

Archival Collection Finding Aid

Name/Title:	Jansma Family Heritage Collection
Subject(s)	Immigration, Ethnicity, Assimilation, Patriotism, Community, Local History
Archival Collection #:	226
Accession #:	2011.8.1
Source:	Sidney J. Jansma, Jr.
Date Acquired:	May 18, 2011
Span Dates:	1919 - 1982
Processor(s):	Merdzinski

Abstract:

This small archival collection helps document one local family's immigration and assimilation story. The Jansma family is of Dutch descent and their "American Story" began in 1919 when the donor's grandparents and their nine children emigrated to the United States from Friesland, Netherlands, looking to for a fresh start after the end of World War I.

Through a small group of emigration documents, family photos, and related family ephemeral material, the collection documents the story of the first generation grandparent's emigration; the donor's father's assimilation and the donor's full integration into the American way of life in the West Michigan community.

The Jansma family immigration story is one example of the stories that create our American "melting pot" identity, heralding the rich diversity found within every American city, small rural community and suburb.

History:

Emigration is the process by which a person leaves his place or country of residency to relocate elsewhere. Historically, there are five main causes of emigration: war, natural disaster, religious intolerance, poverty, and famine/drought. Dutch emigration peaked in the 19th century due to agricultural crisis and religious persecution. Many who came during this period were from rural areas, and an unusually high number of families emigrated together.

ref: http://www.swierenga.com/Calvin_lec.html

Scope and Content:

This immigration collection spans post-World War I though the third quarter of the twentieth century. It contains a small grouping of documents, photos and ephemeral material that helps tell the story of one Dutch-American family's emigration. First generation immigrant documents include passports, ship boarding pass, photographs, clippings and trade cards from the Dutch business left behind; second generation documents include Americanization program, correspondence, marriage certificate and passport; third generation documents include passport and printed family genealogy report.

Series Descriptions:

No.	Series Name	Description
I.	Documents	Papers that indicate who came, reason(s) for emigration, country of origin, date of journey/arrival, port of entry, including passports, ship's boarding passes, birth & marriage certificates, naturalization certificates, etc.
II.	Photographs	Images of people, milestone events, homes, businesses, etc.
III.	Ephemera	Miscellaneous prints and hand-written material, including cards, pamphlets, clippings, etc.

IV. Family Genealogy Family tree, descendants, ancestors, including information on jobs or businesses, military service, government/public service, education, etc.

Container List:

Container	Folder	Series	Description of Contents	Dates	Count
Box 1	1	I.	Dutch Passports and Ship Boarding Pass for first generation, and United States passports for second & third generation. Also includes Marriage certificate for 2nd generation Sidney & Theresa; Printed Americanization Exercises program, Nov 1929 for Sidney.	1919-1982	7
Box 1	2	II.	Black and white photograph of immigrant, Herman. B/W snapshots of Herman & Maaiké's first home in USA in Orange City Iowa in 1920 and first Grand Rapids home on Umatilla Street, 1935.	1919-1935	3
Box 1	3	III.	Trade cards from Herman's grocery business in the Netherlands "Jansma Kindermeel"; newspaper clipping documenting Herman's 100th birthday, and hand-written love letter from 1940 when Sidney was courting Therese.	1920-1935	4
Box 1	4	IV.	Report on descendants of Jan Douwes Jansma	1758-1978	25