The history of the English and Scottish churches of the Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reaches out in many directions. During the period of 1550 to 1700 numerous Netherlands British churches were closely interrelated with events in England, Scotland, and America. Six of the churches were founded in the sixteenth century, and during the seventeenth century another thirty-four emerged, counting officially established churches, garrison churches, and Separatist congregations (at least forty English-language churches in all). Hundreds of English and Scottish ministers (I worked with a file of over 350 ministers) served the Netherlands English-Scottish churches or otherwise resided or traveled in the Low Countries from 1550 to 1700. These churches were almost uniformly Puritan in theology and practice, or if Scottish, Presbyterian and Covenanter. A large portion of the preachers in the pulpit were Puritans or Covenanter Scots, many of them in forced exile. During the Puritan Revolution, however, the tide reversed, and as the Puritans went home, Anglicans became the exiles of the 1640s and 1650s. After the Restoration, the Puritans came back.

This study attempts, first of all, to give an overall history of the English-language churches functioning in the Dutch Netherlands 1550-1700. Second, the emphasis is on the connection of the overseas churches to the Puritan and Covenanter movements of England, Scotland, and America. International Puritanism had three interconnected centers: England, America, and the Netherlands. The Dutch side of the story is best approached through the history of the various congregations of the Netherlands, in which the Puritans made their headquarters. Puritanism was a wide movement of English Calvinist dissent against established Anglican religion, including Presbyterians, Separatists and non-Separatists, Congregationalists, and Baptists; and in its broadest sense Puritanism also encompasses the origins of English Anabaptism and Quakerism. Although the Spanish Netherlands functioned in a similar role to English Catholics, they are not included in this history.

There have been many books on aspects of English religion in the Netherlands, especially on the Separatists of Amsterdam and Leiden. Like all scholars of Dutch Puritanism, I am much indebted to the Separatist studies of Henry M. Dexter, Champlin Burrage, B. R. White, and Leland Carlson; and to Raymond P. Stearns, my advisor in graduate school days, and Alice Clare Carter for their work on the non-
Separatist English churches. Building on their work, my goal has been to write a general history of all the churches, Separatist and non-Separatist, Puritan and Anglican, and to show the relationship of each to the larger picture of English-Scottish religion in the Low Countries.

The research and writing has been mostly pleasure. The work began on my first sabbatical from Bethel College in 1969-70, which was spent in Amsterdam and London. I returned to England and the Netherlands in the summer of 1973 and for my second sabbatical in 1976-77. Perhaps much of the writing could have been done in Kansas, but it has been immensely more pleasurable to be on the scene in England and the Netherlands. Grants from the Social Science Research Council and the American Philosophical Society in 1969-70 and a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies in 1976-77 are gratefully acknowledged. I also received assistance from the Bethel College faculty development fund.

A traveling scholar (in search of Puritan history) is daily dependent on the expert assistance of librarians and archivists, and I thank each one who helped to make my work possible. In England: The British Museum (now the British Library), the Public Record Office, the Bodleian Library and the libraries of Merton College and Regents Park, Oxford; Dr. Williams’s Library; St. Bride’s Printing Library; Lambeth Palace Library; Registry Office, Somerset House. In Scotland: The Scottish Record Office; New College Library, Edinburgh; the National Library of Scotland. In the Netherlands: Koninklijke Bibliotheek of The Hague, the university libraries of Amsterdam, Leiden, and Utrecht; the Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague; the library and archives of the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk, 100 Javastraat, The Hague; the Archief and Library Ver. Doopsgezinde Gemeente, Amsterdam; the Rijksarchieven of Gelderland, Zeeland, Utrecht, and Noord-Brabant; the Gemeente Archieven of Amsterdam, Arnhem, Bergen op Zoom, Breda, Brielle, Delft, Dordrecht, Gorinchem, Haarlem, The Hague, ’s-Hertogenbosch, Leiden, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, Utrecht, and Vlissingen. The archives of Hamburg, Zutphen, Zwolle, and Gouda gave me help by correspondence. I express special thanks to John Russell and James Morrison for access to the archives of the Scots Church of Rotterdam and to Ds. C. Hamoen for use of the records at the church of Heusden. And not least of all, thanks to Martha Stucky and the staff of the Bethel College Library and to Robert Kreider, David Haury, and the staff of the Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College.

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