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January 22, 1977

- R: Have you been living in Holland all your life?
- C: Not quite all of my life. First twenty years I lived in Grand rapids. From then on I lived in Holland.
- R: Did you just move into this house recently?
- C: Last Monday.
- R: Where did you move from?
- C: Central Park.
- R: Is that near Holland?
- C: That's on South Shore Drive, about three miles out of Holland. Actually, it's part of the city now. It was originally a suburb.
- R: Do you live alone here now?
- C: My wife is downtown shopping. It was her instigation that got me started on this place. I lived on the lake for fifty years. Everything was centered around the lake. But there comes a time when the house is too big, the garden is too big, the lawn is too big. We had a chance to get this place. This is a very unusual place.
- R: It is. The house is really different from all the other houses around here.
- C: It's nicely arranged for two people.
- R: Do you have a big back yard?
- C: Not too big. I was accustomed to one much bigger.
- R: You are a gardener, right?
- C: Yes, I love to garden.
- R: Will you get a chance to do that here with all this cold weather?
- C: Where's your home?

R: New Jersey.

C: I think there's enough room for a little garden here. I planted strawberry patches and raspberry patches at the other place.

R: Do you plant corn or tomatoes or anything like that?

C: Will I try that here? Well, I think I'll buy a little acreage from the city. The city lays out plats for gardeners.

R: Is that around here?

C: Right behind us here. For ten dollars you can get a city plat with sprinkling service. I will miss my sugar beets, I can tell you that.

R: You lived in Grand Rapids for the first twenty years of your life? Did you go to high school there?

C: I went to Calvin Prep School for four years and then four years of college.

R: What college?

C: Calvin College. I then spent many years at the University of Michigan.

R: How many years were you there?

C: I did all my work in one semester and ten summers. I commuted for ten summers.

R: What year was that? It must've been quite awhile ago.

C: All through the thirties.

R: You lived during the depression? That must've been something.

C: Well, we didn't fair too badly on Hope's campus. We took ten percent cut one year. That was when other colleges were asking professors to forego their salaries.

R: Right after you graduated from University of Michigan, did you go into teaching?

C: I was teaching all the time and going to University of Michigan during the summers.

R: What made you come to Hope?

C: I was principal of the Christian high school here in Holland. That gave me first-hand contact with a lot of people on Hope's campus. Then when Dr. Nykerk died they needed another English teacher and asked if I'd be interested. That was in 1928.

R: So you started at Hope in '28? What was it like then?

C: What was it like?

R: What was the college like?

C: Well, for one thing the chapel wasn't there. The Chapel was opened in 1929. I came pretty much with the Chapel. There were times when the Chapel was less than half full. I'm sure we had no more than 150 students.

R: What buildings were there?

C: Graves library, Graves is a conversion job. That was used as a Chapel and a Library. After the library moved out it was converted into class rooms. It was completely converted from top to bottom. Carnegie Gym was there, Vorhees was there, and a little building occupied by students now on Columbia avenue was there. It was the first building there. That was about it.

R: You taught at Hope for over forty years?

C: Forty-four.

R: You just retired recently?

C: That's right. I had good hearth and enjoyed my studies. I don't think I missed Chapel more than five times.

R: What was Chapel like back then?

C: It was definitely a religious service.

R: Three times a week?

C: Five times a week.

R: Was it mandatory?

C: Yes.

R: All the students had to go.

C: Yes, that's right.

R: How was the food?

C: the dorms arranged the eating services. Otherwise, very few people ate on campus. They all went downtown to Eighth Street and got something there. Now of course it's big business. They have to get Saga in to feed all the students. They opened the cafeteria after I started.

R: What was it like teaching when you first began in '28 and when you retired in '72? The methods of teaching and the students must've changed.

C: There are conventional ways of teaching and unconventional ways of teaching. I don't think the project you're working on now would've appealed to the students at that time. They would say they were an English major and we want to study composition. When it comes to going out in the street with a tape recorder, it wouldn't appeal. At least, there was no occasion for it. They were a pretty serious lot, you know. A good many of them are in higher offices today.

R: do you know many of them?

C: Well, on campus I did. I had contact with them while they were on campus. They went out of their way to stop and say good morning and have a cup of coffee with their teachers. There was a very

fine commeradery among the students and faculty.

R: Were classes pretty small back then?

C: Some were. The total curriculum was small. They scaled down the curriculum to fit the students. If there weren't more than five students interested in a course, it wasn't taught.

R: Holland is a very nice community.

C: I've been interested very much in the history of this community.

R: Do you do a lot of studying up on it?

C: I've read most of the stuff written about the colony.

R: It was a colony?

C: It was a colony. Rev. VanRaalte segregated himself from the American world by living in a separate colony on the lake shore.

R: Rev. VanRaalte was the starter of this town?

C: He was the guardian spirit.

R: When was this/

C: 1847. We celebrated our 100th anniversary in 1947. We had a grand centennial. It wasn't quite as big as the bicentennial of national fame, but we had some big things. They appointed me to take six American students to the Netherlands to be entertained by the Dutch Government for six weeks. It was part of the program of the celebration.

R: That was in 1947? Did you go to Holland with six Hope students?

C: No. There were 3,300 schools participating. They wrote an essay on the influence of the Dutch on American civilization. On the basis of that they were judged. Six were chosen, three were high school seniors and three were college freshmen. I had the responsibility for the running of the contest, so after the contest was over and the six winners selected they said I was to take them to the Netherlands. I was lucky.

R: Do you like to travel?

C: Yes.

R: You've been to Holland? Where else?

C: I've been to Europe six times and around the world.

R: You flew around the world?

C: Most of it was by plane with one or two short hops by boat.

R: How long did it take you?

C: Six weeks.

R: That must've been a nice vacation.

C: It was.

R: I'd like to hear about Holland, How it started. I started in 1847?

C: They chose this location because it had so many woods. They could cut down the trees and make enough money to build their homes. They would cut the trees out from the harbor.

R: That's where they started?

C: Where Becker's Junk Shop is. They would "snake" the logs to Saugatuck and Singapore. Those are two little towns south of us. With oxen they would "snake" the trees. They would cut the logs into planks. Because that was available, they would buy the land for twenty dollars an acre, and get a good stand of timber and you could make a little income. VanRaalte was very insistent about it being a strictly Dutch colony. He was suspicious that is they were recognized too fast they would be absorbed by the American people. He was very insistent about that. At that time, of course, the Reformed and Christian were all one. It wasn't until '55 that they separated again and you got the Christian Reformed and the Reformed groups.

R: Did that cause any problems?

C: Oh yes. They were awful bitter at times. The language problem was involved too. The Reformed Church was here a ten year span before the Christian Reformed Church, this meant that the Ninth Street church was bone of contention between the Reformed Church and the Christian Reformed Church. VanRaalte was minister of that church. So there's a good deal of history written about the colony, some by an historian in Ann Arbor who became interested in the project and wrote a biography of VanRaalte for the centennial year.

R: Do you know Dutch?

C: Of course. In Grand Rapids we had Dutch instruction at Calvin and at Calvin Prep and even in kindergarten and the lower grades they did a lot of Dutch. As a result of that there was some slander.

Dutchman. Dutchman,
belly full of straw.
Can't say nothin'
but yaw. yaw. yaw.

It was part of the stigma attached to being Dutch.

R: Do you like to read?

C: Sure!

R: What kind of books do you usually like to read?

C: Well, for my teaching I had to read whatever was the topic of discussion in the classroom. I read some magazines to keep up-to-date with current events. In the main I think I prefer Classic literatures to Modern Literature.

R: Have you ever written any books?

C: No. I wrote my Doctor's Thesis. That was a book!

R: What was it on?

C: It was a study in Literatures. The specific question was, "What does a college achieve with a sophomore literature course?" since there

was an active interest in teaching it, I thought it might lend itself to a more intense study in which I could collaborate with other teachers across the United States. So I carried on my correspondence with sixty others asking, "How would you teach a Shakespearean play to sophomores in college?" "How would you teach a novel to sophomores in college?" That was then written up with unnecessary detail. I was thoroughly disgusted at the time. I guess everybody is though. It was on that basis I got my Doctor's degree in English with a little education mixed in it. I had five men working on my committee. Of these five, four were English majors and one was an education major. They exercised supervision over the project.

R: Did you enjoy teaching?

C: Yes.

R: Why?

C: I like contact with young minds, who are interested in the same things you are. I consider it a privilege to teach at Hope College. I started out in 1928 as Director of the Practice Teaching Program. In '42 when I got my Doctor's Degree I was also elected Chairman of the English Department.

R: How long were you chairman of the Department?

C: About twenty years.

R: What are your hobbies?

C: I think gardening is more my hobby than anything else. I used to be an avid pheasant hunter. This part of the world is populated with a good many pheasants.

R: Did you have a dog?

C: Yes, I had a cocker spaniel.

R: Did you train him yourself?

C: No, he was self-trained.

C: No, he was self-trained.

R: Do you go hunting around here?

C: I've shot a good many pheasants out of my back yard.

R: Do you do any hunting today?

C: I try rabbits, but I'm too old for the fields. I gets hard to keep up with a dog. I gave my guns to my grandson.

R: How many grandchildren do you have?

C: Six

R: How many children do you have?

C: Two.

R: Are they all married?

C: Yes.

R: Do they all live in Holland?

C: No, my son runs an Art gallery in Ann Arbor.

R: Did your son draw those paintings?

C: No, he sells them. He disgned this house. His wife's mother used to live here. It was designed especially for her. He is proud that his father can now live in a house that he designed.

R: Do you like it here?

C: Yes, but it is hard to get used to. We moved from a ten-room into this four-roomhouse. It requires alot of adjusting.

R: What's Tulip Time like? I've heard so much about it.

C: Well, you've seen the Rose Bowl Parade.

R: Is it a tradition in Holland to have this every year since Holland began?

C: No, not since it began. The idea to have a Tulip Festival came from a high school teacher. They say the Holland Tulip Festival is the second largest pagaent in the United States. The Rose Bowl is the only one that's bigger. We have about 40 bands that come

to get prizes. They come by bus and have to pay their own expenses. It's good advertisement for them, too. Eighth Street is lined solid for the parade. It's a busy week, that third week of May. Usually the weather is kind enough to give us a good display of tulips, sometimes it's a little too early and sometimes it's a little too late. The high school students get a vacation two afternoons during that week. They go downtown to watch the parade.

R: Is it all parades and tulips?

C: The boulevard is lined on both sides with tulips. We have a few flower merchants. People come to Holland and order tulip bulbs. They are shipped directly from the Netherlands. People who have seen the festival for the first time rave about it. It brings a lot of tourist trade into the city which can be good or bad. When it first started they wanted to get movie actors and actresses to ride on the floats. Then they took the attitude that to keep the true spirit of Holland, they would try to keep all the talent Local.

R: What do you think of the snow?

C: Well, there have been others in the past that have been more severe. I can remember in 1917 and '35 when there was so much snow the street crews had to tunnel their way through. The whole car went through a tunnel. In 1935 it took us two weeks to get cleared to Grand Haven. So, we've had worse. I hope we've had our snow for the winter, even if it is good for the farmers.

R: What kind of cars did you own?

C: I've been a Dodge fan, we've had a Chevrolet and Fords.

R: Model A?

C: Model A.

R: Was that your first car?

C: The first one was a Model T. The first ride I took in my Model T we drove from Holland to Zeeland and back.

R: Did you have to crank them up?

C: Yes, especially in cold weather. It'll blow your heart out.

R: Do you just keep on turning it 'till the engine turns over?

C: Yes. I think that brought on my father's death.

R: How long have you and your wife been married.

C: This is a second marriage for both of us.

R: What other hobbies do you have besides gardening? What do you do in the winter?

C: I don't have a hobby this time of year. I miss it. I shovel snow for a hobby.

R: How old are you now?

C: Seventy-five.

R: And you shovel snow?

C: I take it easy and steady with a small shovel.

R: What do you do during the day? do you read and watch TV?

C: No, I'm not a great TV fan. Some of the special programs I'll watch. I think I get an aesthetic satisfaction out of gardening and cutting the grass.

R: Do you have many rabbits around here?

C: Yes. The backyard is just overrun with rabbit tracks. The rabbits can strip a whole garden in one night.

R: What do you do to keep away rabbits?

C: Nothing really. Have a larger garden so you can share with the rabbits.

R: What do you think of our new President?

C: I like the way he talks. I'd like to see how he executes his dreams. Some things I like very much about him. He should be given credit for putting together a campaign that defeated Mr. Ford. Jimmy was the underdog.

R: Through the past years of teaching and relating to the students, do you have any words of advice for us as we go through college now?

C: College is a place of study and also of distractions. In the long run, it is better to get into a schedule that will keep you busy but fresh from day to day. You don't have to spread yourself out too thin. College students end up learning as much from their social activities as from their academics.