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### In an Article Written by Henry Hidding Dated 12 March 1912 About the "Ninth Street Church" or the Pillar Church and Published in the Holland City News on the 14th of March

Henry Hidding

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14 March 1912

Holland, Michigan

In an article written by Henry Hidding dated 12 March 1912 about the "Ninth Street Church" or the Pillar Church and published in the *Holland City News* on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, the author related the meeting in the church during the Civil War in which Dr. Albertus C. Van Raalte participated in the recruitment of soldiers for Company 1 of the 25<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry. Van Raalte had opened the meeting which was lengthy and gave an address. Hidding had been at this lengthy meeting and related his memories of the event.

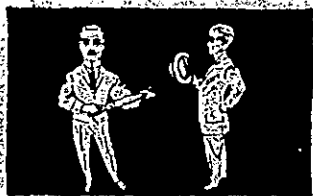
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TAILOR, HATTER, FURNISHER  
Corner River and Eighth Streets

A Great Many  
People

## The Ninth Street Church



The First Church is in the right hand lower corner of this picture, and with the exception of the Methodist Church, the others are directly or indirectly derived from it

### THE NINTH STREET CHURCH.

This church was built in 1856 on a large plot of ground donated by Dr. A. C. Van Raalte, in the center of the city. The foreman for erecting this building was Mr. Schrader. All the work had to be done by hand. The lumber was purchased almost entirely of Jacob Van Putten. Heavy oak timbers were brought from the woods of A. Plugger, three miles southeast of the church.

Mr. Schrader was a builder of mills and was a good workman. The church was at once built of the size which it shows at present with its six pillars. The following men have served as pastors: R. Pieters, E. Bos, K. Van Goor, A. Keizer and E. Tank.

Messrs. De Wit, Brouwer, Sluiter, Paulus, Bolt, Bloemsa and De Goede have served as janitors.

The bell was always rung by the janitor, also during the week, until the whistle at the waterworks was installed. The seats have always been placed in the church as they are now, though not the same seats. The women sat in the center row and the men on the east and the west sides. The elders sat in front at the right side of the pulpit and next to them some thirty students. No one ventured to sit with his wife. After the men entered the church they would for a moment stand still with the hat or cap in front of their eyes.

During the winter the atmosphere in the church was very cold. The women brought a footstove filled with fire; the janitor would bring a warm footstove to the pastor's wife, or "Juffrouw." Soon after the pastor had commenced preaching the women would pass a "snuffdoosje," or a small box containing a sponge soaked with cologne, and this would pass from nose to nose along the entire seat. The men used snuff, and also some women. Many of the men wore

a "tonhoed" or silk tile, especially the pastor and the members of the consistory. Some of the women were dressed in such fashion that a fidgety horse might start on a runaway.

When the people began to come into the church one of the elders would rise and announce a Psalm, which he would read. Then Frederikus Van Lente would arise and lead in the singing, which he could do to a "T" with his strong voice. After him this task was left to Mr. B. Kruidenier, until the organ arrived, which was first played by Miss Reka Workman. After one or two verses had been sung, the pastor would arrive. The services lasted from 9 until 12 o'clock. If anyone commenced to feel drowsy he would arise for a while. If anyone would actually fall asleep, the domine would say "John, or Peter, please wake up your neighbor." If it happened in his own seat he would mention the name. At that time there was but one church and people traveled four or a great many more miles to service.

That church may rightly be called the "mother church." I think some five or six churches had their origin here. Just to mention a few: Hope church, Third church, Ebenezer church, Fourteenth street church, Prospect park, Sixteenth street, etc.

The church has passed through many experiences. In 1871 it was spared from the general conflagration as by a miracle. Once a serious rupture took place and one would almost say that the children of God came together and satan also was in their midst.

Perhaps this church has cost more than any other in the city, since everything had to be made by hand, and money was scarce.

Many happy moments have been passed within its walls, for instance, the prayer meetings which were so

greatly blessed. The congregation has also passed through hard experiences, during an epidemic of diphtheria, when sometimes two would die in one home in a couple of days or two on the same day. And then there was the Civil war. I remember once entering the church which was full of people, as soldiers had to be drafted, there not being enough volunteers. The meeting was opened with prayer by the pastor. Those who made addresses were Dr. A. C. Van Raalte, Mr. M. D. Howard and K. Schaddtee and others. A list was opened and many subscribed their names. The meeting lasted till late that evening. This became Company 1, of the 25th Michigan Infantry. Many mothers wept. Men left their wiver, young men their sweethearts, children their parents. A flag was presented them, I think by the girls with the motto: The Lord's our banner. These men had to be transported by team to Kalamazoo because at that time there were no trains running. The writer of this sketch also brought a wagon load. How sad a parting that was for no one expected to see those again who were now leaving. However, many returned. They were brave boys while in the service. Sometimes they wrote letters just before a battle and sometimes directly after a fight. Then these letters would be read on Sunday just before the long prayer. O how hard a struggle that sometimes proved for the pastor for he himself had two sons serving. Then would follow the prayer. Once the pastor learned that one of his sons had been wounded. At once he hastened to Tennessee where the boy lay in a hospital. Those were dark days. Much more could I relate but shall not do so this time.

HENRY HIDDING,

March 12, 1912.

### Has No Coal at Waverly.

Allegan Gazette.—As an evidence of the deplorable condition into which the Pere Marquette railway has worked itself, it was amusing to hear that Charles Schuler the All-

### Political Outlook

The republican caucus will take place Monday evening, March 25, at the Lyceum Bldg, but up to the present time not much has been

John Dyk wants to be alderman of the fourth on the democratic ticket.

What of Will Van Eyck?