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An Article in the Holland City News, Entitled, "The Van Raalte Colony and Its Influence on Holland at the Present Time," by Mrs. H. D. Post, of Holland, (Widow of Henry D. Post)

Mrs. H. D. Post

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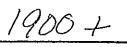
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FILE NAME

January ? 30, 1903

An article in the Holland City News, entitled, "The Van Raalte Colony and Its Influence on Holland at the Present Time," by Mrs. H. D. Post, of Holland, (widow of Henry D. Post).

Contains references to A. C. Van Raalte. Also, "His wife was a noble helpmate worthy of a place in history along with him. The remembrance of home and kindred often intruded itself, and Mrs. Van Raalte often spoke of the trial of leaving early, and still well remembered friends, but she always added, 'It is the Lord.'"

Original in the Archives of Hope College, the Philip Phelps Scrapbook.

THE VAN RAALTE COLONY Holland Chy News - Jon 30 1963 Al its Influence on Holland at the Present Time.

By MRS. H. D. POST, OF HOLLAND,

shlook back to my first meeting with Dr. Van Raalte-he ded to young, with no beard-and recall the striking incidents of interesting and each successive year, the faces that were familiar, and have now passed away, the changes and progress, and improveto down to the present day, it seems to my mind a wonderful pan-In was in the winter of '47 that Dr. Van Realte first visited tract of land where our City now stands. I have been told by a ron who was with him when he first looked at the land, that he halt down in the snow and prayed for guidance and direction from

Let us look for a moment at the prospect before him. The bund was covered not only with snow, but with a most magnificence with of forest trees of immense size, sugar maple, oak, hemlock, a ha variety, many of them 6 feet in diameter.

The people who had come with the dominiee, (as we called him en) knew nothing about chopping down these great trees. They me builders of wind mills, store-keepers, carpenters, tallors, goldins, shoe makers, and when I asked my near neighbor his vocation replied "Busselmaker" meaning brush maker. The Dominee knew character of his people, knew they were active, steady, perseverand could learn. They were also actuated by the same motive field had brought their leader here. So the beautiful forest did not ter him from his purpose. He came not to this wilderness to seek rown or to secure any possible worldy advantage. The motive that mught him here was a noble one, that he might enjoy more religious dom. It was on the occasion of the marriage of his eldest son, at wedding feast that the dominee related among other reminiscences, nt when the bridegroom was an infant, he, the dominee, was thrown to prison for preaching contrary to law. He chose America as the of his adoption because here he could enjoy perfect religious idom. There were great trials and privations to be endured but in darkest hour he seemed to see with prophetic eye the future sucof his labors. I have heard him say when we were passing mugh the the darkest days: "If my head laid low the place would go on My work can not be in vain, because I have built in faith." is wife was a noble helpmate worthy of a place in history along with The remembrance of home and kindred often intruded itself,

Mrs. Van Raalte often spoke of the trial of leaving early, and still cil remembered friends, but she always added, "It is the Lord." a wontime could easily be filled with reminiscences of those early but a glance must suffice to show the contrast between our iviloges now, and those enjoyed by the early settlers. Our mail in ose days came only once a week, on Thursday afternoon. How arty we watched for Vrouw Notting to come with the mail bag on back. Her husband would go to Manlius in Allegan County and in the bar on his back to his home in Graafschap. He would be pliand. I frequently assisted my husband in opening and making the mailin those days. There were not as many love letters writ-then for the postage was higher. As yet we had no roads. Now mail comes every few hours, but we do not appreciate it, as when came only once a week.

reannot refrain from alluding to our system of lighting at that We used the tallow candle. My husband thought I must learn make mold-candles so in one of his journeys to Allegan he purchased ime candle molds. I filled in good orthodox order, a wick in the intre and then full of hot tailow. I put them out doors against a linge tree close by the door. Very soon I heard the rustling of leaves and I ran to the door just in time to see a bungry looking Indian dog imping over logs and brush with the candle molds and candles in his mouth. He ran so fast that it was useless to think of persuing him and I was left to meditate on the light that failed. That was the wint of other days.

The supply of milk for the family seems a trifling thing hut in tose days it involved a deal of labor. Our milk man was' a milk man. We did not have the cow brought to the door and milked in our presence as is done in our "New possessions" but good Vrouw one brought the milk in pails which hung from a yoke which was ross her shoulders. I would say, "Good Morning, Vrouw Arens, are ou well and she, while-she was dipping out my supply of milk ould respond to my inquiry thus, "Beter hoeft het nigt te wezen," eaning it need not be any better, but it was better after a while for she ot a horse and wagon.

It was at the quarter centennial unniversary of this settlement at Dr. Van Raalte paid a tribute to the citizens the United States the received and aided the cologists, among the names he mentioned in Gen. Lewis Cass, Dr. Wykor of Albany, Judge Kellogg of Allean, and many more names I have forgotten. But it was Gen. Robert thart, of Mich., who first directed his attention to the present loca. hir. His object was to secure a site for a society of religious people hich should form a centre of education and religion. The first church ryices were held in the open air. It was at a place near where 'the an Raalte home now stands. A place cleared by the falling trees and irming a hollow square. A person who was present said it was a eautiful picture: This was in May of '47. In the Autumn of that ear the first church was built of logs. It was not till 1856 that a nurch was built in the city. The log church was near where the cemery now is the aim of the emigrant was education, and step by step om our public school to the Academy, and now Hope College which as a name and a place among the colleges of our land. Dr. Van Raalte ad noble helpers but to him belongs the honor of laying the foundaon. As I write the names of Dominee Pieters, Dr. Phelps, Hope's st President, Dr. Stewart, Beak, Scott, all faithful men who have assed away But our fathers, where are they?

As I recall the incidents of those early days, it seems like the stories of the original settlement at Plymouth, the voyage across the sea, the forest life, the great sickness and privation of those days, the religious zeal and strong faith of those Holland pilgrims. Hope College and the Theological Seminary crown the educational system which is the outgrowth of their religious faith. The first lecture ever delivered here was by Dr. Phelps, and his subject was "Omens, signs auguries or prognostications." It was interesting and deserves mention as being the first of a series given under the auspices of the Fraternal Society of Hope College.

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The wilderness has been made to blossom like the rose, a 'change has been wrought which at first thought seemed impossible. Let us not forget that these people were christians and they trusted in one who heard and answered their prayers. They brought their religion over the sea with them. I remember the first morning after my arrival, hearingf rom the little log houses all around us the singing of psalms, and on inquiry was told it was the beautiful custom to sing after each meal or before it.

Now we have taken a hasty glance at Holland as it was in the beginning of our history, when winding paths not deserving the name of roads, through the thick forest, among the trees and over the logs, led among the scattered huts, some built of logs, some of boards and some of boughs and bark. I remember going to see a sick person and noticed that the bedstead upon which he lay was made of twigs of a tree with the bark on them.

We were at that time surrounded on all sides by an unbroken forest isolating us as completely from the world outside as if we were on an island in the ocean. How different is the picture as we now see it. Our city surrounding our fine harbor, and numerous vessels and steamers, engaged in a lucrative trade with the great shipping centres of Illinois and Wisconsin, railroads diverging in many different directions, telegraph lines giving us the means of sending messages, which contrast strongly with good Vrouw Notting's weekly mail, our shops and factories giving employment to a large and increasing population. Our beautiful streets lighted with electricity and lined with well constructed buildings Our many pleasant homes, our churches, and our school houses-all of these go to make up our Holland of today.

Some one has said and truly, "Holland owes her proud position today, by God's blessing to the careful and successful labors of those to whom the great work of organizing and shaping the growth of the new settlement was committed.'

Dr. Van Raalte was spared to see his labors crowned with success. The people who came with him from the fatherland were blessed with high educational advantages, prosperous in their enterprises and comfortable in their homes, and respected as worthy citizens of their adopted country.

The contemplation of this subject for a few moments is well calculated to fill our hearts with gratitude to Him who has so blessed and prospered us in the past that we can safely trust the future in the hands of Him who has brought us thus far, and so signally blessed us, in spiritual as well as temporal things. Many congregations in our western states owe their existence under Providence to this important centre. How many ministers of the gospel and teachers have gone from among us and now laboring in distant lands. In China, Japan Arabia and India are noble workers among the heathen whose names are familiar to us all. Here in our college a few years ago several native Japanese were educated. They were baptized and became members of Hope Church, and afterwards returned to their native land to spread the knowledge of the Gospel among their own people. These influences have earthly limit but spread wider and wider until the final result can only be known in eternity. The event of Dr. Van Raalte and his people settling in this locality in 1847 has had a grear influence upon the History of our country in general, sufficient to warrant my choosing this subject and calling it "A History Making Event."

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WEDNESD:

LATE DR. PHILI

HOPE COLLEGE

AT COLLEGE CELE

Native of Albany Founded tution at Holland, Mich., Its First Presiden

At the semi-contennial co the founding of Hope college Reformed church education at Holland, Mich., which memorated in conjunction w nual meeting of the genera the Reformed church of An week, honor was given the Dr. Philip Phelps, Jr., fo first president of the college, for many years in Albany graduate of Union college 1828. wrong dat Dr. Phelps was born in A 12, 1826, and got his prelimi cation in Albany schools, A graduated from Union college a pastorate at Hastings and appointed principal of Holland When the institution was ch Hope college in 1866, he beca dent and served for twelve ye he resumed pastoral work an nt Blenheim, Scholarie coun he'died September 4, 1895.

Dr. Phelps' father was Phil deputy state comptroller fifty years. He was appointed Comptroller Marcy in 1826, vanced toy deputy in 1828 a two years, 1842-1814, served ously until 1876. When a yo he practiced law in the office Van Rensselaer.

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