LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
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Pieces of Iowa's Past

This Week:

Pella and The Scholte Family

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Pieces of Iowa's Past, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the Legislative Session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All italicized text/block quotes in this document are taken directly from historical publications with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

Pella and the Scholte Family

Pastor Henry Peter (H.P.) Scholte

Maria Scholte

Pastor Henry Peter (H.P.) and Maria Scholte, along with 800 Dutch immigrants, came to Iowa in 1847.

The pastor and his followers fled the Netherlands in search of religious freedom. They settled in Iowa and established the town of Pella.

The city of Pella in 1848.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa, That the permanent seat of government for said State, shall be and is hereby located in Pella, Marion county, in said State.

SEC. 2. The State of Iowa accepts hereby the offer made by Henry P. Scholte of two third parts of the vacant lots in Pella, and half of the vacant lots in Amsterdam, according to the plats connected with the present act, and signed by Henry P. Scholte.

SEC. 3. Said Henry P. Scholte shall deliver to the Governor of the State, a warrantee deed for the whole of the vacant lots in Pella, so that the title for the whole becomes vested in the State of Iowa, for the purpose that said State can have the free and undisputed control over the whole, with the provision that said Henry P. Scholte shall receive from the State one third part of the money collected for said lots, to be paid in cash or in State bonds, bearing interest at the rate of —— per cent. per annum.

SEC. 4. When the State should select the Garden Square in said town of Pella, for the location of the State house, then said Henry P. Sholte shall vacate said Garden Square and give a warrantee deed for the same to the State.

SEC. 5. So soon as the State has made the selection of the even or odd numbers of the town of Amsterdam, then said Henry P. Sholte shall deliver a warrantee deed for the same to the State.

The first five sections of a bill that looked to establish Pella as the seat of government. The bill failed to pass.
Journal of the Senate, 1852.

H.P. Scholte was very active in his community. His name appears multiple times in legislative journals, including this 1852 Journal of the Senate entry (below) for a bill donating land to build the state Capitol in Pella.

Mr. Hillis presented the petitions of Henry P. Scholte and 15 others. and of Henry P. Scholte of Marion county, offering to donate certain property therein described to the state, provided the capital be removed to Pella in said county;

Which were referred to the committee on ways and means.

Journal of the Senate, 1852.

In addition, Scholte served as president of the Central University of Iowa.

The Central University of Iowa.

An institution under the direction and patronage of the Baptist Church of Iowa, is located at Pella, Marion County. A large and substantial brick edifice is in course of erection, and will be completed in June, we understand. The number of students in attendance in 1855, was 122. H. P. Scholte, President; M. A. Clark, Secretary; E. H. Scarff, Principal.

Excerpt from *Iowa as it is in 1856: a gazetteer for citizens and a hand-book for immigrants embracing a full description of the state of Iowa* by Nathan H. Parker

The Scholte family home still stands in Pella.

Sources for more information about Pella and the Scholte family:
https://iowaculture.gov/sites/default/files/dca-dol-iowa175-historicpella-scholte.pdf
https://www.pellahistorical.org/scholtehouse