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ORAL HISTORY of H. Tracy Hall, recorded August 6, 1973.

Sherlene: We're having Family Home Evening at the Hall's house. Dan and Sherlene and David and Karen are back on vacation from Chicago and New Jersey, respectively. Charlotte and Nancy are here. Virginia is on her mission in Scotland, and it's August 6, 1973.

Dad, we just finished asking these first 6 questions of Mom on the other tape and now we're letting her catch her breath and Dad just came back from a ball game with his Priests. So now we're going to give it to him.

Tracy: You have Mom on 2 sides on that other one?

Ida Rose: One! Just one side!

Tracy: This is the other side of the same tape?

Sherlene: We decided to start a new tape.

Ida Rose: I was just telling Karen, it will only take you half as much tape.(laughter) Oh, we might get him wound up.

Sherlene: We made Mom take a big oath that she would tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, unless it proved to be embarrassing.

Tracy: You did!

Sherlene: We'll just assume you're not going to tell any lies here. (laughter). OK, let's start at the beginning. Why don't you tell us a little bit about your ancestry, and where they came from.

Tracy: Well, my father, Howard Hall, was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, June 22, 1887. His parents were Henry C. Hall and Mary Ann Woodcock, and offhand I've forgotten where they were born. Henry C. Hall's father was also Henry C. Hall. This first Henry C. Hall in Ohio somewhere was the first -- they used to have mule drawn street cars -- and he was the driver of one of those first street cars where they pulled the street car with a mule, and the Hall's were sort of in the railroad business from that time on. His son, Henry C. Hall was working on the railroad and then came to Pocatello, Idaho, to work on the railroad and was transferred from Pocatello, which was a rail center, to Ogden, Utah, which was a larger rail center, and somehow, later on, this second Henry C. Hall, who was the father of Howard Hall, got into the transfer business.

My father started work on the railroad too, at a young age. He quit school in the 5th grade, as many people did in those days, and worked at what was called a "call boy" on the railroad beginning at age 11. Now what a "call boy" did was go around and wake up the engine crews. You know switching and trains going in and out of the yard. You see, Ogden was the largest rail center west of Omaha, Nebraska. And I guess they didn't have telephones in those days. They weren't too common and my dad would know the apartments or the homes where they lived and he would have to go there and wake up the crews. You would have thought they would have had an alarm clock or something.



Ida Rose: Well, no. They didn't know when they would go out.

Tracy: I suppose maybe that's it. Maybe there were unexpected calls. Trains would be late and what-not. Anyway, that was his first job on the railroad, and he continued working on the railroad and moved up the line becoming brakeman, fireman, and various things, and this is what he was doing when he met my mother at age -- around 31 or 32. 31, I guess. I don't know why dad didn't get married earlier. My mother had opportunities to get married that I remember her talking about, but she didn't like the guys that wanted to marry her. In fact she had to run away from one who chased her to Idaho and then chased her back to Salt Lake. She couldn't get rid of him. But, I never heard my dad talk about any former girl friends or anything. I never did.

But my mother had become a book-keeper. She had gone to Henager's Business College or LDS Business College. I think it was Henager's and had learned book-keeping. She also learned sewing in one of these sewing colleges. Maybe the business colleges were kind of trade schools that they used to have in those days probably taught sewing. Anyway, she took sewing and learned sewing and book-keeping both very well and I think she did both for a living at various times.

Ida Rose: I remember that she did sewing.

Tracy: Oh, yes. She was a good seamstress. She learned all the tailoring and everything else. Maybe not like your mother, but my mother made -- as boys, see, there were 5 of us -- she made all of our clothes. Shirts, pants, the works up until -- well, she made suits, too. As a matter of fact, Bishop deMik used to give my mom his old suits. He worked -- he was a top salesman at Fred M. Nye, and he always looked well dressed.

Ida Rose: Sharp looking!

Tracy: You know, he had on the latest suits -- and new suits. And he would occasionally give his discarded suits to my mom and she would cut them down to size to fit us boys -- clear up until I was age 18 or 19, she was doing this. So, she was a good seamstress.

Ida Rose: What a job!

Tracy: But, anyway, she was working in Wilson's Grocery store which was on Wall Avenue at approximately -- this is a guess, 27th Street, perhaps 28th Street and Wall Avenue. [The store was at 28th and Wall Avenue, northwest corner. The building still stands (1988) and has been remodeled into a shelter for the homeless and vagabonds, providing meals and a place to sleep, and can be recognized by the neon sign that reads "Jesus Saves."]

At this time my grandmother and grandfather Hall were living on Binford Street. North side of the street, I've forgotten the number, about 2 houses from the corner of Wall and Binford. [This house was torn down in the late 1970's, as were all the other homes on the north side of Binford Street, to make way for the "Golden West Credit Union" to serve the railroad employees.]

This was a fairly nice home for the day, but it was down in the railroad section of town that negroes lived there. Negro porters and other people lived there. My grandfather lived next door to negroes all his life, I guess. There was not all that much segregation. I suppose in that day that negro porters were fairly high-class people. I just read a Readers Digest article about Negro porters and they sort of helped advance their people because they got out and saw what the rest of the world was like and in its own day that was a fairly



high station in life, being a negro porter. But they lived all around there -- the negro people who worked on the railroad were just behind him and beside him, but the negroes lived in houses just as good as my dad did because I had been in some of those houses. But it was a much nicer house than I ever lived in as a kid. My grandfather Hall's house. They had moved there from Pacific Avenue. They had first lived and had built a house on Pacific Avenue, but that was later taken over by all the railroad tracks. Huge switching yards that they had built in Ogden, so they had moved to Binford.

Well, somewhere along the line, my dad had saved most of his money. As a matter of fact in those days if you were still living at home you gave almost all your earnings -- well you gave all your earnings to your parents. I remember my father saying that -- and, golly, he must have been in his twenties -- that he would just bring his pay home and turn it over to his mother. And one day he bought a friend of his and himself a bottle of soda pop out of the pay and his mom noticed the ten cents missing when he got home and he got a scolding for it. [Most people were paid in cash in those days.]

But, anyway, my dad must have earned an awful lot of money between age 11 and age 32 when he got married, but when he got married he didn't have anything, because he had been giving it to his parents that whole time. But with that money -- I guess Grandpa Hall had been saving at least some of what Dad brought home, and my grandfather formed a transfer business. Transfer business in that day was a truck and trucking. It was local trucking mainly and moving. I guess it wasn't so local, because I've heard my dad talk about trucking into Idaho and trucking into Wyoming. But he made my dad a partner in the business, but I guess he was a non-owing partner. I have a picture. The business was located on 25th Street. 25th Street never did have too good a reputation in Ogden because it had drinking, prostitutes, and those kinds of things, but there were some respectable businesses along there.

Ida Rose: Oh, it has a terrible reputation now.

Tracy: I can remember a Murphy's Curio Shop -- there were businesses that catered to the railroad trade because the railroad station was at Wall Avenue and 25th Street -- right at the foot of 25th Street. There was a hotel there and other things. I've forgotten the exact address, but I believe the transfer business of Grandpa Hall's was called City Transfer and Storage, was located on the South side of 25th Street, and I believe it was between Wall Avenue and Lincoln, probably about in the middle of the block. Now, my dad knew all the Jewish people and the pawn shops and the clothing business and he had some gentile non-Mormon friends, too. I remember a fellow by the name of Murphy who owned the corner and ran a curio shop and I believe a kind of a lunch counter, or something. I know he was a nice man. My dad was friends with him all his life. But anyway, my grandpa Hall, Henry C. Hall, had the first Model T truck -- the initial business was with teams, see -- horses pulling wagons to move peoples' furniture, and, of course, they were right by the railroad station and they would truck stuff that came on the railroad cars -- they'd put it on their wagon and hawl it to the customer in the area. But as soon as trucks came along, my grandpa Hall got -- I believe it was called a 3/4 ton truck in those days, maybe a one ton Model T truck. I wish Grandpa were here to tell us. I believe it was probably the first in Ogden, and this sort of gave them greater range and they would truck stuff from the depot in Ogden clear into Idaho and clear into Wyoming and other places. Dad told us some pretty good stories through the years on his trucking business.

Ida Rose: Was it pretty successful?

Tracy: Oh, yeah. My dad -- my grandfather Hall, by my standards was rich.



Ida Rose: When did the business break up?

Tracy: Well, my grandfather, Henry C. Hall, of course, was non-Mormon. My dad was the first to join the church and his mother and father opposed it a great deal. Gave a lot of opposition to it. They changed just before their death, but before that they didn't think anything of Mormonism. My grandfather Hall drank. He used whisky like a lot of people did who weren't Mormons.

Ida Rose: And some who were.

Tracy: And some who were, I guess. I suppose it was getting the better of him in his older years as he approached seventy, and that was probably partly the cause for the transfer business going down the drain. My dad got out of it and my dad's brother Sam carried it on for a little while, but it eventually just faded out. I guess it must have lost anything that it ever built up. I don't know how it was finally phased out. I don't know whether Grandpa owned that property on 25th Street or not. I would guess that he did.

Sherlene: I think that was interesting, because when I was on a debate trip at Weber that was one of the big sights that we got to see. Everybody got on the bus and they drove us down 25th Street so we could see all the prostitutes and the closed windows. You know, this was the gangsters alley, and I can remember the creepy feeling I got going down 25th Street. I was just -- just sick, the whole ride, but really interested.

Tracy: Well, during prohibition days it was the street where you could buy the booze and where the prostitutes were located. Bishop Lofgreen of the 18th Ward once took us kids, I suppose we were 15 or 16 years old, down 25th Street and pointed out where the brothels were.

Ida Rose: That was a good thing to do for young boys.

Tracy: Well, he was just showing us what to be aware of. You know, some kids -- some young kids could be ignorant of what 25th Street was all about, but he took us down an alley and showed us a pile of whisky bottles. This was still during prohibition, supposedly, and that pile of whisky bottles was as tall as this ceiling. Just one huge mound of whisky bottles.

Ida Rose: What was the matter with the local garbage collection?

Tracy: I imagine the police were in cahoots with everything that went on on 25th Street.

Sherlene: Well, they still are from what we heard while we were there. The police were the ones that were keeping 25th Street going. I don't know if that is true, but ...

Tracy: Well, I got detoured, but what happened -- my grandmother used to shop at this Wilson's grocery where my mother was the book-keeper and she would send Howard down to the store and he'd see this pretty girl, you know. Apparently Grandpa Hall was kinda bashful. He must have been to go to age 32 ... but he was always neatly dressed apparently. He wore a hat, you know, and was always neatly dressed according to my mother. So he would go down there. Grandpa Hall smoked cigars in those days -- and, ah, they started eyeing each other, I guess, I don't know how dating started, but, at least that's where they met, and that was the beginning of the thing. But, my mother, of course, recognized that dad was a really fine nice fellow, but, of course, he wasn't a Mormon. He hadn't been raised in an LDS home.



He had one or two contacts with Mormons, one way or another. Somewhere in Wilson Lane -- I heard him mention a contact with Mormons. I don't know what the deal was there.

Ida Rose: He wanted to go to the dances. I remember that, and his mother wouldn't let him.

Tracy: But, anyway. Yeah, my grandmother Hall was little bit. I don't know what you would say -- peculiar in some ways. While she had 5 -- was it 5 children herself? She somehow got the idea that it was sinful to have children, and she didn't want Howard to have children and she didn't want her son Sam to have children -- and Sam never did. Sam got married late in life and so did my dad -- I don't know, I suppose that she must have been hanging on to my father, you know, and keeping him away from girls and not letting him date and what not -- I don't know -- to a late age. It's strange, but in those days, I suppose parents had more control. You know, like taking all the money he earned from age 11 clear up until he got married at age 31 or so.

Ida Rose: This was just a standard practice. You had to go out on your own and then you could have your money. But as long as you were in the parental home, you gave everything to the parents.

Tracy: Anyway, as time went on, see, my dad started to see the light. By the way, my dad was a Socialist at this time.

Ida Rose: He used to get up on the soapbox.

Tracy: Yeah, and he would go to City Hall Park in Ogden and stand on a soapbox and preach Socialism. (laughter) He was the biggest capitalist there ever was!

Sherlene: But he wasn't immoral, or wild, or anything like that.

Tracy: I wouldn't think so. I don't think so, at all!

Sherlene: Because he used to talk about the days in his youth when he was a Socialist and a Communist and he'd sort of contrast that with Mormonism

Tracy: He wasn't a Communist. He was a Socialist.

Sherlene: I don't get that picture of him. At least from my impression of Grandma, I don't think she would have married a man who was that way.

Dan: He was an idealistic type Socialist, I'm sure.

Tracy: Well, anyway, I don't know what discussions he and Mom had, but he finally decided that the church was true, and so having decided that, he said, Well, you ought to have to live the Word of Wisdom. I guess he drank a little -- on occasion. I'm sure he didn't drink a lot. Dad drank and I guess his brothers did. So he said that when he decided to quit smoking there wasn't anything to it. He just threw away his last cigar and never touched any tobacco from then hencefort, ever.

Sherlene: He told me that he shook on his bed for 3 days.

Tracy: Did he?



Sherlene: Yea, when I was a little girl, I asked him if he gave up cigarettes. He told me that he just shook for a few days.

Tracy: He might have done. Well, anyway ...

Sherlene: He got over it. He said he never ate ...

Tracy: He quit see. He didn't try to taper off, or anything. He just made the decision to quit and he quit. And, of course, he had been drinking tea and coffee in his home all his life and he quit that and never touched it again. He never touched any alcohol again. And then, of course, came the issue of his railroad work. A good job. You see he had been working on the railroad for 20 years. Really worked his way up.

Ida Rose: And in Ogden, those were the best paying jobs.

Tracy: Oh, yeah.

Ida Rose: They paid \$200 per month. They got about \$200 a month and they were the rich people in town.

Tracy: So with his idealism, he said, "Well, if I'm going to be a member of the church, I'm going to have to take my family to church. I can't work on Sunday anymore like the railroad had me doing." So he quit working on the railroad.

Sherlene: This was after he had a lot of children, wasn't it?

Tracy: Oh, no!

Sherlene: No children!

Ida Rose: He had a couple.

Tracy: He may have had Gene and I.

Ida Rose: It was after the war. [World War I]

Tracy: Of course, that's another thing. He went into the war just before I was born, I guess.

Ida Rose: And you were born while he was in the service.

Tracy: Was I? I used to know that relationship, but I've forgotten.  
[Howard Hall went into the army shortly after he was married and served from September 1918 to January 1919. He served only about 5 months because the war ended shortly after he entered the service. Tracy was born October 20, 1919.]

My father went to Camp Lewis in Washington and was in the trucking group. What did they call them? Anyway with all his railroading and trucking experience, he was a truck -- in a truck battalion that would deliver supplies to the front lines, supposedly ...or something like that. [Howard Hall was a Wagoner (truck-driver -- wagoner was the old name) -- in Company A, 13th Ammunition Train, 90th Division, at Fort Lewis, Washington.]



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But the war ended while he was in training in Fort Lewis. His brother Ralph, though, had been shipped overseas in World War I and was in England, and we had this great flu epidemic, you know, where people died by the tens of thousands and Ralph got this bad flu and died in England and was buried over there.

Ida Rose: Did they ever ship him home.

Tracy: Yes, after the war was over and things cleared away, if you wanted it, they would exhume the body and ship it home. Ralph was shipped home. He's buried in Ogden City Cemetery.

Let's see. Dad had an older brother Eugene. That's where my brother Eugene gets his name, who died as a baby and is buried somewhere in the Pocatello, Idaho, area. Ida Rose have been up there trying to find a record of the birth and the death and the cemetery, and we've never been able to locate anything. And I think we must have asked Grandpa Hall about the burial, or something, and he knew nothing. Of course, he would have been younger when that occurred. He hadn't been born yet. Let's see. And then he had Sam, who was the oldest brother. I don't know if Sam was older than Eugene or not. I have forgotten. Eugene may have been the first, and then there was Howard, my father, and then there was Ralph, and then the youngest was May.

Ida Rose: Tracy is supposed to look a lot like Ralph did.

Tracy: Yeah, when I was young walking around the streets of Ogden at age 17 or 18, occasionally a man would come up to me and say, "Hi, Ralph!" So apparently I looked a lot like my uncle Ralph. It used to happen a lot. Not just an isolated incident. A lot of people would think I was Ralph.

Ida Rose: His wife says that she would see him sometimes and really take a double-take because he looked so much like him.

Tracy: My aunt Grace. She never did re-marry. She's still living. She lives in Pebble Beach, California. And she has been a widow for approximately 55 years. She never remarried.

Sherlene: I think I met her once. Doesn't she have kinda blond hair. She's a very attractive woman.

Tracy: That would be her daughter. Well, let's see. Where were we?

Ida Rose: You were saying when he quit the railroad.

Tracy: He never did really have a good job after that. He went into insurance.

Ida Rose: He always tried to sell, and he never ,,,

Tracy: He liked selling, but he was never a good salesman.

Ida Rose: He was a sucker for any salesman that came along. Anyone could sell him anything.

Tracy: He later on got a pretty good job in a creamery. A truck driver, I think, again, but then when the crash came in 1929, something happened to that job. Somewhere along the line he went back to work on the railroad. You know, once you quit the railroad, you're



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sort of at the bottom of the pile again. You lose all of your seniority. So he took a job in Carlin, Nevada. I must have been 5 or 6 years old, because these are some of my earliest memories. I can just barely remember them. We went on the train. We had free passes on the railroad, because he was working on the railroad. We went to Carlin, and we lived in a log cabin while we were there.

Ida Rose: Now where was this, Nevada?

Tracy: Carlin, Nevada.

Ida Rose: We stopped there once.

Tracy: But we didn't stay there very long. Yeah, we went out and got a picture of the old little tiny church out there. Liz and Marty took it for us and mailed it to us. But we didn't stay there very long. They had an electric generator in town and they turned it on only one day a week. So you used kerosene or candle light.

Ida Rose: And did your washing that day.

Tracy: Yeah, you did your washing the day they turned the electric power on in town. I remember some interesting things about that town. I remember a lady who smoked a corn-cob pipe and that really seemed funny to Eugene and I. We thought that was funny -- the lady that smoked a corn-cob pipe. In this little log house we rented there was a player piano which was fascinating to us. Some of the terrifying moments of my early life occurred in that town. There were big bullies in that town.

Ida Rose: You had more big bullies.

Tracy: Well, I was little. When I was young, I was tiny. I was really skinny and underweight and people thought that I was going to die. I was so unhealthy looking all the time and so little. And I always got picked on by bigger boys. They looked for a weakling to pick on. But they used to pick on Eugene and I both in that town an awful lot and being a tough railroad town it was really something. And the kids were tough! One incident, a kid got up on his house with a 22 and was shooting at his mom and dad and wouldn't let any of his family members come near the house. That's the kind of town Carlin was.

But some kid ... and you know these metal culverts, these spiral kind of galvanized pipe they put under a road and things like that. There was one just big enough for a little 4 or 5 year old kid to crawl in, real tiny. And these kids enticed me to crawl in from one side and Eugene to crawl in from the other side, and then they built a fire at each end of the culvert.

Sherlene: You're kidding! I've never heard these stories.

Ida Rose: Oh, you should hear some of the ones he's been through.

Sherlene: How did you get out?

Dan: You weren't able to turn around in it, were you?

Ida Rose: You couldn't get out. It was a wonder you weren't asphyxiated.

Tracy: Yeah, it was a wonder we didn't get killed, because the smoke came in, you know, and we were choking and gasping. I am not quite sure how we were rescued from that. Gene and I were in lots of situations ....



Sherlene: You mean you don't remember! I would remember.

Tracy: Well, maybe, you know kids will do things. They are going to scare you right up to the point of death and then they are going to rescue you. They may have ... Some older boys may have come along or something and moved the fire. See, you wouldn't have been able to get out without crawling through the fire. You would have got burned. -- kicked the fire away and we got out. There were some strange things in that -- little kids, you know will get into everything. I can remember the railroad station ...

Ida Rose: Little kids like you.

Tracy: And crawl space underneath it was held up by square posts just maybe a foot and a half off of the ground and you could sort of crawl under the station, and the entire area under the station was matches ...

Ida Rose: That you could light?

Tracy: Yeah. You could scratch them and light them.

Ida Rose: Oh, boy!

Tracy: And I guess that kids had got under there and strewn matches under there for what mischief I don't know, but I remember you could go under that station any time and there was just matches everywhere underneath the station. We only lived there for a short while. Maybe only about 6 months and then we moved back to Ogden.

Sherlene: I bet your mother had something to do with that.

Tracy: That period was sometime around 1927, and it may have been after that that he got the job at Nelson-Ricks Creamery.

Ida Rose: Well, where were you baptized, then? Was that after you were pabtized?

Tracy: Oh, no. No. I could have only been six -- I hadn't gone to school yet.

Ida Rose: If this is 1927.

Tracy: Maybe that's too late. Maybe it was '25.

Ida Rose: It would have been. Because you were baptized in Marriott.

Tracy: Yeah, Well, Yeah, I'm probably making this too old. I may have been only 4 or 5, and we were living on 16th Street. I was born on 16th Street. And then my dad and mom purchased a lot. I can remember going to this cherry orchard in Ogden on about 15th Street and Jefferson Avenue and walking across a plank across the Mill Creek. I can remember that. They bought this lot in this cherry orchard. A new development and we moved there and lived in a tent and I can remember our piano being in a tent.

Ida Rose: The same piano that you had all the time.

Tracy: Uh, huh!

Ida Rose: Well, I'll be darned. When did you get that piano? Do you remember?



Tracy: My father bought that for his mother and the mother gave it to us.

Ida Rose: Where is that now. Who has got it now?

Tracy: I don't know what has happened to it by now. It's gone.

Sherlene: I have a couple of questions. You've answered a lot of these, but maybe you can just describe your parents a little bit more. What they looked like. What their personalities were like.

Tracy: Well, both of them were reserved and retiring and quiet. At least that's my impression. Now Grandpa lived with us here in his older years you know, when he was around 83 - 85 and he seemed to be plenty out-going then, but when I was younger, I don't remember him being that out-going. Maybe he was and I didn't know it.

My mother was kind of retiring. Both were short. My father, I don't know what his height was. He was dark. Had a dark complexion, and youthful. Grandpa Hall was youthful! At 85 when he died, most people would take him for 65 or 60. He always looked youthful. Grandpa Hall was very strong physically. Extremely strong.

Ida Rose: He was little, but he was strong.

Tracy: From his moving days. You see, in this transfer business -- in those days, a man really had to be able to lift a piano. My dad claims to have taken a piano up the stairs to a second story all by himself on more than one occasion. And I can believe it. He was really strong.

Sherlene: Well, when he had that first heart attack, didn't they tell him that it was from all those years of lifting heavy things, or something ...

Tracy: I don't know ...

Ida Rose: That was probably why he could survive the heart attack.

Sherlene: Well, they told him to quit lifting things, though after that. That was later on in his life when they told him to quit lifting things.

Tracy: Well, he had the heart attack at age 65 and he lived 20 years beyond that.

Ida Rose: Did you know that when he was 85 he had forgotten that he had had a heart attack? When we reminded him that he had had a heart attack, he couldn't remember that he had had a heart-attack.

Tracy: I don't ever remember Dad as being sick, but my mother was sick a lot. But my mother's sickness never kept her from working. She worked constantly for us kids. And she was always working late into the night. She was always up whenever any of us came in.

Ida Rose: After we were married, she was always up ironing at night or something.

Tracy: If I were to come in at 2:00 o'clock in the morning, my mom would still be up ironing or sewing, or washing.



Sherlene: No wonder she was sick!

Tracy: But, ah, while she was .. she had goiter removed and her eyes were never very good. She had an eye operation at one point.

Ida Rose: On her tear ducts.

Tracy: Uh huh. Her general health was never too good, but it never kept her from working.

Ida Rose: She had a goiter operation.

Tracy: She never played sick in order to take advantage of being sick. And during depression years and what-not, she went out to work too. She didn't work at good jobs. She worked as maid in the Broom Hotel for a long long time.

Ida Rose: I was telling you kids that my parents for a year or two were on WPA. Were your parents ever on the WPA?

Tracy: They never did go on it.

Ida Rose: Didn't they?

Tracy: No.

Sherlene: How come they didn't? Just too proud?

Tracy: I think so. They were really against it.

Ida Rose: Dad .... like I said. He got off of it just real fast.

Sherlene: He wasn't a socialist anymore.

Tracy: Oh, after my dad joined the church, socialism was out.

Ida Rose: And a man in those days ... This is why I can't see how our country has gotten into the welfare situation it has because people ... it was their pride to be able to support themselves and to take care of their own. And not have to have any help.

Dan: What about all those people who wouldn't work ...

Ida Rose: That was the .... but I mean ... It was ... It was the history of the country. A man ... a man who was on welfare and had to be taken care of was looked down upon.

Sherlene: You see, he really looked down on this guy, who did that.

Dan: But there were all these men doing this.

Ida Rose: Oh, yeah, but I think this was the beginning of that type of a thing, the welfare .. kind of a welfare ....

Tracy: Syndrome.

Ida Rose: Syndrome!



Sherlene: You described it a little bit, but what kind of an atmosphere was in your home while you were growing up?

Tracy: Well, ah, I remember it as pleasant. I know that we were poor. Of course people around in most places I can remember, but, ah, I never resented it. I know that I would listen to things that my dad would tell me. I can remember he told me one time when I was real young, he said, "Coca Cola has bad things in it. You should never drink it." So I never did. I believed him, you know, and I never tried it.

I remember another lesson he gave me. He said, don't ever envy rich people, and don't ever think it's bad for somebody to have money. He said it's OK. He said, that's our system. He says most people who earn money have got it because of hard work. And then most people who earn these huge sums of money put their money to work. They build businesses and make it so people can have jobs. So he says, "Don't ... don't ever" .. In other words he's preaching me the opposite of socialism, see, which he had abandoned. He was preaching me the free enterprise system. And telling me not to ever envy or feel bad because some people seem to have money. That was OK. There was nothing the matter with it. I remember those two things very well.

I know that our parents used to read the Book of Mormon to us at night. I can remember that. Five little boys - no sisters. There were no deaths in our family as children, but I think my mom had some miscarriages. Haven't you heard her ...

Ida Rose: Yes, she said that ...

Tracy: I don't know how many.

Ida Rose: She said she had quite a few between Wendell [ that would have been Donald] and Delbert. She wouldn't have had any room to have any between the rest of you. (laughter) You were pretty close together. [One year and 2 months between Tracy and Eugene, two years and 4 months between Gene and Wendell, one year and 3 months between Wendell and Donald, five years between Donald and Delbert -- because of the miscarriages.] But I think she had several.

Tracy: Our family members were pretty well behaved. All of them.

Ida Rose: They were all smart kids, too. Everyone of them were really intelligent kids.

Tracy: Eugene had a few scrapes that I can remember. I can remember that at a very early age, he came home with the smell of tobacco on him and he couldn't have been more than 5. (laughter) And I can remember my mom and pop really grilling him, really giving him the business. It's funny how you get into scrapes. Other kids teach you things you shouldn't ever learn. I can remember a dirty joke that was told to me at age 5.

Ida Rose: Do you want to tell it? (laughter)

Tracy: No. But you would think that you would forget those things. That's the trouble with dirty jokes. You want to close your ears when .... they stick with you.

Ida Rose: That's what I tell my Sunday School class. You'll remember those dirty jokes all your life, but you won't remember the funny ones. You just try to remember a funny one.



Tracy: But I can remember some of those early experiences when people ... usually older boys, you know, I think they take great delight informing these young innocent boys of all these things.

Ida Rose: Yeah, all those ...

Sherlene: Just like Nancy is taking delight in teaching Daniel to say, "No way!" (laughter)

Tracy: I can remember when the boys in my neighborhood, and I'm sure there was no more than 5, started telling me about sexual intercourse. Only they didn't use that high-falutin' term, you know. I, I, ... you know, ... I was shocked ... What, what you talking about? -- you know.

Sherlene: How old were you?

Tracy: Five. I think. I couldn't have been more than five. "Well, your mother and father do it," they said. And I said, ...

Ida Rose: "Not my mother and father!" (laughter)

Tracy: Yeah! Not my mother and father! (laughter)

Sherlene: Well, I heard it at twelve and I didn't believe it.

Tracy: And I didn't have any idea what a girl was like. I didn't have any sisters. So, I didn't know, you know. So I said, "What do they do?" you know -- I thought that the man must be putting his thing, you know, in the back part. (laughter) I didn't know a lady had a front part, you know. (more laughter) But, you'd be surprised how early in life that big boys start telling little boys all this stuff, you know, that they don't even need to know until they're thirteen years old.

Sherlene: Older than that!

Tracy: But, during this same period I can remember playing tag, you know, and the guys would say, ... you know, they come and tell you when your young and innocent, you don't know any better, they'd say, "Now we play tag with all these girls, you know, and it's the kinda tag where you tackle them, and the object of the game is to tackle them and feel their bottom. Age 5, they're telling you that kind of stuff!

Sherlene: Well, the little First Graders still do it. This was when you were in those long pants?

Tracy: This was in Ogden, when I got out into the country, it was wilder still. But ...

Ida Rose: I had a very ... I had a very secluded childhood! I never got into any of this.

Tracy: I think girls have a more secluded childhood than boys ... but these older boys, .. They want to get all these young innocent boys and tell them all this stuff.

Ida Rose: David, did you have a secluded childhood.

David: Until I was about nine.



Tracy: Well, anyway, uncle Gene got in a couple of these kind of scrapes with tobacco and I didn't .... It's the older boys, you know, who come and ... I could tell you a lot of the other things that the older boys try to get you to do, and I am sure we weren't any older than 4 or 5 that are worse than what I told you by a long ways. But I won't get into those. And you are innocent, you know. Mothers have got to really be on their guard. They really do ... 'cause at a very early age those older boys ... they're going to be getting those little kids into all kinds of mischief. But I don't remember any .... Gene ... if there was anybody who rebelled just a little tiny bit, maybe it was Eugene. It wasn't a big rebellion at all.

Ida Rose: And he came back.

Tracy: Yeah. Most of the boys went right along and we always ....

Ida Rose: I think Gene got in with a bunch of wrong boys in high school.

Sherlene: But he's sure straight now.

Tracy: Oh, yeah. We all went to church regularly. We did every assignment they ever asked us. We were completely faithful in church. The whole family. Parents and all the kids. Never any problems. Always ... Always ... We could always be depended on . Everybody in the whole family.

Ida Rose: And that's how our family was. Even though my father was inactive. They'd always ask the girls to handle the parties and decorate and stuff like that.

Tracy: Yeah, ... What's your next question, daughter?

Sherlene: Let's see ... What are the names of your brothers, tell us about them, describe each of them a little.

Tracy: In order of descending age? Howard Tracy, Eugene Melvin ...

Ida Rose: That's just two. (laughter)

Tracy: Wendell Herbert.

Ida Rose: After Herbert Hoover?

Tracy: No, after the Herbert's.

Ida Rose: Oh, sure!

Tracy: I asked Mom about that. It's after the Herbert ancestors and not Herbert Hoover. ... and Donald Rey, and "Rey" spelled R-e-y, and Delbert Henry. Henry after his 2 grandfathers, his grandfather and her great-grandfather, Henry C. Hall.

The brothers -- Eugene might be a hair taller than I. Delbert is tall. Wendell and Donald ... a little short.

Ida Rose: Donald is tall.



Tracy: Wendell is the shortest. All of them tend to have hair fairly dark. Donald is the lightest.

Ida Rose: Gene was light. He was always blond.

Tracy: My mother and father's hair -- both brunette

Ida Rose: You and Wendell are the darkest in the family.

Tracy: Not real dark brunet, just moderate brunet. Both had blue eyes.

Sherlene: Did you get along pretty well ... as brothers?

Ida Rose: Oh, yeah! They never fought.

Tracy: We were different. We didn't fight at all.

Ida Rose: I never seen them so good ... as fight.

Sherlene: They still don't. They seem to really have a lot of love for each other.

Tracy: There was a little antagonism between Eugene and I at times, because of our somewhat different personalities. I think. I was always the goer. I was out exploring the universe - constantly. And Eugene preferred to stay at home and read books. He was a great reader. He would read and I'd be out seeing what ...

Ida Rose: They were like Tracy and David.

Tracy: All the kids were good students. Every one of them ... were good students. Never any problems in school with any of them.

Sherlene: Now why do you think they were good students?

Ida Rose: Well, they were smart kids.

Sherlene: Did your parents push it or ....

Tracy: Not a bit! We were never taught to go to college. We were never ...

Ida Rose: Not a bit! No pushing at all.

Tracy: We were never pushed for "A" grades or anything. Never.

Sherlene: How come then?

Ida Rose: It was a difference in the culture. They were raised in ... I think that was one of the things. During the depression. And teachers would tell the kids - Well, there is one way you can get ahead ... and that's be smart and ... nobody ever told him about going to college until he got in high school.

Tracy: No. Every kid in our family just automatically liked school. When the kids would shout, "No more teachers, no more books, no more teachers with their cross-eyed looks," some darn thing, and tear up all their papers and throw them away at the end of the



year, I would have mine carefully preserved , holding them against my chest , so that they wouldn't take them away from me.

Ida Rose: Preserve them for posterity.

Tracy: Take them home and save them. My brothers were the same. (laughter)

Sherlene: Ohh! ..... See, these are the neat things ... you don't get stories like this ..

Tracy: Out on the farm ... we lived there through the first and second grade at Mound Fort School when we lived on 15th Street and Jefferson Avenue. In a half a house my Uncle Henry built. My uncle Helon Henry

End of Tape, side 1.

[There was apparently some of what Tracy said not recorded at the end of side one.] After discussion with him, the essence of what was not recorded is: He went to the first and second grade at Mound Fort. Then the family moved out to Marriott, Utah. If the kids at Mound Fort were rough, the kids in Marriott were terrible. Tracy said he came to church one Sunday early. There was only one other boy there. He was running around the chapel, kicking chairs apart. His special target, however, was a funeral door in the chapel which was joined at the top and bottom with some kind of fastener, but which had no central post. The kid would run up to it and with both his feet (like a karate jump) against the door to try to break it down. Tracy said he couldn't believe anyone would deliberately do such things, especially in the church.]

In his own words: He was running around like a beast .... like the Devil was in him ... no fooling! He'd run around and then he'd throw himself against the door -- there were some double doors there -- with his feet, though. He would run and jump with both feet against the door. Destructive little .... beast. That's the way a lot of those country kids were. I was just abhorred at such things. I thought it was awful.

Sherlene: You know, that Stanger's son was my District Leader in Germany on my mission. He was a good missionary.

Tracy: Well, the boy, maybe, grew up to be OK too! [He did. Was very active in the church ... a member of bishopric, etc.]

My parents decided ... it was my mom. I don't think my dad wanted to do it too much. Wanted to take us kids out on the farm where she thought it would be better. And it was in some ways, but in other ways, I think it was worse. Kids were dirtier mouthed on the farm, than we were in the city.

Ida Rose: And rougher!

Tracy: And rough ... and ... and, ah .... just sex all the time ... was all the things those kids ever talked from the time they were six years old ... out on the farm. And they smoked and did all kinds of things. That Stanger boy .. his uncle or somebody used to be a tobacco salesman. He had a whole wooden case of Chesterfield ... and the swimming hole for the whole Marriott area was at the end of our farm and, of course, on the farm you go swimming in the nude all the time. And that's where they'd tell dirty stories and smoke cigarettes and all that kind of stuff.



Well, these big boys, they'd get hold of you and ... even Gene and I, we smoked those cigarettes ... and then we'd go eat onions to go home so your mother wouldn't know that you had been smoking. (laughter) I hate to admit this, but I started to get worried ... I don't know how many I had smoked. I don't think I had smoked very many. Maybe I had smoked six of them over a period of a couple of weeks, or something, I know that ...

Sherlene: You wouldn't touch Coca Cola, but ...

Tracy: Yeah, my dad didn't tell me not to smoke. I guess he assumed I wouldn't. (laughter) But, anyway, I knew you could get the habit, and I started to imagine that I had the habit. I'm sure I hadn't smoked enough of them to get the habit. And I didn't do it willingly, anyway.

Shrlene: Didn't it make you sick when you first smoked?

Tracy: I don't think I ever smoked enough to get sick. I was the kind of a guy that ... you've got all these big bullies around and all these farm kids, you know, telling you to do it, and sitting around and you practically got to do it or your socially .... really coerced into it. And I'm sure I would puff a little, and I'd let it burn. That kind of a deal. Anyway, I got real concerned ... They used to roll up manure, dried manure, you know, and smoke that, or bark from the tree ... I dont know -- all kinds of things. Tobacco ... all those things, I'm sure I smoked. But I got concerned, and guilty, or something ... finally I got this one friend of mine, and it was a Dana kid, and I says, "We're not going to smoke anymore!" They had this whole case of cigarettes. It must have had .... probably a couple of hundred packages. I think this Stanger kid had stolen them from his uncle. They were hidden in this hollow tree down by our swimming pool down on the farm.

Ida Rose: Sounds like Tom Sawyer.

Tracy: Anyway, I got this Dana kid, I says, "We're not going to smoke anymore. I don't care what these other guys do, but we're not going to smoke!" And he agreed with me.

Ida Rose: Did you swear it in blood?

Tracy: Yeah! So we pricked our fingers, I don't know where we got the idea, but anyway, we got blood and we got a pen and we wrote on a sheet of paper on this date, you know, "Tracy Hall and Dana, it was Max Dana, will never smoke again as long as we live." and we each signed our names to that and put it in a Bull Durham can and stuck it in a hollow tree. I wonder if it's still there! And I never smoked again the rest of my farm days, and the rest of the kids kept going, and that Dana kid smokes to this day. So, he didn't stick by it, but I did.

*Prince Albert*

Sherlene: I can remember when I was a little girl, once I asked you, "Daddy, did you ever smoke at all. Did you ever even try it. And when you said, "Yes," Oh, was I disillusioned! Because I thought you were perfect. How could my father have ever even tried, and then you told me how you wrote in blood and you made a covenant that you'd never do it again, even though those big bullies were always after you, and then I decided you were a hero after all. (laughter) But I can remember that.

Tracy: It's funny. I haven't tasted beer. I haven't tasted alcohol. I haven't tasted tea or coffee. I've tasted Coke, but I haven't really drank the Coke, but I have tasted it.



Ida Rose: I remember one time I was at Woolworth's and the first day of my period was always rough and I usually had to go home and go to bed (laughter) And I was working at Woolworth's as assistant manager

Voice: We'll withhold the tape.

Ida Rose: I was training as the Woolworth manager, and I was so sick, I wanted to go home, and she said, "What you need is a good cup of tea." --"Well, I'm a Mormon and I don't" --"Well, this is medicine, it won't hurt you at all." And I .... --"Get on the other side of that counter!" So I got on the other side of the counter, and Mrs. ----- she was the kindest, she was the kindest woman. Everyone was scared to death of her, but she just the personification of kindness, and she brought me this cup of tea . I just tasted it and let it go, you know ... I didn't drink it, but ...

Tracy: We always had tea in our house, because my grandmother Tracy, being an old Englishman drank tea until her dying day.

Ida Rose: We used to love the smell of coffee. We made it at Woolworth's. It smelled so good, but ...

Tracy: It is interesting to me that none of the kids ever took it up, and my mom and dad didn't either, but my grandmother Tracy, who died in 1933, at age about 83 ... Mom always had tea for her.

Ida Rose: You mean Emma Marie Burdett.

Tracy: Yeah! Emma Maria Burdett Tracy.

Sherlene: Well, she was a member.

Ida Rose: Oh, yes. They didn't inform ~~me~~ on the Word of Wisdom.

Dan: The whole point of Heber J. Grant's administration was ...

Tracy: Also those old Englishmen kept ...

Ida Rose: They could get a temple recommend. They could even drink alcohol. It was ... choice. You do it or not.

Sherlene: I remember now ... remember ... Grandma Hall, when she transcribed Nancy Naomi Alexander Tracy's diary, she crossed out all references to tea and coffee, because she had changed her attitude. Daddy went and re-did it and left it as it originally was ... and it wasn't a sin then so much.

Ida Rose: Well, the church ... when the immigrants came across the ocean they were issued a ration of tea and coffee.

Tracy: Speaking of that kind of thing. My grandmother Tracy must have lived with us for 5 years and perhaps longer, as I can remember about that many years.

Ida Rose: And your father was so kind to her.

Tracy: And of all the 14 kids, in my mother's family, my mother was the least well to do, yet she took care of my grandmother, and my dad was always very kind to my



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grandmother Tracy. She was crippled. She died at age 83 and how long she had been a cripple, I don't know. But she had lost the control of her bladder for one thing, and my mother had to keep her in diapers all those years that I can remember, because ...

Ida Rose: Because she had no control at all.

Tracy: I suppose they have appliances you can wear to collect that now-a-days, but in those days ... so

Ida Rose: It must have been a real problem ... You'd have all that bedding to wash, and ...

Tracy: I know my grandmother's room. She always had her own room at our house, always smelled of urine. And I can remember ... one thing I regret to this day. I think of it every year ... on every occasion. Grandma would sometimes get a little stern at us and shake her cane at us, you know, for something we were doing as boys. Things that she didn't like and I remember she did that to me once and I made some stupid remark back ... Something about, "You stink, Grandma!" or something like that, you know, which was terrible.

Sherlene: Did she hit you with the cane?

Tracy: If she could have reached me, she probably would have! (laughter)

Sherlene: Now who was this?

Tracy: This was Emma Maria Burdett.

Sherlene: Describe her a little bit. What was she like?

Tracy: Well, she was probably very good looking when she was young. She had nice features. My mother did, too. My mother was a beautiful woman as a young girl. Very refined, cultured, English features.

Ida Rose: She had high cheek bones. Real high cheek bones. Deep set eyes. That's where you kids get those deep set eyes.

Sherlene: What was her personality like, or did you only know her when she was old and sick, and you don't know?

Tracy: Well, She died when I was 12 or 13, and, unfortunately, kids don't pay much attention to things as they should. I know she darned all our socks. I know that she would sit there in her rocking chair and darn all the socks and mend clothing. I know she did that kind of thing for all us 5 boys. Her rocking chair ... the rockers were worn real flat, because she would have to be lifted out of bed into her rocking chair, and then she would be pulled across the floor, you know, and over the years ... I remember those flat rockers.

Ida Rose: It would probably scratch the floor, too.

Tracy: Her personality, I know was pleasant. She was not stern. Oh, you know, this thing I mentioned, I was probably doing something that I deserved to be spoken sternly to ... but I don't remember her as a stern person. I can remember the kids, her own children, particularly, Uncle Harold coming to see her once in awhile. And Harold would



leave her some money. He would leave her \$5.00 and he would say. "Now, mother, don't you pay tithing on this. I've already paid tithing on this." But she'd pay her tithing on it everytime, anyway! (laughter)

Ida Rose: He was the one that should have been taking care of her. He had the farm.

Tracy: No, that was not Harold. (That was Helon.)

Ida Rose: Oh, yeah! Harold was the one in Idaho.

Tracy: Harold was the last of the children to die. And we didn't even learn that he had died until months afterward.

Ida Rose: I remember that, and his wife ... They were living right out here in Orem at the time, and we didn't even know they had come to Orem. We thought they were in Arizona.

Sherlene: Tell us about ... Well, you've told us a little bit about your childhood. What are some of your happiest memories?

Tracy: Of childhood? General things come to me right off. Maybe some specific things will. The old swimming hole down on the farm. Man, the greatest place on earth!

Ida Rose: Regrets, and all.

Tracy: Man, the .... that was probably minor. It looms because of our church's <sup>g-f's</sup> prohibitions against it, it may have been ... I don't know how ... I just don't know how major it was. I may have only smoked a couple of those darn cigarettes, I don't know.

Ida Rose: But, anyway, it went against your conscience.

Tracy: Yeah, I was real bothered about it.

Ida Rose: How about when the boys tried to drown you.

Tracy: Yeah, sometimes the big boys would get hold of Gene and I and hold us under until we just thought we would die, but I can remember 2 incidences of that, but other than that ...

Ida Rose: When the big boys weren't around ...

Tracy: Really great! The old swimming hole. Very pleasant memories of ranging around the country. It's a good thing my mother never asked me where I was.

Ida Rose: Yes, your mother gave you an awful lot of freedom. I couldn't do it myself.

Tracy: I walked over the whole north end of Weber County. I knew every .. I knew where all the swamps were. I new the shapes of all the farms. Where the trees were.

Ida Rose: Especially where the junk yards were. (laughter)

Tracy: I knew the whole works, and then after I got a bicycle, I expanded my area and I just knew where everything was. Probably had some narrow escapes with death. Ice skating. Oh, I loved to ice skate when I was a kid! I never did have a good pair of skates, though. The skates were hand-me-downs from somebody and the bottoms were always



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rounded, and so .. you know, it wouldn't bite into the ice good. I never owned a new pair of skates in my life. Always somebody's .. because they were not sharp any longer, you know, rounded and ...

Ida Rose: (shouting to the outside) Nancy, you're missing some good stories!

Tracy: But, we could get on the irrigation ditch near our farm and skate maybe a couple of miles down that irrigation ditch and on to an old swamp which covered acres and acres ... and you would just have the time of your life skating down there. Then the kids would build a big bonfire out on the ice at night and ... I think that was one of the things I liked best when I was a kid, was ice skating! But I can remember a time when Max Dana, who was a young red-headed kid about my same age, we sorta took to each other.

Sherlene: This is the one you made the pact with on that tobacco.

Tracy: Yeah. We went skating down there. The kids will do bad things to you. They lead you on into dangerous things They skated down there, and I suddenly noticed the ice was kinda bouncy. And golly, the ice in that area was this thick (indicating by hands, how thick) but we had gone out into this area where it was thin, and I was a little scared, but this kid, he knows all about ice. "Oh, there's nothing the matter with that ice, you know, just keep going, just keep going." He stands there egging me on, and I went out and the ice started to crack, but I turned and came back and it didn't break on me. But I'm sure that it was just on the hair's edge of breaking and letting me into that *key water.*

Ida Rose: (Big sigh!)

Tracy: And knowing those country kids. That Dana kid probably wouldn't even risk his neck to try, even though he was my friend, to rescue me, Those farm kids ... they were funny!

Ida Rose: I've seen things like this in our own ward. Not on this major a thing. But if the situation had been the same, they wouldn't have hesitated to take the kid out of danger.

Tracy: There was quick-sand in these big swamps. There are huge swamps out in Marriott. It's low lying land. Tememdous swamps. There was a Stanger boy who got caught in quick-sand in one of these swamps and lost his life.

Ida Rose: Really!

Tracy: Yeah. Back before we ever moved to Marriott. One of the Stanger boys ... I was out exploring one of these swamps with him at one time, and he had me ... we had got way out on peninsulas and islands that wander way out around. The Stanger kid says, "Now, let's not walk all the way back. Let's take a short-cut across the swamp."

Ida Rose: Was he a brother to this one who died?

Tracy: Yeah! But he knew about this. I didn't know about it at that time. So we took off our clothes, you know, and held them above our head, and then he tells me to go first, you know. So I go first ahead of him through this swamp. And then when we get across, he tells me he had me go first because he was wondering if there was quick-sand out there. (Sounds of anguish) Bounders!

Tracy: The one in the area, his own brother had died in quick-sand in that same swamp. It's a huge swamp. It goes all over the place.



Sherlene: Your mother must have been praying hard during those years.

Ida Rose: I don't know. She had nerves like I, and yet ... really, my impression of her was that she was really quite a nervous person. I don't know how she could stand it. You kids had just all kinds of freedom. They never had to be home at any time, for supper or anything ... I can remember ..

Tracy: Most of them had to be home for supper, but I don't ever remember being scolded for not being.

We had tree houses and trees to climb and big swings and ... the farm was really neat for kids. There's no doubt about that.

Sherlene: Tell about your junk heap.

Ida Rose: Knowing you ... if your mother had known your inquisitive nature, she should have been worried all the time.

Tracy: Well, we had ... , I guess I was kind of scientifically inclined <sup>at</sup> to a very early age. I know things fascinated me at a very early age. I probably had fire crackers at age 6.

David: My mom wouldn't let me have any.

Ida Rose: I inhibited you a lot more than his mother.

Tracy: My earliest remembrances of having an inquisitive and a scientific mind go back to about age 5 or 6 and I had fire crackers. I don't know where I got them. But it wasn't enough for me to just shoot off a fire cracker, I found a chunk of pipe and I put this pipe in the dirt. This was on 15th Street, and then I would stick the firecracker in the end, light it and bang it down to the end with a stick and quick put in a rock and I had a cannon, see, and I can remember my grandmother at that window hollering at me to cut that out. That was too dangerous. That's my earliest recollection of a scientific experiment. (laughter)

But then when we got out on the farm ... we moved to the farm at age seven ... my age of seven ... we would go into town ... I can remember the winter times ... I guess we did it with the wagon in the ~~summer~~ summer time. We didn't have transportation -- the town was 5 miles away -- I can remember my dad and I and sometimes Eugene, walking along the Union Pacific Railroad tracks from 12th Street into town to get a two week supply of groceries. We pulled them back home on a sleigh in the wintertime and in the wagon in the summer time. But my dad would always take me to the Library .... I don't know whether he suggested it, or whether I suggested it, but anyway I'd go to the library and check out a scientific book. And then two weeks later we'd take it back. I can remember ...

Ida Rose: What kind of a books would Gene get?

Tracy: Well, Gene liked Robinson Crusoe.

Ida Rose: He liked literature.

Tracy: Yes, he liked literature. But I'd get scientific books. I can remember getting books that were beyond me ... I just could not comprehend those darn books. Later on when I got to college, I recognized that they were calculus. (laughter) But I read what I



could and got attracted to the practical things ... I'd read about crystal radios and things like that.

My first job at which I made money that I can remember was in Marriott

Ida Rose: Well, tell them where you got some of your parts.

Tracy: Well, I'll get to that. ... was weeding beets for Mr. Dana. And I got paid a quarter.

Sherlene: A day? A quarter a day!

Tracy: Then later on I can remember Eugene and I hoeing weeds in the garden for Mr. Morris at 25 cents a day, and we hoed for a Mr. Hansen, an old dutchman for 25 cents a day. Boy, was his land hard and rocky and dry.

Ida Rose: Just like our Payson farm!

Tracy: Later on we would pick beans and things like that. And I can remember my first ten dollars in a jar .... it was eight dollars, I didn't make it to ten.

Sherlene: At twenty five cents a day?

Tracy: Uh, huh. In silver dollars. I can remember a jar in Grandma's room with my eight dollars in it. When I started to get a little money, I'd read these books in the library and I was attracted to photography and trying to build radios, and I can remember doing both, but I don't know which came first. I went to a drug store and wanted to know where you buy these chemicals it talked about to use in photography. The drug store man was smart enough -- I guess he had some chemistry -- He said, "Well, we don't have that kind of stuff, but there are places in town where you can buy these chemicals." And he sent me to the photography stores to get those. So I was developing pictures out on the farm probably at age 10 or so. And I think I built my first crystal set at age 12. Maybe not ... maybe 10. But I got enough money to buy a pair of earphones that cost me about a dollar and a half and a piece of galena crystal and what-not. So the first radio we ever had on the farm was my crystal set.

But, they had junk yards out there. On the road to Wilson Lane, between Wilson Lane and Marriott, across the Weber River where it joins the Ogden River, and this was where Captain James Brown once had his cabin. A very early historic spot.

Ida Rose: It was really the beginning of Ogden.

Tracy: He signed a peace treaty at that spot ... right there. Well, people would dump junk in the river right at that point. So I would go down and find junk. Well, one day I wandered off on a side street and I came to where they had broken up a lot of slot machines. People used to gamble in those days, even the country store in Marriott had a gambling device in it. A pin ball machine.

Ida Rose: It was against the law.

Tracy: But the sheriff had confiscated several of these machines and smashed them with ~~sledge~~ <sup>slate</sup> hammers down there, and they had more neat junk in them. And I have been collecting junk ever since then. (laughter)



Ida Rose: If you don't believe it, go down to his shed. (more laughter)

Sherlene: Tell about how ... wasn't it on that junk heap that you decided that you were going to work for G.E. someday? Seems I remember an old ...

Tracy: We had a wonderful teacher in Marriott School. I started the third grade. The third, fourth, and fifth grades were in the same room.

Sherlene: You never went to kindergarten, or first or second.

Ida Rose: They didn't have kindergarten.

Tracy: I went to first and second grades at Mound Fort, at the head of 12th Street on Washington Avenue. But, I really liked this teacher. What was her name? Miss ... hmm, I should never forget her name. Miss Stallings! I liked the set-up, because in the 3rd grade, you could listen to what was going on in the fourth and fifth.

Sherlene: Why, was it all one class?

Tracy: Yes, it was all in the same room. Two rows about six to ten kids. I was in the largest sixth grade there ever was in Marriott. Had thirteen kids in the sixth grade. (laughter) But I don't know, a total of maybe twenty-five kids in that room. Third grade on the north. Fourth grade in the middle. Fifth grade on the south.

Sherlene: What school was this?

Tracy: Marriott. Marriott School. Four room schoolhouse.

Ida Rose: A little tiny four room schoolhouse.

( Tracy: And in those days they didn't worry about whether some kids were smarter than others and they didn't try to hide it. The smartest kid would sit in the front seat. I always sat in the front seat. They did the same at Mound Fort. But I really enjoyed the third, fourth, and fifth grades. )

Now I was little, but I was fast. I could run real fast, and I loved baseball. I really loved baseball when I was a kid. We played hard-ball in Marriott. None of this sissy softball stuff for us. We played hard-ball. The principal was a nice guy, Floyd Barnett was his name, and he would hold extra long recesses and stuff like that -- so we really thought he was great. During ice skating season we would flood the baseball diamond and skate at school. It was supposed to be a fifteen minute recess and he would extend it to an hour some days.

Baseball was really my favorite sport. Other kids would take advantage of me. The system .... you know, you would play "work-up" most of the time -- not enough kids for two teams. Do you know what "work-up" is? One guy at bat, others .... Well, the system they had ... They had the bell in that day. They would ring the bell, and everyone would line up on the front walk. And then they would play on the old Victrola phonograph there -- not an electronic -- (sounds of marching music from Tracy and Ida Rose) and then everybody would march into the schoolhouse. You'd do that in the morning and you would do it at every recess. And you would march out the same way. And then the principal would blow a whistle, and then everybody would run for the backstop. And the first guy to the backstop would be the first guy up. Now this was first grade to ninth grade. I could be the first guy to the backstop in the fifth grade. I could beat the ninth



graders there, and so every day the kids would arrange to have the big bruisers hold me back so that I wouldn't be the first one up to bat. (laughter) Bounders!

And I was good, too. Every time I was up to bat I would hit a home run. That's only a slight exaggeration. I was automatically good at baseball all the time. But the darn guys they wouldn't let me ... they would hold me back, and pull all kinds of tricks like that on me. Well,

Ida Rose: They weren't going to have that smart kid beating them at sports!

Tracy: I was already smarter than them, and they really picked on me for that.

Ida Rose: I thought you told me a story that you used to hide in the registers.

Sherlene: I had the impression that you weren't necessarily always so well known. There was one teacher who didn't even know your name.

Tracy: Oh, that was high school. That was high school.

Sherlene: Well, what about the story about some mean teacher beating your knuckles because you were late.

Tracy: That was second grade.

Sherlene: Oh, tell that story.

Tracy: Well, I don't know how come, but I had wet my pants that morning, and my mom was real mad at me (laughter)

Ida Rose: You probably only had one pair.

Tracy: Yeah, and I can remember trying to get them dried out so that I could get to school on time. Well, anyway, I got to school late. Well, in those days they don't ask how come you're late to school. And I was too embarrassed to tell her, anyway. So I came in late. Stern old teacher meets you at the door. Walks you over and sticks you ... remember how those desks were like that. Sticks your hands on the front of the desk like that, and then she takes the ruler and whacks them. That was Mrs. Jensen.

Ida Rose: Just once?

Tracy: No. I don't know how many times, but she did enough that it hurt plenty.

Sherlene: Was that the only time you ever got corporal punishment?

Tracy: No, I got it one other time from my favorite teacher, Miss Stallings. And it was not corporal punishment, it was just ...

Ida Rose: What had you done?

Tracy: Well, the rule was you couldn't chew gum in school. The kids would do it anyway. Well, I didn't. I couldn't afford to buy gum. I had a lot of better things to spend my money on, anyway. But, some of the kids had been chewing gum in Miss Stallings class -- this was fifth grade now -- and one of them was one of the Slater boys. Now, what was his name? Alma Slater, and she took him up to the front of the class, and she



made him put the gum on the end of his nose. And he was standing there with the gum on the end of his nose. Of course, all the kids were down there snickering, including me. And so I started to mock him, and I was going "Ah ha, ha. You got that for chewing gum. You ought to have known better." And the teacher saw me and she thought I was chewing gum.

Ida Rose: And thought you swallowed it.

Tracy: And she came down and gave me the dickens, my favorite teacher. I was heart-broken!

Ida Rose: Serves you right.

Tracy: While I'm telling you about baseball, I was out in left-field one day and a kid hit a long fly ball out in left field, and the shortstop in front of me, a guy named Clyde Hipwell, and, ... you know we caught those hard baseball with our bare hands. I never owned a glove in my life. Well, Clyde had a glove on, and this was a long fly, and he was short-stop and he held his hand up and he said, "I'll get it! I'll get it!" Well, it was a long hot one, and I didn't want to catch it bare handed, and so I just figured, well, he's right in the line of it anyway, so let him get it. And he said, "I'll get it. I'll get it!" So I turned my head, figuring he would get it, and then he ducked down, but it came by, and it hit me right smack in the left ear and I've been somewhat deaf in that ever ever since. And that ear for weeks, just hurt and hurt. Parents never took you to a doctor in those days. They couldn't afford it. But, that ear hurt so much.

I was in a play. I was at play practice that very night and it was just painning me something terrible, and that night wasn't a very good night. I was a dutchmen, a little dutch boy in some kind of a dance. We used to put on operetta's every year.

Ida Rose: You've got a picture of that.

Tracy: I think so.

Ida Rose: That was a darling production. (laughter)

Tracy: Anyway, we were going along doing some kind of a dance where we kicked and I kicked out one of the foot-lights. (laughter)

Sherlene: You had a bad knee that day!

Tracy: I was really conscientious in those days. I thought if you damaged something, you ought to pay for it, you know. I guess I had been brought up that way. So, I was really feeling bad, and I told the teacher, "Well, how much is this going to cost me?" And I was crying because my ear hurt so darn much. And, oh, ... "You don't have to pay for it," the teacher said. That part was good, but later on I got hurting so bad that the teacher could see that there was something the matter and she asked me what was the matter, and I told her so she sent me home. But, I'm still a bit deaf in that ear.

Ida Rose: Probably broke your ear drum.

Tracy: Let me tell you another thing about sports. Football! I was really, Oh boy, too little to play football. It took big bruisers to play football. But some of these big, mean, dumb, country kids were always out to take a little guy and crush him, you know.



Ida Rose: Crunch!

Tracy: So, they decided to let me carry the ball this day.

Ida Rose: That's how he learned how to run so fast! (laughter)

Tracy: They let me carry the ball, you know. To be the big quarterback hero. I knew what they had in mind. They were just going to murder me. So, you know what I did? I took that ball, and I dodged every guy that came after me and I made a touchdown, and so they figured, Ah, you know, it's just luck. So, they're going to let me carry the ball again. This time they are really going to mash me. And I missed every player and made a touchdown the second time. And then they wouldn't let me play quarterback anymore. (more laughter)

Sherlene: I bet they hated you!

Tracy: Two touchdowns in a row.

Let me tell you another thing about my athletic prowess. This Alma Slater was quite a bit older than I was, but he wasn't too smart a kid and we were in the same grade. There were a lot of dumb kids who were two or three grades behind. He started telling me one day how he run a race. He says, "Now I want to tell you how you win a race." We were out in a field down near the pea vinery, and he said, "Now, what you do is ... you start out going slow, you know, and you go just like this, and then you get about two thirds the distance and then you let it all out. Then you really run, and that's the way you win is by going slow at first, and then you go fast at the end.

He said, "Now I'll show you. We'll run this race. We'll run from here to that telephone pole." I says, "O.K." So, he says, "Ready, Set, Go!" So I light out just as fast as I could run, and right from the very start, and I kept up the speed all the way 'till I got to the telephone pole. He started out slow, you know, showing me how to run this race. And here I was gaining on him all the time. He knew he was going to win, because he was doing this right, and when he got about half way there, I was already at the telephone pole. (laughter) One of the funniest things I ever did in my life! I knew he was all wet. That might be fine if you were going to run for a mile, but we were only going to run for a couple of hundred feet. (more laughter)

There was another thing where I was pretty sharp, too. These big country bruisers are always proud of their brawn. They had what they called "girl's bats" in those days, and "men's bats." I was such a little kid I could hardly lift a man's bat. A little handle and this great big thing on the end. But this was the way you hit home runs. You took this, big, huge, heavy bat and you hit the ball with that, and that's the way you hit home runs. They always called me a sissy because I would go over and pick up the light-weight girl's bat. I could hit a home-run with those. But, you know -- it's the power of kinetic energy. The major league baseball .... I discovered this on my own, as a young kid. But within the past twenty years or so, major league guys have found that you want to use a light bat. See, your kinetic energy is one-half the mass times the velocity squared.

David: You ----- and you square it!

Tracy: Sure! So, the faster you can swing the bat, you gain by the square. See! But, the heavier the bat, you only gain to the first power by the mass. Now, I didn't know this, but I discovered it, as a practical matter. Just as a kid, out in Marriott. So, those big old country bruisers were all wrong, again. The light-weight bat was the one to be using.



Ida Rose: They used to do this all the time. They would get this one bat, and they would heft it, and when the batter would come up, they would go lift another, and heft it and put it up here, and go like this, you know, and finally he would choose his bat and go up to the plate ....

Tracy: I was pretty good at broad-jumping. When we had contests around, I would always run and do the broad-jump. I really got ... I was thinking I was pretty good. I sure was good in Marriott, anyway. They had a county-wide field day, one day, at Lorin Farr Park. Remember that's where they had the races, and the end-of-the-year field day and what-not.

Ida Rose: Everything was at Lorin Farr ... That was the big ...

Tracy: And they entered me in the board jump from Marriott and in the races, because I was the fastest runner. And, golly, I ended up last. (laughter)

Ida Rose: Those kids were even faster.

Tracy: Well, I was pretty good in Marriott, but there were some other guys from North Ogden, and Harrisville, and Plain City, that were a lot faster than I was. That was a real shock to me, because I thought that I ought I'd place up there with them somewhere, but I was last.

Ida Rose: Those are good stories.

Sherlene: Tell about the time in high school, when that lady didn't know your name and you won that math contest.

Tracy: Oh, that was Mr. Petersen. I was just quiet. I never raised my hand in any class. They knew me in Marriott, because the classes were so small, but when I was in a history class at high school, one of fifty kids, I never raised my hand to answer a question. I'd just sit there and mind my own business. And, somehow toward the end of the class, one day, this Mr. Peterson, who was a very socialistic, liberal type, pointed his finger back at me and says, "You there, somebody, you did some lousy score on the last examination and you ought to do something" ... anyway, he scolded me, you know. And it was obvious to me that he didn't know what my name was. But I didn't help him out, I just sat ...

Ida Rose: Didn't you go up afterward and tell him.

Tracy: No. Uh, uh!

Ida Rose: What did you get in the course, "A"?

Tracy: I don't think I got an "A". I probably got a "B".

Sherlene: Well, that's not the story.

Ida Rose: Oh, you are referring to that time he took the test and ran the highest.

Tracy: Oh, that was in the fourth grade.

Ida Rose: He was a really tiny guy, then.



Tracy: That was in Miss Stallings class, again. They gave a county-wide intelligence test. This would have been in 1928 or 1929, and, you know, we used to wear overalls and a blue shirt of somekind to school. We didn't wear any pants in those days. And barefooted, most of the time. I don't know if our mother let us go to school barefooted, or not, but at home, we were always bare footed. But I was real scrawny and skinny and unhealthy looking. They gave this county-wide intelligence test in the fourth grade and I was at the median thirteenth grade level in all subjects, the whole darn works. And I was in the fourth grade. Nine years old. Eight years old!

Sherlene: You mean they had thirteen grades in those days.

Tracy: Well, they rated it that way. I don't know. Anyway, I really rated high. The highest in the county. And so the superintendant of the county schools and some of his cohorts came out to see what this wierd creature was like. This smartest kid in the county who took this test. And they got out there, and they could hardly believe it. The dumb scrawny looking farm kid. And, golly, they got me and they quizzed me, and they didn't tell me very much about the test, but they were so concerned about my health. "What does your mother feed you? Don't you get eggs and milk? Anyway, they talked to my parents and told them they had to do something about me because I was wasting away.

Sherlene: Well, do you think you were really undernourished?

Tracy: Yeah! But, I don't know why.

Ida Rose: He can remember times when all they would have for supper was stale bread and water.

Tracy: Yeah, I can remember many a supper where you would just heat hot water on the stove. You put in a level teaspoon full of butter, some salt and pepper, and then you toast your bread. Then you pour that on your bread. That was supper!

Ida Rose: We used to do the same thing, but we would have milk. We called it, "Milk Toast."

Tracy: Well, we had "milk toast" too, but ....

Sherlene: Just because you didn't have the money to buy the stuff!

Tracy: Well, Depression, no jobs, no

Sherlene: But on the farm ...

Ida Rose: But my mother didn't have milk. She went out and got free skim milk.

Tracy: I don't know. We had a cow at times, but maybe the cow was ... You know, you have to dry them out at times -- it may not have been fresh.

Ida Rose: Fresh, they call it. It wouldn't have it when it was having a calf. It would be fresh when it gives milk, see. And then when it would come in again, the calf would be real rich.

Tracy: I don't think my dad was a good farmer. That wasn't really his trade. I don't think he wanted to be on the farm, really.



David: I don't think he really had a trade until he was about ...

Sherlene: His trade was writing letters ...

Ida Rose: Yeah, to the senators. [Which he did plenty of, telling them what was wrong with the country and they better get back to the Constitution or the country would fall apart, with anarchy and all kinds of problems.]

Nancy: You never did tell us how Miss Stallings got you interested in G.E.

Tracy: Oh, that was fourth grade again. No. She asked everyone in the class. There were probably only 8 or 9 of us in the fourth grade, what we were going to do when we grew up. I said, "I am going to be an engineer and work for General Electric." So, I had decided that pretty early.

Ida Rose: But what made you think that?

Tracy: I had been reading books all about Edison and Ford, they were my big heroes, and Edison was the beginning of the General Electric Company.

Shirlene: Oh, well I have this story. Maybe I have it twisted through the years. I thought, when I was a little girl in New York, you told me that you were sitting on the junk heap and you would find all these neat G.E. things.

Ida Rose: No. That was your own .... This is the story he has told me a lot.

Sherlene: I guess I heard it wrong.

Tracy: See, Edison originally had his machine works at 1 River Road, Schenectady. You know, out there on the Mohawk River where the main General Electric works is today. And some high powered financial men bought Edison out, to start the General Electric Company. Edison went on to East Orange, New Jersey, later on.

Sherlene: And he was sort of a hero to you, huh?

Tracy: Yeah, a real big hero ... he and Henry Ford. But I had read about Steinmetz and all the other famous G.E. guys.

Ida Rose: Where did you get all these books?

Tracy: The library. Ogden City Library. Twenty-sixth street and Washington Avenue.

Shirlene: How did you get out to the library?

Tracy: Walked. Five miles!

Ida Rose: They didn't always live in Marriott, you know.

Tracy: No. I didn't get to the library until we had been in Marriott.

Ida Rose: Really! We used to go to the library every week.

Tracy: It was nothing to walk 5 miles back in those days.



Ida Rose: I think we would go before we would go to the show. We would go get a whole bunch of books. I was always reading a book. I think I read in the children's library ... I think I read everything in the library by the time I was in the seventh grade, when I decided that it was time for me to move upstairs.

Shirlene: Well, we're about to the end of the tape. Do we have time for one more question?

Ida Rose: You just have time to say, "Amen." You can have the other half of my tape, dear.

Shirlene: We've got two more tapes. This is really good, though.

Tracy: Hey, let me help you make that a better X-Rated deal! One thing they used to do to me was really embarrassing, but those country kids ... you can't believe what they would do! A favorite past-time of theirs was, particularly if the teacher wasn't around. Like the teachers had a day off, or something. They would hawl me out behind the school, stretch me out, pull my pants down, and spit on me, and invite the girls to come and spit on me, too. And some of them would. (groans)

Ida Rose: The girls would!

Tracy: Yeah! That probably happened to me a half-a-dozen times while I was in Marriott.

Ida Rose: No wonder you had the shakes at night. Once in awhile. My word!

Tracy: Country kids. Well, maybe kids in general are that way. But, I somehow, had the feeling that those mean old country kids ... They used to steal my bicycle. They used to break my bicycle, they tried to drown us. I became so afraid ... and they would try to get me in fist-fights with big guys and I was just little, and I would climb up every night. There would be times I would climb up a pipe in a shaft in the school. It was the only place I could hide, and I would hang up there on that pipe for half-an-hour until the big bullies went home. Then I would neak home through the fields.

Shirlene: Did you tell your mother about these things.

Tracy: I don't think so.

Shirlene: She would have just ....

Ida Rose: You know, you don't tell your mother about some of these things. I had trouble with a teacher in the fourth grade. And I never told my mother. I had night-mares over that teacher. When a teacher gets on to a kid, I think it makes it .... It's exagerated, I'm sure in the child's mind, but it was just ...

Tracy: I never did win a fight. I might have won once. I always used to get Irvin Stanger, who weighed a lot more than ....

End of Tape, 1,2