

Winter 1990

The Joint Archives Quarterly, Volume 01.04: Winter 1990

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The Joint Archives Quarterly

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Winter 1990



Fixtures Stave Factory on Black Lake, 1884

End of an Era

1990 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the last log ride on the Grand river and the end of an era in Ottawa Co.

The February meeting of the Holland Area Historical Society featured Dr. Carl Bajema, the area's foremost authority on logging, who spoke about lumbering activities in Holland and along the banks of the Grand river from Grand Rapids to Grand Haven.

Logging began in Ottawa county in 1832, according to Bajema, when the first sawmill was built along the river. Eventually the industry began to supply markets in Chicago and, once the canal to the Mississippi was built in 1848, to the plains beyond.

Bajema also spoke about the first sawmill constructed in Holland

which was a wind powered operation in 1837. This mill proved to be extremely inefficient and was soon followed by a steam driven sawmill. By 1848 the prime use of wood was for the tanning of leather (using the bark of Hemlock trees) and wood staves for the assembly of barrels. The Fixtures Stave Mill was one such industry in Holland. Most of the early exports from Holland were all related to the timber and lumbering industry.

The lumbering operations along the Grand were among the first to use railroads to transport their timber according to Bajema. They were also the first in the United States to use a steam-driven locomotive rather than horse drawn railroad cars.

Dr. Bajema ended his presentation with slides of early lumbering and several

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which dramatically depicted the great log jam which tore down all but one Grand Rapids bridge in the early 1880's.

Bajema gleaned most of his information from archives in western Michigan including some materials held at the Joint Archives of Holland. He hopes to have a book about the logging industry published by 1993.

The Holland Area Historical Society meets the third Tuesday of each month in the Peale Science Center, room 50. Membership is \$7.50 for individuals, \$10 for families and \$3 for seniors and students. Membership dues can be sent to the HAHS, c/o The Joint Archives of Holland, Hope College Campus, Holland MI. The March 19 meeting will feature Marie Zingle and the history of the Womens Literary Society.

The Joint Archives Quarterly

From the Archivist

Welcome to the final number of the first volume of the *Quarterly*. Over the past year we have been working to bring to you information on the Joint Archives and what goes on both day to day and as we look to future work to preserve our heritage.

Several significant developments have taken place in the past few months. The photographs, some of which were featured on the cover of the last issue, have been entirely reorganized and access to them has been made much easier. A complete inventory of these photos organized topically and geographically is available at the Archives.

Also, at the last meeting of the Joint Archives Council, which was held on January 19, numerous plans were set for the coming year. Among them was a workshop for the community in which individuals who are involved with the care of older paper materials can learn how to best store, handle and make available historical documents. This workshop will be open to all. Church librarians, local records custodians and business records clerks are encouraged to attend.

The Joint Archives will also be issuing a limited edition print which will

feature an early map of the Holland area. Other activities planned for 1990 include publication of an addition to the *Guide to the Collections* and participation in a historical collection project in the Reformed Church in America.

The Joint Archives has been actively collecting new material. The back page lists some of the donations we have recently received. The Holland area is full of one of a kind photographs, albums, diaries and printed material. Please call the Archives if you have or know of materials which would be appropriate for the Joint Archives at 394-7798. I would be happy to visit you in your home and discuss the possibilities of placing material in the Archives.

Larry J. Wagenaar

A Day in the Life

The Joint Archives of Holland is participating in a project entitled "A Day in the Life of the RCA." Its purpose is to collect sermons preached in Reformed churches on Easter Sunday, 1990 for future research and reference.

The project was designed by Donald Luidens, sociology professor at Hope, with the help of Dennis Voskuil, chair of the Religion department, Marvin Hoff, President of Western



RCA Emblem

Seminary and Larry Wagenaar, archivist of the Joint Archives of Holland. It will provide a sampling of sermons from a given Sunday in the church. By collecting sermons, research can be conducted on what preaching was like in 1990 throughout the RCA. It will serve as a snapshot of life illustrating the themes of Easter, varieties of preaching styles and motifs and will facilitate other methods of content analysis.

Two of the three member institutions of the Joint Archives of Holland are affiliated with the Reformed Church in America. "A Day in the Life of the RCA" will further enhance already rich holdings on the Reformed Church held at the Archives.

Letters are being sent to each pastor in the RCA asking them to send a transcript of their sermon (or cassette recording) to the Joint Archives. These sermons will be organized and made available for researchers who in the future will use them for research on the nature of preaching in the Reformed Church in America.

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Former Archivist of the U.S. to visit Holland

Dr. Robert M. Warner, Director of the University of Michigan Library School and interim Director of the University Library, will be coming to Holland and will give a presentation entitled "What is past is Prologue" on Friday, March 30. Warner, who previously served as Archivist of the United States, is uniquely qualified to speak about how archives serve a critical role in the community by preserving materials which document the past.

Warner is credited by Elton Bruins as initially suggesting the combined archives which ultimately became the Joint Archives of Holland. Speaking with Bruins some twenty years ago, Warner suggested that the archival collections of the Netherlands Museum, Hope College and Western Seminary be combined. After two failed attempts due to funding problems, Warner's suggestion - and Bruins' dream - came to fruition in 1988.

Dr. Warner has a long and distinguished career as an archivist and librarian. In addition to being interim director of the University of Michigan's library and Dean of the Library School Dr. Warner served as Archivist of the United States from 1980-1985. Prior to his appointment in Washington he was director of the Bently Historical Library and U of M.



Robert M. Warner

The afternoon presentation will take place in Winants auditorium in Graves Hall at 3:30 pm. Graves Hall is located directly behind the Anchor monument on College across from the Van Wylen library. The presentation will be followed by a reception in the Archives' reading room on the ground floor of the library.

The Joint Archives Council and staff are eager to host Dr. Warner. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend!

Joint Archives Hours

Monday - Saturday

1-4:30 PM

(Closed Sat. March 17 & 24)

Ground Floor
Van Wylen Library

OPEN TO ALL

Keepsake Destruction

Cheap and dangerous. That is what can be said of many budget photo albums which you can purchase at your local K-mart. Beware especially of the type which uses a sticky or gummy paper onto which you place your pictures and fold over a plastic sheet. In ten to fifteen years this will deteriorate to the point where the photos can no longer be removed, the gum will begin to turn a sticky brown and eventually will destroy the photograph.

Many \$2-5 photo albums utilize this method. Poly vinyl chloride which is a plastic that is pliable, somewhat greasy to the touch and has a very "plastic" smell can also destroy photographs in the long run as will traditional "scrapbooks" which traditionally use a very cheap, highly acidic type of paper. Items such as paper clippings and photos will be damaged by the acid in the cheap paper and the book itself will begin to disintegrate in less than twenty years.

It is surprising that albums and other materials which are supposed to help you keep your memories can actually be a partner in their destruction. Rather than taking the cheapest route to storing your photos and other mementos it pays to invest in albums that are designed to be long term solutions to keeping everything in tip top shape.

The Joint Archives Quarterly

Playing Detective

by

Krystal Van Wulfen

Although the recently published *Guide to the Collections* and supplementary indexes have simplified research in the Joint Archives, a certain amount of digging is still frequently necessary. Genealogists especially must play detective when researching their ancestors.

As in solving any mystery, the genealogist should begin by exploring the most obvious clues. In the Archives this means checking the published version of the *Guide* or the on-line computer guide for a listing of the family name.

If the Joint Archives does not contain the personal papers of an ancestor, then there are several other sources that can provide clues for the genealogist. The vertical files of the three collections now have complete inventories which makes it easy to check for a family name or other pertinent information.

The Joint Archives also contains a number of published sources which can be useful in tracking down a family's history. For example, the Holland City Directories go back to 1892 and list the occupations of Holland residents.

Robert Swierenga's books on Dutch in the U.S. census and passenger ship lists provide a

particularly valuable look at how and where the Dutch arrived and where they settled. These books record the names of ships on which immigrants crossed the ocean, occupations, ports of embarkation and arrival, and family relationships as well as information on residency in the U.S.

The Historical Directory of the Reformed Church in America is a valuable resource for anyone researching an ancestor who served as a minister or missionary of the RCA. This can be supplemented by other materials in the



Seminary collection. Also valuable are H. S. Lucas's and J. Van Hinte's books, both entitled *Netherlanders in America*, which contain references to many Dutch immigrants.

Following clues in the Archives is not restricted only to genealogical research; similar methods are used for researching other subjects as well. However, the comprehensive guides and indexes to the collections and trained staff of the Joint Archives makes solving mysteries easy and fun. Move over Agatha Christie!

The Archive's Heros

The work of the Joint Archives of Holland builds upon the work of those who cared for the collections prior to consolidation of the collections. The Holland Historical Trust (Netherlands Museum) archival collection has been cared for by several individuals including Barbara Lampen who is well known to many Holland residents. Since 1982, when Ms. Lampen retired, the Trust's collections and the Western Seminary Archives were looked after by John Luidens who assisted countless researchers in finding materials located in the collections.

Andrew Vander Zee served for many years as the College's Archivist, collecting new material and organizing what is now housed at the Joint Archives. He was preceded by the College's "pioneer" archivist, Janet Mulder. And finally, Elton Bruins created finding aids and helped in documenting the collections beginning in 1968.

In the coming months *The Quarterly* will be focusing on these important individuals and the work they did with the archival collections of Holland. These people served as the caretakers of our collective memory and helped to make the Joint Archives of Holland a reality.

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Barbara Lampen

Museum Archivist 1976-82

Before the Joint Archives was formed in the summer of 1988 the Holland Historical Trust collection (Netherlands Museum) was stored in a vault in city hall behind a curtain in the Mayor's office. Researchers who came to use this material were assisted by several individuals who cared for the collection over the years. From 1976 to 1982 that person was Barbara Lampen.

Barbara Lampen grew up in Holland where her father was a professor of Mathematics at Hope College. She graduated from Holland High School and Hope College after which she attended the University of Michigan where she completed a Masters degree in History in 1939.

Most people who grew up in Holland and attended Holland High School will remember Miss Lampen as a teacher of History, Geography and English from 1942 until her retirement in 1976.

After her retirement she began to work part time for the Netherlands Museum under the direction of Mr. Willard Wichers. Her primary responsibility became the archival collections which were stored in the vault located in the mayor's office on the second floor of city hall.

Carrying up materials to the third floor Museum offices, she assisted researchers who came to find information on the early history of Holland, research family histories and look at the Museum's large photographic collection.

While caring for the archival collections Lampen accomplished several very important projects which later served as a foundation to some of the work of the Joint Archives. In 1978 Lampen was instrumental in publishing a guide to the collections held at the museum. Building on the original guide created by Elton Bruins, this became the basis for the Holland Historical Trust section of the Joint Archive's *Guide to the Collections*. Miss Lampen also reorganized the Museum photo collection based on a model she observed at the Grand Rapids Public Library. She also assisted Mr. Wichers in typing and transcription.

The Netherlands Museum is now the Holland Historical Trust and the archival collections have been moved to their new home at the Joint Archives of Holland. Barbara Lampen's work on the Trust's collections during her six years of work was an important phase in the collection's development. She made countless contributions which made the job of locating historical information and the work of the Archives staff easier.

New Collections

Historical Trust Collection:

- Civil War letters of Wulf Van Appledoorn
- Photos of Holland power plant construction
- Early photos including W.J. Bryant in Holland
- Some early records of life in Fillmore
- Womens Literary Club records

Hope College Collection:

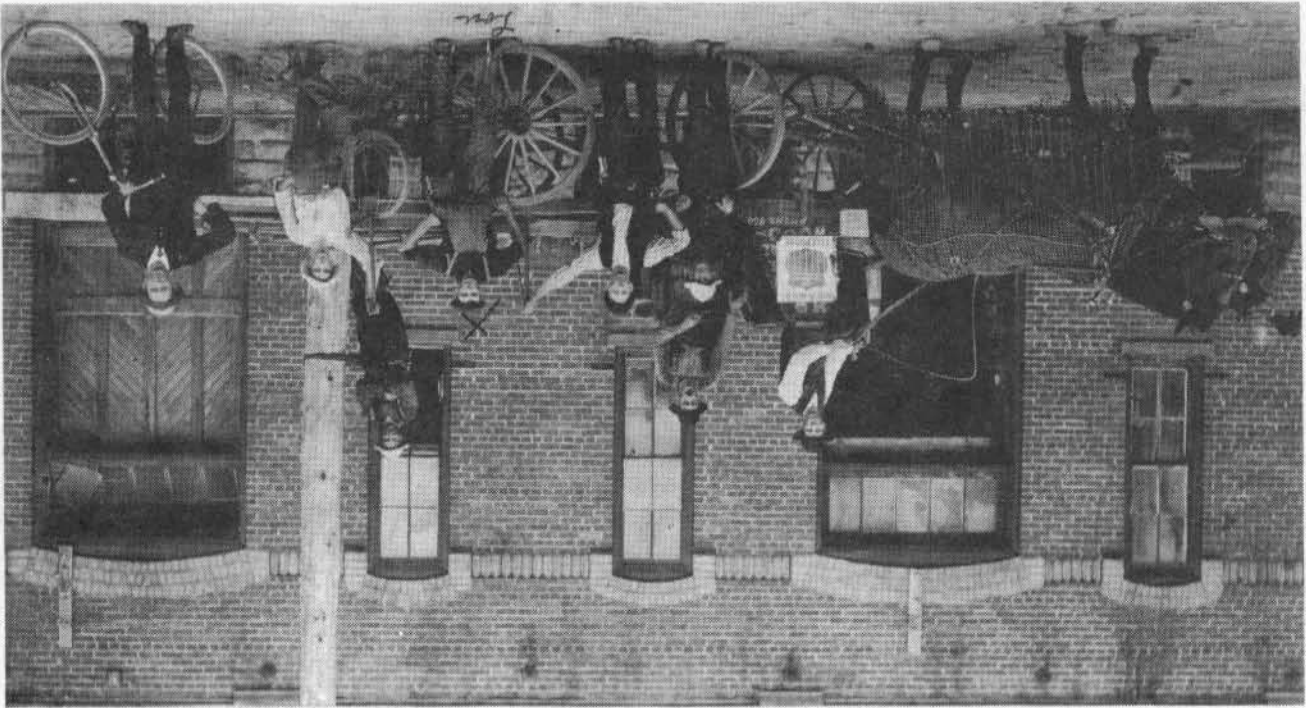
- 1907 photo of Voorhees hall
- Women's league of Hope
- Materials from 1987 inaugural of Hope's 10th president.
- Early college records and maps

Western Seminary Collection:

- Materials of Ottawa Reformed Church
- Several early Dutch hymnals used in RCA
- Donald Bruggink Papers
- Papers of retired RCA ministers
- Photographs

Old stuff in your attic?

Call the Joint Archives at 394-7798. We'll be happy to stop by your home and evaluate your material for possible addition to the Archive's collections.



The Joint Archives of Holland

Holland Historical Trust
Hope College
Western Theological Seminary

Hope College • Holland, MI 49423

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