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### Diary Entry of Geisje Vander Haar Visscher

Geisje Vander Haar Visscher

Clarence Jalving

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1856

Holland, Michigan

Geisje Vander Haar Visscher's diary contains an entry on page 13, in which she made a reference to both Albertus C. Van Raalte and to Mrs. Christina Van Raalte. An entry for 1849 on p. 10 said that the Van Raaltes often came to visit the Vander Haars. The 1856 reference is about the "High School" and bringing it into a better condition. This is a reference to the Pioneer School. She also said Mr. Van Vleck had come to the school. She thought that Mrs. Van Vleck was a lovely person. The Vander Haar apparently got to know the Van Vlecks well.

In Dutch; translation by Clarence Jalving.

Original in the archives of the Holland Museum. A copy of the translation is in the files of the Van Raalte Institute.

expressed the desire to attend. The other two attended the primary school.

Now we got ready to go back to the farm in May which we did. Our farm lay a half hour's walk from the city. We enjoyed life on the farm since we found many pious people living in our neighborhood. We got along with them well. [page 13] There were two elders who lived nearby and during the week we often got together and on Sundays we went to church regularly. Now my husband stayed home most of the time to work on the farm. The man to whom we had rented the 20 acres still lived in the small house there. We ourselves lived in the good frame house on our farm and we also improved it. I was in a good mood all summer and constantly prayed that I might have a spirit of love and forgiveness toward those who had aggrieved me. The Lord heard my prayer and granted me the power to love and forgive.

That summer the Lord again blessed us by giving us a healthy boy on the 12th of August 1856. Although I would have preferred to have a girl, we were happy and had to accept what God gave us. We called him Johannes, hoping and praying that God might cause him to be a source of comfort for us and for others. The child grew and we presented him to God in baptism.

Van Raalte had the congregation sing –

God zal zijn waarheid nimmer krenken,  
Maar eeuwig Zijn verbond gedenken,  
Zijn word wordt altos trouw volbracht,  
Tot in het duieendste geslacht.

God will never go back on His word  
But will eternally remember His covenant  
His word is always truly honored  
Unto the thousandth generation.

It was comforting to me, also for our child. We rejoiced in God and His goodness toward us. We had many friends, both in town and around us. Rev. Scholte from Pella also visited us that year. He preached for us too but the people didn't like him. He was not as orthodox in his teaching[sic] as Van Raalte. The people here still clung to the oldfashioned[sic] doctrine.

We were blessed materially. We had plenty to eat – we were healthy and looked to the future with optimism. That winter we made a trip to Kalamazoo by sleigh. We found many Hollanders there too who were getting along well materially but they had no preacher. Many were pious people and shortly thereafter they called and got a pastor. That winter Van Raalte made a trip east to try to collect money for the Academy and to try to get teachers and professors who could teach theology. Mrs. Van Raalte and other women spent a day at my home. We spent a pleasant day talking religion much of the time. When the dominie got back there was a decided change in the school. Mr. Van Vleck, a pious man, was made president of the school. He also had a fine wife. We associated with them a great deal. He was fond of our boy because he was so sincere in his desire to serve God. We had noticed this many times and it made us very happy. The next year we stayed on our farm and again had a prosperous year. The next winter we moved back to town so the smaller children could more easily attend school and church. Besides it was possible to earn a little in the city in the winter time. We still had our

Geesje Visscher-Van der Haar Diary 1869

Translation page 10; 1849

The Reverend [Van Raalte] and his wife [de juffrou] came also often to visit us and we had much satisfaction with each other (or: took much pleasure in it)

Translation page 13; 1856

Domine Van Raalte has been eastbound that winter, to bring the High School in a better condition [the translation refers to collect money, but that is an interpretation] and to get professors to teach the young men higher (more or better) in Divinity. Mrs. Van Raalte spent a day with me at my home, together with other women...

Rel. School

When the Domine returned, a lot of changes took place in the School. English teachers and boys came to the school. Mr. van Vleck was [made] president of the School, a pious man. He also had a lovely wife. We had much contact (association) with them (or: could get along very well).

vleck  
P. d. p. 1859 = "Academy" = sec. school → Rutgers college  
Academy

Hope College fall 1862

1866 Graduation granted.

10-10-06

J P Verhave -

- meaning of hogeschool in  
Neth. could mean university  
or theol. hogs. seminary

DIARY

OF

M-R-S. G-E-Z-I-N-A V-I-S-S-C-H-E-R

(V-A-N D-E-R H-A-A-R)

[Mrs. Geesje Van der Haar Visscher]

1820-1901

[Original in the Archives of the Holland Museum]

Genemuiden, Netherlands & Holland, Mich.

Translated from the Dutch by

C.L. Jalving

Holland, Mich. Feb. 1954

*Transcriptions by  
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