

SKETCH OF KRUIDENIER FAMILY HISTORY AND TREK
TO AMERICA

Told by Marie Kruidenier DeVries to her brother Dirk's daughter Elizabeth on the occasion of a visit to her aunt in Pella many years ago.

My grandfather Dirk Van Pelt had a general store in Charlois, suburb of Rotterdam and his oldest daughter Aartje clerked for her father until she married my father Daniel Kruidenier. Daniel Kruidenier was considered quite a catch. He was a bachelor 33 years old, a draftsman, and contractor having served an apprenticeship for 15 years. He taught night school while in Holland. Daniel's father Pieter Kruidenier was a nursery man (raised pears and apples primarily). He married Aartje van Pelt when she was twenty-one years old.

One Schippers by name and Pieter Kruidenier formed a partnership and Schippers did Pieter Kruidenier up financially. I remember hearing my father Daniel K. tell about it. My great grandfather Leendert van Pelt had flax fields as a business.

My father Daniel Kruidenier most usually bid for his jobs but he had a competitor who always tried to outbid him.

Adolph Becker by name, whose grandfather was in the City Council and helped Adolph Becker to get bids saying "bid low and if you lose on the job I'll make good your loss. About this time father had quite a family of growing children four boys and four girls and he didn't care to see his boys drafted into the army. This fact and the loss of about one thousand guilders on his last contract decided him to emigrate to America in July 1855.

The family consisting of Pieter, myself, Leedert, Dirk, Albert, Dina, Jane and the baby Elizabeth Cornelia boarded ship in the Rotterdam harbor where they lay at anchor two weeks waiting for a favorable wind. While on board ship the baby died before sailing. The part of harbor they were in was called Hellroeb Sluis. The boat on which we sailed was called the "Richard Anderson." We reached New York City about last of August or first of September. The next trip the R. Anderson made she was lost and never heard of again. Once in mid ocean during a terrible storm our boat rubbed sides once with another and I remember my brother Pieter crying out "Are we going to drown?"

Grandmother took along 17 chests of clothing, dishes, furniture and food besides 2 bushel baskets of wine which the sailors stole. Among the provisions were eggs, oranges, lemons, cake, white bread toasted, three or four chests of Holland biscuits, buttermilk (a little barrel of about 20 gals) etc., but the provisions gave out before the voyage's end and the family had to eat the ship's hard tack.

It was a very stormy voyage with contrary winds. Your grandfather expected your grandmother's brother-in-law to meet them at Castle Garden but this brother Anthony Betten who was in New York buying goods for his little Pella store (hardware) had been called home by the death of a child. When my father saw how the goods of other immigrants was damaged by inspectors he decided to escape similar treatment by shipping a ten dollar gold piece to the inspector. Not a box was touched. The beautiful white and gold china tea set packed between feather beds is still in Sister Dora's possession, not a piece nicked or broken.

My father and your Uncle Pieter went downtown every morning to buy vegetables and provisions and I helped a German

woman, who boarded the inspectors, by wiping dishes and in return she let my mother use her cooking utensils and stove.

After waiting for two weeks my father decided to continue his journey which was very difficult because neither he nor my mother knew a word of English. They traveled sometimes in day coach, sometimes in box cars and by canal boat.

Grandfather Dirk Van Pelt gave my mother a gray dove in a semi-circle wooden cage to keep away the erysipelas. Aunt Dina carried it all the way and was the object of much attention. They had had the dove a long time in Holland and strange to say mother didn't have any more erysipelas there or here in America. We were in Chicago two days. Landed there at 11 P.M. one very dark night and the cabbies tried to get our family in them in fact my brother Albert about 4 years old was already seated in one, when my mother made him get out. She feared being done by the cabmen. We took a train to Burlington which was as far as the trains went at that time and at Burlington we ferried across the Mississippi. In Burlington we stayed about one-half mile out in country with a woman called "Lizzie the Hollander". We were with her 2 weeks on account of impassible roads and waiting for Mr. Dirk der Wilt and Mr. F. Niemans to come with covered wagons

and take us to Pella. We were about one week on the road. Had a snowstorm one night and were lost. We found a settler's one room log house where we spent the night and in the morning he gave us corn bread which none of us liked never having eaten it before. We arrived in Pella late one evening in October at my mother's youngest sister's home. Mrs. A. Betten, who then lived in a frame house next to the brick one one-half year, then moved to the "Ark" so called because it resembled the description of the Biblical Ark. We went to live in So. Pella from there, then moved to West Pella where my father had the showplace of town. We cultivated all sorts of fruits, vegetables, flowers and trees from there he moved close in to town and once more had lovely grounds.

My two younger brothers Leendert and Dirk bought out a general store when they were 19 and 17 years old respectively. After a few years they bought a small house one-half block from the Square and I went to keeping house for them. They had a fine trade and sometimes there was as much as \$4,000.00 kept in the house over night. The children all did well but that first year my mother almost died of homesickness. She had left a nice home with a marble hall for shacks in Iowa. She left an even climate for the dreadful extremes found in Iowa.

All the bolts of cloth she brought along from Holland were of a quality too heavy for hot summers and not heavy enough for severe winters. She never again saw her two younger sisters of whom she was very fond. She wasn't very strong and after bearing twelve children and working very hard all her life and enduring many hardships she was worn out at sixty-three years of age when she died.

Elizabeth K. Pettit