

## Goudsche Radio Industrie G. de Raadt (GRI) and Westminster Radio.

Nobody remembers that radios were once built in Gouda - the two business names shown above tell the current generation nothing. Here follows some family history; a 6-page summary of my book titled “De Galg van Eindhoven” (**The Gallows of Eindhoven**) which is just too much to translate: My great-grandfather Gerrit de Raadt (1839-1918) and his older brothers Pieter (d. 1901) and Arie (d. 1903) started a furniture and mattress factory in Gouda around 1872, named De Raadt Brothers. Pieter later became City Alderman for the Anti-Revolutionary Party, and later even a Commissioner for the City of Gouda; Arie was an evangelist and had been Bible seller in Friesland. The factory complex was in the Peperstraat, (which then bore the numbers 6-7-8, currently 14-16-18). The left one third of the building, next to the Meeting Hall of the congregation of the Darbists (Plymouth Brethren), replaced a building that had burnt down a few years earlier. On the **photo left below** are my great-grandparents with four daughters and only son Jacob (my Opa) on the building plot, among piles of bricks and beams, about 1894. (An older son Leendert had died aged 16, from tuberculosis.) On the **photo right below**, taken 21 years later, Jacob hangs out of the window at right, and in front stands my oom Gerrit (1907-1988) and aunt Mien (1910-1978) with their aunt Leena and their grandfather Gerrit. At that time, my Opa and Oma, Jacob and Mien (née van der Wart) still lived above the store; my father Theo (their third child) was still in diapers. The complex was sold by auction in February 1922 to the Roman Catholic Church (just visible in the 1894 photo).



On 11 May 1921, Opa (1883-1959) registered a business name “GRI” in the City of Gouda’s trade register, and on 12 May 1923 he changed the company's objective to include “building radios”. The business name **Goudsche Radio-industrie G. De Raadt** was used from 1 January 1926.

A second photograph from 1915 (left) shows the house of Gerrit and Alebrechta de Raadt at Gouwe 17. In the showroom are cradles; on the advertising sign over the water, the text states that fumigation work was also done.



Piersonweg 4.

The company was “Court Supplier”, and I read in newspaper advertisements that mattresses were delivered to the Dutch Army barracks in Ede during WWI (when the Netherlands were neutral). Gouwe 17 became the radio factory in 1924. My Opa and Oma then lived at Westhaven 42, which was the firm's office address. In 1930. the family with 6 children moved to Piersonweg 4 (right, previous page) in a photo from September 2010..

Below are three advertisements of GRI radios from that time, which were built in Gouda. From left to right: NCRV-guide of 1926-10-23, NCRV-Guide of 1928-02-04 and NCRV-guide of 1928-10-06. In 1928, GRI was also one of the first three Dutch radio builders to deliver a built-in loudspeaker with the radio, instead of having separate speakers such as had been done initially. (NCRV = Dutch Christian Radio Society, a listener's group.)



Met dit VIJFLAMPS RADIOTOESTEL is 't mogelijk krachtige luidspreker ontvangst te verkrijgen zonder antenne.

Belangrijke voordelen onzer nieuwe vinding:

1. Eenknoopsbediening.
2. Geen antenne of aardlijn noodig, bliksemevaar uitgesloten.
3. Aan plaats nog leiding gebonden, overal op te stellen.
4. Natuurlijker weergave dan met de meeste antennetoestellen.
5. Storingsvrij voor anderen.

Dit toestel opent een nieuwe toekomst. Waar moet het heen als er nog meer antennes bijkomen? 't Is alsof alle huizen met die masten en ra's er op moeten gaan zeilen. Bovendien ieder antennetoestel is een bron van storing voor een anderen luisteraar. Deze toestellen storen niemand. Geheel compleet met alle toebehooren (zonder luidspreker) f 295.— Hoornlooze luidsprekers Philips f 69.—, Musicone f 52.— en f 44.—. Franco door 't Rijk, demonstratie op aanvraag, 3 jaar garantie, goedkoopere toestellen ook verkrijgbaar. Vraag catalogus.

**GOUDSCHE RADIO-INDUSTRIE G. DE RAADT**  
WEST-HAVEN 42, GOUDA • Telef. 46 • Hofleverancier



ALU UW SCHEMERLAMP AAN TE SLUITEN

**GR.**

DE BETERE TOESTELLEN  
ALLE VOEDINGAPPARATEN  
INGEBOUWD

Vraag onze nieuwe geillust. prijs-courant. Handelaars korting.

**GOUDSCHE RADIO-INDUSTRIE**  
G. DE RAADT  
West-Haven 42, Gouda  
Hofleverancier - Telefoon 46



**G. R. 3. Ph. HET NIEUWSTE TOESTEL VAN DE GOUDSCHE RADIO-INDUSTRIE G. DE RAADT**

te Gouda, voor aansluiting aan het lichtnet, uitgerust met de nieuwe Philips wonderserie. Alle voedingsapparaten ingebouwd. Dus een toestel met een luidspreker eraan en meer niet. Voortreffelijke geluidweergave, gemakkelijke bediening. Meerdere voordelen vermeldt het prospectus. Geheel compleet met Philips luidspreker . . . f 270.00. Hetzelfde toestel (smaller formaat) door batterijen gevoed . . . . . f 210.00.

Beoordeling van ons apparaat in een der volgende bladen. Meerdere attesten beschikbaar. - Oud-min. Jhr. Mr. van Karnebeek, com. der Koningin in de Prov. Z.-Holl., laistert op zijn buiten op een **G. R. 4.** U kunt ook ervan genieten. Vraag catalogus.

**G. DE RAADT • HOFLEVERANCIER • GOUDA.**



„OPPERZANGER“  
(Meester-zanger) (Meester-zanger)

„ESMAAL-COMBINATIE“

**G. DE RAADT - GOUDA**

NCRV-Guide of 1929-03-09 – with the previously promised ideal-“combination” to which the name “Chief Singer” was given at first. Philips then objected to that name.



**Naamverandering van den „OPPERZANGER“**

Wij ontvingen een schrijven van de N.V. Philips Radio te Eindhoven, waarin ons verzocht wordt den naam van onzen electro-dynamischen luidspreker „Oppertzanger“ te veranderen om verwarring te voorkomen met den „Meesterzanger“ van genoemde firma.

Waar de N.V. Philips Radio den naam van haar luidspreker ontleende aan de sleer der opera's (Meesterzanger) en wij bij de naamgeving dachten aan den directeur van het tempelkoor in Jeruzalem (de oppertzanger onder de kinderen van Korach) voor wien Koning David een Psalm vervaardigde, meenden we (te meer waar we het woordle meester eraf lieten) vanwege den oorsprong dater naamgeving voldoende onderscheid te hebben betracht om verwarring te voorkomen, doch aangezien genoemde firma Philips ons bericht, dat deze naamgeving haar schade doet en wij met deze firma de meest aangename betrekkingen onderhouden, hebben we besloten aan haar verzoek te voldoen en veranderen den naam in

**„BACH“**

de meester onder de componisten, bij wien we 't allereerst denken aan zijn heerlijke koralen, die 't hart ontroeren.

Zoo heerlijk schoon is ook de weergave van „Onzen Bach“, terwijl ook 't gesproken woord opvallend duidelijk doorkunt.

In 't bijzonder valt dit op, indien men onzen „Bach“ aansluit aan ons speciaal daarvoor ontworpen radio-toestel G.R. 4 N.K. waarvan uitvoerig prospectus op aanvraag verkrijgbaar.

N.B. Behalve de Philips „Meesterzanger“ worden ook de andere Philips luidsprekers sedert jaren door ons in voorraad gehouden en aankoop daarvan ten zeerste aanbevolen.

**Goudsche Radio-Industrie G. de Raadt, Hofleverancier - Gouda**

NCRV-Guide of 1929-04-20 – in which a name change from “Chief Singer” to “Bach” is shown, because Philips had a “Master Singer” loudspeaker. (Opa gave a Biblical explanation for the name change.)

In the summer of 1929, Philips suddenly demanded that all radio builders in the Netherlands pay licence fees to the firm at Eindhoven, for 10 years (from 1 January 1930 to 31 December 1939). Until 1925, Philips had only produced radio lamps; but in 1925, the company had bought six American radio patents, which had almost expired. Philips demanded an amount of □ □ 12.50 per radio device, and that license plates had to be pasted on all those radios. This would allow Philips to regulate their radio production, because in Eindhoven they had also started to build radios. This “Gallows” on what one called the radio-small manufacturing industry first led to the establishment of an Action Committee, which on 31 December 1929 became the Federation of Entrepreneurs in the Radio branch of the Netherlands, (BORN), an anti-Philips organization of which Opa became a board member. The BORN (with help of the government) managed to conclude a series of agreements with Philips in the summer

of 1930, which reduced the license amount to  $\square \square 7.50$  per radio device. Later, Opa (as the secretary of the BORN) apparently succeeded to further reduce this amount to  $\square \square 1.50$ , but then Philips came back and reported: "We don't do it." But when shortly thereafter in "BORN-weekly" certain articles were published that Philips saw as defamatory, the BORN and the Dutch Federation of Radio Retailers were both sued before arbiters, who declared the two organizations guilty and imposed a huge fine – each party  $\square \square 5,400.00$ , which could not be paid by any of the organizations, because it was the world crisis. Opa then became the only BORN board member who did not resign; the BORN was declared bankrupt on 8 March 1933 and Opa eventually had to hear the Liquidator's final report on January 14, 1938, at which occasion Philips received only 6.5% of the amount claimed. (Information in the North Holland Archive at Haarlem).

In the radios built by Goudsche Radio Industry, an invention (scheme) by Ir. H.H.S. à Steringa Idzerda, the Dutch radio pioneer, was to be used, known as Patent Application 50298. On 16 March 1931, Arbiters determined that this "Idzerda Scheme" did not infringe on one of the Philips patents, Ned. Octrooi 7398, but that it infringed on a less important Philips patent, Ned. Octrooi. 10581. That was a source of joy for the BORN, for almost all other patent issues had been won by Philips at the time. N.V. Idzerda-Radio, and also the other companies that were members of the BORN, such as the Rijnland Radio Factory at Leiden, would gain access to the use of this circuit.

**WAARSCHUWING!**

**WIJ GAAN VOORT,**  
met het **afleveren** van:  
en **opnemen** van **nieuwe orders** op:

ad **f600.-**  
plus  
onbeperkte  
licentie.

de **model-vierlamps-ontvanger**

vrij van de **Philips-Octrooien**  
doch **beschermd** door een **nieuwe Octrooi-aanvraag**

De firma **G. de Raadt te Gouda** is bereid U over de resultaten van de in haar bezit zijnde model-ontvanger, nader te informeren.

Demonstratie in onze fabrieks-foonzaal  
elken dag van 11-5j en 8-10 uur.

**N.V. „IDZERDA-RADIO”**  
DEN HAAG  
Beukstraat 10 -- Telefoon 32584

**Idzerda's Meesterwerk**

*Aan den radiohandel.*

L. S.

Zooals wij reeds annonceerden, zijn wij bezitters van — en fabriceren wij volgens het licentie vrije schema van den Heer Ingenieur Idzerda. Het is een wonderschoon toestel, met een prachtige en volle weergave, door de duurste 4 lampstoetsel en niet overtroffen.

Op de frontplaat is het geheele golfgebied in gouddruk aangegeven. Te gebruiken op 125 of 225 volt wisselstroom lichtnet met plaatstroom of anodebatterij en accu. Met ons geheel gelijksroom voedingsapparaat speelt het toestel direct met één stekker op de lichtleiding, zonder dat er iets van de mooie ontvangst verloren gaat. Het apparaat is ook apart verkrijgbaar en overal ter vervanging van plaatstroom en accu geschikt.

**Prijs van het ontvangtoestel . . f 160.- bruto**  
" " " **algeheel voedingsapp f 75.- "**

Uitvoering zeer royaal, in Slav. eiken met coromandel.  
Vraagt het R. O. F. boekje eens, en vooral:  
**Steunt de licentievrije industrie.**  
**Rijnlandsche Ontvangtoestellen Fabriek**  
Leiden, Langebrug 32 a/b, Tel. 802.

The bankruptcy of the BORN was thus a great blow for the radio small manufacturing industry in the Netherlands.

On 2 November 1931, Philips also entered into a legal dispute against GRI, for  $\square \square 28,000.00$  indemnity. What it was about, is not known, but it "ran out of steam" (as Opa wrote about it), because of intervention by minister Verschuur. As a precautionary measure for possible further attacks by Philips, Opa and his sons decided to set up the company "Westminster Radio", intending "the manufacture of and trade in Radio equipment, trade in organs and other musical instruments" and as address Geuzenstraat 53/55, with oom Gerrit as owner. This happened on 1 July 1933.

Just in time, one would say. That same month, Philips again entered into a legal dispute against GRI (an Arbitration, and not an ordinary legal dispute; I don't know why). On 23 October 1933, that resulted in a declaration of "Guilty" and a judgment with a fine of  $\square \square 50,000.00$  plus Arbiters' fees of  $\square \square 1,425.00$ . The same day, the Goudsche Radio Industry G. de Raadt was transformed into a limited company. In this Arbitration, the technical side of the patents (according to Opa) was completely misjudged by Ir. Völter of the PTT, (Dutch Department of Post and Telegraphy), one of the Arbiters. Opa (supported by Ir. Idzerda, his Technical Advisor) formally opposed "the blemish of Völter", but without success, because "there is no defence against an arbitral sentence". All requests to the Government also did not help; by that time, Minister Verschuur had been replaced by Minister

Steenberghe, who had been one of the three Arbiters!!! (“Conflict of interest?”) The result of all this was that the business, not only the factory and store goods, but also the household stock and later the real estate, was sold on 4 March 1935 per Public Auction. Opa and Oma were declared “without assets”. All information on this last legal dispute was apparently stored somewhere in the Bezuidenhout in Den Haag, but was destroyed by the RAF bombardment and fire there in March 1945. Nothing at all exists in the (otherwise excellent) National Archives.

The mysterious thing is that after a very long process, on 16 January 1935, Ned. Octrooi 34759 was finally granted for Ir. Idzerda's invention, after it had already been granted for many years in twelve other countries. But that date was too late – not only for GRI but also for Ir. Idzerda's own company. He sold everything in Den Haag on 8 May 1935, and his patent lapsed in September 1935 because of the non-payment of sixty guilders annual fees. In this way, the radio small manufacturing industry in the Netherlands was taken to the gallows (= hanged).

**OPENBARE VERKOOPING**  
 op MAANDAG 3 MAART a.s., des v.m.  
 11 uur in het pand PIERSONWEG 4 en  
 GOUWE 17 te Gouda van eenige  
**MEUBILAIRE GOEDEREN**  
**RADIO's, ONDERDEELLEN**  
 etc.  
 Aanvang verkoop in pand Piersonweg  
 J. V. v. ENGELLENBURG, Soave.  
 Rotterdam. Telef. 32992.

◀◀◀ From the Goudsche Courant of 1 March 1935, notifying of the Public Auction.

▶▶▶ From the Goudsche Courant of 5 March 1935, after the fact.



According to the above advertisements from the Goudsche Courant, the firm rises like a phoenix (Westminster Radio) from the ashes (GRI). From 28 August 1935, Wijdstraat 22 was named as the address of Westminster Radio. That rented property was used for almost 40 years, until 31 December 1974, when oom Gerrit closed the business “due to old age”.

In 1937, Opa described the entire history as a newspaper of 4 pages, called “**The Gallows of Eindhoven.**” Philips got wind of this, and in a very devious way, was successful to prevent its printing. Only a few printing proofs saw the light. In my childhood in South Africa, I was aware that there was “a newspaper by Opa”, but I did not know more, and never got an opportunity to talk to my father about it. Opa died in 1959, and my father died in 1973 already. I later tried with my aunts, but they could/did not want to say a thing. In 2008, I received a printing proof from my half-sister Gea in the Netherlands. I made a complete book out of this, with Opa's complete and unchanged text, about 370 footnotes and 38 attachments (newspaper articles, commentary and photos.)

From 1935, my father Theo therefore worked with his father in what Opa later called “The business of my son” – Westminster Radio. No radio sets were built there (Philips had already confiscated everything at GRI on 15 December 1933), but radios were sold (not Philips!), repaired and also rented out. My father installed roof antennas throughout the Netherlands, as he said “from Uithuizen to Axel” (the very NE and SW towns), without a salary and only for “room and board plus some pocket money”. Oom Gerrit was the firm's electronics technician, Opa managed the business financially and my Aunt Mien was the treasurer. In 1937 my father became the “post-procuratiehouder” (until 1952). After forced selling of the house at Piersonweg 4, the family first lived in Bodegraafse Straatweg 70, and then at Turfmarkt 83, (City-owned rental housing) in the inner city.

Then, in August 1938, my father met a student nurse from Eudokia hospital in Rotterdam with the name Saar Siebel. Mr. Arij Siebel, the father of that girl, whom he met for the first time on the platform of the Maas Railway Station in January 1939, when she returned from the Winter Sports at the Youth Hostel of Lenzerheide in Switzerland, required that he first had to get a proper job, otherwise nothing would come of the relationship. In September 1939, father started to work at N. Samsom N.V. in Alphen aan den Rijn, (currently part of Wolter Kluwer) and the lovebirds got engaged on Christmas Day 1939 and married on 19 February 1942. Nine months later, I came into the world, and in October 1944, the beginning of the “hunger winter”, also my brother Arie. After WWII, my father completed a course as typewriter mechanic, at Remington in Amsterdam.

During the war, the German occupying forces imposed a whole series of barriers to radio listeners and to the radio industry. At first, Opa and oom Gerrit were left somewhat alone, but that ended soon. As with many other Dutch people, work was done **out of necessity** for the German occupying forces. Westminster Radio e.g. reconditioned radio vacuum tubes, and that is a specialised procedure. On 13 May 1943, a regulation stipulated that all radios were forfeited and had to be handed over to the more than 1000 municipalities in the Netherlands. In the whole of the country, over 100 GRI radio sets were then handed in. This limited freedom of listening, because “radio distribution” was not covered and members of the NSB (Dutch Nazi Party) did not have to hand in their radio sets. However, people who had **rented** (not hire-purchased!) radios from Westminster Radio did not have to hand in their devices, which was a big hiatus in the regulation, causing a very nasty aftermath immediately after the Liberation. By the end of August 1944, the business at Wijdstraat 22 was boarded up and nailed shut.

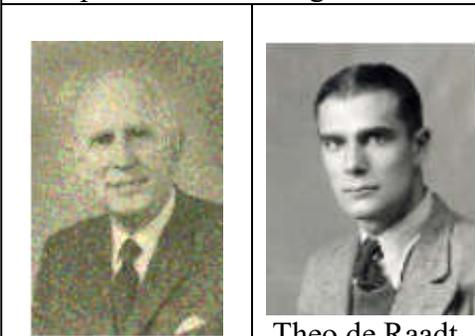
On 5 May 1945, (Liberation Day) Opa was taken into custody (on the Markt in Gouda), and oom Gerrit was apprehended a few weeks later. They were accused of NSB membership and collaboration with the Germans. Oom Gerrit was kept in a pre-trial jail for almost a year at Kamp Duindorp, Opa was first in a makeshift camp at the candle factory, then had a nervous breakdown and went to a clinic in Loosduinen, south of Den Haag. That information I am describing in my second book “Letters from Oma”. In short, the charge of membership of the NSB was almost immediately dropped; the question of collaboration was to be very well sorted out. Opa claimed in his defence, and in his substantial “Exposé to the Advocate” in June 1946 that he and oom Gerrit did in Westminster Radio “what others did underground”, in other words as a "sabotage-duo" that caused old radios to be handed over to the Occupying Forces, so that customers could continue to listen clandestinely on their newer (= better) radios. Opa also claimed to have sold radio valves clandestinely (to the underground). These “camouflage tactics” he hoped to fully explain in his Tribunal. But that Tribunal never happened. In December 1946, Opa and oom Gerrit both received a conditional amnesty, which they had to sign and pay a □ □ 500 fine each. But because Opa had been “without assets” since 1935, (= bankrupt), that money eventually came..... from the savings books of the grandchildren, like yours truly!



Advertising brochure, 1947.



Opa and Oma during WWII.



Gerrit de Raadt in the 1960's.

Theo de Raadt during 1938.



Wijdstraat 22 as used by Westminster Radio, (1935-1974).

For a while, Westminster Radio came under the management of the Dutch Administrative Institute, as it was sorted out if there was any enemy property. After that, some radio sets were still built by Westminster Radio, according to the brochure (**above**) that I found in September 2010 at the Central Archive for Special Jurisprudence (CABR, a Dutch institution especially set up for the post WWII situations) in The Hague. How many? I have no

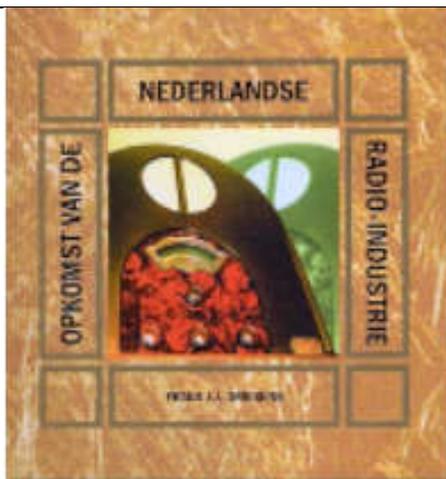
idea. And there is probably none left. But in the Radio-Museum of Frans Driesens in Reusel, Noord-Brabant, is (or was, in 2010) perhaps the only remaining GRI radio in the world. Here follow some pictures.



It is not exactly known when this radio was built.



Without Frans Driesens and Gidi Verheijen – the authors of the books mentioned below, my adventure trip through the family history in Gouda of about 85 years ago would have been futile, ending in a hopeless failure. My specific heartfelt thanks to these two members of the NVHR. (Dutch Society for Historical Radios.)



◀ ◀ ◀ “Emergence of the Dutch Radio Industry” (from 1915 to 1930)” by Frans Driesens – ISBN 90-76014-04-3, (144 pages, art print paper and hard synthetic leather cover with gold imprint) available for €13,-. at [radio.amateur.museum@online.nl](mailto:radio.amateur.museum@online.nl)

▶ ▶ ▶ “The Radio set in World War II” by Gidi Verheijen – ISBN 978-90-9024119-7, available at E.J.M. Verheijen, [gverhe@planet.nl](mailto:gverhe@planet.nl) and tel. (046) 485 18 47 for €30,-. (276 pages).



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