

WINAND CAREL HUGO STARING
1808-1877

Staring was born on 5 October 1808 on an estate near Lochem (province of Gelderland). His father was the poet A.C.W. Staring (1767-1840). Staring Junior studied Law and natural history at the University of Leiden. As a student he took part in the military campaign against the Belgian revolt in 1830. On 6 December 1833 he took his degree in natural science with a dissertation on *Specimen de geologia patriae*, a survey of what had been written on Dutch geology up to that moment. It was the first geological dissertation ever defended in the Netherlands. Van Breda was his supervisor.

After finishing his studies, Staring returned to Lochem in Gelderland. In 1838 he married Catharina Christine van Loeben Sels, with whom he had four sons and one daughter. In 1846 the couple moved to the estate De Boekhorst near Laren (Gelderland). Staring devoted most of his time to the management of his estates, but he was also active as a local judge and as a promoter of the economic and social development of the region where he lived. In 1847 he was one of the founders of the Gelderland Society of Agriculture. But he had not abandoned geological studies. In 1844 he published his *Proeve eener geologische kaart van de Nederlanden* (First attempt at a geological map of the Netherlands, scale 1:800,000). In 1852 he was recruited as secretary to a national commission for the preparation of a much more detailed geological map of the country and moved to Haarlem in province of Holland. After a conflict with the chairman of the commission, Van Breda, the commission was disbanded and in 1857 only Staring was put in charge of the completion of the new map. The geological survey itself was completed in 1860 and the map (scale 1:200,000) was published between 1858 and 1867. A map as detailed as this one had never been published before. At the World Exhibition in London in 1869 this map was awarded a prize for its detailed discrimination of the younger strata. During the conflict with Van Breda—which temporarily robbed him of his salary—Staring had started writing *De bodem van Nederland* (1856-1860), which remained the handbook for the geology of the Netherlands well into the twentieth century. He also wrote many books on rural economics.

In 1862 Staring was appointed lecturer in geology at the Royal Academy for the training of civil engineers at Delft, but already in 1863 he became inspector for secondary education and agricultural

schools in the provinces of Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe and Overijssel. For this reason he moved from Haarlem to his old estate in Gelderland. Because of ill health he had to resign in 1873, but his salary was continued. Staring died in Lochem on 7 November 1877.

Primary works

Specimen academicum inaugurale de geologia patriae (Leiden: Menzel, 1833); *Proef eener Nederlandsche Kunstspraak (terminologie) voor de aardkunde of geologie* (Deventer: Gunne, 1844); *De bodem van Nederland*, 2 vols (Haarlem: Kruseman, 1856-1860); *Voormaals en thans. Opstellen over Nederlands grondgesteldheid* (Haarlem: A.C. Kruseman, 1858; second ed. Zwolle, Tjeenk Willink, 1878).

Secondary sources

W.J.A. Huberts, in: *Mannen van beteekenis in onze dagen*, 10 (1877); H.J. Lovink et al., *Dr. Staring gehuldigd (...)* ('s-Gravenhage: Van Langenhuijsen, 1908); J. G. Veldink, *W. C. H. Staring, 1808-1877, geoloog en landbouwkundige* (Wageningen: Pudoc, 1970).
J. van Baren, in: *NNBW*, vol. 1, 1490-1492.

[K.v.B.]