The Van Mullem-Vermulm-Ver Mulm Family

The Vermulm family has its roots in what have traditionally been known as the Low Countries—specifically modern-day Belgium and the Netherlands. For the past five centuries or more, the family has called the province of Zuid Holland their home. Municipal records show Vermulms living close to the North Sea in and around the city of Rotterdam and the nearby small villages of Charlois, Hoogvliet, and Pernis. Some still live there today, and the area today looks completely different as Pernis is now surrounded by the piers, storage tanks, and petroleum refineries of Royal Dutch Shell.

Our family's name has undergone several changes since the earliest documented ancestor named Hendrik Van Mullem in the early to middle 1500s. Hendrik was my 10th great-grandfather.

Dutch records tell us that Hendrik was born in Antwerp in modernday Belgium sometime in the first half of the 16th century. We know very little about him—not even the exact years of his birth or death. In Hendrik's day, there was no such place as Belgium. The city of Antwerp was part of the Duchy of Brabant, one of several formal provinces of the Holy Roman Empire. About the time of his birth, Antwerp was entering its golden era as it became the center of trade and commerce for the region. During the first half of the 16th century, Antwerp became one of the wealthiest cities in Europe due to its trade in pepper, cinnamon, textiles, silver, and sugar. Antwerp accounted for nearly 40% of the world's trade in these commodities

The second half of the 16th century was not nearly so kind to Antwerp. As the city rapidly grew in importance, wealth, and power, it became the focus of a religious and political struggle between Catholic Spain and the Protestant North. Those living in the north perceived growing religious coercion by Spain, and their repeated requests for greater religious liberty were rejected. The Protestant Reformation erupted in 1566 with an event the Dutch call the "Beeldenstorm" or statue storm in which Calvinist mobs rioted and defaced statues and decorations in Catholic monasteries and churches throughout the region. Events in Antwerp soon turned deadly.

The 80 Years War began two years later in 1568 and resulted in the Dutch Revolt. In 1581, the Protestant North established the Republic of the Seven United Provinces and declared its independence from Spanish rule. In 1583, the Spanish responded with a six-year-long vindictive and bloody campaign of sacking northern cities. Called the Spanish Fury, it killed nearly 6000 of Antwerp's citizens and burned close to 1000 homes in the city. Harbor facilities were ruined, and the Scheldt Estuary was closed to trade for the next 200 years. Antwerp's wealth and power soon became a sad memory. When Antwerp finally fell in 1585, Spanish Catholic forces gave the city's Protestant population four years to settle their affairs and leave. Intellectuals, merchants, and skilled tradesmen comprised most of the Protestants who fled the city. When the last one left, only 40,000 of the city's original 100,000 inhabitants remained. The Protestant migration went north to the United Provinces, which today make up modern-day Netherlands. The refugees' arrival sparked the Dutch Golden Age.

Whether merchant, tradesmen, or craftsmen, we have to assume that Hendrik was one of the Protestants who fled, and his journey may give us a clue into the origin of the earliest version of our family name van Mullem. Some 70 miles northeast of Antwerp on the river Maas is the small Dutch hamlet of Mullem (called Vortum-Mullem today). There are no written records to prove that Hendrik settled in Mullem, but since most last names at this time in history were derived from either occupations or places of residence, it's reasonable to assume that Hendrik resided in Mullem for a time and took the village as the family surname. Unfortunately, we will never know Hendrik's original family name, for when the Spanish Fury sacked Antwerp, they did so without regard to history or the future. Their destruction of the city was so thorough that few municipal birth, death, or marriage records from that time exist today. On a business trip to Europe in 1992, I met a Belgian man who was familiar with our family name. He said it meant "one who makes their living on the sea or with boats." Given Rotterdam's status as a major seaport, I was satisfied that his explanation might be correct. But when I wrote my name for him, he promptly informed me that I was spelling it incorrectly. He explained that he knew people by the same name in the Netherlands, and that the proper spelling was the one-word form Vermulm. There are unsubstantiated rumors concerning why our side of the family chose to use the two-word version. Today there are relatives in the Netherlands, Montana, Australia, and even Brazil using the one-word spelling of the name. Perhaps he's right. Computers don't seem to like our version as evidenced by the large number of letters I've received addressed to Mr. Mulm with the salutation "Dear Ver."

While it's unknown who Hendrik married, Dutch family records show that he had at least one son named Dirk Hendrikszoon van Mullem my ninth great-grandfather. Dirk's birth year is unknown, but because family records show that he died in Rotterdam in 1593, we can speculate that either he or his father moved the family about 70 miles farther north to Rotterdam. For the next nine generations, the family lived in and around the Rotterdam area with births and baptisms recorded in the villages of Hoogyliet, Charlois, and Pernis.

Huibregt Dirkszoon Vermulm was born in Pernis on July 7, 1795. Huibregt was my great-great grandfather. He was baptized in the Pernis Netherlands Reformed Church, and his baptism records document the establishment of the Vermulm form of our family name.

On May 29, 1826, at the age of 30, Huibregt married Maria Cornelisdr Koole. Maria was five months pregnant with their first child—a son named Dirk. Between the years of 1826 and 1848, their marriage produced eight children—seven boys and one girl. The other boys were named Kornelis, Peter, Arij, Leendert, and two Willems. The girl was named Huibertje. Their son Kornelis was born in Pernis in 1828, and he was my greatgrandfather. The family lived on a short street named the Tijkenweg, which still exists today, although the original house is gone. In 1856, Kornelis married a lady from nearby Portugaal named Adriaantje Warnaar—my great grandmother. It's with them that my Vermulm family story really begins.

Dutch immigration was different from that of almost any other country in that no mass migration within a specific time period ever occurred. Since the first immigrants came to New Amsterdam (New York) in 1615, Dutch migration has ebbed and flowed largely in response to economic conditions and world events. The primary reasons for Dutch migration were religious persecution, political ideology, economics, and cultural change. In addition, the Dutch often chose migration based on their very practical calculation that greater liberty and more prosperity awaited them in the United States than in the Netherlands. Dutch culture in the 1800s was largely defined by a highly religious social order, a strong work ethic, tight family ties, and a commitment to education.



The Tijkenweg in Pernis today

The greatest migration of Dutch occurred in the middle to late 19th century when about 250,000 Dutch peasants and rural artisans came to America. This was triggered by a potato crop failure and a revolt against the Dutch Reformed Church. In the late 1880s, there was a second agricultural crisis in the northern Netherlands, which precipitated the migration of another 75,000 people to America's shores. Some of these immigrants came to Iowa, and the Vermulm family was among them.

Kornelis and Adriaantje were married on June 13, 1856 in the small village of Hoogyliet in Zuid Holland province. Municipal records document Kornelis' occupation as "arbeider" or laborer. This term was broadly applied to nearly any type of general labor in the 19th century Netherlands, so it's difficult to say with certainty what Cornelius did to support his family. It's possible that he may have worked at the small Pernis fishing harbor. It's unlikely, though, that he was a farmer or worked on a farm. The municipal census records are very detailed when describing occupations. Occupations such as fishermen, barrel maker, merchant, sail maker, and farmer are clearly identified as being distinct from general laborers.

By 1880, Adriaantje had borne a total of 10 children—eight boys and two girls. Like so many families in 19th century Europe, the mortality rate in their family was high. Three of the children died before their second birthday, and a daughter Maartje died at the age of 29 just a month after giving birth to her last child.

Their second youngest surviving son was my grandfather Willem Leendert Vermulm. Willem was born in Hoogvliet on October 11, 1872. When Willem was about eight months old, the family moved from Hoogvliet to Pernis.

My parents always told me that Willem was the first Vermulm to ever come to America. According to their story, Willem wanted to leave the Netherlands and travel to South Africa to work on the farm of a Dutch émigré. Not having any money, he decided to stow away on a ship going to South Africa. His trip was supposedly complicated when



A street scene from old Pernis

his illiteracy caused him to choose the wrong ship, and he sneaked aboard one bound for New York instead. Arriving at this unplanned destination, and with no financial means to make a return trip, he supposedly hooked up with some other Dutch speaking immigrants bound for a place called Rock Valley, Iowa.

You need to understand the effect that a story like this has on a small boy. In my mind, Willem's tale conjured up an image of a daring young man with a devil-may-care attitude. His was a perilous saga that ended well but could have easily led to me speaking Afrikaans and dealing today with the fallout of Apartheid. On one hand I admired his courage. On the other, who wants to tell all his friends about a grandfather who couldn't read or write and who was so stupid he got on the wrong boat? I kept that story to myself. As time went by, my parents repeated the story frequently enough that, as I grew older, I became comfortable with having a grandparent that I could place neatly into a category I called unconventional. It's quite a story, but it's an even better example of how information gets changed and embellished over time as it's passed from one generation to the next. Here's what really happened. Willem had a sister named Cornelia Marie who was six years older than he. In the spring of 1890, she left the Netherlands for the United States aboard the S.S. Spaarndam; traveling out of Rotterdam by way of Boulogne, France. The Spaarndam was owned by the Holland-America shipping line and was built by Harland and Wolff in Belfast. Like her famous Harland and Wolff cousin the Titanic, that 22 years later would collide with an iceberg and sink in the North Atlantic, the Spaarndam was on her maiden voyage.

Fortunately, the Spaarndam sailed without incident, and Cornelia Marie arrived in New York harbor on May 23, 1890. She was not traveling alone. The passenger manifest provided to the immigration agents at the Barge Office shows that she was traveling in second class with Mr. and Mrs. Arij Koole and their six children. We know this with certainty from three pieces of evidence. First, Cornelia Marie's grandmother Maria was a Koole, and the genealogical records indicate that Mr. and Mrs. Koole were Cornelia Marie's second cousins.

Second, on the manifest, Mr. Koole claimed all the baggage for the party including Cornelia's. Finally, trans-Atlantic sailing notices along with their second- and first-class passenger lists were routinely published in the Algemeen Handelsblad—an Amsterdam newspaper of the day. In the May 13, 1890 issue, Cornelia Marie's name along with that of the Kooles and their children are listed. At the age of 23, it's clear that Cornelia Marie accompanied her Koole relatives to the United States. Perhaps she came along to help with the children or perhaps she came to check out conditions in America in advance of the rest of the Vermulm family. Whatever her reasons for coming, we know that Cornelia Marie was the first Vermulm to arrive in America and Iowa.

On April 23, 1891, Cornelia married a Dutch immigrant named Alka Kemper. She was 24 years old and it was her first marriage. Alka, a farmer in the Rock Valley area was 34. Cornelia was his second wife.

Until the latter half of the 20th century, the Dutch persisted in being very family oriented. It's highly unlikely that Kornelis's family would

have fragmented by sending one child to America and another to South Africa while the rest of the family stayed in the Netherlands. When Willem left the Netherlands a year later, it's almost certain that he did so to follow his sister Cornelia Marie.

It's also rumored that Willem left the Netherlands for another reason. By 1890, the Netherlands was 17 years into a 31 year long conflict called the Aceh Wars. (See sidebar on next page.) The war was highly unpopular with Dutch citizens, where military service for all of those older than 18 was compulsory. On the 1930 federal census, Willem indicated that he immigrated to the US in 1891. Not coincidentally, he turned 19 in October of that year.

After these discoveries, I had to let Willem out of the unconventional box. He was still daring, though, because the stowaway part of the story is most likely true. After an exhaustive search of the records at Ellis Island, the Barge Office, Castle Garden, the Port of Baltimore, and the passenger lists for the main Canadian port of Québec for 1890 to 1892, there is not one immigration or arrival record for Willem that can be found. He most likely stowed away in a cargo ship where no passenger lists were kept and access to a ship would have been easier.

The story of his illiteracy is also questionable. Early federal census forms indicate that he had completed eighth grade, could read, write, and speak English. Later immigration records also show that Willem's brothers, sisters, and parents were all literate when they arrived. In addition, the Dutch have had a long and historic commitment to the education of their children, going back to a time before education in the Netherlands was compulsory. A study done at Radboud University in Nijmegen shows that in 1870, the literacy rate for Zuid Holland province exceeded 90%. By the 1880s, illiteracy in the Netherlands was for all intents and purposes nonexistent.

There is a more practical reason, however, to believe that Willem was literate in 1891. He was very serious about his own children's education as evidenced by a story that's been passed down by my father. When my father was a youngster, he attended Plato number 9 country school with his siblings Bill, Herb, and Johanna. He apparently misbehaved so badly one day that his teacher sent him home. When he got home, Grandpa took a board in one hand and my father in the other. He brought my father back to school and told the teacher that he sent his son to school to learn. He handed the board to the teacher and told her to use it if that's what it took to make my father behave. "But," he told her "under no circumstances are you to send him home again because he can't learn there." The Dutch were nothing if not strict in their beliefs. Above all they believed in discipline and they practiced it.

Two of the Vermulm children were now planted in America with the rest of their family still in the Netherlands. Before covering the rest of the family's migration, it's worthwhile to spend some time discussing the changing conditions that preceded their departure.

Like his father Kornelis, Willem's occupation was shown as arbeider or laborer. This was not the case for Willem's three older brothers Huipbregt, Jacob, and Cornelis Leendert. While Willem, his parents, and his younger brother Reijer were still living in Pernis, the older brothers had already relocated to different parts of Rotterdam. The municipal records there show that they worked at a variety of professions.

Cornelis Leendert was classified as a "losswerker" or loose worker. This means that he was essentially self-employed, and that he earned his income from a variety of sources. Many of the records from this time suggest that the primary job of a losswerker was loading and unloading ships in harbors—the equivalent of a modern-day longshoreman.

The oldest brother Huipbregt held a variety of jobs. He's listed as "arbeider," "sjouwer," and "schipper." We know from these records that arbeider meant a general laborer. The job of sjouwer could have been used to describe anyone from bellman to janitor, doorkeeper, or baggage agent. Schipper indicates that, at least for a time, Huipbregt

The Aceh Wars

On the northern end of Sumatra is the predominantly Muslim region of Aceh. Today it is rich in oil and natural gas, but in the beginning of the 17th century, it was known as the Sultanate of Aceh, and it was one of the wealthiest, most powerful, and cultivated states in Indonesia. Throughout the 19 century, Aceh Province provided half the world's black pepper supply.

The Dutch were a colonial and seafaring power whose ambitions with regard to Aceh were quite clear. They wished to exploit the area's natural resources and ward off their rival colonial powers—particularly the British and French. The Dutch negotiated the 1871 Anglo-Dutch Treaty of Sumatra with Great Britain. The treaty was designed to preclude conflict over Sumatra and secure Dutch shipping rights for the Sultanate's pepper and agricultural exports. In 1873, the Dutch learned that the Sultanate was in direct talks with the British. They perceived these Aceh-British discussions as a prelude to abrogation of the British-Dutch Treaty, and they launched an offensive aimed at occupying all of Aceh Province. This sparked the Aceh Wars—a conflict that lasted until 1913.

In 1883, Acehnese military leadership declared the conflict a Muslim Holy War, and the fighting mutated into a symbol of Muslim resistance to Western imperialism. Acehnese women and children launched suicide attacks against Dutch soldiers. Back home in the Netherlands, the war stirred up a great deal of controversy as photographs and stories of the death toll found their way back to the home front. The Dutch tried one failed military strategy after another. The campaign drove war spending to nearly 20 million guilders a year, which nearly bankrupted the colonial government. The conflict was interrupted by World War I, but after 1918, intermittent conflict continued until the outbreak of World War II. worked as the skipper or captain of a boat. This doesn't necessarily imply that he commanded a large vessel, as he might possibly have been the captain of one of the smaller canal boats that ferried cargo around the interior of Rotterdam.

Brother Jacob was described as both "sleeper" and "bootwerker" or boat worker. No historical context can be located for the term sleeper, so we don't know what that job entailed. Boat workers were those who worked on the boats that handled and transported goods on the numerous waterways in and around Rotterdam. Their work was distinct from that of the loose worker and the warehouse worker. We'll learn more about Jacob and his job later in this story.

There's a very good reason to assume that Kornelis's and Willem's laborer jobs were closely related to the work going on at the Pernis harbor. Going back as far as the late 1600s, Pernis was one of several small villages along the Nieuwe Maas River—each with its own small harbor and fishing fleet. From Pernis, the town's fleet plied North Sea fishing grounds in search of cod and herring. The fleet often traveled as far as Iceland. Numerous occupations are required to support a harbor and its fleet. It's possible that Kornelis and his sons may have worked loading and unloading equipment and fish, maintaining fishing boats, constructing or repairing harbor facilities, or repairing sails. Pernis was surrounded by dikes and polders, and it's possible they may have worked maintaining them.

As mentioned, it's unlikely that Kornelis or other members of the Vermulm family were farm laborers because, while there was limited farmland around Pernis, the "Bevolkingsregisters" or people's registers (Dutch census forms) are quite specific in identifying those who were involved in agriculture versus those who did other types of work.

By 1885, fishing technology had begun to change rapidly. The Pernis fishing fleet had traditionally been composed of small sailing sloops measuring only about 70 feet in length. These ships became known as "Haringbuisen" or herring buses.



The old harbor in Pernis ca. 1880

The experienced skippers who captained them were either too proud or too poor to convert to the much larger, more modern, steampowered trawlers with which they had to compete. As the larger fishing operations began dominating the industry, they also influenced fish prices and the conditions under which the industry operated in general. The effect was that, for small fishing operations like the one at Pernis, it became increasingly difficult to survive.

As a result, the cod and herring harvest for the Pernis fleet began to dwindle, and by 1890, the fishing fleet at Pernis collapsed. That's the same time that Kornelis, Adriaantje, Willem, and Reijer moved across the river to Rotterdam proper. The other children had already done so.

There are no records, written histories, or verbal family stories to prove any of these assumptions, but it seems likely that as jobs disappeared in the Pernis area, the Vermulm family gradually moved away from the village in search of work somewhere else in the city of Rotterdam. And eventually, they left the Netherlands altogether. Had the family stayed just a few more years, they would have found plentiful work, for in 1902, Shell petroleum begin its first industrial petroleum production at the neighboring areas of Walhaven and Vondelingenplaat. Those developments brought about the total extinction of farming activities in the area as the polders and farmland were gradually redeveloped into the new harbors and petroleum production and storage facilities that totally surround Pernis today. The village itself retains some of its original character and still claims more than 85% of its inhabitants as being of Dutch origin. There are a few buildings left from the 1800s, but modernization has also taken place. Pernis received some damage during World War II when Allied bombers attacked the neighboring oil refineries to prevent important fuel supplies from falling into the hands of the Nazis.

Records show that after leaving Pernis, Huipbregt lived in the Nassauhaven neighborhood of greater Rotterdam not too far from his brother Cornelis Leendert who lived at different times in the Katendrecht and nearby Feijenoorddijk neighborhoods. Jacob and his family lived in the neighborhood of Kralingen just across the river. When Kornelis, Adriaantje, Willem, and Reijer moved from Pernis to Rotterdam, they lived at number 74 Wijnstraat just one street over from the Wijnhaven and Leuvehaven—two of the busier Rotterdam shipping harbors of the time. (See aerial view on the next page.)

Back to the Migration

Once Cornelia Marie and Willem were settled in Rock Valley, the rest of the family begin coming to America. Their passenger records are shown on pages 57-59. It took 12 years before they were all in America. Cornelis Leendert (three years older than Willem and three years younger than Cornelia Marie) arrived in New York aboard the S.S.Dubbeldam on May 5, 1892. His destination was listed as Rock Valley. At the time, he was single; more on that subject later.

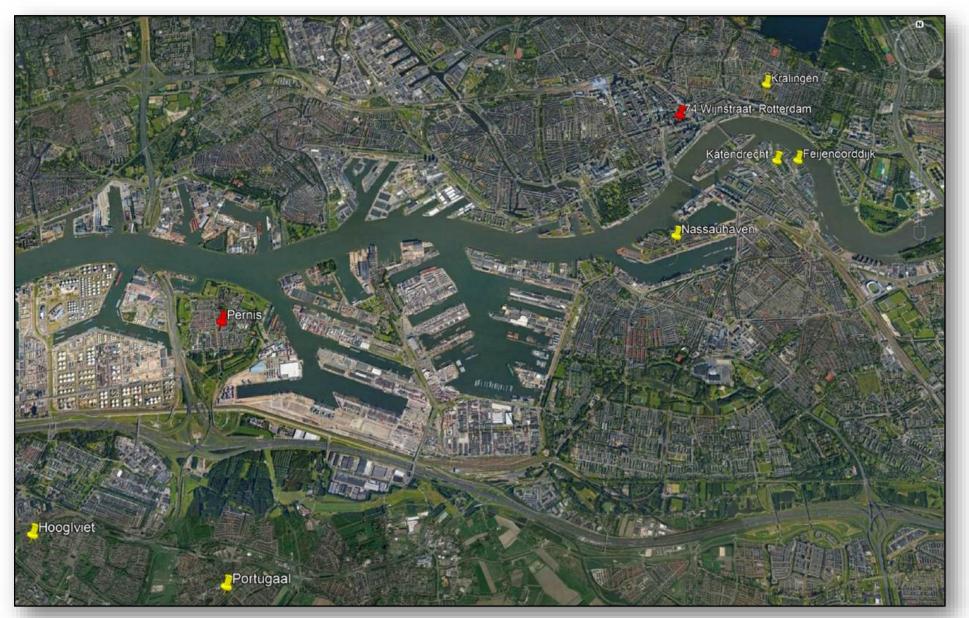
My great-grandfather Kornelis, my great grandmother Adriaantje, and their 11-year-old son Reijer left their Wijnstraat home and boarded the the S.S. Maasdam II. They arrived in New York five days later on May



The Wijnstraat prior to May 1940

10, 1892. They listed their destination as Orange City. Why they did not travel on the same ship as Cornelius is inexplicable. Two years later, on May 11, 1894, the S.S. Rotterdam II docked in New York Harbor, and the oldest son Huipbregt, his wife Lijdia, and their five children passed through Ellis Island. Their destination was listed as Rock Valley and the home of A. Kemper, Cornelia Marie's husband.

Sometime after his arrival in 1892, Cornelis Leendert returned to the Netherlands where, in 1894, he married a lady named Elsje Velgersdijk. He returned with Elsje, their four children, and Elsje's sister Willempje Velgersdijk.. They arrived aboard the S.S. Statendam on April 14, 1902. Willempje later married Cornelis' younger brother Reijer. Their immigration record shows their destination as Rock Valley and the home of Alka J. Kemper.



An aerial view of modern Rotterdam showing the locations of Pernis, Hoogvliet, Portugaal and the neighborhoods of Nassauhaven, Katendrecht, Feijenoorddijk, and Kralingen. The 74 Wijnstraat, location is the last home of Willem, Kornelis, Adriaantje, and Reijer Vermulm before coming to America.

Aboard the same ship with Cornelis Leendert's family were his older brother Jacob, Jacob's wife Maria, their three children, and Jacob's mother-in-law, Maria Langendam. But their arrival record remains somewhat of a mystery that is not solved to this day, for it appears that Jacob never entered the United States with the rest of his family. Jacob's descendants have been told through the years that Jacob died during the crossing and was buried at sea. The immigration manifest, though, hints at a darker story and an unsolved mystery.

Based on new evidence, we can only speculate on what really happened. The manifest shows Jacob arrived alive, but later census data shows that only Maria and the children entered the U.S. And there is an ominous notation on the Ellis Island record concerning Maria's mother.

Ellis Island did not come by its nickname as the Island of Tears without reason. Numerous families were split up with some being allowed entrance through the Golden Door while others were turned away. The results of the mother-in-law's medical inspection are clearly noted—senility. A senile immigrant was expected to become a societal burden and an unnecessary expense to the government. Senility was an ironclad reason for denying admission and returning the immigrant to their home country.

Two specific lists accompany the ship manifest. They are the "Record of Detained Alien Passengers" and the "Record of Aliens Held for Special Inquiry". These two lists were for immigrants requiring additional investigation or for those who were being held in the Ellis Island hospital while they recovered from illness or communicable disease. The elder Maria Langendam's name does not appear on either list, and so it is nearly certain that she was remanded to the Holland America Line whose responsibility it was to return her to the Netherlands at their expense. There is also no evidence of any kind showing that the elder Maria ever entered America in 1902; nor is there a death record for her in the Netherlands.

Initially, the only reasonable conclusion that explained both Jacob's absence in America and his descendants' belief that he died at sea was

that Jacob accompanied his mother-in-law on her return to the Netherlands, and that he died along the way. But equally mysterious were the notes I'd found in my parent's belongings. They indicated that Jacob died in an accident in the Netherlands. The notes were not specific about when, where, or how. For a time, the only certainty was that neither Jacob nor his mother-in-law ever made it beyond Ellis Island. The 1910 federal census shows that his wife Maria had remarried to a Dutch immigrant named Arie Steenhoven. Steenhoven adopted their three children Dirk, Cornelius, and Maria.

A mystery remained regarding the circumstances of Jacob's and his mother-in-law's deaths. Searching the on-line Dutch municipal archives at www.wiewaswiel.nl only resulted in an even greater mystery. There, Jacob's death is clearly recorded and shows that he died on Wednesday, October 9, 1901—six months and five days before he supposedly arrived at Ellis Island. And the Dutch death record verifies that he was the Jacob in question since it shows his father as Kornelis Vermulm, his mother as Adriaantje Warner, and his spouse as Maria Langendam.

How could Jacob have arrived in New York City in April 1902 when the records in the Rotterdam municipal archives show that he died six months earlier in 1901? Clearly some information is missing, and some family stories are simply incorrect. Are the stories of Jacob's death and burial at sea intentional for some reason or merely accidental?

Jacob's death record is very explicit in describing that he died at 2:00 a.m. in a house on the Coolsingel. The Coolsingel was then, and still is, a major shopping and business street in Rotterdam. While it is a wide boulevard today, in 1901, the thoroughfare was divided down the middle by a canal. The canal was used for shipping goods into the interior of Rotterdam from the nearby harbors on the river. The street is more than a mile from Jacob's home in the Kralingen neighborhood.

Combining my parents' notes with the historical record of Jacob's death and the knowledge of his job as a "boat worker," it can only be assumed that he was working a night-shift on a boat transporting



A postcard showing the Coolsingel in 1900

goods up the Coolsingel canal. Somehow, he was involved in an accident that caused his death. How could the Statendam passenger list show that Jacob arrived at Ellis Island more than six months after he died? There are two possible explanations.

Looking closely at the passenger record, there is no mention of Cornelis Leendert accompanying his wife and children on their trip. As a matter of fact, Cornelis is not shown on the passenger manifest at all. He had come to America once before in 1892 and then returned to the Netherlands where he married and started his family. It's possible that Cornelis Leendert may have posed as his brother Jacob hoping to get the entire family, including the senile mother-in-law, into the country. This is one explanation. There's also another possibility. Research has found no passenger or immigration record for Maria's second husband, Arie Steenhoven. It's possible that, for this 1902 voyage, Arie may have used Jacob's identification papers and immigration papers, posed as Jacob, and taken his place as the head of the family. We'll never have an exact explanation for who took Jacob's place on this



Kornelis and Adriaantje's headstone in Valley View Cemetery

1902 voyage to America. In any case, Jacob's family was the last of the Vermulm family to depart the Netherlands. Jacob was dead, Maria was widowed, her own father was dead, her mother was senile, and the last of her husband's family were leaving the Netherlands forever. With her support structure crumbling, Maria was probably desperate to accompany the rest of Jacob's family to America. Finally, it's possible that the elder Maria Langendam died on her lonely return trip and was buried at sea. We have to keep in mind that there is no death record for her in the Netherlands. Nearly every rumor has a shred of truth, and it's possible that her death in this manner might be the seed of the story of Jacob dying at sea. We'll never know.

In 1895, less than three years after their arrival, my great-grandfather Cornelius died. My great-grandmother Jennie died at Tante Kay's house just three years later in 1898. Both are buried in Rock Valley's Valley View Cemetery. Both birth years shown on their headstone are wrong.

Like most immigrants, the family Americanized their names after their arrival. They left the last name mostly intact but simplified their first names. Cornelia Marie became plain Cornelia or "Tante K," her Dutch

nickname in the family. Huipbregt became Herbert and later Henry. Cornelis Leendert became Cornelius, and Willem Leendert dropped the Leendert and began to spell his first name as William. Reijer became Raynold. My great-grandfather became Cornelius, and my great-grandmother changed her name to Jennie.

About the children

William married Tjitske (Tillie) Wassenaar in November 1898. She was a young Dutch immigrant from the tiny village of Sint Jacobie Parochie in the province of Friesland. They had 10 children named Robert (#1) who died in 1905, William, Cornelius, Robert (#2), Frank, Herb, Nell, Genevieve, Johanna, and my father Jake. In spite of how he may or may not have arrived in America, William became a citizen in 1896, and Tillie was naturalized in 1898. The 1940 census shows that William was unable to work all that year. The reason why is unknown, but it may have been his health for he died from a heart attack four years later on June 24, 1944. My grandmother Tillie died in our farm house in 1957. They are buried in Valley View Cemetery in Rock Valley.



William and Tillie's headstone in Valley View Cemetery

Cornelius and Elsie stayed in Rock Valley and raised six children named Maria, Cornelius, Nick, Jenny, William, and Martha. Four of those children were born in Holland. On October 28, 1921, Cornelius was killed in a farm accident. A short news article in the November 21, 1921 addition of the Hawarden Independent newspaper explained the details.

Cornelius Ver Mulm of Rock Valley was almost instantly killed on October 28, when he fell 8 feet from a corn crib striking his head on the ground and breaking his neck. Mr. Ver Mulm was operating the corn elevator and was standing on a board which had been placed across the crib. He stepped backward upon the end of the board extending over the side of the crib, causing the board to tip, and he fell to the ground. His early life was spent in his native Holland, and he came to Sioux County in 1902. He is survived by his wife, three sons, two daughters, three brothers, and one sister.

Cornelis Leendert and Elsie are buried in Valley View Cemetery.



Cornelius and Elsie's headstone In Valley View Cemetery

Huipbregt's daughter Nellie died in 1901 and his wife Lydia a few years later. Both are buried in Valley View Cemetery. The early 1900s were prime settlement time for Montana and it's possible that after their deaths, Huipbregt needed a change. In 1905, he bid farewell to the graves of his wife and child and moved to Montana. Cornelia, her husband Alka, Raynold, and his wife Willempje followed.

A generational rumor has existed that a feud developed between the siblings and that this was the reason why Huipbregt, Cornelia, and Raynold all moved west. There's never been any proof for this rumor. There's also no proof for a similar rumor that the feud led the Iowa branch of the family to distinguish itself from the Montana branch by changing the spelling of the family name to the two-word version Ver Mulm. The Montana branch of the family to this day retains the original one-word spelling. Perhaps the rumors themselves have developed out of the vacuum that came with the passage of time and when other more reasonable explanations were long forgotten. To modern generations, there must have been a serious schism that caused three of Cornelius and Jennie's children to abandon the rest of their siblings in Rock Valley and move to Montana in the very early years of the 1900s.

The Migration Mystery Solved

The story of the migration of Huipbregt, Raynold, and their sister Cornelia Marie (Tante K) can now be told, and a feud was likely not the primary reason for their migration west. The roots of their migration story sprouted much earlier than their own arrival in the United States in the very late 1890s, for they were to build their futures as a result of the misfortunes and fortunes of even earlier American immigrants.

In the mid-1840s, Col. James Conrad and his wife Maria were raising their family near Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Amongst their 12 children were two sons named Charles and William. Like many families in the Shenandoah Valley, the American Civil War left their ancestral home in ruins and the family impoverished. In 1868 Charles and William Conrad headed West in search of a better life. Their trip took them all the way to Fort Benton in Montana territory. Still more than 20 years away from statehood, Montana offered the brothers the opportunity they'd lost in Virginia.

Over the next 35 years, the Conrad brothers built an empire that extended from New Orleans to the Canadian border. Their business interests included a mercantile trading and shipping company with worldwide reach. In 1874 alone, they shipped more than 30 million pounds of supplies to the Canadian government.

The brothers acquired a small fleet of packet steamers and moved products the length of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers from the Missouri's headwaters in Montana all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. They involved themselves in gold-mining, cattle ranching, and timber production. In 1880, they purchased nearly 7000 acres of land in what is now Pondera County, Montana. By 1890, they had increased their land ownership to 200,000 acres and named their landholdings the Seven Block Ranch. The Conrad brothers were also early promoters of sugar beet production in the area, and it was this and other agricultural experiments that probably made them aware of the area's great need for water.

With the passage of time, the Conrad brothers incorporated many of their investments under the name of the Conrad Investment Company. Along the way, they had cleverly gained control of most of the water rights in the area, and they set their sights on developing irrigation for the transformation of their vast real estate holdings into productive farmland and substantial profit. They assigned an employee named M. S. Darling to be the project engineer, and they also tasked Darling with the job of recruiting people to move to the area and work on the irrigation project. The History of Pondera County by the Pondera History Association explains the results of Darling's recruitment efforts in greater detail. The first group of settlers arrived in 1905 from Rock Valley, Iowa—a Dutch settlement. Those first four families were ill prepared to meet the rigors of the new settlement area. They were the Van de Kop brothers, the Kempers, the Vermulms, and the Vanden Hulls. All were members of the Dutch Reformed Church. There were 17 children in the group. Mother Vermulm and her infant child had died back in Iowa. Leaving behind his wife and the small baby, Father Vermulm arrived in Pondera County with his ten children. The first summer found him building irrigation ditches for the project. Later he ran a road grader pulled by 15 head of horses. Times were very hard.

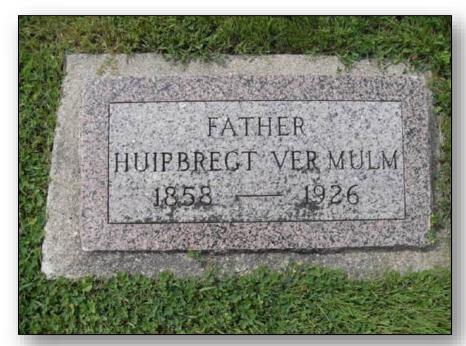
The nearest school was in what would become the town of Conrad. The children, however, spoke no English, so their parents decided to build their own school. Mr. Kemper gave land. The building was started in the fall of 1905, and "The Kemper School" was completed in the spring of 1906. There were ten pupils the first year.

We now understand the catalyst for the Vermulm migration to Montana. Soon the Vermulm immigrants were joined by more Dutchman from Huntley, Montana and Pella, Iowa. Other settlers came to the area directly from the "old country" of the Netherlands. The area became known as "Dutch Settlement." These Hollanders held their own Dutch language church services in the Kemper School. Huipbregt Vermulm, now known to the area's residents as Henry, became particularly valuable in 1913 when 13 families came from the Dutch speaking part of Belgium and settled in the countryside between Conrad and nearby Valier. Huipbregt became their unofficial interpreter and was known thenceforth as "Father of the Belgians." In 1912, he purchased 155 acres of Montana land from the federal government for \$1.25 per acre

In the years that followed, the Vermulms and Kempers were active among their Dutch neighbors and the larger community. In 1908, they and 18 other families established a formal church in Conrad. It was named the First Reformed Church. Huipbregt and Cornelia Marie's husband Alka Kemper were two of the three-member building committee who made plans for a new church structure. It was completed and dedicated in 1909. It was not until 1925 that the church finally discontinued their Dutch language services.

It's clear now that Huipbregt, Raynold, and Cornelia Marie responded to the recruitment proposals of the Conrad brothers, which resulted in the migration of the family to Montana. It's possible, of course, that leaving the rest of their siblings behind in northwest Iowa may have caused some friction. Of that we can never be sure. But what is certain is that the Conrad's recruitment efforts were the primary catalyst for the siblings' move. Descendants of both the Iowa Ver Mulms and the Montana Vermulms gathered in Iowa in 1992 for a first ever family wide reunion—a schism, if ever there was one, was long forgotten.

Huipbregt died in 1926 at age 68. His sister Cornelia Marie, or Tante Kay as my father called her, died in 1944. The youngest sibling Raynold died in 1941 at the age of 60. All three are buried in Hillside Cemetery in Conrad, Montana.



Huipbregt Vermulm's headstone in Montana—Note the alternate spelling of the family name.



Cornelia Marie's headstone — She was the first Vermulm in the USA.

There is no specific cause of death recorded for Jacob Vermulm. With land in high demand, and nearly one-third of the country below sea level, cemetery space in the Netherlands is limited, and plots are only rented for a hefty sum for periods of 10 or 20 years. Cremation is preferred over burial. It's unlikely that Jacob's grave could ever be found—if one ever existed. We'll probably never know anything more about the cause of Jacob's death.

Less than a year after her arrival in 1902, his wife Maria married Arie Steenhoven. 1910 census records show that he adopted Maria's three children Dirk (Dick), Cornelius, and Maria. Mother Maria died in 1914 and is buried in the memory Gardens Cemetery in Sioux Center under the last name of Steenhoven. Jacob's children kept their Vermulm last name, and some of their descendants live today in the Sioux County area.

In many ways, the Van Mullem – Vermulm – Ver Mulm immigrant story is unremarkable. Compared to earlier immigrants, their trip was a pleasure cruise. They migrated late enough that steam technology had overtaken wind and sail. Rather than a trip of several months, their voyage took only eight or nine days. Steerage quarters weren't luxurious by any means, but their travel conditions were far less crowded and sanitation was greatly improved. They needed to bring no water, food, or supplies, and their meals were prepared for them. Because the transcontinental railroad had been completed in 1869, long before their arrival, they could travel nearly anywhere without difficulty.

Their lives in America were largely unremarkable, too. There were no immediate economic upheavals, the Civil War was long over, and World War I was not even on the horizon. They weren't wealthy, powerful, or influential. They were just simple hard-working people. That's what they knew, that's why they came, and that's what they set about doing. In the end, the most remarkable thing about the family was probably their pragmatic approach to seeking better lives and finding greater prosperity for themselves and their families. Their adventure has made all the difference for me—for without it, I wouldn't be here. Of course, I hope I wouldn't be in South Africa either.

Epilogue to the Ver Mulm Migration

It appears that the family of Kornelis and Adriaantje Vermulm was the only branch of the Vermulm family tree to leave the Netherlands for America. When they emigrated, they left relatives behind. Kornelis said goodbye to at least one brother and one sister. Adriaantje bid farewell to at least one brother and several sisters. Their children left behind cousins, uncles and aunts, and lots of friends. It's hard to believe that they didn't write each other letters or that communication between the relatives ceased with their departure. So, it must have been difficult for the Vermulm family in America to learn of the events that unfolded in the Netherlands after they left.

Kornelis and Adriaantje were both dead by the time World War I began, and since the Netherlands was a neutral observer during that

conflict, none of their family was likely worried about what might be happening in their old homeland. The same cannot be said for the events of World War II.

The port facilities of Rotterdam were coveted by Adolph Hitler as the perfect launching point for Operation Seelöwe, the invasion of Great Britain. The Netherlands, however, planned on remaining neutral in this conflict as they had in World War I. The Nazis had other plans. On May 10, 1940, Germany launched a ground and airborne invasion of the Netherlands. Even though German forces were superior in every way, the Dutch fought them to a stalemate over a period of the next three days. On May 14, 1940, Germany dropped the hammer. The Nazi Luftwaffe conducted a heavy bombing campaign against Rotterdam. Nearly the entire historic city center was destroyed, 900 people were killed and 85,000 were left homeless. The last home where Kornelis, Adriaantje, Willem, and Reijer lived at 74 Wijnstraat was reduced to a pile of rubble. The Dutch capitulated on May 15.



The Wijnstraat following the 1940 Nazi blitz of Rotterdam

Kornelis' brother Pieter died in 1915. Pieter's son Philippus (Kornelis's nephew) was a butcher living in Kralingen. Philippus died in 1935, but his daughter Hendrika Vermulm had a front row seat to the agony of the German occupation.

In 1928, Hendrika Vermulm married a man named Joseph Saloman Van Kloeten. Joseph was an office clerk and a member of Rotterdam's Jewish community. It's clear that with the start of the war, Hendrika had somehow become involved in the Dutch Resistance. On December 20, 1941, she was arrested by the SD for *"letter smuggling and making false statements.*" She was held in solitary confinement and without mail for 41 days before being released. On October 9, 1941, Joseph was arrested by the SD (Nazi security agency). The charge was *"as a Jew, made an incorrect statement regarding descent"* (i.e. race). Joseph was held in prison until he was deported by the Nazis on February 13, 1942—first to the transit camp at Amersfoort, Netherlands and then to the concentration camp at Gross-Rosen in modern-day Poland. Gross-Rosen was a forced labor camp where many of the inmates died from exhaustion in the camp's stone quarry. Joseph died there on May 20, 1942. Hendrika was arrested again on March 10, 1942 and held until June 19, 1942. The municipal records do not give a reason for her imprisonment, but frequently, the Nazis needed no reason for their actions.

There are no other records on file concerning Hendrika until after the Netherlands was liberated. In September 1945, files at the Rotterdam Archives show the Hendrika remarried to a man named Dirk Bloot. Dirk was 49 and Hendrika 39. There are no mentions of Hendrika after her marriage.

As an illustration of Nazi diligence, 16 Van Kloeten relatives from Rotterdam were also deported. Six died in Sobibor, nine died in Auschwitz, and one at the transit camp in Amersfoort. The victims ranged in age from nine to 75.

Finally, there was one Vermulm relative in Rotterdam that got into trouble all by himself. The municipal police records show that a man named Leendert Willem Vermulm was arrested and jailed in September 1945 for investigation into financial shenanigans related to black market activities during the war. It's uncertain who this particular Vermulm is or how he is related to the rest of the family.

It's unknown to us today if William, Cornelia Marie, or Raynold knew of the trials of their relatives in the Netherlands or how they felt about what was happening in their former home.

My Parents

William and Tillie could not predict that when my father Jake was born in their Garfield Township farmhouse in 1919, he would one day be farming the adjacent farm directly across the river. The only proof of his birthplace is my father's often-told story. I usually heard it when we were mending fences on a small part of our farm that lay across the river. From that small piece of land, he could see the neighboring farmstead, and he always told me that it was the farmhouse where he was born. Unfortunately, the early farm atlases from those days record only the landowners and not farm tenants. The 1920 census does show the family lived in Garfield Township.

Within a few years of his birth, the family relocated to another farm south of Rock Valley in Plato Township. They rented there as well. There's no indication that my grandfather ever owned any farmland, which may have been a good thing because that meant he also had no farm to lose during the Great Depression.

My dad married Dorothy Van Roekel on February 19, 1941, and in December of that year, my oldest brother Lee was born. Like so many young families from this generation, their life was put on hold as World War II broke out. My father's war stories are told very well in a book he wrote with Lee titled **An Old Soldier Remembers**, so it's unnecessary to recount them here. But it is worth noting that Dad did something few other Iowa farm boys had ever done until that time. He circumnavigated the globe. He left San Francisco Bay on a foggy morning in July 1943. His ship stopped at Hobart, Tasmania; Perth, Australia; and Bombay, India on the way to Karachi. On May 1, 1943, he left Karachi in convoy, drove almost 3,500 miles across India and up the Burma Road to Paoshan, China. After the Japanese surrender in September 1945, he and his unit boarded a beat-up C-47 Skytrain and "jumped the hump" (the Himalayas) on their return to Lido, India.

On November 28, 1945 he boarded the ship for home. The return voyage took him to the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean Sea, past the Rock of Gibraltar, across the Atlantic Ocean, and into the welcoming arms of Lady Liberty in New York Harbor. He returned home from New York by train on December 29, 1943 — 1047 days after he said farewell to my mother and brother. He left an Iowa farmer and returned as a staff sergeant. Like most families of that time, Dad and Mom worked hard to put their lives back together and to pick up where they left off. The U.S. Army had trained him to be a mechanic. Putting his newfound skills to use, he went into business with his brother Bill. The two ran a combination auto repair and auto body business in Rock Valley. My mother took care of the family, which over the next seven years grew with the addition of my brother Roger and me.

By 1957, back problems forced Dad to exit the repair business and return to farming. He moved our family to the northern half of Section 3 of Garfield Township – a 320 acre farm southwest of Rock Valley — just across the river from where he'd been born 37 years before. His circle was complete.

When we moved to the farm, our house had running water and only one sink in the kitchen. There was no indoor bath or toilet — only a galvanized washtub for bathing and an outhouse about 50 feet away. In the winter, the bedrooms would become so cold at night, that a glass of water had a thin layer of ice on the top in the morning. Dad put an end to those problems in the first years. He convinced the landlord to provide the money for remodeling the house and adding a full bathroom, better heat, and more insulation. Mom and Dad farmed there for 21 years. They grew corn, oats, soybeans, and hay, and raised cattle and hogs. Eventually my brothers and I were all grown and married. In 1978, our folks retired from farming and moved to Rock Valley where they built a new house — the first and only new house they ever owned.

For a time. Dad worked at Roorda Manufacturing in Rock Valley to supplement their Social Security income. Mom worked as a part-time nurse's aide at Valley Manor, the nursing home just down the street in Rock Valley. They visited friends and family, and Dad did a lot of fishing, gardening, and working in the yard. They kept active in their church, and Dad helped turn an old creamery building into a functioning senior citizens center. They also did more traveling in their retirement, going to California, Alaska, and on a number of tours.

They enjoyed 24 years together in retirement before Dad died very suddenly on October 29, 2002 at age 83. Mom moved to an assisted living facility in Sheldon and then to a nursing home in Sanborn, the town where she'd been born. After a period of declining health, Mom died on October 19, 2010. She was 92. They are buried in Valley View Cemetery in Rock Valley.

The World War II Odyssey of Jake Ver Mulm

As mentioned, Dad's World War II experiences were told very well in **An Old Soldier Remembers**. But new information is constantly appearing and, it's now possible to enrich the information presented in that book with a little more information about his experiences in the service.

Dad left Camp Stoneman in California for Karachi, India (now Pakistan) on July 31, 1943. He sailed on the SS Brazil, which has a story of its own. The Brazil began life as the passenger liner SS Virginia in 1928. The ship was operated by the Panama Pacific Line and traveled regularly from New York to Havana, then through the Panama Canal, to San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. In 1937, the Virginia was sold to Moore and McCormick Lines, refurbished, and renamed the SS Brazil. She sailed regularly between New York and Buenos Aires as part of President. Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Fleet" of American flagged passenger vessels.

On December 6, 1941, the Brazil left New York Harbor for what the cruise company called their Christmas Sailing. She was the last ship to depart from the United States before war broke out between the U.S. and Japan. On board were five Japanese nationals — Shigeto Nigai, Chancellor of the Washington Embassy; R. Ando, his attaché; Hirochi Takagi, the third secretary; Kazushige Hirasawa, counsel in New York;



1943 - The USAT Brazil in wartime gray

and Hirasawa's wife. The four men were some of the highest-ranking Japanese diplomats in the United States. Knowing what was coming the next day they were making their escape. With Congress's declaration of war, the ship's portholes were sealed and the lights painted blue and purple to hide the ship at night. On December 10, the ship made her first stop in Barbados where, at the request of President Roosevelt, British intelligence officers went aboard and arrested the five Japanese. On the way to Buenos Aires, the ship's crew painted the ship gray and painted over the American flag insignias. The Brazil arrived in Buenos Aires on December 23, 1941, unloaded passengers and freight, and set sail for New York on Christmas Day. 35 days later, the Brazil returned to New York City where she was commandeered by the War Shipping Administration and converted to a United States Army Transport (USAT).

The Brazil was not scrapped until 1964, and her service records are detailed — even during the war years. She transported supplies munitions and troops to the European, Pacific, and CBI theaters. On one return trip from the Mediterranean, she brought back the crew of a German submarine for internment in an American POW camp. Dad's sailing to Karachi board the Brazil was one of many such trips made by this ship.

Webster's dictionary defines an odyssey as, "a long journey full of adventures or a series of experiences, which give knowledge or understanding to someone." Of all Dad's experiences, his 35-day journey from Karachi to Paoshan (now Baoshan), China certainly was an odyssey. Dad kept a diary of this trip, but lost it somewhere along the road in Burma. Luckily his good friend Clarence Den Hartog of Orange City also kept a diary. Dad and Lee included excerpts of it in his book, but I'm inserting it here in its entirety for two reasons. First, it shows the reactions of a small-town Iowa boy to the sights and sounds of a world that's completely new and foreign. Second, it exemplifies what we have so often been told about a soldier's experience in war time - a life that's a combination of boredom, homesickness, uncertainty, and sometimes fear. Except for Clarence's comments about his personal well-being, we can safely assume that his experiences were Dad's experiences, too. Where words appear in parentheses, these are the modern-day place names for a village or city mentioned in the diary. On May 7 of the diary, the convoy crossed the border between modern-day Pakistan and India.

The diary of Clarence den Hartog

Miles at start of trip – 658

May 1, 1943 – 782 miles. Left Karachi, India (Pakistan) at 9 o'clock Tuesday morning. Sgt. Patterson from Boone, Iowa and myself driving a 2 ½ ton 6 x 6 GMC with winch, a machine shop truck with trailer. Mileage at start was 658 miles. We got to Hyderabad 4 o'clock mileage 782. No trouble but terribly hot, dusty, and miserable. Had our beds all set when a dust storm blew up. So bad you couldn't see a thing. We're pulling a trailer with three barrels of high-test gas for kitchen stoves.

May 2 – 985 miles. Plenty of dust today, no trouble but for camels, cows, and water buffalo in the road. Slept on the ground in a train depot. Another dust storm. We're in Sukkai (Sukkur). Mileage 985.

May 3 – 1097 miles. Dusty day, all rough brick road. Mileage now 1097. No dust storm at night. Slept very well. Stopped at Adams Walk (Aaddam Porr). Nothing but a reservoir. Washed out our clothes, etc.

May 4 – 1251 miles. Good day today. Had some brick road at start. Ran over a 5-to-6-foot snake. Were stopped in Multan for tonight.

May 5 – 1486 miles. Good day and some very nice trees and grass. Pulled into Lahore area and waited for the MPs. Got washed and to bed at 11 o'clock.

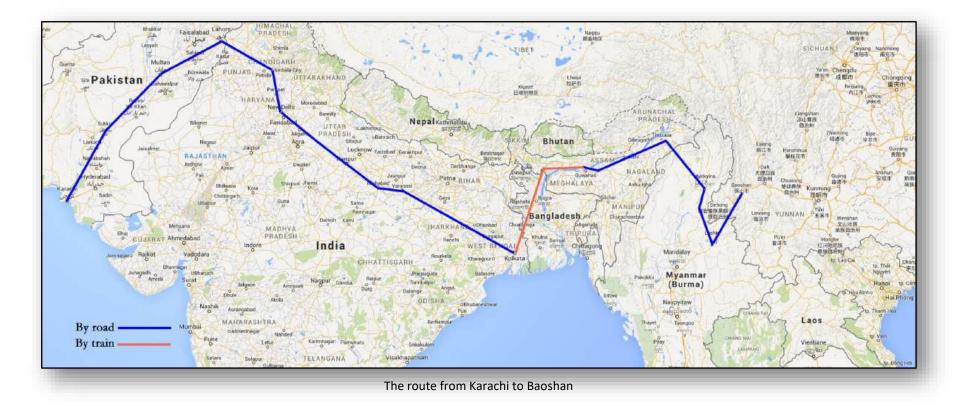
May 6 – Didn't move today. We greased our trucks, got the tarps fixed, etc. Late afternoon and evening until about 10 o'clock, we got a pass uptown. Had a fairly good time, but nothing to do uptown.

May 7 – 1674 miles. Monday evening. Swell day today. Good roads and not much dust. Arrived in Ombala (Ambala, India) at about 5:30. Hope to get to Delhi tomorrow.

May 8 – 1813 miles. Germany surrendered today! Got to Delhi about 5 o'clock. Had our first major trouble today. Second truck in front of me slid its duels on a seven or eight-year-old kid, and he died a few minutes later. I saw the whole mess. Also saw a lot of monkeys. Looked the city of Delhi over, and it's pretty nice. Had a steak and a Tom Collins. We killed the kid about 35 miles from Delhi. We're staying where a detachment of our boys are.

May 9 – Didn't move today. Put some grease seals in the left rear wheel, tightened wheel bearings, etc. Went to town in the evening to a dance. Had a fair time, only Forsythe disappeared. I held the truck up until 1:30 AM, and the guys finally got restless to go home so I had to leave him.

May 10 – 1950 miles. Very dirty day. Had our first blowout on one truck. The convoy has had a lot of flat tires. Slept real well at night. Saw some peacocks. Spent the night at Etah.



May 11 – 2088 miles. Stopped in Cawndore (Kanpur) for the night – a very hot and dusty day. Saw our first elephant. Good place for showers, etc.

May 12 – 2208 miles. We are in Allahabad – a very small town. It was a very dusty day but good stop for tonight. One of the fellows bought a monkey. Went to town and had a swell time.

May 13 – We are in Benares (Varanasi), the Holy City, with all the temples etc. Nothing for us to do though. We had a very rough and dusty trip, but good showers here. Changed oil and replaced manifold gasket. We are to get further travel orders here so don't know where will move to next.

May 14 – Didn't travel today. We're still in Benares. Had a good day. Went swimming in the swimming pool in the afternoon and saw the Hindu Holy Temple, Temple of Love, etc. Washed my hands in the Holy Ganges River.

May 15 – 2472 miles. A pretty fair day. Rather dusty at first but ran into hills, trees, and grass. Pretty nice country. Slept in a dust storm all night. My eyes are pretty sore.

May 16 – 2582 miles. We are in Aransol (Asansol). The town is no good at all, but we have a pretty good place to camp. The weather is swell here. Trees, hills, and grass. Looks like it may rain soon now.

May 17 - 2728 miles. Nice day, good roads, and climate. We are now in Calcutta. We are to stay here for a while. Don't know how we'll leave here or when as yet. Waiting for further orders.

May 18 – We didn't move today. Did P.M.s, etc. on our trucks and slept most of the afternoon. In the evening, we went to town. Had grilled lamb chops and a Tom Collins. Calcutta is very much larger than I expected. Lots of traffic. Reminds me of Chicago. Saw a lot of coconut and banana trees.

May 19 - Went to the trains to load on our vehicles. Sat there all morning and returned here to strip our trucks down. They were too high. Went through the REA plant and went uptown for ice cream last night. I have a hell of a cold and feel pretty rough.

May 20 – 2762 miles. Laid around all afternoon waiting to pull out. Didn't leave until 1:30 for the train. Drove down there and loaded our trucks. The train left around 8:30. Had a fair night sleep. Don't know when we get off yet. I'm feeling okay this morning.

May 21 – 2765 miles. – Had an all-day dirty freight train ride. The country looks much better. We got off the train with the vehicles at 10 o'clock after getting soaked in a sudden rain storm. We parked in an open plain where there is no water. I slept in the cab and was stiff and sore all over — besides adding to my cold. Traveled 315 miles by train.

May 22 – Didn't travel today. We raised our tarps and bows and fixed our bunks in the back. Bathed in a nice mountain stream. Had rain at night and slept really comfortable.

May 23 – 2923 miles. Very pretty country. Traveled some nice mountain roads and very dense jungle. A very good day. At night we stayed in a parking lot where across the road is the pumping station for gas from Calcutta to China. Six big pumps pumping 450 barrels an hour, 24 hours a day. May 24 – 3013 miles. Nice drive in the forenoon. Afternoon we laid around and waited for a ferry. Drove some trucks up for another company while we waited. At 6:30 we crossed the Brahmaputra River.

May 25 – 3096 miles. Had a slow day's drive. Pulled into an overnight camp at about 12 noon. We sat around all afternoon and went to a movie in the evening. Got up at 4 a.m. and left at 5:45. Plenty of rain.

May 26 – 3269 miles. Left at 5:45 in the morning. I drove all day. Had good roads. Got here at 1 o'clock. Sat around in the afternoon. It did a lot of raining. We are in Assan (Assam).

May 27 – 3441 miles. The roads are really rough. Lots of tea plantations. Civilized country where there are lots of schools, etc. Got rid of the Diamond Ts (wrecker trucks) at Chabause. Drove on to Ledo where we spent the night. Saw Henry Armstrong the boxer on the stage.

May 28 – 3552 miles. We traveled the Ledo Road and boy is it rugged! We started out at 5:45 AM and got here at 10:30 last night. We were all terribly tired and hadn't eaten all day. We were happy by having mail call though, and I got a lot which really built up my morale — and it needed it. We are in Shingbewang (Shin Bway Yang, Myanmar) where we were supposed to be but orders are changed and we go next to Myithkyina (Myitkyina, Myanmar). I got 36 letters.

May 29 – 3710 miles. Had a pretty good day. The road was better, but it is terribly dusty, hot, and bumpy. We're Myithkyina now, in a G.I. camp. Good showers, etc. Went to the show in the evening and slept like a log all night. I finished reading my letters.

May 30 – Didn't travel today. In the morning, I put an axle gasket in my truck and lubricated it all up. In the afternoon, we worked hard on some wreck of a truck, which we'll take along over the Hump with our equipment. We also had to lift a truck off a Chinaman who ran in the ditch. Six were badly hurt, and one in the truck, I think his back is broken. Yesterday, we saw a train of boxcars that were all shot to the

dickens and a few tanks were shot up in a tank battle. There are several bomb holes and shot up equipment around here. Looks as if were heading right where the bullets are flying. I'm going to write a letter home tonight.

May 31 – Didn't travel today. Worked hard all day getting our other trucks in shape. One of the fellows turned one over but wasn't hurt. It's hotter than heck. Tomorrow, we start on the move again. Saw Carl Clay today, but didn't talk to him. We'll leave over a nearly 3/10-mile-long pontoon bridge over the Irawaddy River.



The Irrawaddy pontoon bridge

June 1 – 3830 miles. Jackie's birthday today. It's been a really bad day. Last night we slept outside and got rained out. The first part of our trip was in mountains and rainy and slippery. One truck turned over – the

same one that killed the little Indian kid. Later, Jake's trailer turned over. Several of the fellows went into the ditch. The same truck that turned over smashed one of our Jeeps. The latter part of the trip was hot and terribly dusty. The country is all ruined. Shell holes, trees and buildings all blown up, many bridges out, etc. There are several Chinese around here already with their big straw hats. Tomorrow we should enter China. Were in Bhamo for the night. Driving alone again.

June 2 – 3903 miles. We're about 18 miles from the Chinese border. The roads were mountainous and dusty. A good day, though. A lot of bridges and trucks along the road that are blown up. A lot of trees and shell holes blown up. We explored a temple here but have to be careful of booby-traps. Across the road we looked at some pillboxes, etc. It stinks with dead Japs around here. We're starting to see the screwy, pointed up roofs on the buildings or rather part of the buildings. The people are starting to come down out of the hills now again. Butch is around here and came over to visit us. Near Lashio.

June 3 – 4033 miles. Mileage when we crossed over the Chinese border was 3940 miles. First convoy to crossover was at 2 PM. We crossed at about 1 o'clock. We had to go back 15 miles to get our pass to enter China. The roads are terrible. Rough and all mountains. Every bridge is blown out. There are bomb craters, foxholes, dugouts, and machine gun nests all over. Pulled into camp about 9 o'clock. Eight trucks and a wrecker weren't in yet when we pulled out this morning. Don't know what is wrong. We should get there tomorrow.

June 4 – 4114 miles. Well, we made. We pulled in here about 6 o'clock. The time has changed, two hours faster. It was a heck of a long, rough, dusty day. Sure glad we made it okay. Had two flats today. We are in Paoshan (Baoshan), China. Not a bad place but a lot of work getting here.

From their Karachi departure on May 1, 1945 until their arrival in Baoshan on June 4, 1945, the 3479th Ordinance Medium Automotive Maintenance Company traveled a total distance of 3,456 miles. Dad stayed in Baoshan for the balance of World War II. It was another 177 days before he left for home. Today, the China-Burma-India (CBI) theatre of operations is known to veterans as the "The Forgotten Theatre" of World War II.



The section of road from Ledo in India to the junction with the Burma Road at Mongyu, Myanmar was called the Ledo Road and the Stillwell Road. Here, Dad stands at the 0 milepost

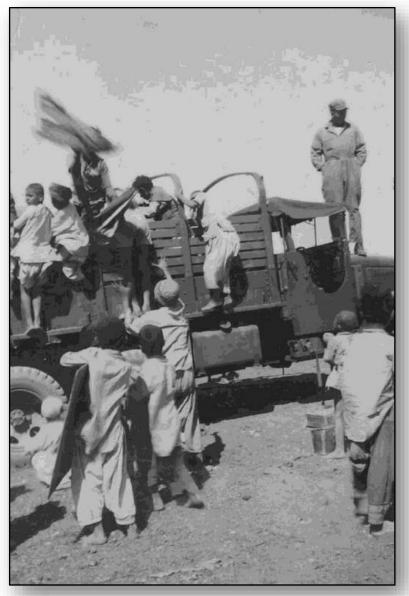
The ASR System

During World War II, both enlisted men and draftees were in the service for as long as the United States government deemed their presence to be necessary. However, as it became apparent that Allied victory was in sight in Europe, the War Department began planning for the redeployment of military personnel. On September 15, 1944, military command first issued "readjustment regulations" and put in place a points system known as the Advanced Service Rating score or ASR. The idea was simple in general principle — those who had served the longest or who had fought the hardest should be discharged and returned home first. Soldiers were awarded points for several criteria, and discharge was conditioned on achieving a minimum number of points according to the following schedule published in a 1944 issue of stars and stripes.

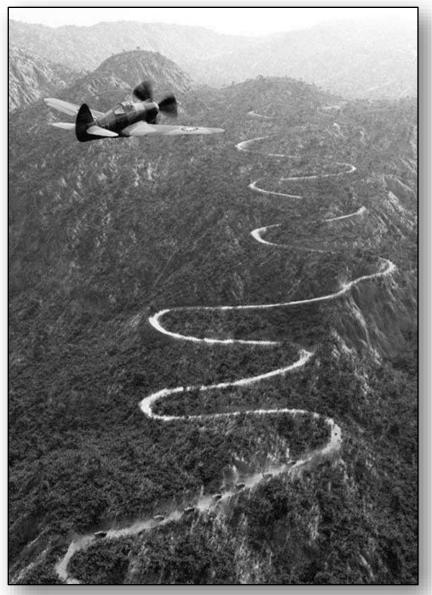
By the time dad reached Baoshan, his ASR score was 47. If not for the Japanese surrender, he would have had to serve 38 more months to reach the required 85 points to go home. His discharge papers show that, after credit for his theater ribbons, good conduct medal, and a bronze battle star, his final ASR score was 80.

How to Score Points

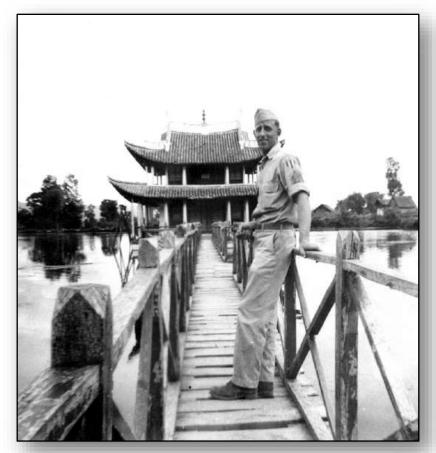
follows:	
1. Each month in service	1 Point
2. Each month in service overseas	1 Point
3. Each combat award (includes each medal and each battle participation star)	5 Points
 Each dependent child under 18 (maximum of three)	hich points
 will be awarded. No points will be awarded for age, in dependents other than children under 18. A complementals and campaigns for which points are to be a published on page 5 of today's paper. "Interim" minimum score for eligibility for discharge of EM. (This score is not final. The final critical score for discharge will be based on a complete tabulation of points of all soldiers. It is expected to be the same or slightly lower.) 	cte list of



Indian children swarm a garbage truck in Dad's convoy. This was a routine occurrence. A similar event is probably what caused the accident that killed the Indian child on May 8.



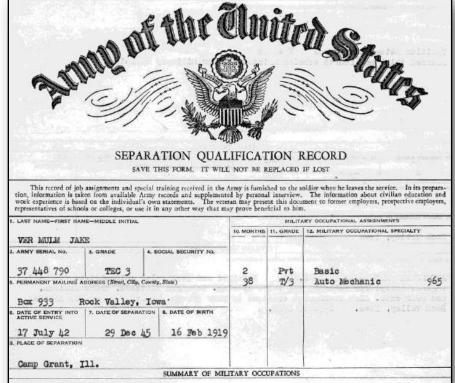
A Curtiss P-40 Warhawk from a fighter group known as "The Burma Banshees" flies top cover for an Army convoy as it heads up the Stillwell Road from Ledo, India to Mongyu, Burma (Myanmar today).



Dad at a Chinese Pagoda



USS General J. H. McRae - AP-149 The ship that returned Dad to the United States



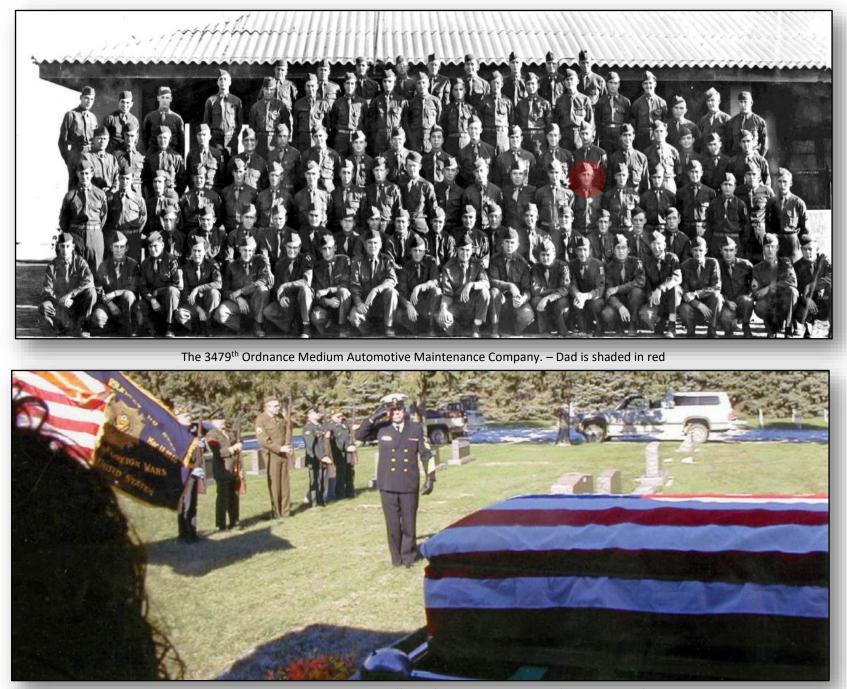
13. TITLE-DESCRIPTION-RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION

MECHANIC, AUTOMOTIVE: Performed 4th echelon work on all types of wheel vehicles. Made replacements on engines, clutches, and transmissions, differentials, etc. and overhauled same. Did some carburetor and ignition work. Supervised at times between 20 and 30 men.



Dad's Separation Record

ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION HONORABLE DISCHARGE Army of the Cluited State 1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INVITE RENT SERIAL NO. 37 448 790 VER MULM JAKE ORD AUS TEC 3 FLACE OF 3494TH ORD MED AVT MAINT CO 29 DEC 45 SEPARATION CENTER 16 FEB 1919 BOX 933 ROCK VALLEY IOWA ROCK VALLEY IOWA SEE 9 BLUE BROWN 5 10 162 2 WINTE AREAD OTHER (RECOVER) SINGLE HARMED OTHER (RECOVER) "SIX NO AUTOMOBILE MECHANIC 5-81.010 MILITARY HISTORY ALL OF EALLY THID ACTINE SES 3 JUL 42 17 JUL 42 FT LEAVENWORTH KANS 64 SERVICE 22. HOWE ADDRESS AT THE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE TATE OF DOAL 1 STOUX TOWA SEE 9 SIGUX COUNTY AL SPECIALTY AND NO. Honorable Discharge And 194 tiled for report this 44 day of MECHANIC WHEEL VEHICLE AUTO 965 NONE SE. BATTLES AND CARTADORS This is to certify that mount CENTRAL BURMA A DECISIONES AND CITATIONS AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL ASIATIC-PACIFIC THEATER RIBBON W/1 BRONZE BATTLE STARS GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL WORLD WAR 2 VICTORY MEDAL SERVICE STRIPE 4 OVERSEAS SERVICE BARS JAKE VER MULM 37448790 TEC 3 3494TH ORD MED AVT MAINT CO NONE AND SERVICE OUTSIDE GONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN DATE OF DEPARTURE DESENSION JUL 45 JUL 45 JUL 45 OTHER (Aprilia) Army of the United States 31 JUL 43 PTO 10 SEP 43 is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military 28 NOV 45 USA TO 19 2 4 24 24 DEC 45 service of the United States of America. TEC 3 For convenience, a certificate of eligibility Not 372/86 has bee issued by the Veterans Administration to be used for the futur NONE This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest request of any quaranty or insurance becafit under title CONV OF GOVT RR 1-1 (DEMOBILIZATION) all Re of 15-365n DTDnah 5h DEC all the part was presed and Faithful Service to this country. INSPECTORS 8 WKS 142 0 0 PAY DATA VOU 19185 101400 100 NONE : 22.40 197.92 G F DOLBEAR CAPT Given at SEPARATION CENTER CAMP GRANT ILLINOIS INSURANCE NOTICE IMPORTANT IS PREMIUM IN NOT PAID WITES THE Date of Allot-KIND OF INSURANCE 49. HOW PAID X" 31 DEC 45 31 JAN 46 Date . 6.64 29 DECEMBER 1945 LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED ASR SCORE (2 SEP 45) 80 ERC TIME FROM 3 JUL 42 TO 16 JUL 42 CHESTER A SHITH MAJOR A C Jake Ver mulm JOHANNA M LOUWERENS 2ND LT WAC Dad's United States Army Discharge Record



The honor guard presents arms, a bugler sounds Taps, and the Officer of the Guard salutes Dad's casket at his funeral. (Photo by Lee Ver Mulm)



At left, Dad's and Mom's wedding photo. At right, Dad and Mom in retirement.



The Reformed Church in Pernis. This was the Vermulm family church. The rear portion of the church dates to medieval times. It is considered the oldest structure in the entire Rotterdam metropolitan area. The larger front part seen today was built in 1926. It's unknown how it looked when the family lived here.

The Dutch "Bevolkingsregisters" or people's registers were documents that were kept on all Dutch citizens. Similar to a census, the registers kept more than just a count of people in each household. The registers show each person's name, their birthdate, their place of birth, their occupation, their religious affiliation, the date that the person moved into a specific town, where they moved from, the date they left the town, and where they were moving to.

The registers show that the Vermulm family's religious affiliation was "NH," which stood for Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk—the Netherlands Reformed Church. There is a second smaller Reformed Church in Pernis as well. It is identified in the registers by the letters



GER," or the Gereformeerde Kerken. The GER is a split off of the church that is more closely aligned with the teachings of John Calvin.

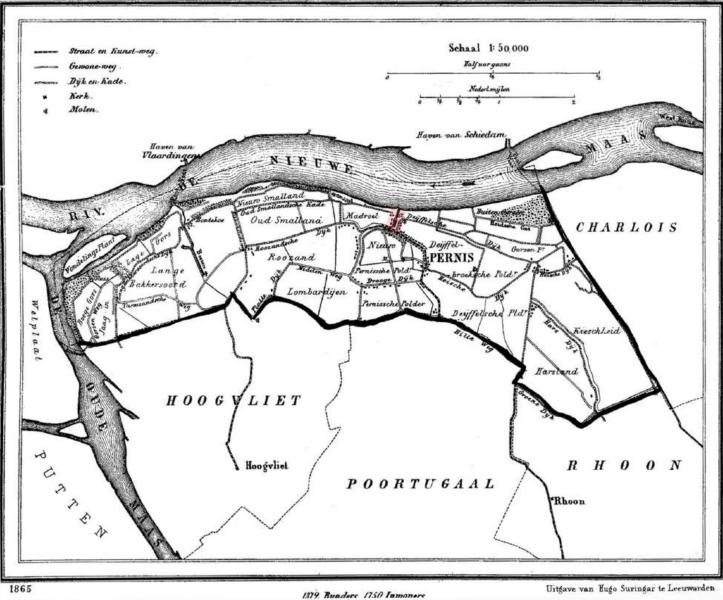
With the exception of Willem Vermulm, (whose method of getting to the United States is unknown) all the Vermulm immigrants left for America from the building shown above. This was the headquarters for the Holland America shipping line. It is located on a large wharf on the Nieuwe Maas River across from central Rotterdam. It's within walking distance (a little over a mile) from the 74 Wijnstraat address that was home to Kornelis, Adriaantje, Willem, and Reijer Vermulm. So many Dutch immigrants sailed to New York from this location that the building has been preserved and now serves as an upscale hotel called the Hotel New York.

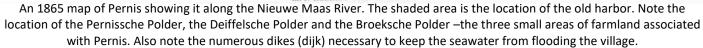


A GoogleEarth view of Pernis today showing the location of the Reformed Church and the street called Tijkenweg where the family lived when Kornelis was born. The old harbor was located in the area of the red star near the top of the map. It's village park land today.

PROVINCIE ZUID-HOLLAND

GEMEENTE PERNIS.





VIj.	Annetje 't Hart / het Hart, (dr. van Vd[p. 73]), geb. te Pernis op 5 aug 1753, ged. te Pernis op
	19 aug 1753 (getuigen: Annetje Pieters Buurman en Jannetje Dirksdr Rheedijk), tweeling, ovl. te
	Pernis op 28 aug 1839, otr. te Pernis op 18 jan 1782 met Dirk Pieterszn Vermulm / van
	Mullem, zn. van Pieter Jansz van Mullem en Jannetje Dirksdr Groen, ged. te Hoogvliet op
	18 feb 1753 (getuige: Annetje Adrianusdr Snoijer), ovl. te Pernis op 21 nov 1818.
	Uit deze relatie 8 kinderen:
	1. Pieter Vermulm, ged. te Pernis op 15 sep 1782 (getuigen: Neeltje Arjaansche van der

- Pieter Vermulm, ged. te Pernis op 15 sep 1782 (getuigen: Neeltje Ariaansche van der Steen, vader en moeder waren geen lidmaat), ovl. te Pernis op 28 mei 1849, tr. met Pietertje 't Hart (zie VIIe[p. 60]). Uit dit huwelijk geen kinderen.
- 2. Neeltje Vermulm, ged. te Pernis op 30 nov 1783 (getuige: Neeltje van der Steen), vermist.
- 3. Huibregt Vermulm, geb. te Pernis op 7 sep 1786, ged. te Pernis op 10 sep 1786

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This is an excerpt from a family genealogical book in the village history museum in Pernis. The museum is called the Oud Heidkammer Pernis—or the Old Antiquities Room of Pernis. It shows the marriage of Dirk Peiterszn Van Mullm/Vermulm (Generation 8 on the next page). It is the first documented instance in which the family name changes from Van Mullem to Vermulm. The reason for the change is unknown. The record notes that Dirk married Annetje 't Hart on January 18, 1782 in Pernis. In addition to the three children shown here, the couple had five more children. Their seventh child, Huipbregt Dirkszoon Vermulm is shown in Generation 9 on the next page. His baptism records show that he was "born in the village" of Pernis. There are no records to indicate what Dirk's occupation was.

The Descendants of Hendrik van Mullem

Generation #1 – Hendrik van Mullem – b. ??, d: ?? & *Unknown Spouse* had a child named

Generation #2 – Dirk Hendriksz van Mullem – b. ??, d. 1593 & Unknown Spouse had a child named Daniel Dirkz Van Mullem

Generation #3 – Daniel Dirksz van Mullem – b. 1585, d. ?? & Unknown Spouse had a child named Hendrik Danielsz Van Mullem

Generation #4 – Hendrik Danielsz van Mullem – b:1615, d. ?? – & Unknown Spouse had a child named Hendrik Hendriksz

Generation #5 – Hendrik Hendriksz van Mullem – b. 1640, d.: ??, & Spouse Lisbeth Stoffelsdr de Groot had had a child named Jan Hendriksz

Generation #6 – Jan Hendricksz van Mullem – b. 21 Sep 1675, d. ??, & Spouse Jannetje Pietersdr Speuij – b. 17 Dec 1684, d. ??, m. 7 Nov 1705 had a child named Pieter Jansz Van Mullem

Generation #7 – Pieter Jansz van Mullem – b. 31 Jan 1706, d. & Spouse Jannetje Dirksdr Groen – b. 19 Dec 1723, d. ??, had a child name Dirk Pietersz Van Mullem

Generation #8 – Dirk Pieterz van Mullem – b. 18 Feb 1753, d. 24 Nov 1818, & Spouse Annetje Huibregtsdr 't Hart – b. 5 Aug 1753, d. 28 Aug 1839, m. 18 Jan 1782 had a child named Huibregt Dirksz Van Mullem (Vermulm)

Generation #9 – Huibregt (#2) Dirksz Van Mullem (Vermulm) – b. 7 Jul 1795, d. 20 Aug 1848, & Spouse Maria Cornelisdr Koole – b. 11 Feb 1802, d. 30 Nov 1878, m. 29 May 1826 had a child named Kornelis Vermulm

Generation 10 – Kornelis Vermulm – b. 3 Jun 1828, d. 9 Mar 1895, & Spouse Adriaantje Warnaar – b. 19 Oct 1832 – d. 4 Aug 1898, m. 13 Jun 1856 had a child named Willem Leendert Vermulm

Generation 11 – Willem Leendert Vermulm – b. 11 Oct 1872, d. 24 Jun 1944 & Spouse Tjitske (Tillie) Wassenaar – b. 11 Sep 1878, d. 11 Mar 1957, m 5 Nov 1898 had a child named

Generation 12 – Jake Ver Mulm – b. 16 Feb 1919, d. 29 Oct 2002 & Spouse Dorothy Van Roekel – b. 24 Jul 1918, d. 19 Aug 2020, m.19 Feb 1941 had a child named

Generation 13 – Dennis Eugene Ver Mulm – b. 6 Jul 1952 & Spouse Martha Leu Scott – b. 14 Apr 1952, m. 15 May 1976 had children named

Generation 14 – Scott Evan Ver Mulm – b. 10 Feb 1982 & Spouse Kasey Baker – b. 27 Feb 1979, m. 9 Oct 2010

Generation 14 - Molly Erin Ver Mulm - b. 7 Nov 1986

Kornelis Vermulm was born in Pernis, and Adriaantje Warnaar was born in neighboring Hoogvliet. They married in Hoogvliet on June 13, 1856. Then separate villages outside of Rotterdam, Pernis and Hoogvliet are now distinct neighborhoods within the greater Rotterdam metro area. In 1856, they were about 2 miles apart.

Between 1856 and 1890, the family moved between the villages twice. They started their married life in Pernis, moved to Hoogvliet in 1863 and moved back to Pernis 1873. Their first four children were born in Pernis, the next four in Hoogvliet, and the final two were born in Pernis.

In the spring of 1892, Kornelis and Adriaantje and their 11-year-old son Reijer set sail from Rotterdam with 800 other steerage passengers on the SS Maasdam II. They left behind four children buried on Dutch soil and went to join their children Cornelia Marie and Willem



The Barge Office Immigration Center in 1892



1889-1900

KORNELIS VERMULM - Family Group Sheet

Kornelis Vermulm

Birth: 3 June 1828 in Pernis, Zuid Holland Death: 9 Mar 1895 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa Parents: Huibregt Dirkszoon Vermulm & Maria Koole



Adriaantje Warnaar

Birth: 19 Oct 1832 in Hoogvliet, Zuid Holland Death: 4 Aug 1898 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa Parents: Jacob Warnaar & Maartje Jansdr Voogt



Marriage: June 13, 1856, in Hoogvliet, Zuid Holland, Netherlands

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
Huibrecht Vermulm	м	20 Feb 1857 in Pernis			24 Jul 1857 in Pernis
Huipbregt Vermulm	м	28 Mar 1858 in Pernis	Lijdia Koster	29 Feb 1884 in Pernis	2 Apr 1926 in Conrad, Pondera, Montana
Jacob Vermulm	м	24 Nov 1859 in Pernis	Maria Langendam	30 May 1890 in Nieuwerkerk aan den Iissel	9 Oct 1901 in Rotterdam
Maartje Vermulm	F	20 Mar 1862 in Pernis	Arie Boer	27 Aug 1885 in Ijsselmonde	26 May 1891 in Isselmonde
Cornelis Vermulm	М	28 Sept 1864 in Hoogvliet			15 June 1866 in Pernis
Cornelia Marie (Tante K) Vermulm	F	4 Nov 1866 in Hoogvliet	Alka J. Kemper	23 Apr 1891 in Rock Valley, IA	29 Feb 1944 in Conrad, Pondera, Montana
Cornelis Leendert Vermulm	М	10 Mar 1868 in Hoogvliet	Elsje Velgersdijk	12 Jul 1894 in Pernis	28 Oct 1921 in Rock Valley, Iowa
Willem Leendert Vermulm	м	11 Oct 1872 in Hoogvliet	Tjitske Wassenaar	5 Nov 1898 in Rock Valley, IA	29 Jun 1944 in Rock Valley, Iowa
Reijer Vermulm	м	26 May 1874 in Pernis			21 Sept 1874 in Pernis
Reijer Vermulm	м	14 June 1880 in Pernis	Willempje Velgersdijk	25 Feb 1903 in Rock Valley, IA	22 Apr 1941 in Conrad, Pondera, Montana

Willem and Tillie represent the merger of two very different Dutch provinces and cultures at a time when most of their contemporaries back in the Netherlands married a close neighbor. Willem was born in Hoogyliet in the province of Zuid Holland and spent his youth around Pernis. Tillie was born in Sint Jacobie Parochie in Het Bildt municipality in the province of Friesland. The two met after they came to America.

To get to the U.S., Willem most likely stowed away on a cargo ship in 1891. Tillie, whose Dutch name was Tjitske, sailed with her siblings on the S.S. Veendam. They arrived on March 16, 1896 and passed through Ellis Island each with one piece of luggage.

Willem and Tillie married on November 5, 1898. Over the years, they farmed in at least three different locations around Rock Valley. They had seven sons and three daughters. Their first son Robert died at the age of six from kidney disease. Their youngest son Jake married my mother, Dorothy Van Roekel.

Willem died on June 24, 1944, while my father was stationed in Karachi, India (now Pakistan) during World War II. Tillie died in the kitchen of our farmhouse southwest of Rock Valley on March 11, 1957. She had come to visit for the day. I was not quite five years old when I found her lying on the kitchen floor. All these years later, the memory of that day is as clear to me as if it happened only yesterday.





Above – An old postcard of St. Jacobie Parochie—late 1800s At left – A postcard from old Pernis about 1885

WILLEM LEENDERT VERMULM - Family Group Sheet

Willem Leendert Ver Mulm

Birth: 11 Oct 1872 in Hoogvliet, Zuid Holland Death: 24 Jun 1944 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa Parents: Kornelis Vermulm & Adriaantje Warnaar



Tjitske (Tillie) Wassenaar

Birth: 11 May 1957 in St. Jacobie Parochie, Friesland Death: 11 Mar 1957 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa Parents: Poppe Wassenaar & Pietje Meijers



Marriage: November 5, 1898, In Sioux County, Iowa

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
Robert Ver Mulm	М	6 Jan 1900 in Rock Valley, IA			7 Aug 1906 in Rock Valley, IA
Genevieve Ver Mulm	F	2 Sep 1901 in Rock Valley, IA	Henry Ver Sluis	6 Mar 1924	13 Oct 1987 in Pipestone, MN
Cornelius Ver Mulm	М	2 Nov 1902 in Rock Valley, IA	Cornelia Boscaljon	3 Feb 1932	21 Apr 1958 in Rock Valley, IA
Frank Ver Mulm	М	14 Dec 1904 in Rock Valley, IA	Hattie Van Der Vliet	12 Feb 1930	15 Oct 1972 in Rock Valley, IA
Nell Ver Mulm	F	6 Jun 1906 in Rock Valley, IA	Louis Middle	6 Feb 1930	3 Jul 1983 in Rock Valley, IA
Robert Ver Mulm	М	3 Jul 1907 in Rock Valley, IA	Gertrude Hoekstra	22 Feb 1934	28 May 1987 in Maruice, IA
Herb Ver Molm	М	25 Apr 1909 in Rock Valley, IA	Anna Mantel	1 Dec 1937	7 Mar 1981 in Hudson, SD
Bill Ver Mulm	м	7 Oct 1910 in Rock Valley, IA	Winifred Van Der Vliet	29 Dec 1931	7 Nov 1973 in Rock Valley, IA
Johanna Ver Mulm	F	18 Dec 1914 in Rock Valley, IA	Albert Gerritsen	7 Sep 1934	28 May 1997 in Rock Valley, IA
Jake Ver Mulm	м	16 Feb 1919 in Rock Valley, IA	Dorothy Van Roekel	19 Feb 1941	29 Oct 2002 in Rock Valley, IA



The Family of Willem Leendert and Tillie Ver Mulm (Abt. 1917) Back row (L-R) – Nellie, Genevieve (Jennie), Robert, Cornelius (Case), Frank Front row (L-R) – Herbert, William, Johanna, Tillie, Bill Not shown – Robert #1 who died at age six and Jacob who was not yet born



The Family of Willem Leendert and Tillie Ver Mulm Back row (L-R) – Bill, Cornelius (Case), Jacob, Robert, Frank, Herbert Front row (L-R) – Nellie, Johanna, Tillie, William, Genevieve (Jennie) Not shown – Robert #1 who died at age six



William and Tillie and six of their children sitting in a 1911 EMF Model 30 Touring Car. Note the Rock Valley pennant hanging from the rear. It's uncertain if they owned this car as the price in 1911 was approximately three times William's income that year. Based on the age of the children, it's estimated that the picture was taken in 1915. In addition to William and Tillie, the children are: Nell (girl in white dress on front running board), Genevieve (girl in white dress in the rear), Johanna (sitting on William's lap), Herb (next to William), Bill (next to Herb), and Frank (to Tillie's right).





Genevieve (L) with Robert

JAKE VER MULM - Family Group Sheet

Jake Ver Mulm

Birth: 16 Feb 1919 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa Death: 29 Oct 2002 in Rock Valley, Sioux, Iowa Parents: William Ver Mulm & Tjitske Wassenaar



Dorothy Van Roekel

Birth: 24 July 1918 in Sanborn, O'Brien, Iowa Death: 19 Aug 2010 in Sanborn, O'Brien, Iowa Parents: George Van Roekel & Fannie Haagsma



Marriage: February 19, 1941 in Edgerton, Minnesota

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
Leroy James Ver Mum	М	18 Dec 1941 in LeMars, Plymouth, Iowa	Hazel Van Veldhuizen	11 Jun 1963, in Hull, Sioux, Iowa	15 Jan 2021 in Waterloo, Blackhawk, Iowa
Roger Allen Ver Mulm	м	23 Oct 1946 in LeMars, Plymouth, Iowa	Amy Bakewell Lynn Meyers	June 1975 in San Mateo, CA 28 Jun 1988 in Stockton, CA	
Dennis Eugene Ver Mulm	м	6 Jul 1952 in Sioux Center, Sioux, Iowa	Martha Leu Scott	15 May 1976 in Clarion, Wright, Iowa	

DENNIS VER MULM - Family Group Sheet

Dennis Eugene Ver Mulm

Birth: 6 Jul 1952 in Sioux Center, Sioux, Iowa Death: Parents: Jake Ver Mulm & Dorothy Van Roekel



Martha Leu Scott

Birth: 14 Apr 1952 in Clarion, Wright, Iowa Death: Parents: Donald R. Scott & Edna D. Nauman



Marriage: May 15, 1976 in Clarion, Wright, Iowa

CHILDREN	SEX	BIRTH	SPOUSE	MARRIAGE	DEATH
Scott Evan Ver Mulm	М	10 Feb 1982 in Des Moines, Polk, Iowa	Kasey Baker	9 Oct 2020 in Grimes, Polk, Iowa	
Molly Erin Ver Mulm	F	7 Nov 1986 in Des Moines, Polk, Iowa			



The extended Vermulm/Ver Mulm family in 1992

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Kornelis' birth record from 1828. Shaded areas identify him, his father Huibregt, and his mother Maria Koole. Note that Huibregt's occupation is "arbeider," and Maria is labeled as "huisvrouw" or housewife. The record states that Kornelis was born in a house with the address AN5 in Pernis. This was the address of the house on the Tijkenweg.

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Adriaantje's 1832 birth record. Her name is shown as Ariaantje, which is not in agreement with later documents. Her parents are shown as Jacob Warnaar and Maartje Voogt. The record shows Jacob's occupation is a merchant (van beroep koopman).

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Register	Family Name	First name	Sex	Relation	Date	Birth Place	-	-	Church	Occupation	X	Date came	Address	Date left ;	Where to	Death		Remarks

The image above is taken from the 1860 "Bevolkingsregister" or peoples census for the village of Hoogvliet. These registers were done every 10 years and contained extensive information on Dutch citizens. At the bottom of the register image are the English language translations for the Dutch language column headings at the top of the page.

It was the responsibility of the head of the household to report this information to the Office of the Civil Registrar whenever a change in information occurred. This might happen when someone moved in or out of a village, when a child was born or died, etc.

This page contains a great deal of information about Kornelis and his family. When Kornelis and Adriaantje were first married, they lived in Pernis. We can tell this because their first three children Huibregt, Jacob, and Maartje show Pernis as their birthplace. The page shows that the family moved to Hoogvliet in May 1863 where Cornelis, Cornelia Marie, and Cornelis Leendert were born. The register also shows the death of their son Cornelis on June 15, 1866. It lists Kornelis' occupation as arbeider or laborer and the rest of the family, including Adriaantje, as "zonder" or no occupation. With a house full of kids, it's doubtful Adriaantje would have agreed with that description.

The diagonal line drawn through the names on the left-hand side indicates that the family left Hoogvliet and moved back to Pernis in May 1873.

It's interesting that this record does not show Willem Leendert who was born in October 1872—a year before the family moved to Pernis. Kornelis must have neglected to visit the Registrar's office to update his family information.

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Kornelis and Adriaantje's wedding record showing Kornelis is 28 and Adriaantje is 23. It shows Kornelis' father Huibrecht and Adriaantje's parents Jacob and Maartje have all passed away (overleden).

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PASSAGIERS, vertrokken van Rotterdam, per st. Spharndam, nar New-York, de heeren W. A. Nijgh, G. J. M. E. d'Aquin, D. Brand en echtg., P. D. van Citters, Henri Dijkmans en echtg., Jan Dijkmans, Henricus Dijkmans, H. de Vries van Doesburg, mej. Maria Groeneveld P. J. M. van Emmerik, Vincent Farensbach, Henri Geloudemans, A. van de Goorberg en echtg , mej. W. van de Goorberg, mej. J. van de Goorberg, G. van de Goorberg, W. A. Haverkorn van Rijsewijk, A. C. Hoogendijk en echtg., Willem Hoogendijk, W. Hoogendijk, Cornelis Hougendijk, mej. G. A. H. H. Hoogendijk, mej. J. M. Hoogendijk, D. C. Kleijn van Willigen, G. Lotman en echtg., J. F. Lotman, mej. C. S. M. Lotman, mej. J. L. Lotman, mej. S. L. Lotman, mej. C. Lotman, J. L. Leonardi, mevr. W. B. en mej. W. B. Millard, F. A. Millard en echtg., W. E. en L. G. du Celliée Muller, T. J. van Outeren en echtg, H. C. van Outeren, jhr. F. V. A. Ridder de Steurs, J. W. Steens Zijnen en echtg., G. W. Thiemo en echtg., D. A., D. A. I. en J. F. Thieme, H. A. W. Torchiana en echtg., H. A. W. Torchiana, met dienstb, T. van den Brink, Eugène Tromp, W. C. Verwey-Mejan, L. C., A. en L. J. van der Dussen, H. van Driesten, allen van de Holland-California Land Co. J. R. Sill en echtg., Jacob Fröhlich en echtg, mej. Mathilde, Marie, Fugenie en J. Fröhlich, Chas en Chas Werner Jr., S. Pandke, André Hauer, mej. Carthaus, mej. Theresia Halterbach, A. C. Rink en echtg., W., P. en A. Rink, mej. N. E. Pauwels, F. Arntzenius, Henry Bosch, Gerrit Gertgen, C. en C. Antizenius, Henry Boson, Gernt Gertgen, C. en C. Jongejan en kind, mej. T., Anna, Jacoba, T., Adr., E. en A. Jongejan, A. Koole en echtg., Bastinan, Leendert, A., Johan, T. en Cornelis Koole, H. Struyk, en echtg. Th. Leendert en L. Struyk, mej L. Struyk, mei. C. Vermulm, L. Kleine en echtg. en kind, mevrouw Anna R., mejuffrouw K. en mejuffrouw Fr. Werner, Eugene Werner, mej. Katharina Weiszer, meyr. Christina Flug, mevr. Christine Fornbacher, meri. Marg. Fornbacher, mej. Maris Schmidt B. mej. Marg. Fornbacher, mej. Maria Schmidt, B. Pellikan en echtg., Peter Sielsen en echtg., mej. Bosa Scheiner, mej. Ursula Rapp, mej. Jeannette Fallier, A. J. G. A. Nortier, Robert, Fictios on echtg , J. W. Note-boom, Johan 't Hart, De la Madrès, M. Roeg, B. van der Zee, echtg. en kind, mej. Jannetje van der Zee, Jacob van der Zee, O. van der Zee, mevr. Froukje Noordhuis, mej Grietje Buwold, W. Dijkema, H. Bent, Heinrich Rolappe, Corn. de Knegt en ec'tig., Bastiaan de Knegt en echtg., Cornelis de Knegt, W. de Knegt, mej. J. de Knegt, J. P. de Knegt, T. de Knegt, mej. N. de Knegt, Julius Kuttnel, dr. A. Kleijn, J. C. Madsen, Friedr. Wolff, Jul. Judels, Ch. Judels, L. Hischberg, Otto Grassmann, J. H. Bos, Irma Paquet, Gaston Paquet, benevens 659 tusschendekspassagiers.

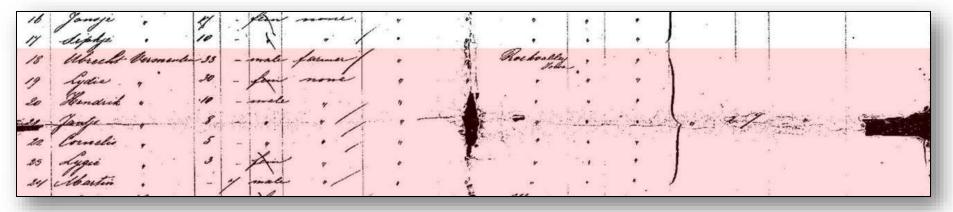
This is the manifest from the 1890 sailing of the S.S. Spaarndam. It shows Cornellia Marie Vermulm in the company of Mr. and Mrs. Arie Koole and their children Bastiaan (Bart), Leendert, Arie, Theis, Cornelia, and Johan. Cornelia Marie was 23 years old. The Amsterdam Algemeen Handelsblad newspaper article announcing the Spaarndam's sailing to New York is at the right.

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This is an excerpt from the passenger manifest for the S.S. Dubbeldam, which arrived in New York harbor on May 5, 1892. It shows Cornelis Leendert Vermulm, age 23 headed for Rock Valley. It's interesting to note that, while he was a "losswerker" in the Netherlands and lived in the city, he told the immigration agents at the Barge Office that he was a farmer.

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This is an excerpt from the passenger manifest for the S.S. Maasdam II, which arrived in New York harbor five days later on May 10, 1892. It shows Kornelis (Cornelis) Vermulm, his wife Adriaantje (Adriana), and their son Reijer (Reier) traveling to Orange city, Iowa. It's unknown why their son Cornelis Leendert didn't travel with them, and it can only be assumed that he awaited his parent's arrival and that they all traveled to Iowa together.



This is an excerpt from the passenger manifest for the S.S. Rotterdam II, which arrived in New York harbor on May 11, 1894. It shows Huipbregt (Ubrecht), his wife Lydia, and children Hendrik, Adriaantje (Jantje), Cornelis, Lijche (Lygie), and four month old Martin. The family was headed for Rock Valley, Iowa. As did his brother Cornelis Leendert, Huipbregt claimed that he was a farmer even though records show that he'd never farmed.

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The passenger manifest for the S.S. Statendam, which arrived in New York on April 14, 1902. Cornelis Leendert's wife Elsje is shown with the children Cornelis, Kathje, Klaas, and Adriaantji. With them is Elsje's sister Willempje. Also shown is Jacob Vermulm with his wife Maria and children Dirk, Cornelis, and Maria. With them is Maria's mother Maria Langendam who was diagnosed as senile. The elder Maria Langendam would have been denied entry and returned to the Netherlands. It's unknown who posed as Jacob on this voyage since he had died in Rotterdam six months before.

33 Op heden den twaathden ____ der maand October_ achttien honderd twee en zeventig, is voor Ons ondergeteekende Ambtenaar van den Burgerlijken Stand te Hoogvliet, yerschenen :____ Cornelis Sermulan van beroerlig - jaren, wonende te Horg wliet welke arbeiden oud vier en weerlig - jaren, wonende te Horg wliet welke Ons heeft verklaard, dat op den elfelen Octaber achtlie aheudese treeser te verke des avonds - ten hulf lier, ure, in deze Gemeente Riter te Vierren vie Den dertie is geboren een kind van het mannelijter geslacht, uit hem Veeler van beschijzer herid worder Advisantje Barnoas. van beroep Ionder _____ wonende le House weleit _____ welk kind zal genaamd worden Willen Leonderto_____ Van welke verklaring wij deze Akte hebben opgemaakt, in tegenwoordigheid van Toherne & Willend Inich van beroep relearnanter oud ackhenteraties ____ jaren, wonende te Horg which en van Gerrit Stond _____ van beroep berd b_____ oud door Ons na voorlezing onderteekend mich ete geteerigen hebbende de delorant worklause nicht the comen febrijeen

WILLIAM VER MULM

Funeral services were held for William Ver Mulm at 1:30 o'clock at the home and 2:00 o'clock at the First Ref. Church on Tuesday afternoon.

William Ver Mulm was born at Parnissee, in the province of South Holland, Netherlands, October 11, 1872 and at the time of his passing June 24, 1944 was 71 years, 6 months and 11 days old. He came to the United States af the age of 19 years coming directly to Rock Valley in 1991. He was united in marriage to Miss Tillie Wassenaar on November 5, 1898 who with the six children survive their husband and father.

The children who survive are Jennie (Mrs. Henry Ver Sluis, Ruthton, Minn.); Cornelius; Frank; Nellic (Mrs. Louis Middle: Robert, Herbert, William, Jr.; Johanna, Mrs. Albert Gerritsen and Jake serving in the U.S. Army in India, Robert lives at Maurice and all the rest at Rock Valley. One son Robert died at the age of six in 1906. He is also survived by 26 grandchildren. Pallbearers were C.A. Walhof, Frank De Graaff, C. Rozeboom, H Reit, R. Keizer, and A. Gerritsen Sr., who carried their friend to his last resting place in Valley View cemetery.

Above at left is the birth record for Willem Leendert Vermulm. It shows that he was born at home in Hoogvliet to Kornelis Vermulm and Adriaantje Warnaar on the 11th of October, 1872 at 9:30 in the morning. To the right above is William's obituary from June 1944.

	*	
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STANDARD CERTI	FICATE OF DEATH DEPARTMENT OF VITA	L STATISTICS
1. PLACE OF DEATH: (a) County with With Township Rock (b) City or Town (if outside city or town write RURAL NEAF and give town	2. USUAL RESIDENCE (HOME) OF DECEASED: For newborn infant give residence of mothe (a) State (c) City or town (if outside city or town limits write RURA NEAR and	цх
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In this community (yrs., mos. and days) 35 years	If yes, name of country 3.(b)IF VETERAN, NAME WAR	
3. (a) FULL NAME William Ver Mulm 4. Sox 5. Color or Race 6. (a) Single, married. Male while married. 6. (b) Name of husband Tillie Ver Mulu		19 33
	rs Inmediate cause of death	DURATION
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19. Signature Barbara De Haara District	Iowalleensed (M.	D. or other)
Date received June 30-1944 Filed No. 110	(c) Date signed le 26/84	

William Ver Mulm's death certificate from 1944. It errs in the number of years he'd been in Rock Valley. It states 35 years, when in reality, William had come to Rock Valley in 1891.



Above – The Pernis "Wapen" or municipal flag. The illustration of the plow and the fish commemorates the heritage of Pernis as both fishing and farming village,

At right above—Kornelis and Adriaantje Vermulm

At right below—William and Tillie Ver Mulm on their farm near Rock Valley, Iowa





The author trying to fill some big shoes in Rotterdam



Near the last address of the Vermulm family in Rotterdam