

Henry Peter Scholte and the 1853 Founding of Central College

James E. McMillan

There are times when institutions as well as people must take stock and face challenges of self-definition. Now approaching its sesquicentennial, Central College, founded in 1853 on the tall grass prairies of Iowa, has faced and weathered several such character-building periods. During these stages of growth, development, and adaptation, trustees, administrators, faculty, students, and staff alike must draw upon their own inner strengths and intuitive wisdom to further the good of the whole. While doing so, these individuals of a more modern era can choose to draw upon the example of other institutions and individuals of the past. In Central's history, such past individual and institutional examples abound, ranging from the founding Baptist Church to the surrogate Reformed Church of America. Also included is one who recognized and indirectly furthered the efforts of both, Dominie Henry Peter Scholte, the founder of Central's host town, the mid-nineteenth-century Dutch enclave of Pella, Iowa. The open mind and far vision of the dominie embraced the Baptist educational gift to his environs and established the foundation for the Reformed Church continuum of the twentieth century. With his own contributions, both in property and spirit, Scholte quite typically ran ahead of and not alongside many of his fellow emigres to the heartland, but even those who held back must have recognized the practicality and wisdom of Scholte's vision at that early time. The dominie's unique combination of entrepreneurial effort with spiritual clarity and intellectual acuity has continued to serve the college as an example through the subsequent decades as Central has weathered financial panic, wartime, threats from rival institutions, flame and conflagration, the transferral of church affiliation, and the more recent accelerations and decelerations that typify a dynamic institution approaching 150 years in age.

While Scholte and his flock of Hollanders faced an uncertain future in their native land, the Baptist Church in America contemplated extending its educational influence into the West beyond the Mississippi River. After the defeat of Sac Chief Black Hawk and the opening of Iowa lands to white settlement in 1833, the Baptists claimed the distinction of holding the first formal Protestant service in what was to become the Hawkeye state -- the date, October 19, 1834. Over the next several years, as white settlement progressed up the valleys of the Des Moines, Skunk, Iowa, and Cedar Rivers, Baptist congregations proliferated until by 1842, fifteen such groups existed. These formed the Iowa Baptist Convention at Iowa City in June, embracing all 382 church members. In subsequent meetings held annually, the convention added missionary and educational plans to its routine denominational concerns and in 1846, a proposal targeted Agency City as a site for a Baptist school. To most, the idea seemed premature, and even though the proposal anticipated the interior growth of the soon-to-be state, the bulk of pioneering enterprise took place along Iowa's eastern border, the Mississippi River.¹

Boosters of Burlington, the original territorial capital, began to dominate and in a slow process by 1852, the convention determined to locate a new institution in that river town. The definitiveness of the decision bothered those who continued to believe an interior location would be more appropriate to service state growth, and later that same year, the convention rescinded the resolution supporting Burlington. An interesting reel next ensued as various partners courted

the church wishing to be the chosen site. While the dance played on, stubborn Burlington Baptists proceeded to found Burlington Institute which would provide initial competition for the future Central College. Beautifully located overlooking the city and the river, it opened its doors in the fall of 1853, a year before Central.²

The convention at Marion, Iowa that reversed the Burlington decision in September 1852, also put out a call to all the Baptist congregations to send forth three to five delegates each to a meeting to be held in November in Oskaloosa to make a final site determination. Not coincidentally, Oskaloosa stood among the contenders, along with Pella, fifteen miles to the northwest. Providence took a hand in the proceedings, and inclement weather held down the number of attendees to twenty-one. This group determined to be far more deliberate than those who chose for Burlington the previous year. They would not repeat the mistake of hastiness, and sparse in number, noted the inexpediency of making a decision at that time. The assembled then called for a meeting in Pella for the following June 1853 when the weather would be more accommodating.³

Mid-century Pella was a young but rapidly growing town approaching two thousand in population, nearly ninety percent among whom were Dutch. The original eight hundred settlers had followed Henry Peter Scholte across the waters in 1847 escaping religious dissension in Holland, and even then on their jounies, fate had intervened to point toward a future venture between the still unfounded town and college. While these original emigrees rested and waited in St. Louis after their travels from Baltimore, the leader Scholte put out feelers for a future location for his group. Hosted by fellow Presbyterian Calvinists in Fairfield, Iowa, Scholte took the advice of one of their ministers to seek out Baptist preacher Moses J. Post concerning potential land aquisitons, for Post "had traversed all of the then known Iowa." Scholte met Post in Fairfield at a child's funeral and immediately noted in this man "the hand of God." The engaging Baptist then led him sixty further miles west to the "finest lands in all Iowa," the ridgeline between the Skunk and Des Moines Rivers in newly surveyed Marion County, the farthest reach of state organization and hard by a frontier still occupied by native Indians. From this beginning, with Scholte directed by the Baptist minister, came the town which would host the future college.⁴

At the Pella meeting of June 2, 1853, the hand of "providence" as Scholte put it, continued to play a part. During the intervening months since the Oskaloosa meeting, a committee of fifteen had been enjoined to study prospective sites and report to the Pella meeting. Now, as that group convened, with Scholte in attendance, not only was it found that the site investigation "had failed to fulfill its responsibility," but also fewer delegates than even had appeared at Oskaloosa now took up the educational task in Pella. They numbered eleven, only half the Oskaloosa contingent. Assuredly Scholte, as host and community leader, addressed these eleven urging upon them not to put off, yet again, the site determination. Now that he had them on his own turf, he wanted to see the project through to a hopefully favorable conclusion. One can only imagine the six-foot, three-inch dominie cajoling the audience, pipesmoke drifting around his head while the pipe in hand would score telling points of emphasis.⁵

The anticipated establishment of a college fit well within the dominie's vision. As current Central professor, Phil Webber, has pointed out, he "had already become an American at heart... there was nothing left to accomplish in the Netherlands." But his dreams had been developed there and now he intended to realize them. Scholte later stated in his own

biographical sketch "I made my choice for Iowa, and I am not disappointed, as far as the natural condition is concerned. I should however not complain if we could have a little more well educated society." He intended now to see that through and hoped that a college would further the amalgamation of positive Dutch and American characteristics. In advocating English language usage, he wrote in his paper, the *Pella Gazette*: "This, together with intermarriage between native and foreign-born citizens, will leave in a few years but little difference between Pella and other more exclusively American towns." To be balanced, however, he also expressed hope that "the Dutch character would show for ages [its] mark..." Certainly a college could nurture and influence this intermarriage.⁶

Upon Scholte's urging, the delegates voted to proceed with the decision, concentrating on the proposals from Oskaloosa and Pella. The Pella proposition delivered by Scholte, A.E.D. Bousquet, and Professor L. Dwight, intended "to put up a building suitable for a college and to donate it and a large campus to the Baptist denomination of Iowa." Minutes indicate "this proposition together with the beautiful site of the proposed location was strongly urged (author's italics)," undoubtedly by the determined domine. Although details on the proposal from Oskaloosa have been lost, it certainly would have included similar community donations of land, money, services, and the construction of a building. If this be the case, Scholte's voice and presence along with the on-site meeting in Pella provided the determining factors.⁷

In the interest of fairness, the assembled delegates voted to give the two representatives from Oskaloosa the same votes as the three from the Pella area. Prayer was then offered before the two proposals were heard and then again before the vote was taken. It favored Pella, and although the exact count was not recorded for posterity, the committee unanimously resolved that Pella be the place of location. A committee of three then drew up articles of incorporation for the Central University of Iowa, the name reflecting both the accessible interior location and the future aspirations of the fledgling institution:

The name and style of this Incorporation shall be "The Central University of Iowa," and its object shall be the establishment, holding, and government of a literary and theological institution in Pella, under the particular auspices of the Baptist Denomination, yet offering equal advantages to all students having the requisite literary and moral qualifications, irrespective of denomination or religious profession.⁸

The next day, the delegates adopted these articles and the constitution and elected the first board of trustees. Fittingly, the choice for president of the executive committee fell upon H.P. Scholte who was joined by Wellington Nossaman as vice president, I. C. Curtis as secretary, and John Smeenck as treasurer. While Smeenck, like Scholte, was a Dutch Pellan, Nossaman and Curtis were both pioneers who had located in the general area of the nearby Des Moines River prior to the Dutch arrival and founding of the town. Curtis had sat as a delegate and was a founding member of the region's first congregation, the Aurora Missionary Baptist Church located six miles south of and founded three years before Pella in 1844.⁹

Indisputably, Dominie Scholte played the key role in obtaining for Pella a nascent institution of higher learning. His presence and influence at the June 1853 meeting swayed the vote, his prestige garnered the office of trustee president, and his personal means allowed the

development of the future campus. Backing up the Pella proposition, Scholte donated an undisclosed amount of hard money and town blocks 71, 72, 81, and 82 (eight acres) for campus construction along with a 160-acre quarter section of land lying outside of the town to be employed for future considerations. Former Central College Librarian Josephine Thostensen, compiler of a centennial history article on the school, has written:

That the Central University of Iowa found a home among the Dutch settlers was largely due to the influence of the Reverend Hendrik Petier Scholte, who showed in this way how little significance he attached to differences of opinion regarding the formalities of religious worship... He fully cooperated with the Baptists, gave generously of his wealth, and at all times had the interest of the College at heart.¹⁰

In his studies of the Pella Dutch, historian Richard Doyle wrote:

...the man most responsible for success was H.P. Scholte... Scholte was not a Baptist, but his cooperation with them in this project emphasizes his liberal point of view in matters of religion as well as his high regard for education. Thus as Van Der Zee states: 'The Puritans of New England waited longer for Harvard College than the Hollanders of Pella did for Central College.'¹¹

Certainly, it required an individual of singular character, vision, and independence to facilitate the college's birth and implement its growth, and in H.P. Scholte, a more suitable man for acknowledgement cannot be found. Not only did he possess the entrepreneurial skills and promotional spirit necessary, he valued education in the highest degree. A scholar himself, he had graduated in 1832 from the University of Leyden in Holland before his ordination the next year. Already he had shown leadership qualities with the organization of the Scholte Club whose membership included the future founder of Holland, Michigan, Albertus Van Raalte. Too, his individualism often led to controversy, and by 1840 he had been briefly suspended from the synod of fellow Seceders who initiated the *Afscheiding*. Naturally he fell out with Dutch church and government officials in Holland, and similar occurrences continued after his emigration to Iowa. He did not align with the already established Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (the future RCA), as did Van Raalte, preferring to start his own independent Christian Church of Pella. Even so, his own congregation temporarily forbade his preaching during the winter 1848-49 when questions arose concerning his handling of emigree financial resources entrusted to his care. Then later in 1854, his congregation suspended him for selling to American businessmen church property fronting Pella's Garden Square. Undeterred, he founded a new church that, too, remained independent of the official Dutch church in the United States.¹²

Both Scholte's role in the founding of Central and his controversial land sale to Americans a year later reflect interestingly on his aims in the new land. Professor Earl William Kennedy, who has appropriately termed the dominie a "talented and cultured maverick" also notes that "Scholte had no interest in creating a Dutch ghetto" in America. Unlike Van Raalte, this dominie persuaded his followers to immediately embrace U.S. citizenship, in his own words "so as to identify ourselves as soon as possible with the land of our adoption." This particular

scene of "200 men with brawny arms upraised to heaven eschewing all allegiances to foreign powers" occurred on September 17, 1847, less than a month after the Hollanders' arrival at the Pella site. As Scholte's biographer Lubbertus Oestendorp pointed out he "had no intentions of becoming a part of a denomination in America, least of all of transporting a 'Dutch' church to the new land." He "wanted no 'theocratic colony.'" In Scholte's assimilative mind "Pella was not to be the church but the world in which God's people would be found, together with unbelievers." Scholte "wanted the town to be a decent habitation, but not a New Jerusalem."¹³

The Baptists scarcely constituted an unbelieving congregation in the dominie's mind, so it would be only natural for him to embrace and facilitate their offer of a higher educational institution. Calvinist in theology in many ways, the Baptists differed primarily in church government. Like Scholte and the Seceders, the Baptists also avowed the separation of church and state. In fact, to the Baptists and Roger Williams in 1630s Rhode Island is attributed the founding of the world's first civil government based on this separative concept. Too, the Baptists believed in the autonomy of the local congregation as did Scholte and, of course, the Bible constituted the ultimate religious authority. Moreover, Scholte may have been aware of the church's commendable record of past successes in higher education, notably Brown, Colby, Colgate, Bucknell, and most recently in similarly midwestern Ohio, Denison, founded in 1837. If the Baptists, with their own logic, adhered to adult immersive baptism, why object strenuously when such goals as a college in your community could be obtained with cooperation and civility.

Turning his attention to the de facto establishment of Central, president Scholte geared up for the task of erecting a two-story, forty-four by sixty-foot edifice as prescribed by the board of trustees. Digging of the foundation began in 1854, appropriately, at the juncture of blocks 81 and 82, land donated by Scholte as the center of campus. As the slow construction proceeded, Scholte oversaw the first tentative steps of the school. At the June 1854 second meeting of the trustees, he directed the hiring of the Reverend E. H. Scarff as principal of the academic department. An Ohio preacher and graduate of Denison, Scarff opened Central for its first classes in October 1854 in temporary lodgings a few blocks from the Pella square and distant from the planned campus. Awaiting the internal development of a collegiate level class, Central was only an academy at this time, enrolling thirty-seven students, a number which grew to seventy-three by the academic year's end, half of them Dutch Pellans.¹⁴

At the June 1855 third meeting of the trustees, the secretary noted the tight money and difficulty of completing construction of the campus building. Nevertheless, with only the basement complete, the trustees changed building specifications from two to three stories. However, school would meet for another year in the temporary lodgings.¹⁵

After this meeting, Scholte resigned his presidency and took over the treasurer's job where he could pay closer attention to college finance. Money, material, and services which had been lavishly spread during the year after founding were now drying up. Still, the new Central Hall was enclosed by the spring of 1856 and with only one floor suitable for use, the building opened for fall classes. As funds continued to evaporate, however, Scholte personally took over the contract for construction of the building, providing from his own pocket the funds necessary for completion as well as building materials. By fall 1857, bell and bell tower were up and much of the interior completed. Most important, the collegiate department now opened under the auspices of Central's first president, the newly appointed Elihu Gunn. Although the financial crisis of 1857 threatened many, the school as a whole thrived. Enrollment for fall 1858

stood at 292 and would grow to 369 by the beginning of the war. Professor Scarff wrote of these years, "The Central University of Iowa being thus suddenly raised from its humble beginnings to this proud position among the institutions of learning in young Iowa, may well be called a new departure." Thus Scholte had seen Central through its birth pangs and early development to stability.¹⁶

As the years progressed, however, it should be noted that despite Scholte's recommendations of accommodation and assimilation, numerous Pella Dutch increasingly resisted the young Baptist college. Not only did some among the Pella Hollanders grow ambiguous to Central, so too has historians' reporting on this apparent apathy to education as the Nineteenth Century progressed. Certainly, Central drew an increasing number of Americans to Pella, but figures are vague. Jacob Van Der Zee reported that by 1860, the population was about evenly divided between Dutch and Americans, while Richard Doyle produces evidence that by the same date, Pella remained three-quarters Dutch. In either case, Scholte's vision of Americanization was taking place, but this did not suit all Pella Hollanders, a fact that pertained to Central College as well. Van Stigt in his history of Pella of 1897 spoke of "the criticism so often heard then and even today: 'But it is a Baptist and not a Reformed school.'" While this carried "little weight" with the author personally, there were those who felt otherwise.¹⁷

Too, Jacob Van Der Zee in his *Hollanders of Iowa* reported that the Iowa Dutch often subordinated secondary and higher education to other concerns:

...in the struggle for existence and wealth in Iowa very many Hollanders have lost sight of cultural pursuits...some have weaned their children from school at an early age while others have been easily satisfied to see their children finish the grammar school or at best the high school. It is indeed doubtful whether one child out of twenty-six has continued in school beyond the eighth grade - a statement that does not flatter the Hollanders in America as a people thirsting for education.¹⁸

Jacob Van Hinte concurs:

...the majority of Pellians was even more indifferent to such training... Many Pellians looked down with some contempt both on those who taught and those who learned... another well known colonial figure declared: 'many take higher education in order to have an easier life rather than work on farms or be involved in some other kind of manual labor.'¹⁹

Town and farm work and the search for material gain and stability obviously cut into Dutch aspirations for an education at the local Baptist college.

Competition for Central also arose from the egress of Pellians to Orange City and Sioux County, Iowa, and from the growing attractiveness of Hope College, the Reformed Church institution founded by Van Raalte in 1866 in Holland, Michigan. The Dutch in Orange City founded their own academy, Northwestern in 1882, and this in turn fed Hope and not Central. With the advent of Hope, Dutch Pellians who did seek collegiate training preferred Hope over Central because of church affiliation. Van Der Zee writes "It cannot be denied, however, that

the founding of Central University at Pella was not sufficiently prized by the Hollanders for many years... the number in attendance until about twenty years ago [1890] was almost negligible."²⁰

Conversely, historian Jacob Van Hinte, writing in the 1920s, emphasized Dutch interest in Central led by Scholte and A.E.D. Bousquet, the "soul" of the cultural life. Showing the polarity of the situation, Van Hinte maintains:

Characteristic of the Pellians breadth of mind is, in the end, the answer they gave to the repeated reproach addressed to them that they not only tolerated a Baptist school, but even frequented it: 'That it is a Baptist school and not a Reformed one, we have always considered to be of very little importance in the field of scientific education.'²¹

So the relationship between the town and the gown, which Scholte so ardently supported, ebbed and flowed during these years. It is known that in 1859 and 1865, Van Raalte visited the Iowa Dutch in order to ascertain the feasibility of starting a Reformed Church-affiliated college. He had already, in 1856, been called in to Pella to establish the town's First Reformed Church, Scholte abjuring the association. Van Raalte found, however, "the duplication of schools in such a rural town altogether unnecessary and superfluous," for Central College was healthy and serving the community well.²²

Over the one and a half centuries since Scholte's initial efforts as founder, Central has withstood many storms. During the Civil War years, ninety-nine percent of the male students enlisted, and of these 126, twenty-four gave the ultimate sacrifice, an extraordinary ratio. Beginning in the 1870s and lasting until the new century, loyalties became seriously strained among Iowa's Baptist institutions at Pella, Burlington, and newly founded Des Moines College. While Burlington Institute went out of business in 1901, it was clear that a majority of aggressive church members favored Des Moines over Pella, and Central nearly expired, but ultimately relying on the strength and determination of its own staff and alumni, refused to go to ground.²³

This polarized situation set up the next critical stage in the college's history when in 1916, the Baptist Church decided to consolidate into one school and forego Central entirely. Fortunately, the Reformed Church stepped in at this juncture and saved Central for the future. The Baptists had picked the wrong horse, too, and it was with mixed feelings that Central associates watched Des Moines University go under in 1930.²⁴

Then came the fires that destroyed Central's three original structures: the YMCA building housing chapel, gymnasium, auditorium, and library burned in 1917; Scholte's original Old Central succumbed to possible arson and fire in 1922, and the next year the women's dorm Cotton Hall suffered severe fire damage and was condemned. Again fortunately, the RCA had kept pace, and four newly constructed buildings provided continuance.²⁵

Financial stress, war, and enrollment difficulties continued to plague Central during the 1930s and 1940s, but as of 1942, one great hurdle had been cleared: sufficient endowment for national accreditation. Scholte would have exulted at this step into the mainstream of American collegiate education.²⁶

But with continued amalgamation of Dutch and American, the balances shifted during the postwar years. While the college prospered, particularly during the 1960s when enrollment went

from 500 to 1500, connections with the Reformed Church and Dutch heritage loosened. These trends have continued in more recent decades until today only about ten percent of the students have Reformed background. At the same time, the college community remains strongly grounded in the Christian tradition as is evidenced by the mission statement, the curriculum, and the student body which, as Scolte had hoped, represents a diversity of denominations. Now, the college nearing its sesquicentennial, once again faces challenges of identity, definition, and commitment. It is a time that requires reflection on the independence, dedication, and flexibility of a founder such as Henry Peter Scholte, who represented the best of both worlds without unduly prejudicing either. Assuredly, Central can do likewise.

Endnotes

Jim McMillan extends his thanks to Central College Archivist Madeline Vanderzyl and to Central Professor of German, Dr. Philip Webber for assistance and advice in the preparation of this paper. All of the materials listed below with the exception of Abernathy are found in the Central College Archives.

It should be noted that it is probable that many of the records pertaining to the pre-1916 period of Central College history were either removed to Des Moines College in 1916 and have since been lost after the demise of that institution in 1930, or many relevant records perished in the Central fires of 1917 and 1922.

1. G. P. Mitchell, ed., *A Century of Iowa Baptist History, 1834-1934* (Pella, Iowa, The Baptist Record 1934) 18, 29; for Central College to 1934, see 117-27.
2. Alonzo Abernathy, *A History of Iowa Baptist Schools* (Wolverton Printing and Publishing: Osage, Iowa, 1907) 105; for Central College to 1906, see 104-37. This photocopy courtesy of the Baptist Church Research Center, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.
3. Kate Keables Beard, "History of the First Twenty-Five Years," *The Alumni Record*, July 20, 1904 (Pella, Iowa, Central University of Iowa) 3, 5; for Central College to 1878, see 3-18.
4. Richard L Doyle, "Pella: The Prairie, the People, Prosperity -- Wealth Mobility in an Iowa Immigrant Community," a paper presented at the Conference on Dutch Immigration to America, 1782-1982," the Balch Institute for Domestic Studies, Philadelphia, Pa., September, 1982; Table 1,; "Pella and Its People: The First Seventy Eight Years," a paper presented at the Third Conference of Dutch-American Studies, Central College, October 1981, Tables 2, 3; Cyrenus Cole, "A Bit of Holland in America" in *Souvenir History of Pella* (G. A. Stout Publishing: Pella, Iowa, 1922) 9; Ronald D. Reitveld, "Hendrik Peter Scholte and the Land of Promise,"

manuscript, 17. Post moved to Pella in 1847 and died there in 1848 at age thirty-seven.

5. *The Central Ray*, January 1892, "Central University of Iowa: An Historical Sketch," 49-50. According to Van Stigt (see note 16), Scholte was "addicted" to pipe smoking. Dutch military records establish his height.

6. Philip Webber, "Reassessing the Visionary Thinking of H.P. Scholte," a paper presented for the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies, Hope College, Holland Michigan, June 13, 1997, in author's possession. Webber here refers to Oestendorp's conclusions (see note 12). Scholte's biographical sketch is from Cornelis Smits, courtesy of Philip Webber; Henry S. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America: Dutch Immigration to the United States and Canada, 1789-1950* (Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, 1989) 193. Scholte's full quote reads "hope that the industry, order, honesty, and piety of the Dutch character would for ages show their mark in the neatness of town and country, the excellence of roads and highways, the scientific reclamation of the soil, the promotion of schools and other institutions of learning, and the multiplication of houses of worship."

7. Minutes, June 2, 1853, Board of Trustees, Central College, 1853-86. Scholte's exact words went unrecorded. Oskaloosa eventually hosted the beginnings of Drake University which moved to Des Moines and William Penn College which remains active today.

8. *Central College Ray*, *ibid.*

9. *Souvenir History of Pella*, 118. The Aurora Church moved to Pella in 1857.

10. Josephine Thostensen, "One Hundred Years of Service, 1853-1953: A History of Central College," 9-10. This is a special edition of the *Central College Bulletin*, August 1953. The 50-page article is the most complete work on Central College History to 1953. For more recent years, see *The History of Pella, 1847-1987* (Pella Historical Society: Pella, Iowa, 1987) 129-40, "Central College, 1853-1986," by William Wing.

11. Richard L. Doyle, "Frontier Influences in the Development of Pella, Iowa, 1847-57 (unpublished Master's thesis, Drake University, 1967) 106-13. Central Professor Philip Webber has stated that "while the Baptist Church gave birth to Central College, Scholte applied the forceps." For Van Der Zee, see note 16.

12. For background on Scholte, see Edward William Kennedy, "Eden in the Heartland," *Church Herald*, March 1997 (Reformed Church of America: Grand Rapids, Michigan) 8-15.

13. Kennedy, *ibid.*; Lubbertus Oestendorp Th.D. dissertation, Free University of Amsterdam, *H.P. Scholte: Leader of the Secession of 1834 and Founder of Pella*, (Franeker: T. Wever, 1964) 158, 160, 162.

14. *The Central Ray*, January 1892, 58.

15. *Ibid.*, 50.

16. E. H. Scarff, "Central University of Iowa - Pella: Reminiscences, 1881," manuscript, 28. This is the most complete inside view of Central during its first three decades. Scholte continued on as treasurer until 1865 when he retired dedicating the last years of his life to other interests including writing his final tracts of a religious nature. The enrollment count included all students: children's, academic (high school-college prep) and collegiate divisions. Central admitted female students from the beginning, evidence of the democratizing influence of the West in education. Baptist Denison, for example, did not admit women until the late Nineteenth Century, nor did the majority of the schools in the East.

17. Jacob Van Der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa* (State Historical Society of Iowa, 1912) 107; Doyle, Pella: The Prairie, etc.," Table 1; K. Van Stigt, *History of Pella, Iowa and Vicinity* (Weekblad Print Shop: Pella, Iowa, 1897) 84.

18. Van Der Zee, 272.

19. Jacob Van Hinte, *Netherlanders in America* (Baker House Books: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1985) 398; The original in Dutch was published in 1928. Van Stigt was the other well known colonial figure.

20. Van Der Zee, 279.

21. Van Hinte, 287, 291-92.

22. *Ibid.*, 400. Wooed by Pellans for educational and religious reasons, Van Raalte did make the establishment of a college in Michigan a condition for his permanent residency in Holland, hence the founding of Hope College in 1866.

23. *A Century of Iowa Baptist History, 1834-1934*; for Burlington, see 115-16; for Des Moines College and University, see 134-50. Oestendorp incorrectly attributes Central's near demise to the opening of Hope College. Its effect was indirect at best. The competition with Des Moines was the crucial factor.

24. The Reformed Church took over the property of Central College. The endowment went to Des Moines with the Baptists.

25. Van Hinte suggests arson, 863.

26. The required endowment for accreditation was \$500,000 at that time. Having started over in 1916, Central took some time to achieve that figure. Endowment, not academic quality provided the issue.