

**WIETSE LUBACH**  
*Also proclaiming his truth in Drenthe*



THE REV. W. LUBACH.

(Picture from "History of the Classis of Paramus, pg. 502)

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## **WIETSE LUBACH**

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### **H.M. Luning**

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Wietse Lubach was born in 1825 and grew up in an orthodox family in Leeuwarden, as son of the woodcarver Hendrikus Lubach and Johanna van der Perk. He died in 1903 at the age of 79 in Wortendyke (USA, New Jersey). During his eventful life he proclaimed everywhere the gospel and his truth. He considered himself an evangelist who had to preach the gospel of the cross in the vineyard of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> From 1864 until 1870 he preached in Drenthe where his confessional way of thinking caused a schism in the Dutch Reformed Church of Emmen which had given in to a more liberal tendency. As evangelist of the strong orthodox Confessional Association within the Dutch Reformed Church he worked in several places in the Netherlands, but never stayed long. He had not enjoyed a higher education, but by self study, especially of the bible, and the gift of speech he turned himself into the messenger of the true gospel.

Quite early he must have come in touch with the orthodox 'Fryske Réveil', the successful variant of orthodoxy within the Reformed Church in Friesland as for example represented by Groen van Prinsteren and Da Costa.<sup>2</sup> Lubach was inspired by the Provinciale Vereniging van Waarheidsvrienden (Provincial Association of Friends of the Truth), established in 1854 by the orthodox pastor J.W. Felix as an association for spreading the truth. Very soon he felt the strong need to also preach the gospel himself and to start to evangelize. In time his profession of watchmaker became a side issue. After a review of Lubach's Frisian years as certified catechism teacher with the Dutch Reformed Church, his years in Drenthe will be addressed. But his life after these two periods is certainly not less interesting.

### **Joure and Leeuwarden.**

In 1857, the year of his second marriage, Wietse Lubach bought a house in Joure from the gold- and silversmith K.B. Zijlstra. He only concerned himself with watch making and the repair of tower clocks.<sup>3</sup> It is doubtful whether the business could properly sustain his family. There were many mouths to be filled and the family Lubach had a remarkable composition. As childless widower he married Reinskje Radelaar. She was the widow of P.A. Herschoe and stepmother of three children from two – of the three – previous marriages of her first deceased husband and mother of a daughter, Joukje. With Wietse Lubach she gave birth to four more children: Johannes (1858), Martje (1860), Henderika (1862) and Trijntje (1865).

In Joure the Lubach family attended a Reformed Church which was well known as orthodox or so called evangelistic. It was called 'Jouster orthodox', confessional in preaching, but liberal in daily life. The struggle for the daily bread sometimes was detrimental to the acquisition of the spiritual bread. Lubach evidently involved himself with the church and the study of the bible. He passed the exams for catechism teacher within the Reformed Church on 28<sup>th</sup> march 1860.<sup>4</sup> The Classis of Heerenveen bestowed him this dignity. For two and a half years Lubach had taken lessons from Jan Jarig Wassenaar of Joure and had studied a lot. The pastor told the classis that Lubach was accepted as church member in 1855 in Joure and that his behavior was without any blemish. In the presence of the pastor he had taught

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<sup>1</sup> Municipal Archive Kampen, Archive Theological School inv. no. 1.22 for the year 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Joh. Frieswijk e.a. red. *Geschiedenis van Friesland 1750-1995* p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Leeuwarder Courant, 29 December 1857

<sup>4</sup> Kerkelijke Courant, 7 April 1860

catechism to boys and girls aged 18 to 24, demonstrating his natural ability. Because of this testimony Lubach was allowed to participate in the examination, granting him dispensation for the age-rule whereby a 34 years old person was considered too old.<sup>5</sup>

In 1861 Lubach suddenly sold his dwelling and shop in the Voorstraat in Joure, stipulating that it could not be occupied before 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1861.<sup>6</sup> Heated by a disagreement with the newly nominated pastor Dirk Beeckman he denounced his membership of the church in Joure. On 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1861 he wrote: *that he resigned his membership of the Reformed Church* and requested: *his name to be deleted from the membership registry.*<sup>7</sup> Later Joure received an undated letter in which he and his wife asked to be transferred to Leeuwarden, allowing them to be accepted there as members. The reason was that their two years old child had not yet been baptized. He did not inform them that this would not allow him to teach catechism in Leeuwarden. The postmark was dated 13 December 1864 and the church council of Joure considered this as a request for something they were not in a position to fulfill, as it was not an attempt to be admitted again as a member of the church. Lubach let it be for the time being, allowing it to become the much sought stick to beat him much later in Emmen, resulting in removing him from his position as catechism teacher.

But in Leeuwarden this did not discourage him at all. He traveled around, evangelizing and selling religious pamphlets which clearly preached the principal religious values, amongst which the New Testament.

In the mean time he kept looking for a new line of action and eventually tried his luck in an pastor-less orthodox group in the populous Hoogeveen area.

#### **Hollandscheveld and Hoogeveen.**

The Lubach family registered in the municipality of Hoogeveen in March 1864 and moved into a new home at Hollandscheveld number 514. Apparently Lubach had given up the watchmaker business as the administration listed him as tailor. But this could also be a variant of the 'knitting and sewing school'-profession, used by some preachers to conceal their religious activities. It is striking that the church in Hollandscheveld, where the position of pastor was vacant, was founded on a strong orthodox catechism. This was not what Lubach at that time was looking for. Quite different was the situation at the reformed church of Hoogeveen, which had slowly given in to a more liberal tendency. Recently the baker Albert van Engen, together with others, had written a request to the church council for a third pastor, indicating they wanted someone who 'Gods Woord regt snijdt', i.e. who did not deviate from God's Word.<sup>8</sup> According to them many seats in the church remained empty on Sunday because not any more 'was God highest revered and were sinners deeply condemned'. The church council of Hoogeveen had remained deaf for these orthodox complaints. This caused many to look for the old truths in line with their feelings outside the church, where these values were preached by those who taught catechism against the will of the church council. But Lubach did not find his bed maid in Hoogeveen. A liberal Hoogeveen inhabitant described preachers like him as: 'countless evangelists, missionaries, dismissed teachers and what not, have in our time, especially lately, made the church of Hoogeveen the subject of their exploitation'.<sup>9</sup> It is apparent that Lubach's conduct must have evoked some resistance.

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<sup>5</sup> Tresoar, Archief Classis Heerenveen, inv.no. 41

<sup>6</sup> Leeuwarder Courant, 23 November 1860

<sup>7</sup> Utrechts Archief, Letters concerning this case are present in the archive of the Confessional Association of Utrecht, inv. No. 217.

<sup>8</sup> Albert van Engen and the teacher H.P. Mitze were the leaders of the election committee 'Truth and Confession' as counterpart of the liberal group 'Light and Freedom'. They were both proponents of the original reformed direction within the reformed church of Hoogeveen.

<sup>9</sup> Statement made by Jan van der Veen, cited by Metselaar, *Elim* 58.

In 1863 the orthodox part of the church of Hoogeveen counted 79 members, two of which were even on the church council.<sup>10</sup> The problems in the community centered around H.P. Mitze, head-teacher of the 1864 established Christian National School.<sup>11</sup> The law on primary education, introduced on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1858, allowed this school to be established without approval of authorities. Mitze strongly opposed both preachers of the church of Hoogeveen and accused them of ‘renouncing God, perjury and being unfaithful to Jesus’.<sup>12</sup> In the school, situated close to the church, Mitze even organized catechism exercises during the sermons in the church.<sup>13</sup> Mitze invited evangelists who could act as opponents of the more liberal preachers. This was of course a thorn in the flesh of the church council. The orthodox church members who used the school were closely related to the Confessional Association in Utrecht (established in 1864), and through the church of Hollandscheveld to the even more radical Friends of the Truth in Amsterdam. This congregation met in ‘de Bosch’, the wooded part of Hollandscheveld, where the ‘proper’ catechism was taught in sermons led by friends of the truth. It is very likely that Lubach was involved in this through his Friends of Truth in Friesland. The populous Hoogeveen was doubtless a new market for the newly established Confessional Association in Utrecht, which felt related to the Friends of the Truth. Lubach supported the orthodox members of Hoogeveen whole heartedly and felt completely at home amongst these brothers. Diligently he did all he could to increase the number of followers. A liberal opponent wrote at that time about the visitors of these catechism-exercises that ‘they invited strange pastors to preach because they did not like their own preachers and felt too important to visit the Christian Reformed Church to which they belonged’.<sup>14</sup> But to the contrary, the orthodox group did not at all feel the need to leave the reformed church. They only were against the direction of their church and chose to stand opposed to the modern theology and the ethical view. Their aim was to correct the Writ and the confession. They believed this could be achieved by establishing evangelizations and by appointing evangelists. Only later the orthodox groups focused on reorganizing the church. In any case they wanted to remain entitled to the rights on their church, at the same time denying the unorthodox the same rights. They were in their own house and had no intention to leave, unless they were expelled.<sup>15</sup>

It may be taken for granted that Lubach has led services in the school of Mitze. This did not raise much wind in Hoogeveen, at least not enough for the classis meeting to consider it problematic. Lubach remained probably not long enough in Hoogeveen to make such an action necessary. Later, after Lubach had settled with his family in Emmen in 1866, rumor had it that he not been able to get any followers in Hoogeveen. These must be considered as nasty remarks, on purpose not fit amongst brothers.

### **Emmen.**

The Lubach family was registered in Emmen on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 1866. Although noted as Dutch Reformed, he did not take the trouble to effectively register with the church. Just as in Hoogeveen he registered here as a supposed tailor. Another similarity was that the reformed church in Emmen had a vacancy and also there existed a relatively small group of orthodox oriented church members. The majority of the reformed community adhered to the belief in a benign God. They preferred a warm sermon which touched upon their daily problems. As a

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<sup>10</sup> W.J. Beerekamp, *Bij de Tijd* 54-55.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, 65-66. Summer 1864 Mitze was appointed head-teacher of the newly established Christian National School, which opened on the 5th of November.

<sup>12</sup> A. Metselaar, *De hervormde gemeente van Hollandscheveld (1852-1871)*.

<sup>13</sup> W.J. Beerekamp, *Bij de tijd* p. 83.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, 66.

<sup>15</sup> A.J. Rasker, *De Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk vanaf 1795 (1974)* 253.

consequence they were accused by the righteous members of forsaking the central values of the holy writ and the confession.<sup>16</sup>

Around 1853 the growing influence of both the Groninger and the modern theology caused a growing dissatisfaction amongst the orthodox church members. These were the kind of people with which Lubach tried to connect and with whom he tried to organize the existing opposition in Emmen. Furthermore the population in the peat lands increased rapidly. In the sand regions the social relations were still mainly based on traditions. The average pastor considered himself more an authority than a servant of the congregation. But the wish for unity of the majority and the search for the truth of the minority caused gradually more and more conflicts between the two groups. The increase of the population of the peat lands meant a simultaneous increase in different religions in Emmen. Unity and truth in the church should go together, but instead were causing an increase in tension between the different groups. The church in Emmen could not keep up with these developments and was late in increasing the number of clergymen.

So it was not surprising that the church council received complaints about a number of members of the church. These attended sermons led by a catechism teacher, a certain Lubach. The plaintiffs were more worried about the financial health of the church and of the parochial relief board, than about the spiritual health of their brethren. Even mayor L. Oldenhuis Tonckens did not have a high regard of Lubach, because the latter was living from donations from his supporters.<sup>17</sup> He did not exercise a profession, even worse, he held sermons at which he proclaimed to be a convert and used these gatherings to raise resistance against the appointed pastor. The discord this created in the church community was, according to the mayor, mainly his doing. He spread much slander, which was easily believed by the ordinary and ignorant people and which caused them to be misled. In short, the mayor considered Lubach a troublemaker who earned a living from the religion by spreading contrived slander.<sup>18</sup> With these allegations Oldenhuis Tonckens took the line of the church and the church council.

To contain the damage in the large church community the church council had appointed a catechism teacher who should act as a counter-balance. But the community was overwhelmed by evangelists who in turn delivered sermons in daytime and in the evening. On a Sunday there were six or seven locations in Emmen and surrounding villages where one could attend a religious ceremony.<sup>19</sup> Lubach was not the only one who was fishing in this pond.

#### **A new pastor.**

The appointment of a new pastor for the reformed congregation of Emmen caused considerable disagreement, for which only Lubach was to blame. A year later a new election system would have to be followed; now the old regulation was still valid. This meant that 107 votes were distributed among the well-to-do, which caused a religious battle of several weeks. Even the 'boerhoorn'<sup>20</sup> was used to accompany voters to the ballot-box. The entitlement to elect pastors and church-elders was in the following year extended to all male church members, excepting paupers and endowed-persons. Especially in liberal communities, the introduction of the new regulation caused the orthodox groups to try to get their

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<sup>16</sup> Rasker, 53.

<sup>17</sup> L. Oldenhuis Tonckens was appointed mayor of Emmen in 1849. He also caused a large opposition which wanted to get rid of him, resulting in his resignation in 1869.

<sup>18</sup> Drents Archief, Kabinet Gouverneur, inv.no. 2019 year 1867.

<sup>19</sup> P.D.A.C. 19 December 1867.

<sup>20</sup> H.T. Buiskool, *Ecclesia Emmensis* (1933) p. 27. This horn was of old mainly used to call the village community to a meeting, but was also used as a signal e.g. in case of fire or for other special occasions.

representatives in the election committees and church councils. The situation in Emmen was not unique; it spread across the country and caused much tension everywhere in the reformed church communities. In Emmen the election was supervised by mayor L. Oldenhuis Tonckens. There were three nominees of which the liberal Rev. M.A. Gooszen from Dwingeloo received most votes. One would expect that this completed the election, but 46 of the cast votes went to the, not nominated, orthodox pastor J.P. Nonhebel from Middelburg. Nonhebel became one of the first members of the 'Friends of the Truth' when he was preaching in Anjum.<sup>21</sup> A number of the people who were entitled to vote had complained about deleting Nonhebel from the list of nominees. It was known in Emmen that, when preaching in Heemse, Nonhebel attracted wagon loads of followers from the environment of Deventer where the churches were mainly non-orthodox. The church council could not find a solution for the problem and asked the classis to intervene. The proposed solution was to ask the entitled voters to select one of the two candidates. Subsequently 55 of the 107 votes were for Gooszen and the other 52 voters abstained. This time the counselor Rev. Liefinck from Odoorn issued a serious complaint and the case went back to the classis.<sup>22</sup> In the end the provincial church council was called in, which decided in December 1866 that Rev. Gooszen could be appointed.

In the election period the church council accused Lubach of obstruction for the purpose of gaining profit for himself. He was someone who had the mouth full of the Lord but lacked a principal mark of a man of the cloth, i.e. love of the truth.<sup>23</sup> Lubach maintained that he had preached on invitation of members of the church council. The council judged that Lubach had arrived from Hoozevee without an invitation, he himself had offered to preach. In Lubach's considerations the church was in decay and had fallen prey to unbelievers. Stronger put: prey to the enemies of God! Hell had conquered the gates of the Lord's churches. It was no use to fight against the wolves outside, if the flock was consumed and destroyed from within by pestilence and other diseases. The church council was surprised about these presumptuous statements. It rejected the blemish put on the church by Lubach. It was a lie that the church of Emmen had not endeavored to increase the Kingdom of the Lord. Furthermore, things could only improve with the arrival of the new pastor. The church council would ensure at all cost fair proceedings in the church and that only holy weapons and pure principles were used in solving disagreements.<sup>24</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 1867 Rev. M.A. Gooszen's arrival at the border of the municipality was met with rejoice by 100 youngsters on horseback.<sup>25</sup> At his confirmation Rev. J.W. Liefinck of Odoorn concluded that the need of Emmen was now relieved and he proclaimed Gooszen as the peacemaker in the congregation. These nice words did not go well with the opponents who were not present but took to the streets until midnight, giving so loudly vent to their disapproval and anger that it seemed as if a country-fair was taking place.<sup>26</sup> This way Gooszen was from the beginning confronted with an opposing orthodox party, which made his life very unpleasant.<sup>27</sup> People convinced of their own righteousness, did not consider Paul's words: be unanimous and let there be no discord between you.

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<sup>21</sup> Tresoar, Archief Vrienden der Waarheid, inv. no. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Drents Archief, N.H. gemeente Emmen inv. no. 48.

<sup>23</sup> Drents Archief, N.H. gemeente Emmen, inv. no. 48, Brief aan Provinciaal Kerkbestuur te Utrecht op 16 September 1868.

<sup>24</sup> Drents Archief, N.H. gemeente Emmen inv. no. 48.

<sup>25</sup> P.D.A.C. 12 of March 1867.

<sup>26</sup> P.D.A.C. 4 of April 1867.

<sup>27</sup> Rev. Gooszen was born in Eibergen in 1837, he studied in Groningen and became pastor in Wilnis. In 1865 he was appointed in Dwingelo, in 1867 in Emmen and in 1869 in Veendam. He remained there until 1872 when he went to Schiedam. In 1878 he became Theology Professor in Leiden. There he lectured dogmatics, canon law and mission-history. He died January 1916.

### **Confessionals and Liberals.**

In a pamphlet of 1865 the Confessional Association announced the expectation that the separation of the spirits would become more evident, in the end resulting in a segregation of the reformed church in two parts: 'those who gather around their confession and those who completely forsaken the living, personal God and his Christ and thereby want to change the church into an association for the improvement of civilization.'<sup>28</sup> Groen van Prinsteren put forward in 1866 as principal and first goal: banishment of the liberals. It was against this background that the agenda of the meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1866 in Utrecht contained an item about the evangelization of Drenthe.<sup>29</sup> Three worried brothers from Assen were concerned about the spiritual needs in Drenthe. They called for help 'in appointing believing clergymen in Emmen, Coevorden and Sleen'. The central board decided to ask for more information how they could be of service to these communities. There were yet no steps taken by the association specifically aimed at the election of the pastor in Emmen. Nevertheless the Rev. J.W. Felix of Utrecht informed the association that he intended to form a number of sections. The chances looked good for a section in Assen, but through the wrong handling of the cases for appeal in Emmen and Coevorden these had to be considered as lost.<sup>30</sup> Evidently until then Lubach had acted completely on his own account. The consequence was the establishment by the orthodox church members of Emmen of their own section of the Confessional Association.

When P. Huët, as representative of the central board of the Confessional Association, visited the new section, he also had a meeting with Rev. Gooszen. The church council was very positive about this meeting. At the same time the council commented vehemently against Lubach. It wrote: 'what good are these positive feelings if they are counteracted by someone of whom one can say without exaggerating that he has a vested interest in stirring up the quarrel and in stiffening the conflict.'

Shortly thereafter E. Horryng, representing 37 members of the confessional section of Emmen, put forward a request to the central board of the association for a yearly allowance for their beloved brother Lubach.<sup>31</sup> This was agreed and as of May 1867 Lubach received a small addition on top of his income of f.250.- from the Emmen-section. Some time later an attempt was made to raise his salary, because he was living in poverty. Rev. Huët was able to accomplish this. The board of the new Emmen-section consisted of H. Sikken, churchwarden, E. Horryng, elder, J. Knechtering, A. Aikes, churchwarden and W. Lubach, certified catechism-teacher.<sup>32</sup> The section had 27 members and about the same number of sympathizers.

In the mean time the church council had received a request from 82 members to ban the evil wreaking Lubach as soon as possible from Emmen.<sup>33</sup> Their opponents had of course quite a different view of the matter. To the contrary, they considered it a privilege that Lubach had eased the distress caused by the earlier vacancy in the community. Be it in sitting rooms or kitchens, he preached and taught catechism in Emmen, Zuidbarge and Westenesch. In addition to this, the Christian National (or better: Confessional) education in the new school in Noordbarge would soon start, whatever antagonists might try against it.<sup>34</sup> But in the heat of

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<sup>28</sup> Rasker, 164.

<sup>29</sup> Utrechts Archief, Minutes Central Board of the Confessional Association on 20 September 1866.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, 20<sup>th</sup> of December 1866.

<sup>31</sup> J. te Winkel, *Scheuring in hervormd Emmen (1866-1868)*. In *Kroniek van de Historische Vereniging Zuidoost-Drenthe* 2006 no. 1, 2 en 3.

<sup>32</sup> Utrechts Archief, Minutes Central Board of the Confessional Association on 16 of May 1867. At a later meeting the allowance was raised to f.200.-.

<sup>33</sup> Drents Archief, N.H gemeente Emmen inv.no. 7.

<sup>34</sup> P.D.A.C. 26 Maart 1867.

the fight Lubach must have had his doubts. The population register of Emmen shows his (intended) departure to Valburg in Gelderland on 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1868, apparently corrected later on when he changed his mind again. Later, after he had left, he admitted that he often felt utterly discouraged in Emmen.

With Rev. Gooszen Emmen had received in their midst a pastor of the 'Groninger school', also called the 'Evangelical school', which had developed in 1830 at the Groningen University. It called itself evangelical because it was founded on the gospel of the bible, specifically on the life of Jesus Christ.<sup>35</sup> Their preachers were simple, but 'were warm witnesses of Gods Fatherly Love, at the highest witnessed in Jesus'.<sup>36</sup> During his stay in Emmen Gooszen supported both the evangelical rejection of the modern naturism as well as the anti-confessional point of view of his 'school'. From the pulpit he fought against both and, as was witnessed in Emmen, in doing so could not always restrain his temper.<sup>37</sup>

According to a contented church member, even the most righteousness of the orthodox members could not take offence at the way Gooszen preached. Lubach and his proponents should have listened to his reconciliatory preach in his introductory sermon. According to one of Lubach's opponents, this attempt to restore peace was not appreciated at all by Lubach. He strived to keep the fight going, although only with very limited success. It's no good fishing in troubled water and he had to provide for a living while watch making did not provide sufficient income. He was only after pecuniary gain. He did not succeed in Joure, did not get off the ground in Leeuwarden and was rejected in Hoogeveen. The Confessional Association should have laid bare his past and checked whether he acted with the best intentions, in stead of providing him with an allowance.<sup>38</sup> The writer apparently had no need for a traveling barn- and kitchen preacher who boldly pretended to be a 'convert'.

According to the church council Gooszen tried to maintain unity within the community. "*To turn the community into a full completeness in the living and heartfelt confession of Jesus Christ, the resurrected from the grave, who thereby forcefully proved to be the Son of God and the redeemer of the sinners as always proclaimed by the Church.*"<sup>39</sup>

It can therefore not be supported that Gooszen was a demolisher, a liberal, a modernist. Proof of this is the introduction of the catechization-booklet of Doedes '*Leer der Zaligheid*' to be used by the oldest catechumens. But now Lubach attacked the moral integrity of Gooszen and called the choice 'a fraud to deceive the people'.

### **Lubach's accomplishments.**

It can be read in a report that every Sunday Lubach gave two sermons in the Christian National School of Noordbarge. A confessional head teacher was in charge. On a Sunday Lubach had some 200 people attending his preaching. Every two weeks there was in the afternoon a sermon for children. Every Sunday night there was a 'gathering to discuss reason and heart'. Friday afternoon there was catechism for some 30 children and in the evening for 50 youngsters. Saturday night was for the 'youth association' with 40 members to offer them an alternative for profane entertainment and the remaining days were occupied with house visits.<sup>40</sup> In comparison, the reformed church was every Sunday attended by 800 to 1000 people. This demonstrated, according the 'liberals', that their 'direction' fulfilled the needs of many hearts.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> H. Algra, *Het wonder van de 19<sup>e</sup> eeuw* (1976) p.73-74.

<sup>36</sup> *ibidem*, p.76.

<sup>37</sup> M. Beversluis, *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letteren* (1918) p.31-49.

<sup>38</sup> P.D.A.C. 12 March 1868. Open letter by an anonymous opponent of Lubach. More in: Kerkarchief Emmen inv.no.48.

<sup>39</sup> Drents Archief, N.H. gemeente Emmen, inv.no.48.

<sup>40</sup> P.D.A.C. 1 September 1869.

<sup>41</sup> P.D.A.C. 13 August 1868.

The troubles in Emmen eventually had the effect that a hail of stones was thrown at Lubach when he went around.<sup>42</sup> The irritation culminated when a report was made public of a meeting of the Confessional Association in Utrecht on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 1869. It said about Emmen: ‘the ‘hunebeds’<sup>43</sup> here are memorials of an earlier barbaric population and it seems that the present inhabitants have kept some of that barbaric behavior. Shattering windows, demolishing beehives and knife-fights make this very apparent. With sharpened knives, carried by all, they attack each other until they close the pleasant evening (in the café) with cut and bloodied faces.<sup>44</sup> In this way the report referred to the tribulations of Lubach in Emmen. After windows had been smashed in Lubach’s house he had filed a complaint with the Commissaris des Konings. Mayor Oldenhuis Tonckens was requested to provide information about the way it happened. The problem was that it was difficult to prove that the windows had been smashed. It was Lubach’s own fault that more and more people turned against him. Lubach was really worried, he was afraid of physical harm. The mayor was wondering: ‘Was Lubach perhaps requesting to be accompanied by a policeman? Who is capable of preventing an physical attack, when a large number of people have a grudge against you?’ The success of the new pastor and the general contentment with him could have amplified the vicious behavior of Lubach and this condemnable attitude could have resulted in shattered windows.<sup>45</sup> The statement from the village policeman H. Berkhoven and the two night watchmen Kappe and Esschendal declared to have heard the breaking of glass. Coincidentally they were on their round some 25 meters from Lubach’s house. They had called Lubach and he had come outside, but he had not seen anyone who could have done it. They had seen two persons close to a stand of young trees, about 50 meters from Lubach’s house. One of them ran away and the other, Hendrik Beugeling, worker on lock 4 of the Oranje Canal, said he had not seen anything. They would continue with a ‘quiet’ investigation and the police would keep an eye on the house.<sup>46</sup> That the windows had been broken before was, according to the mayor, new to him. He had also not heard before about the demolition of beehives, although it had certainly happened. The church council of Emmen said to regret the way youngster made public their condemnation of Lubach. Nevertheless it was caused by a natural urge for and just feeling of truth, justice and good faith. The church council had placated the youngsters and trusted it would not happen again.<sup>47</sup>

### **Lubach has to go.**

The church council of Emmen, lead by pastor Gooszen, took, almost simultaneous with his appointment as the new pastor, steps to get rid of Lubach. This was not easy as Lubach had not registered as a church member. The question was whether he should be considered as a member, as he had an appointment as catechism teacher of the Dutch Reformed Church from the classis of Heerenveen. The situation was saved on 26<sup>th</sup> of February 1868 by the classis of Coevorden. They had done some research in Joure and it appeared that Lubach was not a member of the Dutch Reformed Church anymore. He had resigned his membership on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1860 when still living in Joure. Whatever Lubach might say, that this had not been his intention, or that he just had forgotten to put Leeuwarden down as his new address,

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<sup>42</sup> A. Houkes, *Christelijke vaderlanders, Godsdienst, burgerschap en de Nederlandse natie 1850 – 1900* p. 92.

<sup>43</sup> A hunebed is a type of single-chamber megalithic tomb, usually consisting of three or more upright stones supporting a large flat horizontal capstone (table). Most date from the early Neolithic period (4000 to 3000 BCE). From Wikipedia at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolmen>.

<sup>44</sup> P.D.A.C. 13 August 1868.

<sup>45</sup> Drents Archief, Kabinet Gouverneur inv. no. 2019 year 1867.

<sup>46</sup> Drents Archief, Kabinet Gouverneur inv. no. 2019 year 1867.

<sup>47</sup> Drents Archief, N.H. gemeente Emmen inv. no. 48. Letter church council to the Provincial Church Council in Utrecht on 16 September 1868.

this was the formal situation.<sup>48</sup> Not being a member meant that he could no longer be a catechism teacher. The consequence was that the classis of Heerenveen which had provided this qualification, took this away again on 26<sup>th</sup> of 1868. Appeal could not change this decision.<sup>49</sup>

The question for Lubach was now: what next? He tried to be confirmed again in the Reformed Church! For this purpose he first approached Rev. G.J. Sijpkens from Hardenberg, who preferred he would approach someone else.<sup>50</sup> Another member of the board of the Confessional Association, Rev. F.P.L.C. van Lingen from Zetten in the Betuwe, nicknamed 'Iron Frits', was willing to help.<sup>51</sup> And thus was brother Lubach's submission accepted by the church council of that church and the next day he was confirmed as church member.<sup>52</sup> A year later five pupils of Lubach wished to be confirmed by Rev. Kooy from Dedemsvaart, but the church council of Emmen refused to provide them with the required attestation. Rev. Felix advised them to change their address to Dedemsvaart!<sup>53</sup>

Although continuously persecuted, Lubach continued his normal activities in Emmen. The Confessional Association paid his allowance, but did not provide additional funding to allow him further studies. The church council of Emmen was not yet satisfied with what they had achieved. It filed a complaint against Rev. J.W. Felix, chairman of the Confessional Association, because he had acted against the rules of the church council. The case was brought forward to the highest authority. In the end the complaint of Emmen was rejected.<sup>54</sup> A large part of the Emmen community must have been relieved when Lubach voluntarily left in the spring of 1870 because he was called to Vlissingen. Lubach wrote to the central board that he hoped that the section of Emmen would now better realize the privilege it had enjoyed, in the same line adding, 'although my efforts have been lacking'.<sup>55</sup> In Emmen Lubach was succeeded by P.J. Nauta from Meppel. Rev. J. Kooij performed the confirmation.<sup>56</sup> The Emmen-section was willing to pay him a yearly income of f.300.

In 1868 the Confessional Association of Emmen built a classroom on the Sterrenkamp, later called the 'Little White Church' or less respectful the 'little chocolate church'. Later on this became the foundation for the orthodox Chapel Community. The old Reformed Church is now the Protestant district community Grote Kerk in the center of Emmen and still represents a moderate liberal religion. Since 2004 both churches are part of the Protestant Community of Emmen.

### **Middelburg.**

The Lubach family eventually departed on 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1870 for Middelburg instead of Vlissingen. The intention was that Lubach would evangelize the polder workers on the canal through Walcheren and the workers on the railway track from Rozendaal via Sloedijk to Vlissingen. The brethren in Middelburg were already eagerly awaiting his arrival. The

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<sup>48</sup> Utrechts Archief, Archive Confessional Association inv. no. 217 and Church archive Emmen inv. No. 48Zie ook kerkarchief Emmen inv.no. 48. These contain scores of extensive letters about this case of which only a short summary is given.

<sup>49</sup> Letter General Synod 25 July 1868. Also: Kerkelijke Courant, 7 March 1868. All records about the impeachment of Lubach can be found in the archive of the Confessional Association in Utrecht, inv. no. 217.

<sup>50</sup> Utrechts Archief, Minutes Central Board Confessional Association December 1868.

<sup>51</sup> After Zetten Van Lingen became pastor in Rotterdam in de Christian Reformed Church.

<sup>52</sup> Utrechts Archief, Annual Report of the Confessional Association 1869/1870 p.13.

<sup>53</sup> Utrechts Archief, Minutes Central Board Confessional Association of 18 March 1869.

<sup>54</sup> Utrechts Archief, Annual Report of the Confessional Association 1868/1869 p.5. Also church archive Emmen inv. no. 48.

<sup>55</sup> Utrechts Archief, Archive Confessional Association. Letter of Lubach to central board of 8 January 1870.

<sup>56</sup> Drents Archief, N.H. gemeente Emmen, inv. no. 48. Also Nauta was very worried about his family when his windows were broken. (Houkes, 92).

central board supplied hundred guilders in contribution to Lubach's moving expenses.<sup>57</sup> After an exhausting journey the family arrived in Middelburg, even before their household goods could be delivered. But the local brethren ensured they had a bed to sleep in. Lubach was eager to start, convinced that his life would improve. Was it a coincidence that the orthodox Rev. Nonhebel, the not appointed pastor of Emmen, was posted in Vlissingen?

In Middelburg the confessionals used the classroom 'De 'Toevlucht' ('The Refuge') in the Bogaardstraat. Sometimes Lubach used it for sermons and praying-sessions for the Middelburg section of the Dutch Mission of which he was secretary. He even advertised in the papers, inviting interested people who loved the Lord Jesus to come. It was also used by other speaker, such as Rev. J.P. Nonhebel.<sup>58</sup>

In 1872 Lubach stirred things a bit when he issued a complaint to the municipality of Middelburg in order to prevent the coming of a fancy fair. He was doing this with 19 sympathizers in support of the complaint issued by the reformed church council.<sup>59</sup> They gave as reason that the fair had lost its original nature. Even to the extent that it was conflicting with God's word, the only guide to live in a civilization which considered itself Christian. The fair was a breeding place for debauchery and licentiousness. The proof of this could be heard daily on the streets where youngster yelled the immoral songs they had picked up from singers at the fair. But for the rest Lubach's stay in Middelburg was uneventful. He worked in the vicinity of the city with the canal and railroad workers, as well as on the Sloe. His evangelizing work ended within a year when the project was completed. Furthermore there was no money left for payment of his salary. As he had never undergone an examination in order to become officially certified for the appointment of evangelizer, he offered the central board to do this on condition it would pay for the cost. The board let hem know they were not interested and that he should consider looking for another job. To investigate his possibilities he traveled Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and discovered what he called horrible situations. The people of Breskens were, in good faith, led by a liberal pastor. Lubach considered this an abomination. Groede had a pastor who lived the life of a 'pillar saint' who had no concern for his flock. The man had slammed the door in his face. He discovered just one god fearing family. In Zuidlande the pastor and his flock were apparently unconcerned about the coming judgment of the Lord. This way he visited all communities of Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and all atrocities he found indicated a large and fruitful scope of work for someone like him. But this could of course not be done without financial support. The central board did not react and so on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 1871 Lubach spoke for the last time to the workers on the Sloe. He was yearning for another posting and was trying to find a community with a vacancy he could fulfill. He was running out of money and once again he called upon the central board for help.<sup>60</sup> On top of this he started to have doubts about his own trusted church. On Walcheren he more often got in contact with orthodox pastors and church councils. They were confessional in their beliefs, but the community life left much to be desired. This was especially obvious in Middelburg.<sup>61</sup> There the Lord's Supper was once attended by a whore, which was without any fuss condoned by the church council. This contributed to Lubach's beginning doubts, but he was as yet far from turning his back on his church. As an obedient son of the Confessional Association he went to De Knijpe in Friesland under the old bane.

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<sup>57</sup> Utrechts Archief, Minutes Central Board Confessional Association, 20 January 1870.

<sup>58</sup> Middelburgsche Courant, 8 September 1870, 2 December 1870, 1 April 1871, 8 September 1871.

<sup>59</sup> Middelburgsche Courant, 16 June 1871.

<sup>60</sup> Utrechts Archief, Confessional Association, letters from Lubach to the central board.

<sup>61</sup> Gemeente Archief Kampen, Archive Theological School inv. no. I. 22 of 1875.

## **De Knijpe.**

As of 1871 Lubach was evangelizer for the Confessional Association for the Reformed Church in De Knijpe, near Heerenveen. A very angry J. van 't Land, catechism teacher in Benschop, protested vehemently against the appointment of Lubach. He had believed he would get the appointment, but the council in De Knijpe had strung him along and had pretended there was no problem at all.<sup>62</sup> Two days later the council announced that brother Lubach was appointed on recommendation of brother Haselhof from Domburg. Combining De Knijpe with Heerenveen and Gorredijk, as the central board had suggested, was out of the question for the council of De Knijpe. The evangelization building was opened in October 1871 and it was visited by a considerable number of people. The house for the evangelizer was also almost ready. When Lubach started on 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1872 there seemed to be nothing that could go wrong. Yet there surfaced a few problems from his previous posting. In a letter to the central board he reacted on an accusation from Middelburg: 'that we had lived disgustingly sloppy in the house and had not paid rent over the last month'. He was certain his wife was a spotless person and completely rejected the accusation about the rental.<sup>63</sup> We will never know whether these accusations played a role in his considerations, but in De Knijpe he broke with the Confessional Association and the Dutch Reformed Church.

In a sermon in De Knijpe he already once referred to the Christian Reformed Church as the only church which preached and followed the Apostolic confession. This was the refuge for those who agreed with the bible and the confessional writings of our forebears in this Christian world of division and confusion. Days and weeks Lubach struggled with himself, but in the end he concluded he had to join a church which was founded on God's infallibility.<sup>64</sup> The confessional section of De Knijpe did an attempt to change his mind. It was even prepared to raise his salary, but all to no avail. Where he would go, he did not yet know, but in full confidence that God would show him the way Lubach joined the Christian Reformed Church. 'With whom I preferred to suffer, fight and die, than to enjoy the privileges of a church, in which appalling sins remain unpunished and where the God of our forebears is reviled and repudiated,' were his clearly stated words.<sup>65</sup> So in 1873 Lubach departed without much ado for Duurswoude.

## **Duurswoude.**

About 1860 some people in Duurswoude joined the radical association Friends of Truth. They left their old reformed village church and did not want to remain a member of a community which was not clearly Christian reformed, orthodox and righteous. They were simple people who desired to hear a different sermon on Sunday than they heard from their pastor. The Friends of Truth fulfilled that wish. A few preferred the Christian Separated Church of Donkerbroek. The end result was a reformed church in Duurswoude, too poor to afford the salary of a pastor.

Lubach arrived with his family in Duurswoude, presently Wijnjewoude, in May 1873. Without being certified he becomes the pastor of the by then instituted reformed church. With his family he lived in the rectory, where he did not have to pay rent. But also here he did not last long. The reason was not dissatisfaction on any side; to the contrary, the community was very content with him. According to the church council he was sound in his belief and faultless in his behavior. Therefore it wanted him to be promoted to pastor of the

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<sup>62</sup> Utrechts Archief, Confessional Association, letter to central board 23 November 1871.

<sup>63</sup> Cor W. Stigter, *'Dy tsjerke komt nooit fol!' De gereformeerde kerk in Wijnjewoude: een begin.* 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Gemeente Archief Kampen, Archive Theological School inv. no. I. 22 year 1875.

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem.

Holy Gospel. To achieve this, the council wrote to the classis, but when this was not successful an appeal was sent to a higher body: the Particular Synod of Northern Friesland.<sup>66</sup> The church council of Duurswoude claimed that Lubach could become pastor based on 'article 8'. That article stipulates that men without a degree but with the 'singular gift' of speech can become pastor after undergoing an examination. Everyone was satisfied with his work and the church council was convinced that he could be very useful in expanding the Kingdom of the Lord. They concluded their plea with the words: 'May the Lord and his ghost be amongst you in order that it results in improvement of God's Kingdom, the Lord's honor and our happiness'.

The church council was partly successful, but Lubach needed some additional tutoring. He registered on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1874 and again on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1875 at the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Churches in Kampen. He supported his admission with a paper on 'Why did I leave the Confessional Association?' in which he gives account for this act, which he considered to be related to both his temporary and eternal wellbeing. Even so, the reformed church was where he had been brought up, which could not easily be forgotten. There he had been baptized, accepted as member and there he had devoted himself to fight heresy. He suffered years of struggle, injuries and contempt. But what was now happening in the reformed church in terms of public sins diminished his affection and the inclination to gain souls. In brief, he left with pain in his heart.<sup>67</sup>

Lubach's paper must have pleased the curators of the Theological School and as a consequence he was admitted. Because of his age he got dispensation for languages. He did his exams in the other subject in 1877, after which he became candidate and therefore was qualified for an appointment as pastor.<sup>68</sup> During his study he remained at work in Duurswoude, but after graduating he was done with the community there. He was called to Edam. His stepdaughter stayed in Duurswoude, where she had married Hendrik, son of elder Kamminga.

### **Edam and Zaandam.**

In November 1877 Wietse Lubach and his family arrived in Edam where he fulfilled the long standing vacancy of Christian Reformed pastor. Initially Edam was rather naïve in expecting they could attract a pastor of name, but they only received refusals. At long last Wietse Lubach was approached, who accepted the call from Edam for an annual salary of f.800.-.<sup>69</sup> In addition he lived in the rectory in the Spuistraat without paying rent. As De Bazuin announced, the congregation was very happy with his arrival:

*"Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> of November was a veritable day of happiness and enjoyment. After years of fights and sighs, we enjoyed the privilege of seeing our teacher.*

*With reference to 1 Cor. 4:1 was our appointed teacher the Rev. W. Lubach, in our midst confirmed by by our Counselor Rev. J. Westerhuis of Landsmeer. In the evening the Reverend introduced himself in our congregation with a speech about Rom. 1:16. May prayers and gifts make the community of our Lord bestow our travail in this city and its environment". (J. Molenaar, scriba.)*

But soon it transpired that the Christian reformed community of Edam was far from happy with Lubach. Already after a year there was a group of discontented members who 'did not feel edified' by the pastor. Moreover the church council criticized his pastoral behavior,

<sup>66</sup> Archief van de Particuliere Synode Friesland-Noord der G.K.N. inv. no. 8.

<sup>67</sup> Gemeente Archief Kampen, Archive Theological School inv. no. I. 22 year 1875.

<sup>68</sup> Handelingen Curatoren der Theologische School der Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, 14 July 1874, 13 July 1875 en 10 July 1877.

<sup>69</sup> W.H.de Wolf, *De gereformeerde kerk van Edam - Volendam en Zeevang: een gemeente in beweging*, 1977 p. 20.

which even resulted in postponing the Lord's supper. Furthermore it became apparent that Lubach's payment was not enough for four adolescent children. He had to make debts, e.g. with the local baker. It turned out that his eldest son needed much money, which he borrowed from church members, whereby he abused the thrust worthy name of his father the pastor. The 'case' Lubach created much controversy in the congregation.

Son Johan bought a certain amount of cheese from an elder without paying afterwards. The pharmacist came to the church council with an outstanding bill of f.48.-. The money from a collection from Suawoude for the destitute Edam congregation 'never arrived at its destination'.

All in all enough reasons for the council to ask the classis in 1879 to mediate. A commission appealed to the church council to be fair and sincere in dealing with the pastor and to mildly draw his attention to his mistakes. But the situation had become untenable.<sup>70</sup> In the end the classis decided to sever the bond between Lubach and his congregation, 'may the teacher and the church council members show that, whatever may have happened, they can forgive and can give each other a brotherly hand', were the words used. Although everyone must have felt relieved, both the pastor and the church council were put under surveillance. Edam had to pay half of the interim allowance to the sum of f.93.75, with the result that a few members showed their disgruntlement by reducing their contribution. One or two even resigned. Autumn 1881 Lubach requested to reduce his allowance by f.2.- in payment of the debt to the church elder. There was great disappointment and embitterment in Edam, also towards the classis. The events had nearly ruined the congregation. Especially the fact that Lubach remained callable for a new position was considered incomprehensible.<sup>71</sup>

Lubach had to make do with the allowance and occasionally he preached somewhere in Noord-Holland for the Internal Mission.

The loss of face in Edam must have been the reason that the family moved to Zaandam, Spoorstraat 2 (now Stationstraat). It became questionable whether the children could be registered with the Christian Reformed Church. This had been omitted by father Lubach in Edam.<sup>72</sup> During his stay in Zaandam the position of pastor of the Chr. Ref. Church of Zaandam became vacant, but Lubach's application must have been unsuccessful. Another disgrace must have been the conviction of his son Johannes by the court of Haarlem.<sup>73</sup> On an evening, when working as farmer's help in Wormerveer, he had hit someone on the head with a billiards cue and had then thrown the victim against the piano. He was fined with f.10.- or three days in prison. The family really was in a tight spot and emigration to the U.S. must have been a godsend. Afterwards a member of the church council of Edam reproached the classis for having let Lubach escape!

It remains a mystery how five persons, Johannes left later, could make this journey without possessing the required funds to do so. Possibly they were financed by his future congregation. The family left from Amsterdam on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 1882 with the steamship Zaandam of the Holland America Line.<sup>74</sup> The new ship with three decks of the

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<sup>70</sup> Wolf, 21.

<sup>71</sup> Minutes Gereformeerde Gemeente Edam. Joh. De Heer, *Gedenk uw voorgangers*, part II 1985 p. 238.

<sup>72</sup> Information W. de Wolf (Edam).

<sup>73</sup> District Court Haarlem, Access 452 inv. no. 338 conviction 277. He arrived in the U.S. a month after his parents with the P. Caland. Source Citation: Year: 1882; Arrival: New York, United States; Microfilm Serial: M237; Microfilm Roll: M237\_460; Line: 13; List Number: 1743; Source Information: Ancestry.com. New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1820-1897; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M237, 675 rolls); Records of the U.S. Customs Service, Record Group 36; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>74</sup> S.S. Zaandam Source Citation: Year: 1882; Arrival: New York, United States; Microfilm Serial: M237; Microfilm Roll: M237\_458; Line: 4; List Number: 1451;

spar deck type made its maiden trip.<sup>75</sup> Such a journey in itself is already a tiring experience and is furthermore exciting for not knowing what to find at the end. Whether on his journey Lubach acted as 'evangelizer at sea' is not known, but given his past this is not unlikely. On arrival on Castle Island in New York on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1882 they were faced with a selection procedure which could turn out negative. Because the U.S. was possibly not eager to accept evangelizers and preachers Lubach listed his profession as baker, the rest of his family listed as farmers. They were even registered as Germans, maybe with the intention to burn all bridges behind them. Anyway, once admitted he could prove that he had successfully attended the Theological School of Kampen. This made it possible for him to start immediately as 'domestic missionary' in Saugatuck, situated on the bank of Lake Michigan. After a year of field work Lubach became pastor in Lansing in Cook County, close to Chicago. The base salary of \$250.- a year was paid by the Board of Domestic Missions.

### **Lansing**

Nowadays it is a suburb of Chicago. The name may originate from three brothers Lansing who settled there in 1846. The expansion of the village was mainly caused by the arrival of colonists from Germany and the Netherlands. An extra stimulus was the railroad which was built in 1856. At present the city has 21 different church societies, for which Lubach hardly can be blamed.

However, the first church of Lansing was the Reformed Church on the corner of Ridge Road and Burnham Avenue. Of old this church embraces the Christian religion as described in the three historic confessions: the Apostolic Confession, the confession of Nicea and the confession of Athanasius. But also the rules derived from the Christian Reformed documents, originating from the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century - the Dutch Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Dortd regimen were followed and played a crucial role. According to one source Lubach stayed there as pastor until 1892, but that seems improbable because the same source locates him already at a different place in 1886. As a matter of fact Rev. W. Lubach became pastor in 1886 of the Reformed Dutch Church in the 165 miles distant Oostburg, Wisconsin.<sup>76</sup>

### **Oostburg**

At present Oostburg is a village enclosed by Interstate Highway 43 and Wisconsin Highway 32 in the southeastern part of Sheboygan County. Nowadays small windmills and tulips are remembrances of the Dutch founders of Oostburg. At the arrival of Lubach this was of course quite different. It did not have a proper center and only after Oostburg got its train station in 1872 was there a beginning of central developments.<sup>77</sup> After a schism of the church, resulting in a part of the members joining the Presbyterians, there remained 25 families with 60 members, instead of the previous 60 families and 122 members. Oostburg was then the smallest religious community which could afford a pastor and his salary was accordingly. During Lubach's time in Oostburg the rectory was lost in a fire. At the East Oostburg School, close to the rectory, many onlookers had gathered. At the peak of the fire the school was even

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Source Information: Ancestry.com. New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1820-1897; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M237, 675 rolls); Records of the U.S. Customs Service, Record Group 36; National Archives, Washington, D.C..

<sup>75</sup> The ship was built in Rotterdam, launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1882 and delivered in September. It was a 3063 tonns passenger-freighter and could carry 50 first and 424 third class passengers. It was 101 meters long and could reach a velocity of 11 knots. (Vereniging De Lijn, Rotterdam).

<sup>76</sup> *Historical Directory of the Reformed Church in America 1628 – 1992*.

<sup>77</sup> H. Krabbendam, *Vrijheid in het verschiep: Nederlandse emigratie naar Amerika 1840-1940* (2006) p. 80 and 125.

evacuated. A report of the fire, kept in the archives, tells about Mrs. Lubach risking her life when trying to save the church registers and the library of her husband. But only the church registers with the minutes of the church council meetings from 1876 till 1892 were saved. All older registers were lost.<sup>78</sup>

### **Palmyra**

After Oostburg Wietse Lubach and his wife Renskje departed for the Reformed Church of Palmyra, NY. At that time still a small village in Wayne County, in the meantime grown into a small city with six churches. The Reformed Church of Lubach was founded in 1887 by a group of 34 people. Until March 1890 their services were held in the Presbyterian church, later in the previous Methodist church. At his arrival in the autumn of 1892 Lubach started to preach there. Lubach's wife Renske Radelaar died on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1896. She was buried in the Village Cemetery in Palmyra. Lubach stayed in Palmyra until 1898 when he left to become pastor in Midland Park.<sup>79</sup>

### **Midland Park - Wortendyke**

Midland Park in Bergen County in New Jersey was also called Newtown, but even earlier Holland Wortendyke, named after a family which settled there. Nowadays it just consists of only three houses situated to the west side of the village. It was never a village in its own right and was earlier a part of Ridgewood. Lubach probably went there in his old days to be able to live with his son in law John A.C. Verwey who had married his daughter Martje. Also daughter Hendrika lived there. The eldest son Johannes Lubach lived in 1900 with his wife Elizabeth Hyink in Cedar Grove, Sheboygan, Wisconsin. It is remarkable that Johan in America had assumed Calvijn as second first name. Presently there are still descendants of Wietse Lubach and Renskje Radelaar living in Sheboygan County. Part of the family joined the Presbyterian church, the counterpart of the Dutch reformed churches which are based on the school of Johannes Calvijn.

Lubach's pastorate in Wortendyke did not last long, but was 'blessed with the healing of old wounds and keeping the scattered community together'.<sup>80</sup> This was quite a change compared with what happened in the past in Emmen. In view of his age he asked for retirement, which was granted in 1900. Wietse Lubach died in 1903 at the age of 78 years while living with his family in Wortendyke and was buried at the Methodist cemetery in Midland Park.<sup>81</sup>

The funeral was performed by the pastors Jacob Poppen (Wortendyke), Martin Flipse (Passaic) and C.J. Kalkoen (Midland Park). The Necrology Report from the General Synod of 1904 speaks of Wietse Lubach as a cheerful, benevolent person with a friendly character and an honest, pleasant, Dutch preaching pastor.

In May 1924 the remains of Wietse were reburied next to his wife at the Village Cemetery in Palmyra, New York.

### **Epilogue**

Stemming from the 'Fryske Réveil', Wietse Lubach dedicated his life to what he considered to be his calling. Only amongst 'friends of the truth' he felt completely at ease. Passionately he tried to change the minds of those who held a different opinion. Although it was maintained in Emmen that he was just after the money, this was definitely not the case. According to himself he started his work, called by the Lord, to full satisfaction amidst the simple workers of Emmen. But soon the more well-to-do people who were in charge

<sup>78</sup> Information Rev. Wayne De Vrou in Oostburg, U.S.A.

<sup>79</sup> *Historical Directory of the Reformed Church in America 1628 - 1992.*

<sup>80</sup> *A history of the classis of Paramus of the Reformed church in America, p. 50.*

<sup>81</sup> *Minutes of the Particular Synod of New Brunswick. Reformed Church in America.*

exhibited lack of interest and even hostility, while many others just showed indifference. His endeavors in Zeeland were, just as in Emmen, thwarted by a lack of income. Even his own brethren let him down by telling him he had to sort it out by himself. At last he could start again in Friesland, but then got embroiled with his Reformed Church. The switch-over to the Christian Reformed Church was just a nuance in his way of thinking, which gave rise to the problems in Edam. Once in the U.S. he came into calmer waters. He even developed into a binding factor within his congregation. Possibly with age he had grown milder.

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