in the *Sioux City Journal*.

Injured dignity was at the heart of his reply:

We are of Holland descent; we cannot deny that fact; but we consider ourselves Americans; we are proud to descend from that noble Dutch race (read Motley’s works); but we are far prouder that we are now Americans, that we can raise our children in the free air of this beloved Republic

I am happy . . . to say that I live among that true, Christian people; that I daily receive the good will of them; that I am respected and beloved, and that each of them would spend their last drop of blood in my defense. And although nobody else but myself feels and knows better that I am a very imperfect man, with more short comings than perhaps anybody else [*sic* for entire



Portrait of Henry Hospers, 1872.
Image from Northwestern College Archives.

sentence]. I know, and God is my witness, that I have done and do all I can, to benefit my dear countrymen.²

Hospers’ defense of himself and his fellow colonists came amidst what amounted to a fight over the county administration as well as the county seat. The losers tried to characterize it as an anarchistic revolt by foreigners.³

Sioux County—created by the Iowa legislature in 1851, surveyed from 1853-1857, and governmentally organized by settlers in 1860—had few residents until the arrival of the Dutch colonists and others in 1870. Until then, Calliope was the county seat as well as the county’s only settlement (the hamlet, on the county’s western border, was later absorbed into Hawarden).⁴

The county lands and finances were controlled by a small group based in Calliope who in turn controlled the county offices. As the *kolonie* leader, Hospers was approached by two county officials while he was in Sioux City on business for the settlers in the winter of 1869. Offered the opportunity in secret to bid on and buy lands set aside to fund schools in the eastern part of the county, which would be put on sale in early 1870, Hospers smelled fraud in the making—“it would have been very probable that the proceeds of the sale would have gone . . . into private

² Letter of Henry Hospers to *Sioux City Journal*, February 3, 1872.

³ On fighting over county seats, see Thomas J. Wood, “Political Centers,” in *The American Midwest: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*, eds. Richard Sisson, Christian Zacher, and Andrew Cayton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 1106-1107.

⁴ Leland L. Sage, *A History of Iowa* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1974), 96; G. Nelson Nieuwenhuis, *Siouxland: A History of Sioux County, Iowa* (Orange City, IA: Sioux County Historical Society, 1983), 37-41, 45-51. Sioux County had 10 residents in 1860 according to the U.S. Census; 586 in 1870; Nieuwenhuis, *Siouxland*, 46, 54.

pockets,” he later wrote.⁵ Instead of participating in the fraud, he contacted Iowa’s Attorney General, who stopped the sale.

The Dutch colonists started arriving in 1870, and Hospers himself settled in 1871. In that same year, he was elected county supervisor. Also elected were two other new officers not from Calliope: Antonie J. Betten, Jr., auditor (and a close associate of Hospers), and J.W. Greatrux, treasurer. Hospers was sworn into office Jan. 1, 1872, but Betten and Greatrux were refused by the three-member Board of Supervisors (with Hospers in the minority) on the basis that they were not adequately bonded (insured). After continued rejections of the two officers, 90-plus men gathered in Orange City and traveled 23 miles overnight to Calliope on the snow-bound prairie for an expected Monday morning board meeting on January 22. The twenty-some sleighs, according to County Clerk Jelle Pelmulder’s account, “were a beautiful sight as they, in a long line, descended from the hills in the bottom of the Big Sioux [River] and in sight of Calliope.”⁶ The only supervisor who appeared, though, was Hospers. (The official date for the meeting was Jan. 21, which was a Sunday; Hospers and the crowd assumed that the meeting would be on Monday. Whether the confusion of dates was accidental or not is unclear.) Hospers himself returned to Orange City. However, the crowd—composed of Dutch and non-Dutch county citizens—proceeded to commandeer the county safe, books, and other financial records, cutting through the rear of the rude Calliope courthouse to roll the safe out onto a sled. Their stated

⁵ *Sioux County Herald*, February 10, 1892. Originals of this weekly newspaper are in the Archives and Special Collections, Northwestern College, Orange City, IA; for online access, see <https://siouxcounty.newspaperarchive.com/>.

⁶ *Ibid.*, July 6, 1876.

concern was the belief “that we have been defrauded by the out going [*sic*] administration, and wish to secure the books wherein we believe the evidence of their guilt is to be found.”⁷ The crowd then caravanned back to Orange City that night, Jan. 22—a particularly cold one. The horses pulling the sled were unable to climb the icy east bank of the West Branch of the Floyd River, so the safe was left out overnight and brought into town the next day.

Fallout from the “Calliope Raid” by the “drunken Holland mob” in 1872 took almost a year to settle.⁸ (The crowd’s inebriation was denied by Hospers, but no one claimed that no one had imbibed any alcohol.) A court order quickly returned the county records to Calliope. In April, the Board of Supervisors finally accepted the bonding of the new auditor. Also in April, after Hospers obtained state legislation allowing for court intervention in bonding county officers, a circuit court accepted the bonding of the new treasurer.⁹ As a result of the November elections, Orange City became the new county seat and the Board of Supervisors was expanded to five members. Early the following year, Hospers himself became chair of the Board.¹⁰

In retrospect, the raid itself was comic—and locally it became legendary. The issues that led to it, and the fallout as well, were more sobering. Throughout these developments, Henry Hospers was an actor, soberly moving things along whether from behind the scenes or in front. He was seeking “to benefit my dear countrymen,” but what benefited them also generally benefited himself as well as the public. Like most of the immigrants, he was heavily invested

⁷ *Sioux City Journal*, January 26, 1872.

⁸ Most of the following information is from *Sioux County Herald*, July 6, 1876 and Nieuwenhuis, *Siouxland*, 56-58.

⁹ *Sioux County Herald*, February 10, 1892.

¹⁰ *Sioux County Herald*, November 3, 1887, November 10, 1887, November 17, 1887.

financially, even existentially, in the success of the Dutch *kolonie*. Yet he also considered himself and the other colonists Americans as well as Dutch.

Hospers' leadership of the Orange City colony was generally in line with that of Scholte of the Pella colony and Van Raalte of the Holland colony. Hospers, though, has been less studied compared to Scholte and Van Raalte.¹¹ This is understandable in part because he was a second-generation leader, in part because the Orange City colony was not only later but also smaller than Pella or Holland. Further, the surviving records related to Hospers are spottier than those related to Scholte and Van Raalte.¹² Nevertheless, Hospers as a colony leader is significant because he was able to learn from both Scholte and Van Raalte in ways that contributed to the Orange City colony's distinctive stability. Moreover, his experience helps fill out the tapestry of Dutch

¹¹ On Scholte, see the following: Ronald D. Rietveld, "Hendrick Peter Scholte and the Land of Promise," *Annals of Iowa* 48 (1986): 135-154, <http://ir.uiowa.edu/annals-of-iowa/vol48/iss3/>; Johan Stellingwerff, *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier*, ed. Robert P. Swierenga, trans. Walter Lagerwey (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2004); Eugene P. Heideman, *Hendrik P. Scholte: His Legacy in the Netherlands and in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2015). On Van Raalte, see the following: Jeanne M. Jacobson, Elton J. Bruins, and Larry J. Wagenaar, *Albertus C. Van Raalte: Dutch Leader and American Patriot* (Holland, MI: Hope College, 1998); Robert P. Swierenga, "Albertus C. Van Raalte as a Businessman," in *A Goodly Heritage: Essays in Honor of the Reverend Dr. Elton J. Bruins at Eighty*, ed. Jacob E. Nyenhuis (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007): 281-317; Jacob E. Nyenhuis and George Harinck, eds., *The Enduring Legacy of Albertus C. Van Raalte* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2014); Robert P. Swierenga, *Holland Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2014), Vol. 1. On Hospers, see Nelson Nieuwenhuis, "Henry Hospers: The People's Friend" (Iowa City: published by author, mimeograph, 1978), <http://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/henryhospersbiography/1/> and Brian W. Beltman, "Hospers, Henry," in *Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, eds. David Hudson, Marvin Bergman, and Loren Horton (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008), 249-250, also online at <http://uiopress.lib.uiowa.edu/bdi/DetailsPage.aspx?id=181>.

¹² Hospers was the son of a schoolteacher, but he had little formal education, unlike the university-educated Scholte and Van Raalte. Also, Hospers' Orange City records have largely disappeared. See Henry Hospers Family Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa, <http://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/findingaids/6/>.

Protestant settler acculturation: retaining Dutch identity and becoming American amidst the fluidity of modernity.¹³

In the 1874 inaugural issue of *De Volksvriend* (The People’s Friend), Hospers articulated a bedrock assumption which guided all three Midwest Dutch Protestant leaders and the colonists in general: to settle where “they might live under the shadow of the church and school [*kerk en school*].”¹⁴ The Pella, Holland, and Orange City colonists sought to preserve a way of life that they felt was threatened in a secularizing and industrializing Netherlands. Breaking from the Netherlands’ *Hervormde Kerk* (Reformed Church) in 1834 (*De Afscheiding*, the Secession), the Seceders and their children spawned the Midwest Dutch colonies.¹⁵ The colonists, in turn, largely centered themselves around Dutch Reformed churches, schools, and piety.¹⁶ This trinity provided the institutional, intellectual, and affective anchors for a multigenerational and pragmatic cultural maintenance that was linked to their ethnic territoriality, especially in the more rural Orange City colony.¹⁷

¹³ On Protestant Dutch-American identity over time, besides Krabbendam, *Freedom on the Horizon*, see also Peter Ester, “Growing Up Dutch-American: Cultural Identity and the Formative Years of Older Dutch-Americans,” Van Raalte Institute Lecture, Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2008, and Michael J. Douma, *How Dutch Americans Stayed Dutch: An Historical Perspective on Ethnic Identities* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014). On the concept of liquid modernity, see Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Henry Hospers, “A Concise History of the Settlement of the Dutch Colony in Sioux County, Iowa, Part 1,” *De Volksvriend*, June 25, 1874, translated by Nelson Nieuwenhuis, <http://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/henryhospersdocuments/3/>, 3.

¹⁵ Elton J. Bruins and Robert P. Swierenga, *Family Quarrels in the Dutch Reformed Churches in the Nineteenth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1999). On the Netherlands’ context, see James C. Kennedy, *A Concise History of the Netherlands* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 289-305.

¹⁶ Eugene P. Heideman, *The Practice of Piety: The Theology of the Midwestern Reformed Church in America, 1866-1966* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009).

¹⁷ Brian W. Beltman, “Ethnic Persistence and Change: The Experience of a Dutch-American Family in Rural Iowa,” *Annals of Iowa* 52 (1993): 1-49, <http://ir.uiowa.edu/annals-of-iowa/vol52/iss1/>; Brian W. Beltman, “Ethnic Territoriality and the Persistence of Identity: Dutch Settlers in Northwest Iowa, 1869-1880,” *Annals of Iowa* 55

In planting their *kolonies*, it should be noted that Hospers, Scholte, and Van Raalte were beneficiaries of American empire. That is, in terms of what is called settler colonial studies, the Dutch Protestant Midwest colonies in general and the Iowa ones in particular are not really examples of “settler colonialism” which cleared the frontier land of “wild” first nature and “wild” first inhabitants while relating uneasily to the metropolitan centers to the east or Europe. Rather, they seemed more what could be termed “second settler” communities which “instantly” settled and made a “second nature” (farms and towns) out of recently “cleansed” land.¹⁸ In other words, Hospers, Scholte, and Van Raalte were each leaders of settler colonies in regions that had already been largely vacated of Native Americans by treaties and other means, thus making colonization relatively easy.

As leaders, Pella’s Scholte and Holland’s Van Raalte were similar in many respects. As already noted, both were clergy and university educated. (At the University of Leiden in the 1820s, Van Raalte was part of the student group—the Scholte Club—that formed around the older Scholte.¹⁹) Both were part of the *Afscheiding* in the Netherlands. Both had charisma, eloquence, and entrepreneurship enough to attract parishioners, organize and lead emigrants, and establish settler colonies. Both not only labored in the religious realm, but also devoted as much or more of their time in the United States to secular affairs of their respective colonies. In the

(1996): 101-137, <http://ir.uiowa.edu/annals-of-iowa/vol55/iss2/>; Michael L. Yoder, “Anabaptists and Calvinists Four Centuries Later: An Iowa Case Study,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 67 (1993): 49-72.

¹⁸ John Mack Faragher, “Commentary: Settler Colonial Studies and the North American Frontier,” *Settler Colonial Studies* (2013), online publication: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2013.846389>.

¹⁹ Bruins and Swierenga, *Family Quarrels*, 21.

latter regard, both were cross-cultural brokers between Americans and Dutch colonists. Scholte was, among other things, a newspaper editor, a banker, a broker, a land agent, a notary, a leader in the establishing of what became Central College, and a delegate-at-large from Iowa to the 1860 Republican National Convention (where he backed Lincoln).²⁰ Van Raalte, among other things, treated the sick, bought and sold land, established township government, organized road clearing and harbor construction, partnered with businessmen to erect grain and lumber mills, founded newspapers, and, in the realm of education, managed the district public school and led in the founding of what became Hope College and Western Theological Seminary.²¹

Yet there were important differences between the two Midwest *dominees*.²² Scholte was from a prosperous Amsterdam family who owned a box-making company. Despite his charisma, particularly in the pulpit, Scholte’s autocratic personality and assumption of class privilege proved difficult for many colonists to endure for long. Moreover, Scholte eventually moved beyond most of Pella’s colonists theologically. While he adhered to the Dutch Reformed confessions, he rejected ecclesiastical hierarchies in favor of congregational independence. He also grew into a more revivalistic and premillennial evangelical than most of his colonists found palatable. His Pella church had various organizational difficulties and conflicts, and when Scholte died, his congregation disbanded.²³

²⁰ Reitveld, “Scholte and the Land of Promise,” 152.

²¹ Robert P. Swierenga, “Off the Pulpit: Van Raalte as Community Leader,” in Nyenhuis and Harinck, *Legacy of Van Raalte*, 130.

²² *Dominee* is the Dutch word for minister, derived from Latin word for master, *dominus*. Anglicization of the Dutch word is *dominie*. For historical accuracy and consistency, I use the Dutch word.

²³ Heideman, *Scholte*, 233-245. See also Stellingwerff, *Iowa Letters*, 384-385.

Van Raalte, on the other hand, was from neither Amsterdam nor a prosperous family. He grew up in several Dutch villages where his father was the *dominee*.²⁴ He was a reluctant Seceder, breaking from the *Hervormde Kerk* only when his own ministerial candidacy was rejected by the establishment’s representatives.²⁵ While entrepreneurial, he was more “a promoter and fundraiser than a businessman.”²⁶ Compared to Scholte, Van Raalte was less impetuous and more irenic. As a *dominee*, Van Raalte consistently attended to church matters in the Holland colony and beyond. Unlike Scholte, he did not object to Reformed ecclesiology. Moreover, in 1850 he led his churches, organized as the Classis of Holland, into what was then the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (renamed the Reformed Church in America in 1867). Seceder Van Raalte was aware of the irony of this affiliation. The American denomination traced its origins to 1628 and the *Hervormde Kerk*, when the first congregation was organized in New Netherland (renamed New York by the English), a colony of the Dutch West India Company.²⁷

Henry Hospers grew into adulthood in the shadow of Scholte. Born February 6, 1830 in the village of Hoogblokland (near Gorinchem), province of Zuid Holland, Hendrik Hospers was the eldest child of Jan and Hendrika Middelkoop Hospers. His father was the village schoolteacher. The Hospers family was pious, and they joined the 1834 *Afscheiding*. Like other Seceders, they were uneasy under government harassment in the late 1830s and early 1840s, and

²⁴ Rein Nauta, “The Leadership of Albertus C. Van Raalte: Dynamics and Characteristics,” in Nyenhuis and Harinck, *Legacy of Van Raalte*, 108-109.

²⁵ Swierenga, *Holland Michigan*, 45.

²⁶ Swierenga, “Van Raalte as a Businessman,” 314.

²⁷ Gerald F. De Jong, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the American Colonies* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), 17-19.

as unemployment and the potato blight spread through the Netherlands' society in the mid-1840s, Jan Hospers joined the board of Scholte's emigration society. Teenaged Henry was sent to Iowa on behalf of his family with the 1847 emigrants.²⁸

The son prepared the way for his family's immigration in 1849 with land purchases. In the 1847-1849 correspondence between him and his family, Henry described the “gently rolling” prairies, settlement life, and American customs, while Jan worried about learning farming and wondered, “How do you pronounce the word ‘Iowa’?”²⁹ Before their arrival, Henry had learned surveying, partnered in a lumber yard, and taught school. Moreover, he had taken important steps along the path of Reformed spirituality: “Beloved Father, pray for me! I am so convinced that I am a covenant breaker; but it is my hope (ah, if only it were faith) that the Lord may also grant to me the assurance of the covenant He made with Abraham and his seed. As soon as the Lord has assured me of His grace to my soul, I will write you of it, dear parents.”³⁰

Between the arrival of his parents and surviving siblings in 1849 and his investigation of lands in northwest Iowa for a new colony in 1869, Henry Hospers matured into a community leader among the Dutch settlers. He emulated Scholte's entrepreneurship while cultivating a courteous benevolence in his patriarchy, unlike Scholte's more peremptory autocracy. While in 1849 he could confidentially refer to Scholte as the “pope of Pella,” in 1868 he could publicly

²⁸ Henry Hospers Family Collection; Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 2-10; Stellingwerff, *Iowa Letters*, 115.

²⁹ Stellingwerff, *Iowa Letters*, 118-217; quotations from 127 and 130. Published from originals in Henry Hospers Family Collection, Series 1, Box 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 193, letter of 25 August 1848. On assurance and the order of salvation as understood by the Dutch colonists, see Heideman, *The Practice of Piety*, 92-96, 108-117.

sponsor a city council resolution upon Scholte’s death that characterized “the founder of our colony” as “an able theologian” and “a good-hearted, wise, and moderate-minded human being.”³¹

In Scholte’s Pella, Hospers married: first Cornelia Welle (1826-1863), with whom he had six children (two died in infancy), then after Cornelia’s death, Hendrina Overkamp (1837-1907), with whom he had eight children.³² Moreover, building on his experience surveying land for the settlers, he studied law and opened a land office. He saw how Scholte fostered the opening in 1853 of a Baptist academy, at first named Central University (later reorganized as Central College). Hospers also turned to local politics in the 1850s and 1860s. An acquaintance from the time remembered him as “a young man . . . with steel-grey eyes and a bald crown, whose quiet demeanor and winning speech betrayed the born diplomat.”³³ As a Democrat, he was elected alderman and eventually mayor.³⁴ He ran for county surveyor and for the Iowa legislature as well, but was defeated. Finally, with the Rev. P.J. Oggel, in 1861 he started *Pella’s Weekblad* (Pella’s Weekly Newspaper). The Dutch-language paper was the first such in Pella; Hospers and the other shareholders purchased the office and supplies of Scholte’s English-language (and Republican) *Pella Gazette*, which had folded in 1860.³⁵

³¹ Stellingwerff, *Iowa Letters*, 208, 478.

³² Unless otherwise noted, the information in this paragraph is based on Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 19-41, 46.

³³ H.P. Oggel in *De Volksvriend*, 9/19/1895, as translated and quoted in Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 41.

³⁴ One of Hospers’ fellow council members was N.P. Earp, father of Wyatt Earp.

³⁵ Jacob Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1912), 248-252.

Rising land prices around Pella turned the middle-aged Hospers and other Dutch men, especially younger ones or those with young children, to thinking about a new colony with more affordable arable land elsewhere.³⁶ With the Homestead Act in place, the Civil War over, and Scholte dead, Mayor Hospers and his *Pella's Weekblad* provided the leadership and publicity for a committee to form and sponsor a scouting party to northwest Iowa in spring 1869. The party's positive report about land in Cherokee County led to the formation of a colony association. Close to 100 men signified their desire to obtain homesteads or purchase tracts outright. The association selected Hospers as part of the leadership committee; they also gave power to the committee to choose an alternate location, to select and arrange the allocation of land to subscribers, and to designate a town site. Hospers was made part of a second party to be sent to select the land; for his work on behalf of the association, he was also allowed one-third of the town lots.³⁷

From this point in the summer of 1869 until his death in 1901, Henry Hospers provided leadership to the new Dutch colony and to Sioux County. He did so in at least three major ways: as a tireless promoter of the colony in particular and Sioux County more generally; as an elected office holder; and as a founder of “church and school.” He was not a clone of the Rev. Scholte of Pella, let alone of the Rev. Van Raalte of Holland. He was a self-educated foreign-born layman young enough to have come to adulthood in the United States—and thus more American to an

³⁶ The information in this paragraph, unless otherwise noted, is based on Beltman, “Ethnic Territoriality,” 105-108. For Hospers' explanation of the land hunger, see Hospers, “A Concise History, Part 1.”

³⁷ Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa*, 131.

extent than either of the *dominees* were. As we shall see, he was also a legislator and administrator for more than just the Dutch colonists—things that distinguished him from Scholte and Van Raalte. Yet, despite his formation in Pella, the patterns of his leadership resonate at least as much with Van Raalte as with Scholte. Hospers was as entrepreneurial as either *dominee*, but he was more like Van Raalte in his diplomacy and his loyalty to Reformed ecclesiology, theology, and piety.

If Hospers is known about at all beyond Sioux County today, it is most likely as a promoter of the county and Orange City. In promotion, he followed in the footsteps of Scholte and Van Raalte. As already noted, he was part of the second party sent from Pella. He spent time in Sioux City in 1869 for the *kolonie* and, among other things, steered the group to Sioux County after learning that speculators were waiting in Cherokee County for the Pella colonists. Hospers and the scouting group, with a surveyor, marked out ranges of land that would become Holland and Nassau Townships. According to Hospers’ account (only a few years later), the party was impressed with the richness of the land. They briefly encountered a solitary American Indian (probably Sioux) “carrying a small rifle.” Since their weapons were far ahead in the wagon their cook was driving, the surveying party was uneasy. At their camp that evening on the west side of the Floyd River, they saw an Indian campfire to the east; they nervously kept watch all night. Hospers never questioned how the land became “open” for settlement; instead, he balanced recounting the group’s fear with comedic stereotyping: the Indian “no doubt” wondered “at our likely ‘Dutch’ appearance”; all the Indian could do by way of communication was shrug and say

“Hugh”; he left abruptly when “He, no doubt, concluded that we were not the savages he had probably been on the lookout for.”³⁸

Hospers lauded the new colony site in *Pella's Weekblad*. He did not, however, immediately move to Sioux County along with the first colonists in 1870. Instead, amidst selling his newspaper and closing up his land business in Pella, he spent the end of 1870 and the beginning of 1871 in the Netherlands as a commissioned agent of the Iowa State Board of Immigration. Basing himself at his uncle's home in Hoogblokland, he corresponded and held meetings, as he advertised, “for the purpose of giving detailed information to all who wish to emigrate to Iowa.”³⁹ Back in Pella in February 1871, he finished closing up his affairs there and in June moved to Orange City. When he appeared in the store that had been constructed for him, an unidentified person was heard to remark, “There is the father of the colony; from now on, everything will go well.”⁴⁰

Once in Orange City, Hospers promoted the colony and the county largely in two ways: as a businessman and through the press. Hospers' business interests became extensive. Initially, he operated a store as well as a land office. He did not remain a merchant for long, though. By 1874 his brother Cornelius had opened a general store, which brother William later partnered in.⁴¹

³⁸ Henry Hospers, “A Concise History of the Settlement of the Dutch Colony in Sioux County, Iowa, Part 7,” *De Volksvriend*, August 6, 1874, translated by Nelson Nieuwenhuis, <https://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/henryhospersdocuments/2/>, 3.

³⁹ As translated and quoted in Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa*, 151.

⁴⁰ A.J. Betten, Jr., “History,” *De Volksvriend*, September 19, 1895, as translated and quoted in Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 63.

⁴¹ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 47-48.

Henry Hospers had more than enough to do as a land agent, notary, lawyer, and farmer. As a colony association leader, he had been involved in assigning sections by lots to association members. The Dutch colonists at first concentrated on settling public land under the provisions of the Homestead Act. However, they also began to purchase railroad-grant land soon after arriving. (At the time, railroads were not only considered essential for transportation; they were also important holders of lands granted by states and other governments.) By the end of 1872, he had ensured that the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad established two depots in eastern Sioux County: East Orange (renamed Alton) and North Orange (renamed Hospers). Other railroad building in the county also had his support.⁴² Besides his involvement in these and related arrangements, in Orange City itself Hospers was president of the townsite company as well as owner of one-third of the lots.⁴³

Hospers' land dealings were especially complicated by grasshopper infestations in the region 1873-1879. His promotion of the colony and the county during this period ranged from encouraging discouraged settlers, to refusing to buy land cheaply, to offering financial help, to trying out “hopper proof” crops, to writing letters to “several leading Eastern religious newspapers,” as the town paper observed, expressing his “faith in this country” and “that all we need is a class of people with backbone” to settle the prairies “so the ‘hoppers will not do damage.’”⁴⁴

⁴² Ibid., 99, 106, 114.

⁴³ Beltman, “Ethnic Territoriality,” 108, 114-115, 117-118, 120-121, 125, 129-130.

⁴⁴ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 87-91; quotations from *Sioux County Herald*, March 1, 1877, November 9, 1876.

By 1880, Hospers and a partner opened a private bank. In turn, the bank did well enough for Hospers to erect a multistoried brick bank building in 1884.⁴⁵ The bank implied not only Hospers’ prosperity but also his stake in the future of the colony and county.

More overt and ongoing promotion by Hospers came from *De Volksvriend*.⁴⁶

Drawing on his experience with *Pella’s Weekblad*, Hospers launched the Orange City Dutch-language weekly in June 1874. The paper would inform “our fellow-Hollanders [about] a magnificent spot of God’s



The bank building in downtown Orange City.
Image from Northwestern College Archives.

earth where there is plenty of opportunity . . . for many a Dutch household, where the Lord out of His grace . . . has shown He is well pleased, where there is abundant opportunity to train the rising generation.”⁴⁷ Historian Robert Schoone-Jongen characterized the early *De Volksvriend* as

⁴⁵ Ibid., January 22, 1880, September 18, 1884, January 29, 1885. However, there was at least one anonymous critic of Hospers and his bank. A piece in the February 19, 1880 *Herald* was titled, “Shame for Shylock,” claiming that Hospers blocked legislation for a state loan program for seed wheat—“Why? Because the father of the colony started a bank.”

⁴⁶ A complete run of the weekly is housed in Archives and Special Collections, Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa. For online access to the paper through the National Library of the Netherlands, see <http://library.nwciowa.edu/archives/otherresources/historicalnewspapers/de-volksvriend>.

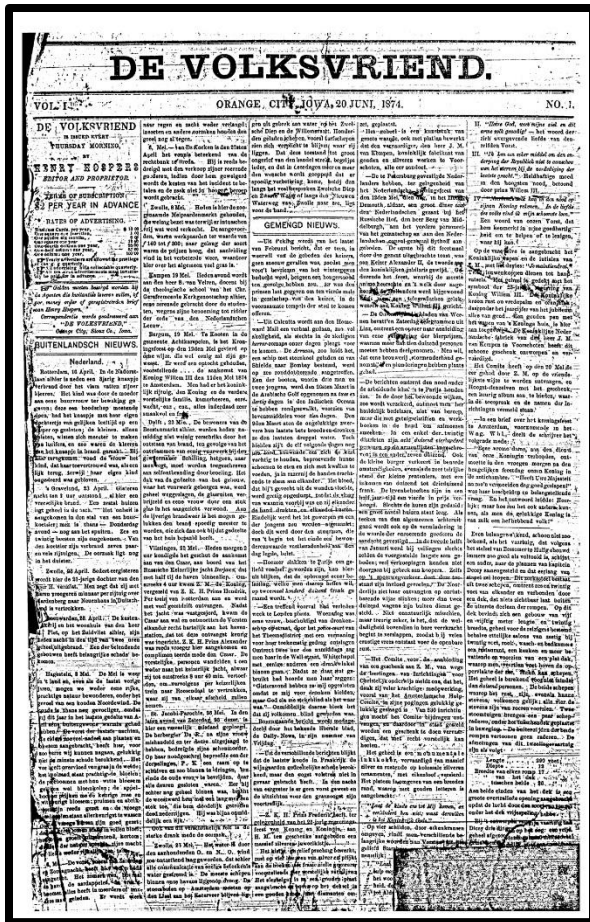
⁴⁷ Translation from *De Volksvriend*, June 18, 1874 by Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa*, 252-253.

a virtual “real estate infomercial.”⁴⁸ By the 1880s, the weekly broadened itself to cover the generally westward expansion of Dutch *kolonies* into the northern prairies, Great Plains, Rocky

Mountains, and Pacific Coast through regular reports from correspondents. Hospers himself ceased direct editorial input when he handed proprietorship over to his son John in 1875.⁴⁹

However, he retained ownership of the newspaper until selling it in 1891.⁵⁰

Arguably Hospers’ most overlooked role as a leader compared to Scholte and Van Raalte was as a government official. Of necessity, holding elective offices made him more than a leader only of the Dutch. To an extent unmatched by Scholte and Van Raalte, Hospers became a leader of the general public in Orange City, Sioux County, and northwest Iowa.



First issue of *De Volksvriend*, June 1874.
Image from Northwestern College Archives.

⁴⁸ Robert Schoone-Jongen, “Dateline Orange City, Iowa: *De Volksvriend* and the Creation of Dutch American Community in the Midwest, 1874-1951,” *Annals of Iowa* 69 (Summer 2010): 310, <http://ir.uiowa.edu/annals-of-iowa/vol69/iss3/>.

⁴⁹ *Sioux County Herald*, February 18, 1875.

⁵⁰ Schoone-Jongen, “Dateline Orange City,” 313.

Hospers was briefly Superintendent of Schools for the county in the 1870s; he also served on the Orange City School Board. After Orange City incorporated, he was mayor for a year in the 1880s.⁵¹ For a time, he was Justice of the Peace.⁵² As a Republican, he became a party leader in the county (by 1873 he had switched from the Democratic Party).⁵³ He withdrew from a heated nomination battle as the Republican district candidate for the Iowa House in 1879. In 1887, though, he received his party’s nomination for the House district and was elected.



Iowa House of Representatives, 1890.
Hospers is in the top arc, 4th from the right.
Image from Northwestern College Archives.

Amidst Republican struggles throughout the state and nation,

he was narrowly re-elected for a second term in 1889. A member of the Ways and Means Committee for both the 22nd and 23rd sessions of the General Assembly, it was later said of Hospers, “He had no pretensions as a speaker, but in the committee room, where the real work of

⁵¹ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 101, 113, 128.

⁵² *Sioux County Herald*, January 4, 1877.

⁵³ Unless otherwise noted, the information in the rest of this paragraph is based on Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 95, 132-142.

the legislature is done, his worth was acknowledged and his influence felt.”⁵⁴ He supported Governor William Larrabee and the regulation of the railroad rates; he was also for “Sunday Observance” and prohibition.⁵⁵

He declined running again for the House in 1891, but in 1895 he emerged as the Republican nominee for the 49th Iowa Senate district. His reported campaign speech was concise:

I am not a speaker, but a plain businessman. I have lived in Sioux County for twenty-five years, helping to build up the country. I deem it a high honor to be nominated a state senator, and I shall deem it a yet greater honor to be elected. I am a republican [*sic*] who will be proud to vote for the re-election of Iowa’s greatest man, Senator Allison. But great as these honors are, the greatest yet will be my faithful service. I look to you for counsel. You are welcome to advise me. Your interests are my interests and your welfare is my welfare. It will be my constant aim to give all I have of intellect and power to this constituency. I know your needs; I have been trusted by those who know me best. For eighteen years I have been chairman of the board of supervisors, and Sioux county is out of debt and with a low rate of taxation. I assure you, fellow citizens, I can

⁵⁴ *Sioux County Herald*, July 3, 1895.

⁵⁵ In voting against paying House pages for Sunday work, Hospers acknowledged the pages might be disappointed. For him, it was the principle: he sought to “honor the Lord’s Commandment: ‘Keep the Sabbath day holy.’” The news report didn’t give any comment from him on why the pages needed to work on Sunday in the first place. *Sioux County Herald*, June 26, 1895.

have no other ambition than to so vote that I can retire with the well wishes of the people.⁵⁶

He won handily. In the Senate, he was chair of the Rules Committee. Besides committee work, he sponsored several bills, including a measure (which was enacted) to better protect the property of married women.⁵⁷ He did not want to run for another term in 1899, but he was convinced by others to allow himself to be re-nominated. To break a nasty deadlock at the district convention, he threw his support to another nominee on the 3,273rd ballot.⁵⁸

However, Hospers' most important office for public service, as well as the one he held the longest, was as county supervisor (1872-1887). As he implied in his senate campaign speech, he had spent significant time resolving the fraudulent county finances that had in large measure precipitated the Calliope Raid in 1872. In 1874, Hospers was involved in settling the county's indebtedness to the state “in account of defaulting County Treasurer.”⁵⁹ Then in 1877, Hospers traveled to Dubuque to oversee *Lombard & Co. v. Sioux County*. The case involved some \$30,000 of irregular county warrants (fiscal authorizations); it was settled for \$724 and a dismissal.⁶⁰ When he was re-elected chair of the board in 1879, he thanked his fellow supervisors. “All our warrants are at par,” he noted. “Our comparatively small bonded debt is

⁵⁶ *Sioux County Herald*, October 16, 1895.

⁵⁷ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 148-153. On Hospers' bills, see *Sioux County Herald*, March 4, 1896 and March 2, 1898.

⁵⁸ Nieuwenhuis missed Hospers' re-nomination, 153; see *Sioux County Herald*, February 15, 1899, June 21, 1899, *Alton Democrat*, June 10, 1899, and Emory H. English, “Iowa Senatorial Deadlocks,” *Annals of Iowa* 34 (1957): 147-148, <http://ir.uiowa.edu/annals-of-iowa/vol34/iss2/>, for the contentiousness of the re-nomination.

⁵⁹ *Sioux County Herald*, August 27, 1874.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, February 17, 1892.

diminishing yearly. Let us, my friends, continue in the same way.”⁶¹ In 1881, on behalf of the board, Hospers took charge of *Higgins v. Sioux County* in Des Moines in federal court. This case was over bogus county bonds (again, originally some \$30,000). Working hard to locate relevant witnesses about early Sioux County officials and practices, Hospers was rewarded with the case’s dismissal.⁶²

So far, we have seen how, compared to the more famous Scholte and Van Raalte, Hospers was notable as a promoter of Orange City and Sioux County economic development. We have also seen how Hospers was a significant publicly elected administrator and legislator. Finally—and perhaps in his own view the most important—he fostered what he termed “church and school” in the northwest Iowa Dutch colony. Moreover, he did so self-consciously modeling himself on Holland’s Van Raalte instead of Pella’s Scholte.

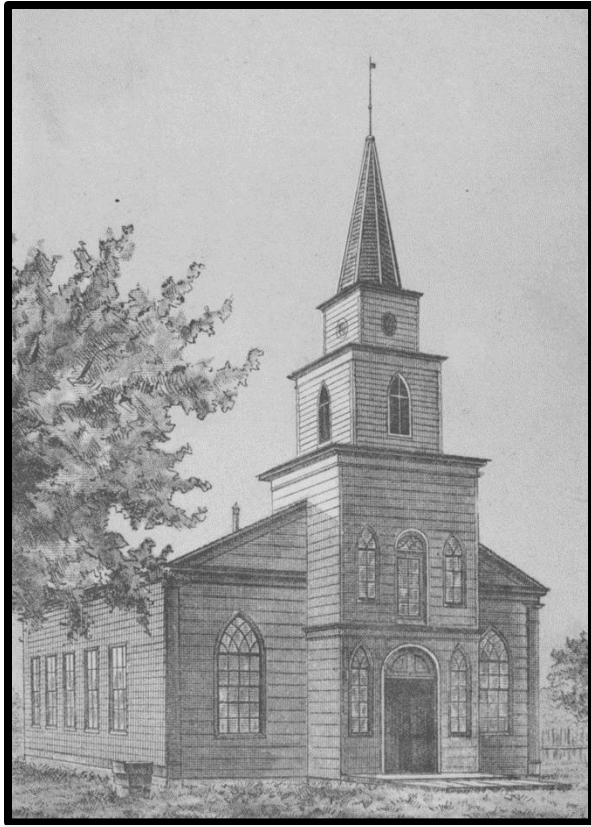
Recall the importance of religion—*Afscheiding*—in the founding of the Pella and Holland colonies in 1847, each led by a *dominee*. Also recall how Scholte’s religious views soon diverged from that of most of his fellow colonists, leading to the brief and troubled life of his own non-denominational congregation. Pella’s Central College (1853)—which Scholte donated money and land to and served as a trustee—began as a Baptist academy; it did not affiliate with the Reformed Church in America until 1916.⁶³ On the other hand, recall that Van Raalte’s Classis of Holland affiliated with the then Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in 1850. That

⁶¹ Ibid., January 9, 1879.

⁶² Ibid., February 17, 1892, February 24, 1892, March 2, 1892, March 9, 1892, March 16, 1892.

⁶³ Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa*, 276-279.

same year, Van Raalte donated land for a Pioneer School; the school opened in 1851. The school grew into an academy and, in 1862, added a college program (Hope College). The academy and



First Reformed Church in Orange City.

Image from J. van't Lindenhout's book,
Zes Weken Tuscchen de Wielen.

college came under the control of the General Synod of the Reformed Church as early as 1853.

In the college, ministerial training for the denomination began in 1866; eventually,

Western Theological Seminary was formed.⁶⁴

Hospers, although directly in the shadow of Pella's Scholte, followed Holland's Van Raalte in religion.⁶⁵ Van Raalte came to Pella in 1856 to organize the Pella Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (First Reformed).⁶⁶ Hospers, then twenty-six, was a charter member of the new congregation, along with his parents and other family.⁶⁷ Once in Orange City in early 1871, Hospers set about establishing “church and

school” as soon as practicable. That May, First Reformed Church of Orange City was organized

⁶⁴ Jacobsen et al., *Albertus C. Van Raalte*, 68-85.

⁶⁵ Others have noted this. See Krabbendam, *Freedom on the Horizon*, 76 and Cornelia B. Kennedy, “The Sioux County Dutch,” in *The Dutch in America: Papers Presented at the Fourth Biennial Conference of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies*, September 29 to October 1, 1983, Hope College, Holland, MI., mimeograph, spiral bound, 36-39.

⁶⁶ Heideman, *Hendrik P. Scholte*, 241-243.

⁶⁷ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 43.

by Hospers and others who were mostly from Pella’s First Reformed. While Hospers was not a founding elder, he was instrumental in getting the church’s building up by 1874.⁶⁸ His general busyness was probably a major factor in his not becoming involved as a church officer, but he was nonetheless closely involved with the life of the church and particularly its first pastor, Seine Bolks. Bolks, like Hospers, had little formal education. He had been mentored in the Netherlands and United States, however, by Van Raalte. Bolks had to take early retirement from preaching in 1878 because of asthma. He remained in Orange City, though, working in tandem with Hospers for church, school, and the Dutch *kolonie*.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, Hospers and the Orange City townsite company had set aside a fifth of the proceeds from lot sales for an academy.⁷⁰ In accepting the call to First Reformed Church, Bolks also had expressed interest in seeing an academy established; before coming to Orange City, he had assisted in organizing Holland’s academy and college. Once the troubled “grasshopper” years were over, financing an Orange City academy seemed more realizable. With the sanction of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, on August 1, 1882, the Articles of Incorporation for Northwestern Classical Academy (NWCA) were signed in Orange City.⁷¹ In its constitution, the academy was placed under the supervision of the Classis of Iowa so that its

⁶⁸ *Sioux County Herald*, March 12, 1874.

⁶⁹ Earl William Kennedy, “A Tale of Two Churches: Orange City’s First Reformed and Christian Reformed Congregations during their First Thirty-Five Years (1871-1906),” in *Proceedings of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies Conference*, September 1985, Northwestern College, Orange City, IA, mimeograph, spiral bound, 101, 103.

⁷⁰ Unless otherwise noted, the information in this paragraph is based on Gerald F. De Jong, *From Strength to Strength: A History of Northwestern 1882-1982* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), 15-19.

⁷¹ See also *Sioux County Herald*, June 29, 1882, July 6, 1882, July 13, 1882, and July 27, 1882.

education would be conducted “in harmony with, and Religion as expressed in, the Doctrinal Standards of the Reformed Church in America.” Bolks became president of Northwestern’s Board of Trustees. Hospers became the treasurer. Hospers also sought subscribers in support of the new school and donated not only money but also a town block of 16 lots. Classes began in 1883, and a new NWCA building was dedicated in 1894. By the time of Hospers’ death, his five youngest children had graduated from NWCA.⁷² It was long after his death that NWCA became first Northwestern Junior College and Academy (1928) and then Northwestern College (1961). The developments would have pleased Hospers; his Orange City colony had both “church and school” which paralleled those of Pella and Holland in stability.

In 1899, not long after bowing out of the senate nomination fight, Hospers suffered a stroke while visiting his son Gerrit (a pastor) and family in Cleveland, Ohio. He recovered enough to return home, but he turned over his business interests to associates and slowly weakened. He died in Orange City on October 21, 1901, age seventy-one.⁷³

He was, noted one eulogist, Sioux County’s “most eminent citizen”; he was “a friend of the people and the people revered and loved him.”⁷⁴ Public tributes to Hospers’ character and contributions were scarcely over, however, before his Orange City Bank failed.⁷⁵ What caused the bank failure is unclear, but it was most likely tied to investments and/or debts of one or more

⁷² Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 170-172. The five Hospers children who were NWCA graduates were (from eldest to youngest): Effie (Aatje), Eva Evangeline, Arta, Isaac, and Hendrina (Etta).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 158-159.

⁷⁴ *Alton Democrat*, October 26, 1901.

⁷⁵ *Sioux County Herald*, November 27, 1901.

of his children and/or their spouses, and also perhaps to embezzlement by a clerk.⁷⁶ It took until 1905 for his estate to be settled. Hendrina Hospers outlived her husband until 1907, cared for by children Isaac and Hendrina (Etta), but they were lean years financially.⁷⁷

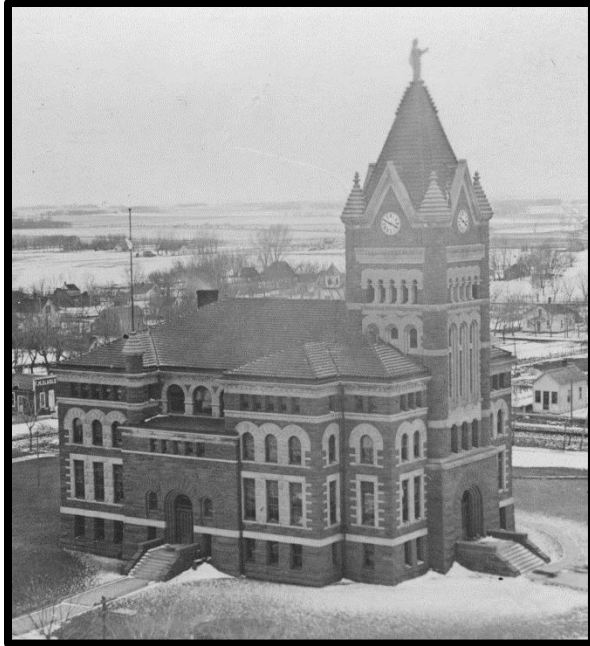
Hospers' bank failure raises other issues. In his 1872 letter to the *Sioux City Journal* objecting to the characterization of the Calliope Raid as an anarchistic act of “that drunken Holland mob,” he had confessed, “nobody else but myself feels and knows better that I am a very imperfect man, with more short comings [*sic*] than perhaps anybody else.” This reflects orthodox Reformed piety: we are sinners, unable to save ourselves, and our only hope is faith in God's grace through his crucified and resurrected Son. Yet, perhaps it was more than a public confession of his Reformed identity. It may also have been a personal acknowledgment of persistent struggles he had in living fully into that identity. He was ambitious and also patriarchal—a man of his time and culture in these and other ways. Yet much about his personal and business life remains hidden. Virtually all the known letters of his are those he wrote from Pella to his family still in the Netherlands (1847-1849). His bank failed—and to date, there are no records of it or of the details of his estate and its settlement. He was pious, and from a pious family, and he helped found First Reformed Church—yet he was never an officer. In Reformed congregational life, the elders were and are tasked with the spiritual health and discipline of members. Further, the earliest consistory minutes of the congregation (1874-1879) are, to date,

⁷⁶ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 161-163.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 162-163.

missing. These are important holes in the record; what is their significance for understanding Henry Hospers? Perhaps more answers will emerge as time passes.

Even so, Hospers’ Dutch *kolonie* and the county were prosperous as the twentieth century



Sioux County Courthouse.
Image from Northwestern College Archives.

began. In 1870, the year Hospers helped select and survey Sioux County for the Dutch colony, the county’s population according to the U.S. Census was 576. In 1900, the year before Hospers’ death, it had risen to 23,337.⁷⁸ Moreover, in 1904, the county got a new courthouse. Hospers had been instrumental in contributing money and time to the campaign to build a new courthouse that would express the county’s solid prosperity more fittingly than the one built in Orange City after the

Calliope Raid.⁷⁹ The Richardsonian Romanesque building still stands; listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it is an imposing contrast to the meager courthouse that the “raiders” had broken into in 1872.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Sage, *A History of Iowa*, 311.

⁷⁹ Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 160-161.

⁸⁰ David Gebhard and Gerald Mansheim, *Buildings of Iowa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 490.

In the aftermath of the Calliope Raid, recall that Hospers wrote: “We are of Holland descent; . . . but we are far prouder that we are now Americans.” On the one hand, the colonists in Orange City and the Midwest and their descendants more generally kept their cultural identity distinct—through their Reformed churches and their educational institutions (*kerk en school*), marriage within the group (endogamy), and new immigrants who kept arriving into the mid-twentieth century.⁸¹

On the other hand, they also acculturated to the United States, of necessity and also by choice. Hospers and his fellow



Henry Hospers and his wife Hendrina Overkamp Hospers at home with their children Hendrina and Arta.

Image from Northwestern College Archives.

colonists as a group had been resident in the United States for over twenty years by 1870.

American society and culture was that much more familiar to them than when Pella and Holland had been founded in 1847. The Dutch language remained important for Hospers’ generation, but he and his fellow colonists already largely knew English as well. As native Sioux County historian Brian Beltman has phrased it, their goals as colonists centered around “making a living

⁸¹ Krabbendam, *Freedom on the Horizon*.

as well as preserving a way of life.”⁸² Making a living did not prove too much of a problem, since the land of Sioux County was not only fertile but on the cusp of being woven into the national railroad network. As to preserving a way of life, that was relatively easy in a rural context. So long as northern European culture and Protestant religion was dominant, larger American society did not appear unduly threatening.

It was not all that surprising, then, that Hospers would not only consider himself Dutch and American, but also that he would, for example, on the one hand publish a Dutch-language weekly in Orange City while on the other hand continually win re-election and general respect for his role as a county supervisor. Whether or not one would agree with his piety and theology, clearly Hospers deserves recognition as a significant yet hitherto obscure Dutch Protestant colony leader of the nineteenth-century Midwest.

⁸² Beltman, “Ethnic Territoriality,” 123.