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The Harrison Academy

The process leading up to this paper has, in one sense been disappointing. I welcomed the invitation from Mrs. Kennedy as an occasion and incentive to work at what I felt was one of the loose ends left after I had finished writing my father's biography. I wrote that with a sense of unfinishedness since I knew there were important gaps in my factual information about the Harrison Academy. But now I feel a bit of chagrin at having learned that, unless I have missed a resource somewhere, there is very, very little extant information.

In a way, that discovery could have set me free-free to manufacture and pass on just about anything I wanted to about the Academy without fear of contradiction by the facts. But I have worked as conscientiously as I can, aiming to say no more than the fact or reasonable inferences from the facts allow, and seeking to avoid letting what I have to say merely reflect my own personal views. I have been equally cautious against letting this be merely a subscript to my father's biography. Granted that he was in fact and by far the central figure in the short life of the Academy, he was not the only one, and I have taken pains to set his own convictions in the context of whatever is knowable about the character of the Dakota Dutch communities.

Our interest as historians is not, I am sure, an interest in the Academy per se, but mainly for what the phenomenon of the Academy can tell us about the people of Dakota. And the history of those people in those times and in that region is also not of interest for its own sake. In so far as it is possible to think with precisions about their interests, in this case in education, that history can be fruitful only as we attempt to render precise our own interests and commitments in education and in some allied matters.

Objectively, the phenomenon of the Academy certainly does not loom very large. Its history was very brief and very sporadic.

It began in the year 1902 and ran for four years. What I was particularly interested in uncovering was what happened after that and until the year 1923, when my father was again involved, and until 1928. It still seems to me that there must have been something between 1906 and 1923, but I have been unable to find any evidence of it having been active at all during those seventeen years. Though I was very young still in 1923, I am reasonably sure that I would have heard

and remembered references to its being there and to persons who might have been involved. It did not end in 1928 when, after 26 years in Dakota, my father became the editor of De Volksvriend in Orange City. It went on for at least a couple of years under the principalship of a man named Lubbinge and my sister-in-law, Bernice Mollema, taught there at least for the academic year 1932-33. I have to assume that that was the end of it.

I had no way of knowing at the time, or now, about the financial support for the school. Its official names was "the Harrison Classical Academy", which would indicate that it was under the sponsorship and had the support of the Dakota Classis. Still there is no evidence in the annual reports of the Classis to the Particular Synod, first of Chicago and later of Iowa, of such Classis recognition of the project; there is only a reference to the hope that such Classical recognition and support would be forthcoming. I could find only one line, in the 1903 report of the Harrison church, which mentions that "an academic project" had been undertaken. Such Classical silence would suggest that the support was purely local, though remembering the fine relations my father enjoyed in the twenties with Reverend Guikema of the Harrison Christian Reformed Church, I am willing to guess that there may have been some degree of support from the local Christian Reformed Church as well as the Reformed. I have no idea of the extent of support, but it was not so pitiful that it did not allow for the purchase of at least a minimum of equipment, including an occasional basic item for use in demonstrating some principles of physical science. So it was not quite as simple as the proverbial "Mark Hopkins at one end of the log and the student at the other."

From where we view things, the operation was indeed quite miniscule, both in scope and duration. That perception has to modified at least somewhat by comparing it with the operation of the whole Reformed Church set-up at the time, which was itself quite miniature. When the Academy venture was undertaken, South Dakota had been a state for a mere twelve years, with the founding of the earliest Reformed Churches dating from the early eighties. Budget receipts for the individual churches ranged from less than two hundred dollars up to twenty-six hundred. There was still a good deal of instability as far as the Dutch population was concerned; some who had settled in the region felt the yen to move further west, lured by the availability of free government land. Nor was every Dutchman automatically a churchman; the area had its share of outright Dutch secularists. And, of course, out there, as universally in those days, the Dutch Reformed community was split down the middle between the Reformed and Christian Reformed churches, to the detriment of the ecclesiastical strength of the ethnic group. In comparison with the general scope of the entire Reformed church enterprise in the tri-county of Bon Homme, Charles Mix and

Douglas counties, the academy venture did seem larger than it can from where we sit. But that small numerical size did not reflect any smallness in the spirit or ambition of the community, as the following must make clear.

I have to rely on at least one bit of visible evidence for an indication that the expectations for the Academy were much more solid than would appear from its size or from the brevity of its existence. The building in which it was housed surely suggests that it was not thought of as a temporary experiment. The quarters, as I knew them in the twenties, were clearly not temporary or makeshift. The building was not new in the twenties so I presume it may have been there for the Academy's first phase, and it had been designed clearly to house a school. And it was a substantial one, with two floors. I should remember more clearly than I do whether there were two rooms on each floor, since the janitorial responsibilities were mine between my eighth and thirteenth years-a job that entailed my being there early each morning in winter to start the fire in the big pot-bellied stove and my sweeping up and cleaning the blackboards and erasers after each day's classes. It is remotely possible that the building had been taken over from the public school system which had outgrown it. But the two-room public school which I attended in the twenties was at that time not very new and was scarcely larger than the Academy building. But the presence of that adequate structure, whether built to house the Academy or in some way taken over the from the public school system, would suggest an expectation of permanence for the enterprise. That, plus the occasional use of the phrase, "the Athens of the West", would indicate a seriousness of purpose and an optimism for its future.

The Academy was clearly not my father's invention, though its operation was mainly his--though not exclusively. There is a minute from the first period from 1902-1906 which pays tribute to the dedication of my father to the Academic enterprise, but his name is paired with that of a man named Steketee, about whom I have no other information and whose name I cannot recall ever having heard.

The initiative for the establishment of the Academy clearly came from the area churches themselves. And in the light of what we know about the quality of leadership in the Dutch community, both clerical and lay, it is not surprising that that initiative is there. Here I must risk indulging in a circularity but it is a circularity I would defend: one reads the character of the people from the fact that they did build an academy but one also reads the character of the Academy from the character of the people who created it.

From the perspective in the ministers Dakota was not then, at least, viewed as a kind of hinterland. Ministers of excellent religious and scholarly stature and competence moved

with apparent freedom not only from the Dakota churches into larger and more firmly established parishes in Wisconsin, Iowa and Michigan but from these areas into Dakota. The image of the ministers at any rate leaves no impression of a community of "dumb farmers" or of persons of marginal competence. The Tri-County area like the area further east, around Castlewood and Lennox, were settled not by people driven thither by their failures elsewhere, but by people of ambition and of vision for even greater opportunity in the wider open spaces of the Dakota territory.

I would guess that that is currently a little hard to believe, seeing that South Dakota does not now have a reputation for having achieved all that greatly in anything. But I can make my estimate of the earlier Dakota realistic by assessing with reasonable confidence why the earlier promise has not been realized. My judgment is that the long range troubles which have given Dakota a reputation as a land of problems all stem from an initial error in judgment respecting the quality of the soil. The Dutch were above everything else farmers, and their trail across the country is mainly determined by the quality of the soil. In the tri-county area they were, I think, misled by first appearances. Under the right conditions what appeared to be there was a soil of superior quality along with ample water. In the twenties we knew of a spot called Mud Lake, eight miles northwest of Harrison. It was then a dry lake bed, providing hay that stood four feet high at cutting time. But that lake had earlier and within the memory of the first settlers extended almost to Harrison itself. What the pioneers apparently did not realize was that the layer of fertile soil was very shallow, unlike the twelve and thirteen foot layers of black loam they had known in Illinois and Iowa. Nor did they realize that the abundant water was all surface water, held there because there was underneath the surface a clay hardpan. Under those conditions, farming was much more at the mercy of the weather than it usually is. Under ideal conditions of regular rainfall through the growing season crops could rival the best that Iowa could produce, but more often than not the rainfall was far more sporadic or lacking and the hot southwest prairie winds could wipe out a crop in a matter of days. It is necessary, I think, to understand that in order to believe the quality of the people that in the late nineteenth century found Dakota so attractive.

Probably the most notable illustration of the leadership quality among the ministers was that of James F. Zwemer, who in various capacities played a major role in strengthening the establishment of the Reformed church wherever in Dakota the Dutch opted to try their fortunes. His tireless effort over the whole area earned for him the title "God's Greyhound", a title which, during his own years as Classical Missionary from 1913-1919, my father appropriated to himself, not, I hope, as if to preempt it but as an indication of how conscious he was

of Zwemer's influence. Zwemer was the first minister of the church in Platte but was also for a time the designated "agent for western institutions", which I would guess was a General Synod appointment. His interest in education and his perceived competence as an educator is amply evidenced by his service as principal of Northwestern Academy in the nineties and his subsequent tenure as a professor at Western Seminary. All that makes it plausible to suppose that the idea of an Academy in South Dakota may have been planted in large part by him.

But Zwemer was not the only outstanding ecclesiastical leader. The Harrison church was probably the strongest in the tri-county area, and that made tiny Harrison (with never more than I suppose a dozen homes) a logical site for the Academy over, for instance, Platte, which was by the turn of the century a fairly bustling town. My direct recollections or indirect impressions of the area's clergy are clearest for the Harrison lineage. At the time of the Academy's inception the incumbent minister was a man named Henry Straks, who came to Harrison fresh from a three year stint as a teacher at the Northwestern Academy. Figuring in the early Platte history was pastor Bernard Mollema who had come after a couple of parishes in the Christian Reformed church; his name was still often mentioned even during my own early years. My clearest impression of what these clergy must have been like comes through the person of Anthony Rozendal who was the Harrison minister in the early twenties. His bearing and interests and polish made it easy to believe he had stepped directly from the high culture of Amsterdam via New Brunswick Seminary and out to the Dakota prairies. His wife was the sister of Henry Hospers, for many years the Professor of Old Testament at Western Seminary, and she bore the same marks of cultural, social, and linguistic good taste and elegance that distinguished her brother. In the thirties after his retirement I had occasion to room and board for a summer in their home in Volga, South Dakota, and "Dominie" Rozendal never appeared even at breakfast without wearing his dress suit complete with high-standing stiffly starched wing collar and tie. Standard clerical dress, not only in the pulpit but for pastoral calls during the week, was a cutaway coat worn with gray striped trousers. Reverend John De Beer, then in the Grand View church, was an equally impressive figure, tall and with a flowing white beard, always ready with a funny story and a kindly pat on the head for us children. The ministers' diction, in sermons and ordinary conversation alike, was carefully elegant. They were, to my recollection, superb pulpiteers, as were Anthony Van Dyk in the Platte church later and and Henry Fikse at Aurora Center. And the church buildings themselves matched the figures of the dominies. They, and the parsonages that stood along side them, gave evidence that the church was a going concern, meant to be around and to flourish for along time to come.

But even the ministers as I have described them did not really match at least one layman. The founder of the Dutch community in Douglas County was Frank Le Cocq, who had spearheaded a westward movement originating in Pella, Iowa. He was a person, by all accounts, of a stature one does not naturally associate with mid-American pioneering of a century ago. He eventually amassed a ranch of nineteen hundred acres and built a large and comfortable home in Harrison, the home which my father purchased for our residence during the twenties. Le Cocq's stature is further attested to by the fact that he was a member of the first legislature of the state of South Dakota in 1890, as well as a County Commissioner for twenty five years and the State's Railway Commissioner for six years. He played a major role in mapping out the area in order to locate the properties available for homesteading, and during those tender first years of Dakota's political history was instrumental in ousting a fraudulent political gang led by a man named Brown. In 1917 the family moved to the state of Washington. There were eight sons. Two became lawyers, three became civil engineers with advanced university degrees and three became medical doctors--all eight of them having ended up eventually in Washington State. Of the eight, the elder two had their secondary school education at the Academy, of which the Senior Le Cocq was a staunch supporter--probably also the leading lay booster for the establishment of the Academy.

The Academy, as I have said, was the community's idea and that much of a portrayal of the kinds of church and lay leadership that was available has to say something about the dimensions and character of the Academic dream. My father was obviously wholly ignorant of what the Dakota community was like. To a degree that is surprising to us who knew him throughout his life as one for whom no assignment was beneath his dignity, he quite looked down his nose at the initial suggestion that he go out to South Dakota to begin his ministry. With a degree of seriousness which we are left only to guess at, he referred to that region variously as "Siberia" and "Arabia Deserta". It was obviously not quite what he had in mind as the place for his career. And though later he could hardly be pried loose from the area, he likened his going out there to Abraham's move out of Ur of the Chaldees, with emphasis on the going out but having no idea what he might be getting into.

The appointment was a dual one. He was to serve as the "Stated Supply" of the Charles Mix church then located some miles out in the country to the southwest of Platte, and as the teacher (he made a point always to say "principal") of the Academy located in Harrison, a good twenty miles easterly from Platte--thus a distance of at least twenty-five miles between the two locations, negotiated always on horseback or by horse and buggy and in all kinds of weather. It was clearly the academic half of the assignment that drew him to South Dakota.

Though he had his Seminary degree it is clear that academic work was then and throughout his life his first love. He had spent some time over the immediately preceding years teaching elementary school in Sioux County and could, I think, easily have settled into that as a career. But here was a chance at working at a higher level, that of the secondary school, and the appeal of that had to be irresistible. Not only did he think of himself as an academician before he was a churchman but he was so perceived by others. His official call to become the minister of the Platte church, though he began that at the same time as the academic one, was addressed to him as Prof. B.D. Dykstra.

The first stint at the academic was relatively simplified by virtue of the fact that in 1902 he simply gathered together a group of students and then saw that group through a four year program, without graduating any or adding a new class each year. During the twenties it was different, as a new class entered each year and was graduated after the normal four years. I have not been able to run down figures as to how many students were involved. My best recollection is that during the twenties somewhere between five and ten students were in each class, and I vaguely remember seeing somewhere a picture of the 1902-06 group which may have numbered as many as twenty. So far as I have been able to discover no records of enrollment and no transcripts remain. Today colleges and universities are very fussy about the credentials that a candidate for admission can present, and I presume that at the turn of the century matters of that kind were generally handled in a far less formal or rigorous manner. The archives do contain a letter written in support of the application of Ralph Le Cocq for admission to Macalaster College, detailing only the work he had done in Greek at Harrison. There is a passing comment in one of my father's memoirs saying that none of the students from the Academy who opted to go on to college or university education was ever denied admission--and most did so go on.

From this point onward I want to focus on two intertwined matters which, I think, raise a historian's interest in the phenomenon of the Academy well beyond a mere antiquarian level to where the history prompts reflection on the nature of education and of a church's possible involvement in it. Much of this is, as you will quickly recognize, of the nature of surmise and inference from sometimes incidental cues, in the absence of formal documents or direct statements defining the Academy's "philosophy of education", and you will be able as I in detecting how warranted or weak the inferences may be. What emerges from that is not a certain or single-minded image. What was undertaken was often undertaken more by instinct, or by conformity with educational conventions of the time, than by a carefully mapped design. But if no sharply definitive image emerges then the very lack of specificity and the possible shifting from one aim to another at least raises

some issues that a church-sponsored education has constantly to be reflecting on. The two intertwined matters are the substance, the curriculum, of the education and the "philosophy", that is the specific aim, of the educational venture.

As far as the substance of the curriculum was concerned I have no reason to doubt that this was left mainly to my father's devising, though one has to surmise also that people like Henry Straks and James Zwemer may have had some input of their own. But the curriculum, so far as I can know, was also not invented simply de novo. Curriculum debates quite certainly did not happen on any kind of large scale or very often. At the turn of the century, education simply tended to be what education is, and much was quite certainly settled by the prevailing custom among academic institutions. In speaking of the Academy, my father does refer to "things usually taught." Even the Hope College catalog for about the year 1896, the year my father entered as a Freshman, uses that phrase in lieu of the later customary detailed curriculum statements. Hope teaches, it said, "all the courses usually taught in institutions of this kind!" In my father's case it is plausible to suppose that his notion of what should go into the curriculum was mainly shaped by the curriculum he had met at the Northwestern Academy, the institution which always stood highest in his affections.

The obvious core of that curriculum was the study of classical languages, with mention being made of three years of Greek during the first period of 1902-1906, and presumably then, as in my time in the twenties, there were four years of Latin. This heavy emphasis on the classical languages was not merely casually there. I remember that in my days at the Academy in Orange City, the fact of that emphasis was the Academy's boast as compared with the public high school. Ours was "classical", that is, an academically elite kind of education. I wish there were some way of determining how much of that rigorous insistence on the study of the classical languages over the years may have been due to the Academies' official titles, Harrison Classical Academy, Northwestern Classical Academy--which had nothing to do with Greece and Rome but was a reflection of the fact that they were or were meant to be under the sponsorship of various "Classes" of the church.

The curriculum also included courses in history and literature, where we first encountered the great classics of both English and American literature, including some poetry. There was no Bible courses, but there was a daily chapel service.

Of some special significance is the emphasis which was placed on mathematics and physical science, which included some astronomy along with the physics. There was nothing

unconventional about the emphasis on mathematics, but it was true that mathematics was a special passion of my father. He acquired a reputation for having memorized the whole of the geometry and algebra textbooks, and prided himself during his college days on never having gone to class with a math problem unsolved. He studied, during his year at Yale, mainly Sanskrit and mathematics. He did have an ambition to become eventually a university professor; in his earlier years that would have meant as professor of mathematics. Later possibly that would have been as a professor of Hebrew or Greek.

The emphasis on science was also not merely routine. He had a warm respect for the modern scientific mind with its respect for facts and the romance of the search for scientific explanations. Late in life in a lecture at Western Seminary we find him deploring the fact that pre-seminarians were mainly neglectful of the study of the physical sciences, hinting at least that they would do well to spend less time with their noses in the Bible and a little more in the study of the natural world. And at one point early in my career in the Philosophy department at Hope when we talked about my role, he made a surprisingly perceptive comment (and, I think, a deserved one) that as a discipline philosophy was relatively more easily manipulable by the ideologically interested than was science. In that connection I wish I could recover a copy of a penetrating analysis of the nature of intellectualism in church related institutions which I ran across while working early in my career on the issue of a philosophy for the philosophy department at Hope. I do not recall just what measurements were employed, but the thrust of the study was that the degree of an institution's sectarian stress varied in direct ratio to the degree that its intellectual focus lay in its philosophy department rather than in the study of the sciences - a conclusion which the study sought to reinforce by showing that the sciences were historically more adept at shedding particular ideological biases (were in that sense more readily "self-corrective") than philosophy had been.

But that much about the curriculum of the Academy has already brought me into the more crucial matter of "the philosophy of education" which, though more tacitly than overtly, seems to have inspired the venture. Here I can speak more confidently of my father's conception of the Academy's reason for being than of the community's. The founding community may not have become any more explicit than to feel that the Academy would be "a good thing to do." As far as my father's perception was concerned, the question did not seem to be whether there should be a "Christian" education over against a secular one, though I shall have to fine-tune his position on this matter a bit later on. For him the issue was whether there should be education at the secondary level at all. During his years as editor, it is true, he took an occasional swipe at "secular humanism" in public education, and I have no right to minimize that. Still, I have to

conclude that his editorials, on a wide range of topics, including education, were more influenced by available emotion-laden images of things, including education, picked up from the public media than his thinking had been before the hectic writing years of his editor years. The Harrison Academy seems to have come into being not as a way to provide students with an alternative to the secular education of the public schools but to give students a chance to go to secondary school at all.

Nor can one infer from the fact that the Academy was church-sponsored that it was meant to be what we would now think of as a "Christian" school set over against the public school. In all, at least all Dutch pioneering communities, the first inspiration to education did come from the churches, as truly in South Dakota as in Michigan and New York and New Jersey earlier. In the case of Harrison°s Academy, it was either this or no education at all, since there was no other within reach. Furthermore, before the turn of the century the temper of life for South Dakota was not that far removed from the temper of the first missionaries to the native Americans, when among both Protestant and Catholic missionaries education, the development of literacy, was as much an inherent part of the church's mission as anything else. And interestingly, the Harrison Academy was not the only venture of its kind at that time in that area. There was another Academy, some sixteen or so miles northwest of Platte and I think on the Missouri River, at a tiny crossroads named appropriately "Academy". My recollection is that this was under the auspices of the Congregational church, not famous, I think, for its interest in propagating schools. That was also a one-man operation.

Nor was the Academy founded, I must judge, for the express purpose of the eventual preparation of ministers for the churches, though a few did enter the ministry, and my father did write a beautiful letter to Ralph Le cocq urging him to consider a ministerial career. From the second period of the Academy's existence I can think of only three who became ministers. The Academy, viewed from the perspective of where its alumni went, was geared rather toward the equipping of persons for professional life, of which the church vocations counted as but one. Besides the two oldest Le cocq boys, one of whom became a Civil Engineer and the other a Lawyer, at least one and maybe two earned their Ph.D.'s and spent their career-time on the staff of Purdue University, and I think there may have been another who earned his engineering degree at the University of South Dakota. And for us in this group the most interesting of the Academy's alumni is certainly the late Professor Henry Zylstra, Calvin College's still much-idolized chairman of the English department. At least in its achievement if not in its explicit purpose, the Academy was a start on the road not only toward literacy or a pragmatically adequate intelligence but toward full

participation in the scholarly and professional community of the nation.

For my father, had the issue ever been posed for him in these terms, it would probably have been more important that religion be an educated and intelligent one than that education be religious in its orientation. In that sense being educated was probably more nearly "the bottom line" than "being Christian" was. He revelled in Charlemagne's famous letter to his clergy, out of which came the Carlovingian Renaissance revolving around Abeleard: "If your theology is as bad as your Latin, I tremble for your theology." He was often shaken by the intellectual imcompetence of the clergy he knew, and deplored what he derisively called "the training of ministers"--"We train animals, we educate people." For him an "educated ministry" did not mean a ministry that had graduated from Seminary. It referred to a situation in which there was an educated class of persons from among whom candidates for the ministry might emerge.

There is one aspect of my father's career and temperament which would seem to belie the academic freedom and openness, the freedom from a parochial interest, that the above has tended to ascribe to him. This was his intense commitment to the worth of having and preserving a group identity, for most of his life in his case a Dutch identity but in later years even more specifically a Fresian one. In those vacant year after leaving the newspaper in 1934 he did make a pale effort to produce his own periodical, and its title would have been "Ons Volk". Still his instincts were quite precise. When he spoke of preserving a group identity he was careful to let this mean an ethnic identity. The unity he fought to preserve was a unity as Dutchmen, or as Fresians. This did not mean apparently that every Dutchman ought to preserve his ethnic identity. It was simply assumed that every Dutchman would want to--and he did feel some shock that in Dakota, understandably amid the confusions of the First World War, some Dutchmen opted to conceal their Dutchness by adopting Americanized or French Huguenot sounding names. And wherever there was that wish to preserve a Dutch identity that wish, he allowed, should be met by establishing a Dutch church in the area, even for four or five families. But I think this was quite different from adopting a parochial attitude in religion, as his pioneering religious (as compared with ecclesiastical) ecumenism would indicate. The closest he comes to a religious parochialism, so far as I have been able to discover, is to have argued that certain denominational emphases are more natural for certain ethnic temperaments than others. (Calvinism is natural to the Dutch temperament while Methodism is not--it is more natural to the African temperament!) But if the question of whether he was religiously parochial is to that extent moot, there is no doubt about the non-parochialism of his intellectualism. Intellectually he was quite self-consciously and by design and

temperament a citizen of the world (Niets menschelijks is my creemd!) and it was in that spirit that he was involved in the life of the Academy.

I do not know how much one ought to let somewhat later developments in my father's educational thinking influence one's interpretation of the Harrison Academy. Too much of what he got involved in after the first period of the Academy and his resignation from the Platte parish was dictated not by principle but by the sheer necessity of making a living and supporting a family. The resignation from the parish was quite certainly in the hope that he would be able to go on to complete his academic doctorate and get into college or university or seminary teaching, though officially the resignation was tendered to permit him "to pursue his own research." In either case academic was much on his mind. For a couple of years before his resignation at Platte and after the first four year stint at the Academy he was engaged in public education at the elementary level, rising to the position of deputy county superintendent of schools and backing out of a promising candidacy for the superintendency only as a way of breaking a messy-sounding political deadlock over the choice among three candidates for the superintendent's position. Then after six years as Classical Missionary he is back in teaching, this time in the Christian schools in Platte. Then without any explanation as to why, he suddenly is out of that--the most plausible guess is that he came under fire for his vocal pacifism but I cannot support that with any evidence. Then for a couple of years he is doing "private teaching" - which means teaching his own children at home. Then there is the move to Harrison and the second period at the Academy.

Upon moving to Harrison he insisted that my younger brother and I attend the parochial school in Garden Valley, which was four miles away out of Harrison, rather than the public school which was a block away. I was able to talk my way out of the ordeal of having to ride horseback daily four miles each way, summer and winter. That would sound like a parochial emphasis on my father's part. But in that he made a careful and important distinction between the substance of education and the auspices of education. It was his conviction then and later that education simply was not a proper function of the state, a conviction that had been much intensified by the circumstance that he had been charged with violation of the law when he educated his children at home and had even spent an overnight in the local jail over the issue. During the thirties as he watched the growth of National Socialism in Germany with its propagandistic power lodged largely in the schools and Hitler youth movement, he was able to see that as a confirmation of what a state education could come to--to be the instrument of control of the mind in an authoritarian state. But for my father education was also not the proper function of the institutional church. It was and

it was urgent that it remain a function of the home and family, or of associations of homes and families, a structure exemplified for him in the Christian schools of the Christian Reformed Church. But the point of that kind of structure was not that thereby education could be ideologically controlled; it was the opposite--a guarantee that it should be free from such control by any interested institution, political or ecclesiastical.

Let me locate the spirit of the Harrison Academy, read now, I think, equally through the eyes of my father and the Dakota community, in a very sweeping context. The Dutch community in American has been in important ways split in its educational philosophy, and this split has nothing to do with the cleavage we like always to import into the picture, a cleavage between theological conservatism and theological liberalism. This split is due to a very deep ambiguity in our perception of the meaning of a Dutch (or any other European ethnic) immigrations, and this includes early New York and New Jersey as much as Michigan and Iowa and the entire mid-west. Was the pressure to emigrate primarily "political" or "economic", each in a very general sense? By "political" I mean loosely an effort by any identifiable corporate entity to infringe on or inhibit the freedom of any other identifiable corporate entity. By "economic" I mean loosely any situation in which the opportunity for making a livelihood is curtailed, ranging all the way from desperation poverty to a fear that one would not be able in the future to do as well as or better than in the past.

Where the urge to emigrate is "political", in the above sense, the major emphasis in the emigrating society is naturally on the preservation of the group's identity against overt external threat or against simply being lost in a larger mass. A corollary of this is obviously that one works toward the development and preservation of an alternative or counter-culture, and a corollary of <u>that</u> is an emphasis on resistance to change. The open options concern only how this will be accomplished. Historically and at least nearly universally, group identity is so deeply intertwined with the notion of a group's <u>religious</u> identity that it would be hard to know how to keep the two apart or even whether we should try to. The more nearly open option is whether such a yen for preserving the group identity should also include creating an ideological identity which defines the parameters of the academic process--leading to the classic exemplification (and caricature) in "the society for the care and breeding of goats according to Reformed principles." The risk involved in such an ideologizing of education is that in the long run it may force us willy-nilly into inventing an ideology and imposing it on (say) "secular" society and its education, so that one's own group identity has a definable threat to preserve itself against on an ideological level--which is the more tempting because such contests are more easily won than is the other

contest involving the inherent quality of an education, its competence in providing the talents for getting on in the world.

Where the urge to emigrate is "economic", in the above sense, the major emphasis in the emigrating society, as far as education is concerned, is on acquiring the arts of civilization to such an extent that one can be competitive within the larger society and mainly on its terms. The risk involved in this process is that the educational process degenerates into and comes to be viewed solely as a "learning how to do it" enterprise which comes along under the guise of being value-neutral, though strictly it is not, not by its explicit design but by virtue of the fact that our values will be almost irresistibly determined by what we can be most visibly successful at--as when a scientific-technological society turns out to be excessively "materialistic".

And the whole story of education in the Reformed churches is the story of an effort to come to terms with that double pressure, the "political" and the "economics". The Harrison Academy at least, by my judgment, tilted quite definitely toward a greater emphasis on the "economic" side of that issue. But the effort to come to terms with that ambiguity in the meaning of an emigration is as much the story of the Harrison Academy as of Northwestern, of Central and Hope as of Calvin and Dordt, and of Kings and Queens colleges long before that. How can an emigrating identity be "in the world but yet not of it"? And, probably in the nature of the case, the most tangible arenas in which we can wrestle with that are the arenas of the church and school.