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Abstract

Research Professor of History, A. C. Van Raalte Institute for Historical Studies, Hope College; Knight in the Order of the Netherlands Lion. The collection includes personnel file (RESTRICTED), several articles, vita curriculum, a selected bibliography, and seven rolls of 35mm microfilm of Gordon Kirk’s Census Data Sheets for Holland, Michigan, Residents, 1850-1880 (filmed by Robert P. Swierenga, July 1974) used in the creation of Kirk’s graduate school thesis, “The Promise of American Life: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Immigrant Community, Holland, Michigan, 1847-1994, 2007 Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies (AADAS) conference proceedings editor’s working papers, and “Migration, Mobility and the Transformation of the Occupational Structure in an Immigrant Community: Holland, Michigan, 1850-1880” (Journal of Social History, Winter 1974). Articles cover all phases of the Dutch migration to the United States, an address given at the dedication of the Joint Archives of Holland, and a paper presented at the Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies conference, September 1993. The collection also contains a series of oral history interviews of local Holland civic and business leaders conducted by Robert Swierenga and David Boeve that include Ken Beelen, Ron and Sonja “Sunny” Boeve, Elsa Prince Broekhuizen, Gordon Van Wylen, Bill Vogelzang, Soren Wolff; and microfilmed records for Classis Chicago records, First Reformed Church of Chicago records, First Reformed Church of Cleveland records, and Second Reformed Church of Cleveland records.

Accession No: H88-1213
Provenance: Robert P. Swierenga
Donor: Robert P. Swierenga
Processed by: Geoffrey D. Reynolds, April 1997

Biography

Robert P. Swierenga was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1935. His educational accomplishments include: a B.A. in History from Calvin College in 1957; a M.A. in History from Northwestern University in 1958; and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Iowa in 1965. His teaching experiences include: Pella Christian High School in Pella, Iowa, from 1958-1961; Instructor of History at Calvin College, 1961-1962; Teaching Assistant, University of Iowa, 1962-1965; Assistant Professor, Calvin College, 1965-1968; Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Iowa, Summer 1966 and 1967; Associate Professor, Kent State University, 1968-1972; History Professor, Kent State University, 1972-1996; Professor of History Emeritus, Kent State University 1996-; and Research Professor of History, A. C. Van Raalte Institute for Historical Studies, 1996-present. His major fields of study and teaching are American/Agricultural and Economic History in 19th Century America, Reformation, and Latin America. Additional accomplishments include many publications and honors and awards. In the year 2000, his former students and colleagues Larry Wagenaar and Hans Krabbendam gave two
large birthday presents to him. On June 9, 2000, they held a conference in honor of his extensive career. At this conference they presented him with a book they had put together, *The Dutch-American Experience: Essays in Honor of Robert P. Swierenga*. The second present was his being named “Knight in the Order of the Netherlands Lion.” This honor was conferred on him by Gilbert Monod de Froideville, Dutch Consul General in Chicago on behalf of Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands.

**Scope and Content**

The papers of Robert P. Swierenga contain many of the papers authored and co-authored on the subject of Dutch immigration to America as well as his updated vita and a selected bibliography of his works. The collection also contains seven rolls of 35mm microfilm of Gordon Kirk’s Census Data Sheets for Holland, Michigan, Residents, 1850-1880 (filmed by Robert P. Swierenga, July 1974) used in the creation of Kirk’s graduate school thesis, “The Promise of American Life: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Immigrant Community, Holland, Michigan, 1847-1994, 2007 Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies (AADAS) conference proceedings editor’s working papers and “Migration, Mobility and the Transformation of the Occupational Structure in an Immigrant Community: Holland, Michigan, 1850-1880” (*Journal of Social History*, Winter 1974).

**Container List**

- Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies (AADAS), Editor working papers, *Dutch-American Arts and Letters in Historical Perspective*, 2007-2008
- Biographical, 1976-[ongoing]
- Bibliography, 1997
- Book Reviews by Robert Swierenga
  - *Dutch American Voices*, Edited by Herbert J. Brinks, 1997
  - *Dutchmen on the Bay*, by Lawrence J. Taylor, 1984
  - *Zion on the Hudson*, by Firth Haring Fabend, 2001
- Books
  - *The Dutch in America: Immigration, Settlement and Cultural Change*, 1985 (editor - review)
  - *Faith and Family*, 2000 (news releases)
  - *Family Quarrels*, 1999 (with Elton J. Bruins – newspaper clipping)
  - *For Food and Faith*, 2000, (newspaper clipping - Scanned images included in
book on zip disk)

*Holland Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*, 2014 (press release)
*Old Wing Mission*, 2008 (co-edited with William Van Appledorn – news release and clipping)


**Correspondence**
Buntrock, Elizabeth, 1999-2000
Miscellaneous, 2001, 2003

**Genealogy**

**Honors**
Dutch Knighthood and Conference on the Dutch-American Experience held to Celebrate the career of Robert P. Swierenga, 2000

**Oral History Interviews**
Beelen, Ken, 2009
Boeve, Ron and Sonja “Sunny”, 2009
Bouws, John, 2009
Broekhuizen, Elsa Prince, 2009
Hallacy, Lou, 2009
Van Wylen, Gordon, 2009
Vogelzang, Bill, 2009
Wolff, Soren, 2009

**Papers/Published Articles**
“Agriculture and Rural Life: The New Rural History,” 1983
“Archival Materials and Manuscripts in the Netherlands on Immigration to the United States,” 1985
“Burn the Wooden Shoes: Modernity and Division in the Christian Reformed Church in North America,” 2000
“Captain De Groot's Account of the Tragic Voyage of the April, Amsterdam to New Castle,” 1817-1818
“Cause of Dutch Emigration to America, The: An 1866 Account”
“Catholic and Protestant Emigration from the Netherlands in the 19th Century: A Comparative Social Structural Analysis”
“Catholic Emigration From the Southern Provinces of the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century,” n.d.
“Computers and Historical Research: Personal Reflections”, 1999
“Cruzamiento International De Kegistros De Immigrants Holandeses En Los Estados Unidos En El Siglo XIX,” n.d.
“Dutch, The,” 1980
“Dutch Immigrant's View of Central Iowa, A” 1965
“Dutch Immigration Historiography,” 1979
“Dutch Immigration Patterns in the 19th and 20th Centuries: and Overview”, 1982
“Dutch Immigration to Michigan and the Middle West,” 1988
“Dutch in Cleveland, The,” 1987
“Dutch International Labor Migration to North America in the Nineteenth Century,” 1983
“Dutch International Migration and Occupational Change: A Structural Analysis of Multinational Linked Files,” 1986
“Dutch Jewish Immigration and Religious Life in the Nineteenth Century,” 1990
“Dutch Rabbi of New York City, The,” *JWB*, 1993
“Dutch Social Clubs in Chicago”, 1995
“Dutch Transplanting in Michigan and the Midwest, The,” 1985
“Dutch Transplanting in the Upper Middle West, The,” 1991
“1834-Netherlands Church Secession and the Dutch Emigration,” 1997
“Ethnicity and American Agriculture,” n.d.
“Ethnicity in Historical Perspective,” n.d.
“Fight to Save Kent State, The,” 1970
“For Food But by Faith,” 1997
“From Colony to City: Holland’s First 25 Years”, 1997
“From Zeeland to Zeeland in 1847,” 1997
“Het Bestuderen Van De Nederlandse Emigratie Naar De Verenigde Staten,” 1981
“Historians and the Census: The Historiography of Census Research,” 1990
“Holland’s Unique History”, 1999
“Immigrant Data Files and Computer Mapping,” 1979
“Impact of Reformed Dutch Immigrants on the American Reformed Churches in the Nineteenth Century, The,” 1975
“In Isolation is Our Strength: The Dutch Reformed of Chicago,” 1993
“Jan Van Mekelenberg,” 1990
“Land Speculator Profits Reconsidered: Central Iowa as a Test Case,” 1966
“Local Patterns of Dutch Migration to the United States in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” 1991
“Low Countries, The,” 1996
“May 4, 1970 Shootings, The” (at Kent State University), n.d.
“Migratie Overzee: Een Spiegel Van De Nederlandse Cultuur”
“Netherlanders in America, The,” 1970
“Netherlanders in America,” 1976
“Netherlanders in Amerika,” DIS Magazine, 1977
“Netherlanders in Chicago,” 1995
“New Rural History: Defining the Parameters, The,” 1981
“News from the Dutch Colony of Pella in North America, June 1854,” 1986

Box 2

Papers/Published Articles (cont.)
“Odious Tax Title, The: A Study in Nineteenth Century Legal History,” 1971
“Ohio’s Calvin College”, n.d.
“Partial Passenger List of the Dutch Ship April, to New Castle, Delaware,” 1993
“Peter Stuyvesant,” 1990
“Pioneers for Jesus Christ: Dutch Protestant Colonization in North America as an Act of Faith,” 1996
“Place of Refuge, A,” 1968
“Quantitative Methods in Rural Landholding,” 1983
“Religion and Immigration Patterns: A Comparative Analysis of Dutch Protestants and Catholics, 1835-1880,” 1886
“Revolutionary Christianity,” 1974
“Samuel Myer Isaacs: The Dutch Rabbi of New York City,” 1992
“Social Science History: An Appreciative Critique,” 1984
“Socio-Economic Patterns of Migration From the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century,” 1976
“Stellingwerff’s Amsterdamse Emigranten and Pella History”, 1999
“Tax Buyer as a Frontier Investor Type, The,” 1970
“Unholy Mess: The IRM California Real Estate Investment Debacle in the Christian Reformed Church in North America in the 1990s,” 2000
“Van Raalte and Scholten: A Soured Relationship and Personal Rivalry,” 1997
Personnel file, 1997 (RESTRICTED)

Box 3

Audiotapes
Bob’s interview with Great Aunt Henriette (Mrs. Arthur) Vos at Rest Haven, Crestwood, Illinois, January 22, 1988
Bob’s interview with Mom and Dad (John R. and Marie Hoekstra Swierenga), Kent, Ohio, February 24, 1981 (3 tapes)
First days in Katwijk, Netherlands, January 1976
Bob’s interview with maternal grandmother Alice (Mrs. Peter A.) Hoekstra (with) and Aunt Evelyn Hoekstra (Mrs. Simon) HetJonk, Hanford, California, December 26, 1981 (2 tapes)
Bob’s interview with Uncle Paul and Aunt Etta Swierenga Tuitman, and Dad John R. Swierenga, Elmhurst, Illinois, May 22, 1993 (tape 2)
Recording of meeting with delegation from Warren Park Consistory with Garfield Mission Steering Committee and members following three month suspension of Rev. James Le Grand, 02/1971
Microfilm
Classis Chicago records, 1900-1913
First Reformed Church of Chicago records, 1853-1936
First Reformed Church of Cleveland records, ca. 1965
Second Reformed Church of Cleveland records, 1890-
Videos
Timothy Christian Schools Heritage Dinner, 2000
Timothy Christian Schools 60th Anniversary, 2009