

# Clarion

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# De Brès Versus Calvin?

## EARLY HISTORY OF THE BELGIC CONFESSION

Everyone likes a well-told story. There are some story-tellers who so ingenuously weave truth and fiction together that you are almost inclined to believe everything they come up with. I have in front of me Report 33 in the Agenda for Synod 1979 of the Christian Reformed Church, the report by the Belgic Confession Translation Committee. If the matter were not so serious and if the authors themselves were not so convinced of the reality of their narration, one would compare the writers of this Report to such story-tellers. Our readers know that they make a strong contrast between the 1561 text of Guido de Brès and the current confession. They speak about two conflicting "schools of thought," "virtually two confessions, each with its own sponsor or its own place of publication." And alas, the Christian Reformed Church, the Canadian Reformed Churches, and all other Reformed communities that adhere to the Belgic Confession, are saddled with the wrong one; they have "the Revision" instead of the "original" and we will later see how embarrassing it is according to Report 33 that our forefathers since 1566 made the wrong choice. But happily this Christian Reformed Committee came along. The "original" of Guido de Brès "was almost forgotten and was actually lost until a copy was found in rather recent years." A footnote makes it clear that these "rather recent years" have to be taken with a grain of salt: In 1855 a Genevan book dealer put out a carefully-executed facsimile of de Brès' original confession. Be this as it may, this rather recently found original has become the basis of the work of the Christian Reformed Study Committee. Let us hear their story.

We have to go back some two decades before de Brès put his confession on paper. Then already there was a conflict; two schools of thought locked horns. We see Calvin and Beza on the one side; the Flemish Evangelicals and later Guido de Brès on the other side. What was the issue? Calvin "reproached the Flemish evangelicals for failing to work towards an established status for their version of the faith"; they had "to put forth an all-out effort to magisterialize the reform in the Low Countries." Our readers will understand that according to Report 33 the issue was the relation between Church and State. Calvin and de Brès did not see eye to eye on this point, they think. "De Brès apparently paid no attention to Calvin's criticism and continued to conduct his conventicle-type meetings. He made no effort to enlist the government's sword to insure his own interpretation of the faith and oppose competitors."

De Brès wrote his Confession from within that very camp that Calvin had chided. Again, he apparently paid little attention to Calvin's call for a different policy. We need not be surprised that Calvin and his colleagues were not elated over the evidence that the delinquent Flemish were now rallying around a creed of their own. When de Brès' confession

began to circulate in printed form, steps were taken, almost at once, to divest the delinquent Flemish of their new creedal symbol. As early as 1565 it was proposed, by individuals who had begun to heed Calvin's advice, that "at each and every meeting of synod henceforth the Confession is to be read in its entirety, as much to give opportunity for expressing our unity as to give opportunity for changes and improvement."

This proposal was adopted and the very next year, in 1566, an "occult" synod convened for the express purpose of revising the Confession. It gave the creed a new sponsor and made it over into the product of the faction that was, by this time, advocating magisterialization of the reform (see Article 36). As a result there were from this time on virtually two confessions and in 1566 began "a tug-of-war between these two confessions." There was friction between the two schools and it became manifest in a preference for either one or the other of the confessions. An "occult" synod had tampered with the text. It would seem that the "occult" synod had been "occult indeed, and quite far off the record."

Alas, at the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619 the magisterial view was in control. Was this Synod not convened by the civil authority? "In the text adopted by Dort and inherited by the Christian Reformed Church, the magisterial view is evident especially in the revised Article 36, but there are other important revisions, in harmony with that view, that run throughout a number of articles. These include, as we shall see, the concepts of election and reprobation, the doctrine of man, the sacraments and the doctrine of the last things."

Are we not happy that Report 33 came along finally in 1979? It frees us from "the current Confession," "the Revision" and it brings us back to "the 1559/61 Confession," "the original." Listen, "we lose nothing, in our judgment, of what must be positively retained; we come clear of some things that rightly embarrass us; and we have a more adequate statement than the revised text on a number of issues that have rightly concerned, and still do concern, the Reformed community." Possibly you do not see immediately the connection between the alleged "magisterialization of the reform" and, for instance, the concepts of election and reprobation. But the Committee can easily bring them all under the term "scholasticism" and otherwise Beza is nowadays the scapegoat anyway; he can easily be burdened with the accusation of orthodoxism. Everything that was fresh in the Reformation is stifled by Calvin's successor; people today are sure of that.

I hope, my reader, that you have understood that the previous paragraphs were a bit ironic. Let us prevent misunderstanding and let me declare in plain English that I do not believe the story of Report 33 at all. I even become indignant when I see how Guido de Brès is played off over against John Calvin and especially how this fabricated story is used in an attack on "the current confession."

Let me try to argue point by point first from what we do not hear in Report 33 and then against what it alleges.

It is remarkable that Report 33 does not say anything positive about the relationship between Calvin and Guido de Brès and is even completely silent with respect to the similarity of the French Confession of 1559 and the Belgic Confession of 1561. No mention is made of the important study by F.L. Rutgers, *Calvin's invloed op de Reformatie in de Nederlanden* . . . (Leiden, Donner, 1899). Rutgers calls de Brès a pupil of Calvin, who stood in personal relation to the Reformer: "dien hij in Sept. '56 te Frankrijk moet ontmoet hebben; dien hij nog veel beter heeft leeren kennen, toen hij kort daarna Zwitserland bezocht, waar hij te Lausanne en te Geneve gedurende minstens twee jaren gestudeerd heeft; dien hij hoog gewaardeerd heeft als zijn leermeester, die hem theologisch gevormd had en was blijven leiden; en met wien hij ook brieven gewisseld heeft, reeds in 1556 . . . ; van welke correspondentie echter, ongelukkiglijk, niets is overgebleven" (page 133/4). De Brès met Calvin, studied under his leadership and acknowledged him as his teacher, who had formed him theologically and still guided him. Already in 1556 de Brès corresponded with Calvin, whom he must have regarded as his spiritual father.

Of more direct significance is the similarity of the Belgic Confession of 1561 and the French Confession of 1559. It is again remarkable that Report 33 is completely silent about this well-known fact. The standard work by J.N. Bakhuizen van den Brink *De Nederlandse Belijdenisgeschriften in authentieke teksten* (Amsterdam: Bolland, 1976) gives in four columns the French Confession, the authentic French text of the Belgic Confession (1619), the Latin text taken from the Acts of the Synod of Dordt, and the authentic Dutch text, also established by the National Synod of Dordrecht 1619. One could ask why in a text edition of the *Belgic* Confession first is printed the Confession of the churches in *France*, accepted by the Synod of Paris 1559, since 1571 also known as the "Confession de la Rochelle" and often indicated as "Confessio Gallicana." Well, the reason is very simple: "Met haar inhoud moet de Nederlandse Confessie in de eerste plaats vergeleken worden." One ought to compare the Belgic Confession first of all with the contents of the French Confession. The last was the model for the first; the French Confession is called the mother of the Belgic Confession and everyone who studies the text edition of Bakhuizen van den Brink is struck by the similarity of these two confessions.

What does this mean for our topic? Well, *Calvin* wrote the draft of this French Confession and therefore the Reformer of Geneva can be called the spiritual grandfather — or "ghost author," if you like — of our Belgic Confession. Instead of playing off Guido de Brès against Calvin, Report 33 would have acted more responsibly by pointing toward the similarity of thought of Calvin and De Brès, the French and the Belgic Confession. There are beautiful studies, e.g., by the Rev. C. Vonk, *De Voorzeide Leer* IIIA and IIIB (Barendrecht, 1955) in which the line from Calvin's *Institutes* to the Belgic Confession is clearly shown, and in which also the differences between the text of 1561, 1566, and 1619 are discussed.

While Report 33 is silent about these things, it gives the construction that the Belgic Confession was first written in a political and theological climate that appears to have changed soon after its publication in 1561. De Brès wrote in the context of the churches under the cross, but soon afterward a new and different era dawned, the era of "magisterialization" — of official support, approval and even espousal of Re-

formed churches by civil powers. Calvin and Beza are then the theologians of this "magisterialization" and De Brès is the simple evangelical. But I ask: why did de Brès then not leave out Article 36 instead of expanding on it, compared to the Calvin-inspired French Confession? The failure of not comparing the French and the Belgic Confession exactly on the crucial point of the civil magistrates is detrimental to the thesis of "conflict between two schools of thought that apparently locked horns already some two decades before de Brès put his Confession on paper." But probably we will later have opportunity to discuss the interesting text of Article 36. I do not believe the existence of a fundamental contrast between Calvin and de Brès, or between the text of the Belgic Confession in 1561 and "the Revision" (the texts of 1566 and 1619). The political climate did not change soon after 1561; there is in 1566 no dawn of "a new and different era."

For those who are knowledgeable with respect to the early history of our Belgic Confession, I simply mention that Report 33 does not deal at all with the interesting attempt of some nobles and *Guido de Brès* in 1565 to express the agreement of the persecuted believers in The Netherlands with the revised Augsburg Confession of 1540, in order to obtain political help from the Lutheran princes in Germany. It does not fit the picture of de Brès as an adversary of Calvin's "magisterialization."

But let us now make the transition from what Report 33 does not mention at all to what it alleges.

We begin by observing that John Calvin made his debut in the southern Low Countries with a tract in which he reproached the Flemish evangelicals for failing to work toward an established status for their version of the faith (see *Corpus Reformatorum*, Volume 34, p. 540ff.; also *Opera* VI, p. 537ff.).

This tract was immediately translated and published in the Flemish language, and it apparently drew wide attention. But it was not well-received, and elicited a published complaint that Calvin was asking, in fact, the impossible. To that complaint Calvin replied in a second tract, similar in spirit to the first (*Opera*, VI, p. 589ff.). Again he asked the Flemish evangelicals to put forth an all-out effort to magisterialize the reform in the Low Countries . . . .

By lodging that complaint against the Flemish evangelicals he also lodged a criticism against Guido de Brès — for de Brès too was then guilty of wrong conduct in not seeking a governmentally-supported cult.

De Brès versus Calvin? I would not believe my eyes, when I read these paragraphs in an official report in the Agenda of a Christian Reformed Synod. For the tract of Calvin to which it first of all refers is entitled, "Petit Traicté monstrant que c'est que doit faire un homme cognoissant la verité de l'evangile, quand il est entre les Papistes" (1543). This tract, therefore, shows how a man who knows the truth of the gospel has to behave himself, when he is among the followers of the Pope. Calvin did not reproach "the *Flemish evangelicals* for failing to work toward an established status for their version of the faith." He wrote against cowards who in their hearts acknowledged the truth of the gospel, but under seemingly pious appeal to the examples of Naaman (II Kings 5:18) or Nicodemus continued to partake of Romish idolatry. The second tract is an "Excuse de lehan Calvin a messieurs les Nicodemites, sur la complaincte qu'ilz font de sa trop grand'rigueur" (1544). So it is true that the first tract had elicited a

*Continued on next page*

complaint that Calvin was asking, in fact, the impossible. But Calvin's point was not that "again he asked the Flemish evangelicals to put forth an all-out effort to magisterialize the reform in the Low Countries." The point was that he urged Nicodemites to *become* evangelicals, if we have to use that modern term, open for misunderstanding. De Brès was "quite willing to conduct conventicles or off-the-record gatherings for exercising faith." Sure, but Calvin did not oppose those conventicles. In the early thirties of the sixteenth century Calvin had done exactly the same in France as de Brès did in the late fifties in The Netherlands: operate underground and secretly gather congregations of Christ. And in Article 28 of the Belgic Confession, Guido de Brès wrote, exactly according to Calvin's tracts against the Nicodemites, the following words:

It is the duty of all believers, according to the Word of God, to separate themselves from all those who do not belong to the Church and to join themselves to this congregation, wheresoever God has established it, *even though the magistrates and edicts of princes were against it*, yea, though they should suffer death or any other corporal punishment.

De Brès versus Calvin? Nonsense. De Brès did not write his Confession, "from within that very camp Calvin had chided." De Brès was no Nicodemite! "Again, he apparently paid little attention to Calvin's call for a different policy." Myth. De Brès

had paid full attention to Calvin's tract "de fuir les superstitions," as the last line of the first tract had read. De Brès himself avoided superstition and his Confession in Article 28 was an appeal to others to flee idolatry and to join the true Church. It was an appeal in the *line of Calvin* and the French Confession (Article 26): where God shall have established a true order of Church, true believers ought to join, even though magistrates and their edicts are against it. That was Calvin's "policy" and that was also the "policy" of his faithful student and pupil Guido de Brès. Calvin's tracts and de Brès' Confession agree rather than disagree. Report 33 is mistaken; it should be rewritten and publicly revoked.

J. FABER

**Postscript:** After the preparation of this article I read that the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church has referred Report 33 "back to its study committee with instruction to translate the 'official' version of the Confession, to publish this translation side-by-side with that of the original de Brès version correcting errors presently found in the committee's work, and to study relation of various texts of a creed to the official adoption of one of these; with report to Synod of 1980."

The topic remains timely and important. I hope to come back to it in due time: first some holidays.

J.F.

## The Difficult Economy

*This article was written by Mr. P. Jongeling in Nederlands Dagblad, May 1979. Translated by U. Krikke, London.*

"Those chickens, it's just as if they do it on purpose," the old farmer's wife said indignantly. "When the eggs are cheap, they lay as if their life depends on it, but when eggs are expensive, it is finished right away and then they hardly lay anymore."

This speaker was evidently no whiz in the field of economics. She exchanged cause and effect. The science of economics is indeed a difficult one. Those who have studied it intensively have the prerogative of opposing each other on practically all counts without having their expertise questioned.

We, the common folks, listen with awe to all of that controversial wisdom. It is indeed good to listen and to learn, provided that we do not let ourselves be taken in by tricks and hocus pocus. Two plus two equals four, even in the higher economics, although one would sometimes start to doubt this.

Economists are at their best when they explain how earlier recessions and periods of sharp decline, such as the world crisis of the thirties, originated and how they could have been prevented or rebuffed. It is too bad that

those preventative measures and remedies which were developed afterwards, do not appear to be quite adequate when a new crisis occurs.

Should we therefore disregard the economists? Absolutely not! We cannot do without them. It is a fact that the economists have discovered all kinds of laws, connections, and backgrounds which deepen our insight. But they cannot plumb the depths of the entire field of economics and forecast with certainty its future development.

When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:)

Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, farther; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it (Ecclesiastes 8:16, 17).

### MAN AND GOD'S CREATION

This holds true for economics, as well as for the governing of the whole world: it is all in God's hands.

Meteorologists have made great strides in studying weather and climate. They have access to the most beautiful technical instruments. Their

work is definitely not worthless and sometimes very useful. However, weather forecasts for long, and even for very short periods of time quite often appear to be incorrect.

Astronomists search the depths of the star-world and discover time and again new Milky Way galaxies. They propose theories and mathematical formulae about the structure of the universe, but it remains mere guesswork, because puny man cannot fathom the problems of time and space. The work of God's fingers, the creation and maintaining of all things, goes far beyond our understanding. And yet, man has to search the works of God in order to praise God more fully, and on his part, further to develop that creation to the honour of God and the benefit of his neighbour.

In this way we will study the economy and utilize what we discover without arrogance, with Biblical norms as criteria.

Economics deals with actions of people, with buying and selling, and with production and consumption. That complicates matters, because man is never purely a "homo economicus." He is driven and motivated by all kinds of impulses, desires, and convictions. Today the government may declare that an energy crisis is approaching and that we have to be very economical with oil and gasoline consumption. It is not at all sure that people will act accordingly, not: even when eco-

nomists and other experts underline the warnings of the government. Sometimes it appears as if large groups of people, driven by shortsighted selfishness, purposely ignore the laws of economics.

Just look at England. That country is in a bad economic position. At one time it was the richest country of Europe, heart of the mighty Commonwealth, and centre of world trade, with unsurpassed seafaring power and a well-developed population which could profit from the enormous supply of rich raw materials, especially coal and iron. That rich and mighty England could afford a relatively high standard of living with a relatively low productivity. Englishmen do not work very hard. The British tea breaks are a notorious "holy cow."

The trade unions are all-powerful in Great Britain. Undoubtedly they served their purpose, but their form of organization, as well as their work methods, are totally outdated. The unions have pushed through a labour reservoir which forces companies to engage different tradesmen for such small jobs as driving a nail, painting a wall, laying a few bricks, hanging a lamp, when one handyman would be able to do all of these things. The unions prevented the companies from modernizing and acquiring advanced machines because some jobs would become obsolete.

A world-famous daily paper, *The Times*, had to work with hopelessly outdated machinery because of the unions. When the directors finally decided to go ahead and acquire modern machines, an endless strike erupted which eventually destroyed the paper, flagship of the press over the whole world. It will probably never be published as a daily newspaper again.

In the past fall and winter England experienced an extensive epidemic of strikes which paralyzed the economy and brought the country to the edge of the abyss.

## Church News

The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad reports that Dr. H. Venema of Winsum (Roodeschool), The Netherlands, who is planning to visit Canada this summer, is a minister in good standing in our Netherlands sister churches.

### A BITTER REMEDY

We have to admit that most wages are low in England: much lower than in other countries, such as The Netherlands. There were legitimate grievances. However, improvements can only come when the machinery is drastically modernized, the production increased, and the complacency abolished, the complacency which a country, having lost its central economic position, can no longer afford.

To modernize is sometimes a bitter medicine. Unemployment may be increased because of it, but in the English situation that medicine has to be taken if it wants to be healed in the long run. Far-reaching social improvements can only be effected on the basis of a healthy economy.

British trade unions do not want to understand this. The voters have removed the Labour government. It has to be seen if the Conservative female Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who has spoken bold words, really will be able to force the trade unions to tow the line.

### AND WHAT ABOUT US?

A man forewarned is a man forearmed. The Netherlands would do well to be forewarned by what happens abroad. Our productivity is higher than in England, but our wage and labour costs are clearly too high. Dutch capital is more readily invested in the U.S. — there is an enormous sum of Dutch money over there — than in our own country because they don't see much future in our industry. Costly, and in principle, useful social measures are being misused on a large scale and not much is being done to control and repress this.

How long will we be able to keep this up? What will our economy and our financial position as a nation look like in the eighties if this continues? Economics is a difficult subject, but everyone can understand certain basic ideas and fundamental rules. When we do not live within our means, something will go wrong, even in The Netherlands. [It is remarkable how our Canadian situation runs parallel with that of Holland in many aspects, and one is tempted to draw that comparison — translators note.]

We have a very favourable position here, in the delta of North West Europe. We possess the most important river deltas, we are situated on the most travelled sea, we are centred among very important industrial nations, we have the largest harbour in

the world, we possess an enormous natural gas reservoir . . . .

There is no end to it . . . . Yes, there is an end to it; if we continue to live off our capital there will be an end to it!

A large part of our population can see, yet is blind. That blindness has deeper causes than economic ones alone, because an economic situation is never one that stands by itself. It is connected with the moral and spiritual situation of a people.

*That is the sore spot!*

How much of a blessing it would be when the trumpet would sound in The Netherlands, [and Canada], so that the people would wake up, so that they would rub their eyes and take a different direction. Then we would be able to afford much larger expenditures for job-creation programs, because when the moral resources of a nation are mobilized enough material resources become available! However, then the government should take down the grey flag of neutralism and raise the Christian-National banner. Up until now it has not been willing to do this!



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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Faber  
Managing Editor: W.W.J. VanOene  
Co-Editors: J. Geertsema, Cl. Stam,  
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Editorial — J. Faber . . . . .	354
Principal's Statement — J. Faber . . . . .	356
News Medley	
— W.W.J. VanOene . . . . .	358
A Corner for the Sick	
— Mrs. J.K. Riemersma . . . . .	360
Letters-to-the-Editor	
— J. Vandenberg . . . . .	361
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	362

# news medley

Yes, we had excellent holidays. They were shorter than other years, because we have to go out West again at the occasion of the Convocation, and then we take the rest of the "free time" which has been granted us for every year. That will be quite something, that Convocation in the Valley. Or rather, the Convocation itself will be similar to those held here in the East; it is just that some more activities are planned around it. We hope that the rest of our membership will be able to enjoy the speeches when they appear in print. And we shall try to give as good a report as possible of all things going on.

During our holidays quite some activities have been developed in connection with the so-called "boat-people" who have survived the exodus out of their country and the hazardous journey over so many miles of open water with all the dangers involved in such a journey.

In the West we learned about the activities which were being undertaken there, and I also asked one of the brothers to provide me with an article in which the various implications were set forth. He did send me some information which is more or less of a general nature and which, as I understand, is common property by now. I wish to thank him for his troubles, but I don't think that I would add anything to what is already known, if I should publish those general rules in this stage of development. It appears, namely, that in not a few of our Congregations the actions have gone far beyond the stage of gathering information and feeling their way around. In Hamilton, for instance, some \$28,000 has been pledged and if there are a few more pledges, they can sponsor three families. In Burlington West as well as in Burlington East similar plans are being realized. In Fergus a committee has been formed and pledges are being taken in order to sponsor one or two families. And thus I could continue. One Church, being too small to sponsor a family on its own, decided to support the efforts of others. And thus there is much activity going on to show the mercy of Christ to people whom we never saw, whom we do not know, but whom we want to know that there is a Church of Christ in this world which cares.

It is very gratifying that so much activity is being developed in the midst of the Churches. We do hope, of course, that those people whom we sponsor will recognize the love of Christ and the Spirit of Christ working through us, and will come and join us in the service of the Lord. But we should not undertake this task in order to make proselytes. It is and should be our purpose to show the love of Christ. In this manner, too, we are a city on a mountain, a light on a candlestick, an open letter, readable and clear.

I expect that I can keep you all informed about the progress in the various Congregations. Of this we may be assured, that the blessing of the Lord will be received upon these undertakings and upon the life of the Churches as a whole.

Whenever, in the course of history, a country opened its borders to refugees and whenever a country received into its territory those who were persecuted because of religion, race, or conviction, such a country flourished under the Lord's blessing. I do not have to mention specific instances: whoever studies the history of the world and of the nations can find examples galore.

We do not do it in order to be blessed by the Lord. We do it to show His mercy working in and through us. We may, however, also be certain that the Lord's blessing will be received upon such actions.

In some instances it is tried to have the contributions for sponsoring channelled via the treasurer of the Church, such for income-tax purposes. If that can be done, we should use that opportunity. For many of our members it won't make one bit of difference: their combined contributions for Church and School bring them already far over the allowable 20% deductions for charitable purposes. If there are members whose total contributions do not reach that twenty percent, it would certainly be worthwhile for them to have everything arranged so that official receipts can be given.

In Hamilton the following was decided: "The deacons report on the activities organized to help the refugees. Although originally it was considered that possibly the deacons should be involved, it now appears that matters are well-organized and that good progress is being made. Nevertheless, from government information received it appears that the government expects to deal with official bodies. Also, the funds collected will have to be channelled through the books of the church. For these reasons, the consistory decides to acknowledge and sanction the appointment of the members of the committee and to recognize it as an official committee of the Canadian Reformed Church at Hamilton."

And herewith we take leave of this topic for the time being. We now proceed to other news.

In the Watford Church some alterations are planned for the Church building. The same is the case in Coaldale. In the former it concerns the auditorium, in the latter the attention is directed more towards the balcony, which is made "habitable" since the number of those attending the services appears to be growing. Part of that increase is to be attributed to the presence of visitors from other places, even from The Netherlands. In one place the thought was even expressed whether it would not be good to organize some Dutch services on behalf of visitors from The Netherlands. However, it was not considered to be feasible to do so.

In Cloverdale plans to expand the facilities were adopted; they will be worked out further, if I understood it well.

At the occasion of Cloverdale's twenty-fifth anniversary the Congregation brought funds together which were to be used for the erection of a decent steeple. Sorry to say, but something else will have to be found. The Consistory received a letter from the Committee of Administration which had sad news.

In the first place it appears that due to municipal by-laws a steeple of sufficient size for our church building is out of the question. The municipality of Surrey has height restrictions of such nature that only a small steeple would be allowed. It is the opinion of the Committee that such a small steeple would not enhance the appearance of the church building and they therefore propose to cancel this project. The Consistory concurs with the committee's observation and will approach the donors with a request to exchange their plan with a more attainable one.

Another disappointment, but worse things have happened in the past. The biggest trouble will be to find a worthwhile project now that the first one fell through. Sterkte!

Carman is also still discussing building plans and trying to determine whether the amount needed for financing can be brought together. It appears that finally the matter of the strip of land sold by the C.P.R. has been settled. "The new property which we bought from the C.P.R. is now surveyed and the re-zoning is approved so the title should be in our hands in a few weeks." That should be, then, approximately the time when these lines are written and anyway when you read them.

Winnipeg, I heard when we spent one day there on our way back home, sold the old parsonage and they are happy with that, even though they did not make any profit. On the contrary!

We are jumping back and forth more than we are used to doing, but that must be the aftermath of the holidays, we'll say.

From the Edmonton bulletin we glean the following information:

The Committee appointed to look into possibilities/needs for a second minister gave report to Council. It was decided to commence preparation for calling a second minister.

That is a very gratifying development, I should say. Of course, making preparations for the calling of a second minister doesn't mean yet that they have a second minister. In any case, it means another vacancy, another place for a minister. Not only the size of the Edmonton Congregation, but also the distances which are to be covered there made the decision to call a second minister unavoidable. Sometimes we have to be "forced" into certain situations and decisions and are then, after all, grateful for that.

Edmonton's Consistory also decided "to celebrate the Lord's Supper on a more frequent basis, i.e., six times per year instead of four times per year . . . . Also the afternoon celebration will be eliminated. This is to be reviewed in January 1980."

We were already in the Valley. Let's mention a few more things from there, and then specifically of New Westminster.

Volunteers were exhorted to join the efforts to bring visits to the King George Private Hospital where the patients are "entertained" with song and the spoken Word, the latter being an address based on a text. I can well understand that such visits are greatly appreciated by the patients who are there sometimes for a long, long time.

The Consistory report mentions,

The question period is made use of by several brothers. Among other questions it is asked why Rev. Van Dam did not remain at the baptismal font with the parents during the congregational singing. Rev. Van Dam gives several reasons why he prefers not to do this. After some discussion the consistory decides to ask him to follow the procedure as it has been practised here for the last number of years. Since it is not a matter of "life or death," he agrees to comply.

When I understand it well, Rev. Van Dam simply returned to the practice which was being followed in New Westminster for seventeen years, and I am wondering whether, when that long-standing practice was changed by visiting ministers, *those* ministers were asked to abide by the practice which had been followed for as long as the New Westminster Church had been in existence. True reformation always goes back to the "very old," doesn't it?

Before I get in trouble, we had better skip out and move to Ontario.



*John and Grace Zietsema will, D.V., celebrate their 45th Wedding Anniversary on August 20, 1979. They were married in Harlingen, Friesland and emigrated to Canada in June 1954. They, with their six children, settled in Burlington where they have continued to live. The Lord has blessed them with 23 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Br. Zietsma served the church in Burlington for several years as a deacon. They are now happily retired and thankful for the many blessings bestowed upon them over the years.*

The farewell evening for the Stam family was to be held on August 17 in Burlington West. It is hard to believe that it is already four years ago that I had the privilege of installing my colleague in Burlington West.

The London Consistory decided to ask "the Churches of Chatham and Watford . . . if they would be interested in airing 'The Voice of the Church' together with London."

And herewith — however unbelievable it may seem to be — we have come to the end of the memorable news of the Churches. Realizing that we are still in the holiday season, we also are aware that the activities are greatly reduced during these months. What would have happened if we had found ourselves compelled to write a medley every time!

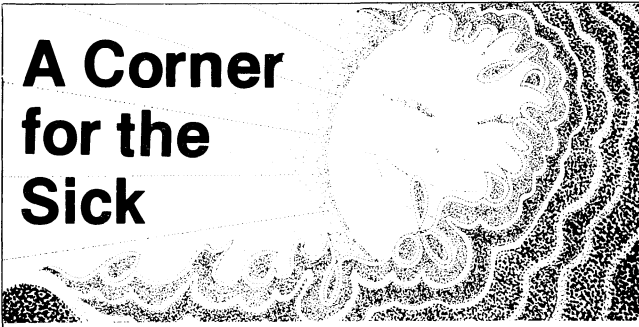
On the day when these lines are written I have not yet received the newest *Clarion* and therefore do not know whether any couples are to be mentioned and to be congratulated with their fortieth or forty-fifth wedding anniversary. I know of only one couple: brother and sister J. Zietsma of Burlington, who on August 20 celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. Especially now that we are getting more elderly persons in our midst and now that the average age of the Church members is rising by the year, we realize the privilege which the Lord bestows upon us in having brothers and sisters who reach that milestone. We congratulate them right heartily. May the words of Psalm 92 find rich fulfilment in their life: those who are planted in the house of the LORD remain green, bearing fruit all the time.

Herewith, dear readers, we have come to the end of our Medley. As you prepare for the activities of the coming season, you are accompanied by this wish: May you find as much joy in your preparation as, later on, in the execution of the plans and the realization of your schedule. Having holidays is nice, but doing the regular work gives more satisfaction. Have a good preparation.

See you next time.

vO

# A Corner for the Sick



Now therefore write this song, and teach it to the people of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 31:19

*The Lord had just told Moses he was going to die and that after this had happened the people would forsake the Lord and break His covenant; that is why Moses is commanded to teach them the song as written in chapter 32:1-43 (please read!). In chapter 31:20, 21 we read: "For when I (the Lord) have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to give to their father, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my covenant. And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness."*

*In chapter 29:18 we read: "Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away this day from the Lord our God to go and serve the gods of those nations; lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit, one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.' This same text refers to Acts 8:23 about Simon the sorcerer, and in Romans 11:20 pride is mentioned in connection with unbelief. In Hebrews 12:15 the believers are urged to: "See to it that no 'root of bitterness' (Deuteronomy 29:18) spring up and cause trouble, and by it the many become defiled." We may learn from those texts that we never sin alone! By being proud or disobedient or stubborn, others will be affected by our attitude and be put into danger. Let our continual prayer be "Create in me a clean heart, O God," and "put a new and right spirit within me."*

*"Then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners will return to Thee." "Open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy Praise." Psalm 51:10, 13, 15. Not a root of bitterness growing in one's heart, but a broken and contrite spirit God will be pleased with.*

.....

Something to think about is:

*"The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none."*

**PAUL DIELEMAN**

307 Connaught Avenue,  
Willowdale, Ontario M2R 2M1

*Paul will celebrate his 10th birthday on September 29th, the Lord willing! He attends a special school. He is slow in learning but plays the piano with a lot of feeling. He likes animals too! He will really enjoy some special attention, so shall we make this a special day for him, brothers and sisters?*

.....

*Jimmy Wanders enjoyed his birthday! The family came together to Orillia Park for a picnic. They helped him celebrate his 18th birthday. On behalf of Jimmy, his parents like to thank all the brothers and sisters who sent him a card. Especially mentioned was a youth club from Albany, Australia.*

*Jim is still in good health and he is very proud of all the cards he received, showing them to everyone. As Mrs. Wanders wrote: "It was a great pleasure for us to see all the cards from all over Canada and even from Australia. Many thanks to the brothers and sisters and also to our Lord Jesus Christ!"*

.....

Send your requests to:

**Mrs. J.K. Riemersma**  
380 St. Andrew Street East,  
Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

## Answers to Unscramble:

Answers: 1. Eli; 2. goat; 3. Gilead; 4. sacred; 5. priests; 6. speech; 7. marble; 8. nuts; 9. prepare; 10. slave; 11. swear; 12. sinew; 13. Sodom; 14. Sumer; 15. Tabor; 16. veil; 17. Achor; 18. Adriel; 19. Ardite; 20. apes; 21. dearth; 22. drove; 23. ephod; 24. Esli; 25. Geder.



## Letters-to-the-Editor

Respected Editor:

Reading the article "Meditation" by Rev. Knigge in *Clarion* of April 7, I noticed how he writes that verse 3 and 4 in Mark 16 do not only inform us that the stone covering the grave was to "roll away" or "roll back" in order for the women to have access to the body of Christ, but that they see, when arriving at the grave, that the stone is rolled "upwards" as the original Greek translation has it.

Rev. Knigge then goes on to write that the stone was rolled uphill and not to the left or the right of the grave entrance as one would expect.

Visiting Israel some years ago I saw the grave of king Herod. He too was one of the elite (Christ was buried in a rich man's grave) of his day and was buried in a grave hewn out of a low limestone mount. A large round stone of some 5½ feet in diameter and about a foot thick covered the entrance of his grave.

The stone was chiseled out of a

piece of rock, set on edge and wheeled either from the left or right side to the grave entrance.

When it got there it would roll into a slot chiseled out in the rock floor in front of the grave entrance and become immovable, jammed tight. It would take a dozen men to re-open such a grave as the stone would have to be lifted out of the slot it was in before it could be rolled away. The slot had a half-moon shape and besides keeping others from moving the stone sideways (grave robbers), it also kept the stone from falling forward and so giving entrance to the grave.

The women that followed Christ were poor people and no doubt felt out of place in this rich man's cemetery. When they died they were buried in graves sealed with a rock or a pile of small ones; both to satisfy the Mosaic law and to protect the dead from wild animals. Their graves were easy to get into.

To them Christ was out of reach in more than one way.

The Greek text therefore, mentioning the rolling of the stone "up-

wards," has to do with wheeling the stone out of the "slot," and not as Rev. Knigge implies, the rolling away of a large boulder onto the roof of the grave.

Yours in Christ,  
J. Vandenberg

### Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

10 King Street E.,  
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1C3  
Phone: 364-5443

#### OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

VAN DEN BROEK, Gerrit, geboren 19 januari 1913, naar Canada vertrokken op 7 mei 1952.

BRONSEMA, Pieter, geboren 13 juli 1914 te Bierum, naar Canada vertrokken op 15 juli 1958.

HILHORST, Nicolaas, geboren 26 augustus 1914 te Hilversum, naar Canada vertrokken op 3 november 1952.

JAKOBSEN, Huibregt, geboren 19 juli 1914 te Serooskerke, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 juni 1952, waarschijnlijk Sarnia.

JANSEN, Nicolaas Gerardus Antonius, geboren 9 juni 1914 te Arnhem, naar Canada vertrokken op 21 januari 1952.

MAST, Oebele, geboren 28 december 1940 te Enschede, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 april 1975.

MENSIES, Harm, geboren 21 oktober 1914, naar Canada vertrokken op 15 juni 1956.

SPRENGERS, Maria, geboren 15 november 1919 te Helmond, naar Canada vertrokken op 24 mei 1960.

VAN DE MEY, Cornelis W., geboren 18 maart 1897, naar Canada vertrokken op 29 april 1979, betrokkene verblijft mogelijk bij Fam. Sayers te Crescent, Ontario.

STUIFBERGEN-BOSDRIESZ, Josephina, Antonia, geboren 6 december 1914 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 10 april 1953.

VAN VUGT, Nicolaas Petrus, geboren te Schayk, naar Canada vertrokken op 11 augustus 1952.

## Our Life it is a Battle Flag

Tune: Julius Roetgen (1855-1932)

Setting: Leonard J. Mens (1879 - )

1. Our life: it is a battle flag  
through days of joy and sorrow;  
nigh lost, torn to a tainted rag,  
yet carried to the morrow.
2. We stumble oft, pain does not cease,  
wounds bleed as weapons rattle:  
but he's no fighting man who flees  
when faced with death in battle.
3. Our life: there is no fighting-lag,  
no peace nor truce demanded.  
Our task: to bear the cross-marked flag  
till it to God is handed.

Guido Gezelle (1830-1899)

translated by Johannes De Viet.

#### OUR COVER

Some of the 200 RCMP officers and men that were organized to form the Canadian Army's 1st Provost Company for service overseas, parade on motorcycles during their training in England in 1940. (Photo courtesy RCMP.)

# our little magazine

\* Why the star? Because Busy Beaver Julia Vander Pol and our College share the same birthday. Imagine that! Julia was born the day the College was opened: September 10, 1969!



## From the Mailbox

Dear Busy Beavers,

Let's start with some good news.

This year we collected \$33.85 for our BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT!

So at the College's 10th birthday celebration our gift will be there!

This year the College's birthday is being held in the Fraser Valley.

Will some of our Busy Beavers be there?

Don't you all think we should offer a prize to the Busy Beavers who will write and tell us about the College birthday celebration?

All the Busy Beavers who will not be able to go would like to hear about it from you!

\* \* \* \* \*

Now about something else . . . .

Did you notice how our summer slipped away, just like that!

Enjoy the last of your holidays, Busy Beavers!

Have you been doing odd jobs and making a little money?

Why does Aunt Betty ask that, you might say.

Well . . . it's because I've sent away all the money out of our FUND which now stands at 0!

That's why I was thinking maybe the Busy Beaver piggy banks are still a little fat now . . . so I should remind them now about building up our FUND again.

Let's do our best and get off to a GOOD START! Shall we?

\* \* \* \* \*

Let's wish all the Busy Beavers celebrating their birthday in September a very, very happy day together with their family and friends. We wish you many happy returns, too. And may the Lord bless and keep you always.

	September 1	Alice	September 17
Faith Schoen	1	Van Eerden	
Irene Schoen	7	Sharon Vander Meulen	18
Debbie Krikke	7	Chuck Buikema	19
Catherine Wendt	8	Floris Wiersema	19
Grace Jongs	9	Juliet Selles	20
Joos Poppe	9	Richard Woelders	20
Belinda Van Grootheest	10	Rolean Hulleman	21
Joanne Koning	10	Corinne Terpstra	22
Henrietta Stieva	10	Cathy Bouwman	23
* Julia Vanderpol	11	Patricia Barendregt	24
Tammy Linde	11	Elaine Schoon	24
Marianne Tenhage	11	Frederika Snippe	24
Mary Vande Burgt	13	Frank Meliefste	26
Andrew Vink	14	Carrie Nieuwenhuis	26
Caroline Barendregt	15	Beverly Schouten	26
Brian Berends	17	Stephanie Berends	28
Marilyn Boes		Jenette Knol	29

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Anne Kotelberg*. We are happy to have you join us. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already sending a chatty letter and riddles, too! I'm glad your family had such fun in the park, Anne. Bye for now.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Debbie Jongsma*. We hope you'll really enjoy being a Busy Beaver and join in all our Busy Beaver activities! I'm glad you're having such a nice holiday swimming a lot. Write and tell us a little more about yourself sometime, all right, Debbie?

You've been enjoying yourself swimming, too, *Mary Van Raalte*. But I see you have chores, too. I think all your relatives in Coaldale must have been very happy with their baby boy! Thanks for the quiz, Mary.

Were you happy to get home again from camping, *Marcella Veenman*? And how did you enjoy your stay at your Aunt and Uncle's house? Thanks for the quizzes, Marcella.

Congratulations on your graduation, *Elaine Bisschop*, and also for the honour of being chosen valedictorian! Sounds as if you had a lovely camping trip. And I hope you'll enjoy your swimming lessons and your move. Be sure to write about it and tell me your new address, Elaine!

How did you enjoy your holiday at the cottage, *Linda Knol*? And how is your swimming coming along? Sounds to me as if you're making good progress. Thanks for your contribution to the BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT, Linda.

Thanks for the lovely pictures, *Karen Schouten*, and also for the jokes. Did you have a good time with your relatives from Holland? And how did your swimming lesson go, Karen?

How did you enjoy your holiday with your seven cousins, *Juliet Selles*? You have lots of animals at home on the farm. Do you help look after some of them?

How do you like living in your new home, *Joyce Huinink*? Have you got used to it already? And did you have a good time with your relatives from Holland? Be sure to join in our big Summer Contest, Joyce. And thanks for your contribution to our BIRTHDAY FUND PROJECT.

Did you enjoy helping with the haying *Carolyn Boeringa*? Sounds as if your Talent Night was lots of fun. Thanks for your contribution to the Birthday Fund, too, Carolyn.

Thanks for your puzzle, *Joanne Hamoen*. You really are having a happy holiday, aren't you? The way you tell it your dog is enjoying your holiday, too, I think. Bye for now, Joanne.

How did your church picnic turn out, *Elaine Hamoen*? And how did you enjoy your cousin's wedding? Be sure to join in our big Summer Contest, Elaine!

Thank you for your very fancy puzzle, *Ramona Kleefman*. Too bad we don't have room this time! Hopefully we can put it in the next issue. Have you got your entry ready for our Contest, Ramona?

Your Field Day sounded like fun, *Greg Hofsink*. Did you or your team win a prize? Thanks for the quiz, Greg. That was good practice for our Summer Contest. Also thanks for your contribution to the Birthday Fund.

Hello, *Edith Hofsink*. How did you enjoy your uncle's wedding, and how did your skit go? Thanks, Edith, for your contribution, too.

TO SAN FRANCISCO (third part)  
by Busy Beaver *Jolette Moeliker*

(You remember the girls have just said goodbyes and have boarded the plane.)

There they went!!

"Isn't this fun, Margie?" Sandra asked.

After a while Daisy came towards Mommy. She asked her something Margie could not understand. Mommy nodded. Then Daisy asked Margie,

"Would you girls like to meet the pilot?"

Well, what would you think? They went.

In the cockpit the pilot welcomed them. He said his name was Mr. Berensen. He showed Margie and Sandra

exactly how everything worked. Then Mr. Berensen said they had better go back since the plane was going to land.

All of a sudden: Bang, boom! The plane had landed. As soon as everything was checked out they went down to their cabin and cleaned up a bit. Margie asked Sandra,

Did you like the trip?

(Conclusion next time.)

REMINDER

Have you sent in your entry for our big Summer Contest? You put on all the sheets your name and age?

And you remembered to do it neatly?

That's just great!

You'll stand a good chance to win a prize!

Bye for now Busy Beavers.

With love from your  
Aunt Betty

### Unscramble

Rearrange the letters of one word in each set to form a synonym or related word to the remaining two words in the set. Insert capitals where necessary.

Example: drachma - time - money.

mite

- 1. Aaron - lie - judge \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. sin - toga - offering \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. aglide - Reuben - Gad \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Hermon - scared - mountain \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. service - stripes - Levites \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. tongue - cheeps - language \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. pillars - blamer - stone \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. pistachios - acorn - stun \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. arrange - repaper - equip \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. laves - master - captive \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. oath - wears - affirm \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. tendon - muscle - swine \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. fire - dooms - brimstone \_\_\_\_\_

- 14. muser - Akkad - Babylonia \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Mountain - abort - Galilee \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. fabric - evil - concealment \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. roach - stoned - Achan \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. David - derail - Merab \_\_\_\_\_
- 19. tirade - Benjamin - Addar \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. mirrors - peas - reflects \_\_\_\_\_
- 21. famine - scarcity - thread \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. roved - flock - herd \_\_\_\_\_
- 23. garment - hoped - official \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. Christ - isle - ancestor \_\_\_\_\_
- 25. captured - Joshua - greed \_\_\_\_\_

S. Bethlehem

Answers on page 360.

Grateful to the Lord, the Creator of life, we may once again thank Him for entrusting into our care a third son:

AREND JOHN

Born: July 31, 1979.  
A brother for: *James and Brian.*

Art and Pat Linde  
(nee Van Yken)

304 Delaware Avenue,  
Burlington, Ontario L7R 3B2.

With thankfulness to the Lord, we announce the birth of our son:

TIMOTHY ALEXANDER

Born: July 18, 1979.  
A brother for: *Malcolm, Andrew, Gregory, Ian, David, and Juanita.*

Bill and Shawnie Wildeboer  
(nee Veenman)

R.R. 2,  
Orangeville, Ontario L9W 2Y9.

*The Lord is faithful in all His words and gracious in all His deeds.*  
*Psalm 145:13b*

Our Father granted us another one of His covenant children. We named her:

RUBY

A sister for: *Anna.*

Ted and Tineke DeVries

Born: July 16, 1979.  
R.R. 1, 4680 Tolmie Road,  
Yarrow, B.C. V0X 2A0.