

H. Tracy Hall oral history, Tape side 5

Sherlene: H. Tracy Hall is continuing his oral history and he is talking about this band belonged to in his youth.

Tracy: Let's see, what were we talking about? The band? This band was a fairly successful thing. The first dance that we played at was in Ogden High School, and our physics department teacher engaged us to play that night. Our repertoire was pretty small. I know we had to go around about six times and our music wasn't very good, I must admit.

Sherlene: I bet you must have sounded good. Didn't you make some records?

Tracy: I think they made some records after I quit, but not before. We played probably at every ward there was in Weber County. Ward dances were popular in those days. We played often at Weber College and Ogden High School. We once played a dance clear out at Camp Williams, an army facility near the Point of the Mountain. Across the valley west of the Point of the Mountain. We played in Arco, Idaho, once. We made usually, I think, about a dollar to a dollar and a half a night over a period of a couple of years, perhaps. I don't think while I was in the band we ever made more than a dollar and a half apiece a night. We carried a lot of equipment around. We purchased our own amplifier.

Let's see if I can remember some of the people in the band. I played piano and was the leader. There was Jack Barrett, who originally played guitar, but realizing that wasn't as important an instrument as a string base, he purchased a string base and learned to play it very well. He played in the commercial orchestras for years after that to earn extra money. Prentice Agee, who was a very good musician, played trumpet. Lane Compton played trumpet. I can't seem to think of the name of the fellow who played drums, with Larry Salerno, I believe, he played trombone. A couple of guys from North Ogden area playing saxophone and another fellow played saxophone. We wouldn't always use the full band. Though we did have a full band of drums, base, piano, three saxes, a couple of trumpets and a couple of trombones. And even larger bands in some incidences.

Like I said, I made all the bookings and arrangements for the band. I paid for a telephone in our own home. Our parents couldn't afford a phone. Just to have it for this purpose. When I graduated from high school, Ogden High School ... I was a good student. I was one of the better students, but I was naive and didn't know about scholarships and things like that. And I never applied for a scholarship. But since my friends were going to Weber College, I wanted to go to, but didn't have any money. So I had to work. I applied for a job.

They had what they called, the NYA, as I remember it. Some program for youth to help them work their way through school. If you were an office worker, or something along that line, you got paid twenty cents an hour. For janitorial work you got paid fifteen cents an hour. I would work from 4:00 A.M to approximately 6:30 or 7:00 A.M. every morning ... and the band business was pretty good. Sometimes we would play as many as 3 times a week to make three or four dollars. But on occasion I wouldn't get back until 1:30 or sometimes even 2:00 o'clock in the morning and then have to be to work at 4:00, which was really quite hard on my health during that year. I became ill later in the year and missed a couple of weeks of school and got a "D" grade in mathematics because I never told the teacher I was ill. The only "D" I ever got in my life. And it was really just because I was out of it on account of illness, but I was bashful. I never gave the teacher any reason for being absent or asking to let me make up tests or anything.



Anyway, a thing was happening with the band. Prentice Agee was really a much better musician than I. And I think there was a little rivalry there. I think he resented my being the leader of the band. Some of the guys had started to smoke and they were drinking a little. And I didn't like that aspect of it. And the other aspect was that all that lack of sleep was killing me, so I gave up the band. The band continued. Prentice was its leader. They got a piano player who was better than I, and actually had some rather important engagements. They played in the Hotel Utah. They played on some radio stations. And I think actually made a couple of recordings at one time of the band, which was called "The High Hatters."

The band was important in a practical way. It was earnings for me. And to have a job in those days was very difficult. A job where you could earn one dollar. I got mixed up here on what I said. There were very few instances when we made as much as three dollars a night. I don't think we ever made four while I was in the band. And there may have been only once or twice that we made \$3.00. Usually we would make a dollar or a dollar and a half. You see, that was, counting the time you were on the job ... a dance usually lasted three hours. That was fifty cents an hour. And a fifty cents an hour job in those days was a hard thing to come by. You compare the fifty cents an hour there vs fifteen cents an hour at the school was ...

Ida Rose: Didn't they pay twenty-five?

Tracy: No. You always contended that, dear, but I earned the money and I remember that it was fifteen cents an hour.

Ida Rose: I got paid twenty-five cents an hour.

Tracy: Well, you came along two years later than I did. The wages had gone up. [Which was a fact, because that is what Wendell was paid when he later joined the program.] Let's see. What else do we need to say about the band? I had become a pretty good piano player by then pretty much on my own. I didn't do much with piano from then on. I would play in church here and there, occasionally. I played in church as a youth. I played the organ, the Hammond organ, in Priesthood meetings for quite a long time in the Ogden 18th Ward.

Sherlene: You accompanied our family orchestra!

Tracy: Then over the years I lost whatever I ever learned about playing the piano. Its's difficult for me to get through a hard hymn nowadays.

Sherlene: I can remember when you used to play the jazz. Wasn't that on Binford Avenue in Schenectady? Wasn't there a piano downstairs or something?

Tracy: Yeah. I don't think we had a piano there.

Sherlene: Somewhere you used to play real jazzy tunes.

Tracy: That would not have been until we had a piano again in our home. At our current home, 1711 North Lambert Lane.

Ida Rose: Yes, but we had a piano in Binford Road.

Tracy: In Schenectady?



Ida Rose: Yes.

Tracy: OK. I guess that's right. We did buy an old piano because you could buy them cheap. That's right. We did. Did we ever have one at Bly Road, in our first home.

Ida Rose: Yes.

Tracy: We had a piano there?

Ida Rose: I don't know about Bedford, dear, I'm sorry. I guess it was Bly Road.

Tracy: Yeah. I guess that's right. I can remember buying a cheap piano.

Sherlene: You used to play the music and we could dance around to it, and we were in a silly mood and you'd play all those funny old numbers and that was fun.

Tracy: Yeah. That may be true.

Sherlene: And you wrote Mom, after you were married, love songs while you were in the Navy.

Tracy: I used to make arrangements. But not much of that has survived. I think I wrote one love song for Mom.

Sherlene: When did you decide to become a scientist someday?

Tracy: When I was in the fourth grade, when I was nine. The teacher asked us what we were going to do when we grew up, and I said I was going to be an engineer and work for General Electric.

Sherlene: And that happened!

Tracy: And that happened!

Sherlene: When did you first start fiddling with photography?

Tracy: Oh, very, very young. When we were in Marriott. I would bring these books home from the library and read about photography and I couldn't ever get the chemicals. These strange chemicals that you had to have to do things. I had purchased a very cheap camera. Fifteen cents, twenty-five cents, something like that. I had taken a few pictures. Some of these pictures may still be in existence. It's too bad all of them aren't. I think only one or two still exist. I had pictures of our home in Marriott, and I know of no other pictures. Pictures of my younger brothers. And I took quite a few pictures around there. I think there is only one. One of my brother Wendell kicking a football, something like that, that I know exists today. [There is also one of Donald with the chicken coop in the background from where he supposedly -- according to Wendell -- pushed him off the roof, with the result that Wendell carries a horse-shoe scar to this day on the top of his head when he landed on a piece of glass below.]

But I wanted to develop my own, so the only people I knew who might have chemicals ... I guess my parents had told me, were druggists. So I would go to drug stores and ask them for these chemicals and ... "No, No, we don't have those chemicals." I finally went to a drug store where a druggist was enough of a chemist that he recognized that they were photographic chemicals and he says, "Oh, those are old-fashioned chemicals. You



don't use those anymore." He says, "I think you can go to a certain photo store and they can actually give you the modern-day chemicals, sell them to you."

I don't know whether I was able to follow through on that, on the farm. They may have been too expensive for me to buy. But when we moved from the farm to 664 30th Street, then I had built a dark-room out of what wood I could find lying around and cardboard, which I nailed. And I made a dark-room in the basement. That's where I did a lot of photography when I was a kid. I did quite a bit of photography and my own developing. I developed pictures for others to earn a little money. Although I didn't charge enough that it ever amounted to anything.

[Donald remembers Mom consulting with the other brothers about the fact that there was never any money for anything, but would we mind if she were to give Tracy a few cents -- she always wanted to treat everybody equally -- to help him buy the developing trays and other things needed for him to do his own pictures. The brothers readily agreed to this, and didn't feel one bit slighted, because they were always excited about the "magic" that Tracy was creating in his many endeavors, and they were just glad to do anything that might be helpful to him in his efforts! Both Donald and Wendell later learned from Tracy how to develop film and to print pictures and to do their own "magic" as they learned something of the miracles of chemistry.]

Later on because of that experience. It was very difficult to find jobs. About the only thing you could get was cherry picking in the summertime out in North Ogden, or bean picking in some places. It was hard to even earn seventy-five cents a day at those jobs. We used to have seminars, so to speak, on how to get a job, because it was depression days and it was so hard to get a job. But ... Dorothy West, who used to play the piano in the Boy's Chorus, that Ena Barnes led, had a father who was quite a buddy with a photographer. This photographer's name was Checketts. I'll have to back-track just a little. I don't know how I got this job. I think that Bishop Grant Lofgreen may have helped me.

The first photographer I worked for. I think was a place called Shiplers. That may have been the name of the man. And he had a brother, a young brother who was working and helping him, but he didn't really need any help, but the Bishop talked him into hiring me. So, I did some photography work there. That was on the west side of Washington Avenue, I think between 24th and 25th Street. And as I remember it, it was not just a photography place. It may have been a jewelry store plus a photography place in the back.

The man who ran this place was sort of a news photographer and he would go out to take pictures of big events, and I remember he took his camera and took a picture of a Union Pacific railroad wreck. It got off the tracks on a curve in Nevada on a bend of a big river, and many people were killed in that. And he flew an airplane out there ... He had somebody fly him, got those pictures and brought them back dead tired and wanted me to develop them and I was afraid I would ruin them for that cause. Besides I had never developed that particular type. They were what we call ... Oh, I forget what you called them, but they were not rolls of film, they were plates. Yeah, you know. Single sheets of film in a holder, and I had never handled those and didn't know how to take them out or anything. And I remember him being a bit aggravated with me that I couldn't do that. He was dead tired from having been up a couple of nights, or something. So he had to do them himself. But just a short time after that, he was flying up in Idaho somewhere. I suppose taking pictures again on something and his plane crashed and he was killed. And I didn't have a job after that.



But then, later, I got on at this Checkett's place. Now these Checkett's guys ... You can like people for the good things, and they did have some good things. Checketts and his brother-in-law and Dorothy West's dad, who was an inactive church member, and other cronies, used this photography place, which was on the east side of Washington Avenue over a store, and I have forgotten the exact location. I think it was between about 23rd and 24th Street. [It was between 24th and 25th Street. Rushmer Optometry occupied the bottom part of the store.]

It was a back alley and the thing bordered on this back alley and at the back you had to go up the stairs. But Checketts was a commercial photographer and also developed films for drug-stores around town and I became very proficient in all aspects of that. He would even let me take commercial pictures with his 8 x 10 commercial camera. People of today wouldn't believe it, but we actually took pictures on a film that was 8 inches by 10 inches. I haven't seen an 8" x 10" camera for years. A sheet of film in those days cost fifteen cents.

Ida Rose: For an 8 x 10?

Tracy: Uh huh. Just a sheet of film. These were reprobates, these guys. They drank, they smoked, they told dirty stories all day long. Took dirty pictures, and were unfaithful to their wives, and all kinds of things. Everything went on in that place. But it was a job, and I stuck with it. I later on, I got my brother Wendell a job there and he wanted to know that I was doing getting him a job at a place like that after he saw it, but he had to stay with the job, too. You had to take whatever job you could get. [Donald, at about the same time, got a job cutting the grass and taking care of Checketts yard in the 1100 block of Capitol Street.

But Checketts learned I was responsible. And he gave me full responsibility of that place on many occasions. He would sometimes be out on 25th Street with the prostitutes down there and the other things that went on and he would get so drunk, he would forget to come back for an assignment. I remember one time he had an assignment to take a picture of Washington Jr. High School graduating class. And they kept calling and calling for Checketts. His first name was Denton. Denton Checketts. And he was not there, and they said, "We've got all these kids here on stage all lined up to take a picture and we have been waiting for half-an-hour!" Well, I said that I would keep trying to get him. So he had those kids for a full hour on the stage and I finally decided that I would never locate Denton, and if I did locate him, he would be too drunk to take a picture. And I hadn't ever used his powder flash equipment before. I guess I may have seen him use it. I knew how it worked. You know, they have flash bulbs nowadays. But back in that day you had magnesium metal plus an oxident, potassium nitrate, or something like that. And an electric wire running through it. You pressed the button and the electric wire heated up and there would be a flash and big smoke.

Voices: Yeah, we've seen those pictures.]

Tracy: Come to think of it, I decided that I couldn't use that. Anyway, I decided I would hire a Taxi. I didn't have any transportation. And so I called the Taxi and went out there with 2 big flood-lights that he had. Hardly sufficient to illuminate that crowd. I took two pictures, and when Denton got back later on, much later that day. I had the pictures all developed and made the first prints and ... Man, you would have thought I was the most wonderful guy on earth. "You saved my life!" he said. "You preserved my reputation!" And so on and so forth.

Ida Rose: Did it work out?



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Tracy: Oh, yeah. They displayed those pictures for a long time at the drug-store on the southeast corner of 28th Street and Washington Avenue. I've forgotten the name of that drug-store [Leinhardt Drug] ... the Washington High School graduating class.

Sherlene: Well, did you get a raise for ...

Tracy: No. No. Let me tell you some other interesting things about this Denton. He was ... the way some people live! He had equipment that he would let me borrow. Like if he had a movie camera, he would let me borrow, which was nice, because I could hardly afford film, but I did take some pictures with that. As a matter of fact, I bought 100 feet or 500 feet of black and white film one time. I was going to develop my own because I couldn't afford the developing, so I built my own system to do this, but they got ruined. My system really didn't work as well as it should have. We have those black and white films today. Three or four of them, and there are things on there we are glad to see, but the quality is real bad. The film stuck together when I was trying to develop it, and I couldn't get it unstuck. It got all mottled and messed up. I never did finish using that full 500 feet of film. Another thing that may have kept me from it was the fact that Checketts would keep taking his camera and other things that he needed in his day-to-day business down to a pawn shop and put them in hawk. You know how pawn shops work. He takes these in, and maybe on a \$100 camera they will loan him \$25.00. And then he has six weeks or some specified time to come and pay that back plus a terrific amount of interest or else they keep the camera and sell it.

I used to frequent these pawn shops on 25th Street. I bought a couple of good cameras down there when I was a kid. But one .. sometimes the goods are stolen. I bought a movie camera down there one time and it turned out to be a stolen camera. The cops came after me and I was really scared. You know, that I would be liable, but I, of course, didn't know that it was stolen. And I did get my money back. I paid \$11.00 for that, which was a lot of money to me back in those days.

Anyway, I would want to use some of Denton's equipment, and he would say, "Oh, yeah, you go down and get it out of hawk, and you can use it." So I would do that, but when I ended up working for Denton, and went to the University of Utah ... In order for me to have a job, I had to keep getting his equipment out of hawk. We couldn't take the pictures. He'd hawk anything to go buy some booze, or go with the girls, or some darn thing. And so, to keep myself in a job, I'd go down and get our equipment out of hawk so that we could do the days pictures.

Sherlene: And you were spending all your salary on that.

Tracy: And I made twelve dollars a week. OK. Comes time to go away to school at the University of Utah. See, I laid out a year and worked for Checketts

Ida Rose: That's the year we went together.

Tracy: ....and that's when I earned money to go to school.

Sherlene: That's when you were dating Mom!

Tracy: And I ended up with enough money to go to school. Well, he owed me \$22.50 at that time and I never got it. I'd go back. You know, I would come home from school with week-ends off and I would go down to see Denton, "Denton, when are you going to pay me?" "Oh, I don't have the money. I can't pay you." So one day I went down, and I



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forget how I worded this. He was usually fairly drunk ... sometimes it was funny. But anyway, he sort of indicated like he was finally going to pay me. I was poor! I was a kid going to school and that \$22.50 was a lot of money! I was so disappointed, that it turned out that what he wanted me to do was to pull the adhesive tape off of his back. He had gone swimming and he dived in the pool and he hit the diving board with his back. But the way he talked to me ... Oh, he was finally going to pay me! And that's the last I ever saw him. He died drunk in the gutter later on, I learned. He had, you know ... he was a drunk and all that, but in a way, he had his good features. He recognized my quality and he would tell me. That I was good. I had ability .. I

Ida Rose: He encouraged you.

Tracy: Yeah. He would tell me my good qualities. Of course, it was good for him, because I would work harder, you know.

Sherlene: That's because you kept him in business.

Tracy: They had dirty pictures in there. People in those days would take pictures of their naked girl friends, their wives, or what-not, and they knew Denton would develop them. They would come to him.

Sherlene: So they would come to him.

Tracy: And Denton would keep a copy. Everything that ever come through with naked women on. Peoples negatives, he would keep a copy. In those days it was illegal to develop such material.

Ida Rose: Was it?

Tracy: Oh, yeah. It was illegal to develop such material.

Sherlene: Didn't you have a hard time keeping your thoughts clean in that adverse atmosphere?

Tracy: Oh, yes, it was probably an adverse atmosphere for me. I'm sure. I survived it, but it was probably bad. I don't know. What do you do when you want to go to school and earn money and there aren't any jobs during the Depression, you know ... Boy, you are glad to have a job!

Sherlene: So Depressions are ... Depressions in more .. I mean just a sign that people are anxious to find any work that ..

Tracy: Well, there are good and there are bad.

Ida Rose: I hope we never have another depression. We're going to have inflation and ...

Tracy: Let me tell you one thing I did one day that was a real kick. They would come there and drink their booze. They all shared the same whisky bottle. I would be in the back working and ... I guess drinking ... where did they get their booze? I guess you could buy the booze. There was some illegality about it, because they would come back to the dark-room to drink it. Maybe they didn't want a customer to walk in. No! Anyway, They would all drink out of the same whisky bottle and tell their dirty stories and conquering of woman, and what-not. One day I noticed back there . . . I don't know why I did it, but I noticed this guy drink the last of that whiskey bottle. So I got this neat idea.



I took the whiskey bottle and I took it over to the tap and put about that much (indicating with hands) water in the bottom of it. (laughter)

Some of those guys ... Oh, they were the dirtiest, crudest guys that ever lived, I'm sure. There must have been guys cruder than them, though, but at least these guys worked for a living. Oh, let me tell you some other things about ...

Ida Rose: Go on and finish the water thing.

Tracy: OK. One of these cronies, he comes back there. He sees this whisky bottle. He thinks there is whisky in it, so he swigs away, taking a few swallows before he realizes what he is drinking is not what he is expecting. He throws the whisky bottle down and lets out an oath, "Who poisoned the whiskey!" I couldn't stay around. I sneaked out and I laughed and I laughed and I laughed. It took him a little longer for him, though, to catch on that it wasn't whisky, because he was just guzzling this stuff.

Sherlene: Didn't he get mad at you?

Tracy: They didn't know how it happened. I had sneaked up front away from where they were.

Ida Rose: It wasn't by you, where that was, Oh!

Tracy: Well, it was back in where the dark-room was. I had just sneaked out past them. They were all having a drunken good time. Denton and his brother-in-law had jobs on the railroad. They were freight-car checkers. They could check all of the freight cars in half-an-hour. They got paid for an eight hour day. So, what they would do, is they would take turns checking out for each other. There was a whole gang of them. A lot of these cronies were freight checkers on the railroad. A real plush job, you know. They probably paid money to get that kind of a job. So, one guy would stay on and punch everybody out. But they could complete the work in half-an-hour. But they got paid for eight. So that is why he could run the photo studio. Most of all, he would just go to work for an .... sometimes they may have had to stay there for a couple of hours at most. Then they would go carouse on 25th Street, or whatever else they wanted to do. This, that, and the other. Then come to the photo studio. They had two jobs, see, one of them a goof-off gold-brick job, with high pay at the railroad, where the railroad wasn't getting their true money's worth.

Sherlene: And then there were people who didn't have enough to feed their starving families! Didn't have any jobs!

Tracy: I learned an awful lot about photography there. I used his big camera to take a couple of pictures. In my book, I have a picture of Weber College that's an 8 x 10.

Ida Rose: What camera did you use to take a picture of the chorus from time to time?

Tracy: I used an 8 x 10 to take some of those pictures. Denton wasn't as well equipped as he could have been. His floodlights weren't big enough and he didn't have modern flash business that he could have had. Taking pictures was always hard, because, ... well, that's another thing I forgot to tell you. My light was so small out at the Washington School, that I had to take .... the time to take a picture was several seconds, and as I remember it, I took two pictures. And there was a fuzzy kid in each of the pictures. somebody who had moved during the 3 seconds or so that I had to expose it. They had this huge gathering, you see, on the stage, with several hundred kids, with two little dinky floodlights clear down where I was.



Ida Rose: That was really good figuring, though!

Tracy: But it was the same problem when I would try to take a picture of the chorus. Some of those pictures aren't too good.

Sherlene: What are some of your memories or church leaders while you were growing up? Who was the prophet you remember best?

Tracy: President Grant. He was for most of my life. He became president around World War I. I was born in 1919. I don't remember when President Grant died, 1948, maybe, something like that. [May 14, 1945.] And I have shaken hands with President Grant on at least one occasion. And I have a book from the whole Frist Presidency. President Grant and his counselors David O. McKay and J. Reuben Clark. A little book by Jordan, called ... something about truth ..

Sherlene: How did you get that?

Tracy: Well, our chorus ... Ena had the idea of our whole chorus could be sent on a mission, all at once. She thinks that Grant Lofgreen loused that dream of hers up. Called on a mission to sing, and proselyte, you know. The whole works of us. I don't know what her scheme was to do it, but somehow Grant Lofgreen prematurely ... I don't really know, this is just supposition, had us up there to visit the First Presidency. All of us. And they must have talked about this possibility. So we sang for the First Presidency. Went back in and sang for some of the other church leaders. We were in the First Presidency's office. Twenty or twenty-four of us. A big group of boys for that day and age, and we shook hands and talked with all the church leaders and they presented each one of us with a book with all their signatures in it. And I have it to this day. That would have been about 1938.

Ena used to take us to conference at times in Salt Lake. A couple of occasions, anyway. She'd try to get cars rounded up and take all the boys to General Conference.

Sherlene: How come she only taught boys?

Ida Rose: She was good with boys. They found out she could control them, and they liked her. They kept her on. They just kept going, giving her class after class after class. She just grew them up.

Tracy: She was given a Sunday School teaching assignment when I first went there. No, I can remember one other teacher. At thirteen or fourteen, she became my Sunday School teacher. She stayed our Sunday School teacher. They just passed her with the kids until we were twenty years old.

End of tape, side 5.

Turn the tape over. It's still the 7th of August 1974. We are at Sherlene's and Dan's at White Plains, New York. What were we talking about, Sherlene?

Sherlene: Do you remember .... Dan, can you be quiet, we are on tape again ... Grandma and Grandpa Hall telling stories about church leaders?

Tracy: Well, yes, I can remember some. I can remember, let's see. President McKay remembered my mother on account of some situation where my mother was trying to



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extricate her younger sister from a problem. I think my Aunt Blanch had run away from home, got married. I think there was an annulment. Something like that. She had a child - - twins, maybe, I've forgotten. I remember we used to have pictures of these kids around the house. They died as I remember it. But there was some problem there, and my mother became involved with President McKay to straighten that up. And years later President McKay still remembered my mom from that situation.

Sherlene: And what was her impression of him?

Tracy: Oh, wonderful man. Yeah. I know they talked about church leaders, but I don't recall at this point any specific incident except that. My mother took me to conference when I was a young baby. She tells me that I was a babe in arms, and she was in the Tabernacle at General Conference. So I went to Conference at an early age.

Sherlene: Are there some pioneer stories that Grandma and Grandpa passed down that might not be in other histories that you could tell now?

Tracy: Well, none specific. I think most of our people walked across the plains. They were with wagons, but they walked. I'm pretty sure that my grandmother Tracy walked all the way. ... That would have been my ... Well, let me see. I shouldn't say that about my grandmother Tracy. She was a Burdett. I'm not quite sure how she did come across the plains. It would have been Helon Henry Tracy, himself, that probably walked all the way across the plains. [He was too young to walk, being a year old, and still a babe in arms.] His brothers and sisters. I'm not sure of that even, though. I hadn't better make any specific statements on this, because Nancy Naomi Alexander Tracy says that her husband was a good provider, and I know he had wagons and what-not. They may have had a chance to do some riding across the plains.

Sherlene: What did Grandma Hall have to say about polygamy? Did she like it?

Tracy: She was for it. She never said anything against polygamy. I don't know whether she was for it for herself, but when the people would raise the question as to how their families got along with polygamy, she was always positive, and got along OK.

Sherlene: Did she tell any stories about polygamy and her family and history?

Tracy: Only about her husband having to go to jail for it and things like that.

Sherlene: Oh, when I said, Grandma Hall right now, you were talking about your grandma Hall.

Tracy: I was talking about my grandmother Tracy.

Sherlene: Your grandmother Tracy. I was talking about your mother.

Tracy: My mother.

Sherlene: Did she hear of anything or ...

Tracy: I don't remember anything that we don't have written down, you know, like Helon Henry Tracy's diary. It's a prison diary, which I have been going to type for the past fifteen years. In fact, I may have it typed. I just haven't done anything with it. And there is Nancy Naomi Alexander Tracy's so-called diary, which is just a little brief history of her life.



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Sherlene: While we're talking, can you think of any additional details about any of these ancestors? Any stories ... bring them up again? OK. How did you meet mother?

Tracy: Well, the girls in your own ward don't look too good to you for some strange reason and you like to go out to other wards and do a little ward-hopping when you get to be 18 and 19 and 20. I had seen mother [Ida Rose] at the 9th Ward. Some of us boys would go to a dance over there, when they would have a dance in their ward. Stand around most of the time too bashful to ask anybody to dance. But, I had noticed mother, and then, one time, my best friend Lane Compton, who lived on 30th Street when I first lived on 30th Street, he later moved to Jefferson Avenue near 28th Street, his father's name was George Compton. Lane and I were buddies all those early years. We were walking down Washington Avenue on the east side of the street. I think it was near the Ben Lomond Hotel and Ida Rose Langford came by. I didn't know her name. But I said to Lane, I says, "See that girl. I'm going to get a date with her." So I learned her name. I don't remember the details of how I learned her name, and where she lived. Got her telephone number and called her up for a date. She couldn't go. I don't remember the reason why. But I got a date for ..

Sherlene: Did she know who you were?

Tracy: Oh, I think so. I think she knew who I was. I'm sure she knew who I was. I got a date for a little later on. I don't remember our first date. Mom would remember it. But I saw other girls just a little bit in between there from the time we got married. Not much. But, I guess we went together for almost two years. And were finally married.

Sherlene: Tell us about your courtship. How did you propose to her?

Tracy: Mother told you that the other night. Didn't she put that on a tape or not?

Sherlene: Nope! It wasn't on tape.

Tracy: That wasn't on tape. Hmm! I thought we were taping that. Well, I had about \$53.00, something like that. And decided that it was about time to get engaged and get married. I was approaching 22 years of age, and Mom was about a year and a half younger. So I went down ... I was going to say Zales, but I believe it was Anderson's Jewelers, where Jack Jeffs, who was a member of our Bishopric in those days, worked. Later on Jack Jeffs went to Provo and worked for Zales, and I bought Mom a one third carat engagement ring to replace her earlier engagement ring which had somehow been lost. So, both of Mom's engagement rings I purchased from Jack Jeffs. Anyway, I purchased a ring. I think about a quarter carat diamond for \$50.00. When I went home that night, at the supper table everyone in the family seemed to sense something was up, and my parents teased me about getting engaged or something. I didn't tell them .... I guess I did. I guess I finally confessed and showed them the ring. So, I called her up and said something about not having enough money to do too much, but let's go to a show, and I don't think we ever went to the show, but I walked her up to Lester Park, which is across the street, east of the Moench Building at the old Weber College. And we sat down under a tree and I probably hugged her and kissed her a little bit and then pulled out this ring, and asked her if she would marry me. I can't remember the words. But ...

Sherlene: You mean you didn't get on your knees!

Tracy: No. I think we both just sort of sat there. And you better get the story from her. Women remember these things better. Anyway there wasn't too much light where we were



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sitting, so we had to run over under an arc light to look at a ring. She said, "Yes!" And this was, I think, about the 18th of July of 1941. And we were married in the Salt Lake Temple on the 24th of September of 1941. At the temple ... I was working at Sperry Mills. My friend Frank Davis was the Elder's Quorum president in the ward those days, and Lane Compton and I were his counselors. Frank had worked at Sperry Mill in their chemical laboratory. Frank was good at electronics and electrical stuff. He had been doing some electrical things for them. Frank got me a job there. A really good paying job for those days. It was fifty cents an hour. I worked as a chemist determining protein content, and moisture content. Ash content in flours and grains, and all the dirty jobs around there. I remember really one bad job of mixing the concentrated sodium hydroxide solutions. Boy, when your mixing that, the alkali spatters out ... try to ruin my lungs from breathing that stuff. I had to transfer the sulfuric acid around. Those were some tasks that were not very good. But for fifty cents an hour -- that was a really high paying job in those days.

Anyway, you needed money so bad, and you couldn't get off work in those days like you do now. You kept your nose to the grindstone and except for the very gravest of emergencies I normally would have worked to 5:00 o'clock. But I got off work at 4:00 o'clock. Ran home. Rode my bike, or something, as fast as I could. Rudeen Allred, who had recently been married, and his new bride agreed to take us to the temple. My father had to work. He was working in those days at Hill Field [Ogden Arsenal, west of Hill Field] as a railroad engineer or fireman on the railroad within the Hill Field complex, and he couldn't go on account of work. My mother went. Ida Rose's parents couldn't go at that time, because the father was inactive. And the mother could have got a Temple Recommend to go, but decided not to go because her husband couldn't. So that was the wedding party. My mother, Rudeen Allred and his wife, I think her name was Irene, and Mom.

We were married at an evening session. It took a long time. We got out about eleven o'clock. In those days, you didn't plan much ahead, I guess, youth doesn't often, anyway. Oh, we had planned ahead enough to have an apartment to live in while we were going to school. I was a senior that year at the University of Utah. But we couldn't be in that apartment for three days, so we stopped at the Mission Motor Lodge, which is near a warm springs swim place ... I guess it's still there on the south [north] outskirts of Salt Lake City. It used to be the end of the streetcar line. They dropped us off there. Not having much money, I tried to beat him down on the price, and I think I succeeded by about fifty cents. As I remember it, we staid there for something like \$3.00 a night ... Maube \$2.50 a night ... for 3 nights.

For our honeymoon, we went to the Utah State Fair, which was there.

Sherlene: Boy, that sounds really great, Dad!

Tracy: Well, we didn't have any money. We did have \$300.00, but I had to have that to go to school.

Sherlene: For our honeymoon, we just drove back east. (laughter)

Tracy: Then we moved into Lucy VanCott's apartment on a street there ... I think the street was University Avenue for fifteen dollars a month rent, for a sitting room and an outdoor sleeping porch, which was a little bit cool in the winter time. But, that's where we started our married life.

Sherlene: Who was with you in the temple?



Tracy: Well, I've told you that. Rudeen Allred, his wife, and my mother.

Sherlene: How come grandpa wasn't there?

Tracy: Well, he had to work. You couldn't really get away. In those days you just didn't (get off work). You had to work. You just didn't get off for something like that.

Sherlene: What was your reception like?

Tracy: The reception. I forgot. That's right, we had a reception ... it was held in the Ninth Ward, which was Ida Rose's ward. And put on by her parents mainly. And my parents did a few things. My father was not to the reception either. He had to work for that. My brother Eugene was my best man. We had a picture taken by my friend Darrell Reader at the reception, and as I remember it, Joyce Hall, not yet married to my brother Gene was in the line. I think Bailey, Barbara Bailey, who is now married to Ray Beiling, who was Moms best girl ... What is the opposite of best man? And her parents and my mother, and maybe a few others were in the line. We have a picture of that. It was a dance. That's the way they all were in that day. Many people brought us gifts. We had so many gifts. We had to lug all that stuff down to Salt Lake City later on.

I remember ... you know nowadays, when the wedding is over, the bride and the groom skip out, and other people handle that stuff, but we had to help get all those presents out of there on the way in Grandpa Langford's truck. It was a nice reception. All my friends came and many people were there.

Sherlene: What did Mother look like?

Tracy: Beautiful! She was thin, skinny, probably didn't weigh 125 pounds.

Sherlene: Tell us about the first years of your married life, while you were in school.

Tracy: Well, when Dr. Walter D. Bonner, who was chairman of the chemistry department found out that I was married, he right off gave me a good job. A part-time job. So I'd have enough money. In addition to that I continued to go weekends ... I would hitch-hike to Ogden. We usually went by train in those days. You would take the Bamberger Railroad which ran between Ogden and Salt Lake. But that would shoot all my week-end earnings to ride that, so I would hitch-hike up to Ogden, work the night shift. Usually Saturday night, and then sleep at my mother's, and then somehow hitch-hike back to Salt Lake. I don't remember the details of that. I may have gone to church in Ogden. I've forgotten. I think I would go to church in Ogden with my parents, and then hitch-hike back to Salt Lake Sunday evenings. And I kept that up for almost all that year.

Mother got a job working in Woolworths. She had worked at Woolworths in Ogden in the food area. I think she got a job clerking in Woolworths. Paid about twelve dollars a week. When it came June of that year. Time to graduate, we started looking at our financial situation. And I had made so much more money, just working part-time than Mom was able to make in the five and dime store, I said, "I think we can make it by just me earning the living, why don't you quit?" She went and got on the telephone at the neighbor's and called them up and told them she wasn't coming back to work, and that was the end of that.

Sherlene: She didn't take much persuading.



Tracy: Mom had a miscarriage while we were still at VanCotts. It could have been a baby to precede you, Sherlene. But she had a miscarriage. The one and only miscarriage she had.

Sherlene: How far along was she?

Tracy: I don't remember. Six weeks, or something like that. But, she got really sick one evening. You know, was sort of .... Oh, I don't know how to say it. Almost out of her mind, you know, with pain, and there was nothing I could do to console her. She was too hot. She was too cold. I would try to comfort her and nothing I could do, you know ... and it went on for so long, I decided we needed to get a doctor, so I awakened Miss VanCott, she never did get married. She was dean of women there. Spinster. She said, "She's pregnant, she's had a miscarriage or something." And we didn't ... Oh, no, she didn't have a miscarriage or anything. But the next day we decided we better get up to Ogden and get her to a doctor.

Sherlene: You mean you didn't even know if she was pregnant?

Tracy: No! And so we took her to a doctor up in Ogden and he just went to work in the doctor's office right there and ... she was having a miscarriage, and he took that scalpel thing and cleaned her womb all out, you know. You go to a hospital for that nowadays. They did it right there in the doctor's office. When she got out of there she was a new woman and felt perfectly OK. Even after all the trauma of that. She never had another miscarriage.

She went to the doctor for an examination before we were married as you do, you know, and she had a tipped uterus. And the doctor told her she'd have trouble with miscarrying. She would have trouble having babies to full term. But after that first one, she didn't. She did OK.

Sherlene: She had seven children! Do you have any other memories of your first years of your marriage?

Tracy: Oh, I guess there are lots of things. You could go on forever. Really. The important things to talk about ... I buckled down and did better in school after we were married. I was taking too many week-ends to run up to Ogden during the previous year, you know, to see Ida Rose. To see Ida Rose Langford. I'd go almost every week-end. So, once married, I had more time for study, and got more accomplished. That year, I took some of my hardest courses. I was taking electricity magnetism in physics -- modern physics, and advanced mathematics of one kind or another, and some of the very difficult courses. I remember this electricity and magnetism course being a particularly difficult one for me. It's a good thing I was married, because I did have more time to buckle down and get that one out of the way.

Sherlene: Where did you live? What was your apartment like?

Tracy: Well, this apartment, as I mentioned, had a sitting room. You shared the kitchen with all kinds of other students ... and the bathroom. A very narrow little tiny living, sitting room, If you want to call it that. And a sleeping porch, just screened in. We slept there winter and summer. That first winter was just freezing out there.

Sherlene: Can you remember what your rent was?



Tracy: Yeah, fifteen dollars a month. Maybe eighteen. It might have been eighteen dollars a month. Mom wanted to move into something that cost \$45.00 a month. We had a little friction in those days. I wanted to live just as cheap as you possibly can, and Mom always felt we could live it up a little bit. It's always been that way. (laughter)

Sherlene: Familiar old story. Any specific memories about the birth of Sherlene, Tracy, and David?

Tracy: Oh, yeah. With you, I can't remember. Mom would remember those details better, but I know that ... I can remember getting a taxicab and taking Mom to the LDS Hospital and waiting around outside for hours. I may have gone back to home or school. I don't remember how long it took for you to be born. But you were finally born and you were our pride and joy. We took lots of pictures of you. I can still remember Mom. Young, pretty, skinny ... skinny like Charlotte still is. And you. She was a good mother.

Tracy, Jr. I don't know the details of that. Because you see, I was in the Navy and I was back in Boston, and there was a certain time I could be home, and we thought Tracy might be born just about the time I got home, but he beat me by early morning, as I remember. I got there at maybe ten in the morning and he was born about four in the morning. He was born at Hill Field, where it was cheap because I was in the Navy. You could go to military installations. So, he was born there, and David was born about the time I was getting ... when was David born?

Sherlene: I can remember that I was staying with Grandma Langford when David was born. I don't know if she had all of us, but I know she had me.

Tracy: Seems to me we went to the LDS Hospital. I was going to get a Taxi and pick him up, then Henry Eyring offered to go in his car when we picked Mom up. And I can remember carrying Mom into the car from the wheelchair. In those days, they kept women for I think it was two weeks in hospitals.

Sherlene: Sounds great!

Tracy: They wouldn't let them do a thing. They didn't make them get up and exercise.

Sherlene: They thought it was bad for them.

Tracy: Yeah. And it was bad for them. And it cost more money. Of course, hospital costs weren't bad in those days. You could have a baby for \$35.00. Thirty-five dollars is all the doctor would charge. Hospital was probably about the same. Thirty-five dollars. Fifty dollars. But, I think we lived in Stadium Village when David was born. Could that be? Yeah, I think Henry Eyring brought him home. We had three kids.

Sherlene: I can remember looking at David, and I expected this beautiful little baby, because that's what mother said about him over the phone. And he had that clear, fair skin. It was almost transparent and I could see all the little blue blood veins.

Tracy: Yeah, that's right. David was that way.

Sherlene: And I thought that looked kind of funny!

Tracy: Yeah, he was a translucent baby. I remember that too. I think David is still a little bit that way.



Sherlene: He was a beautiful baby! When I look at some of his baby pictures, but I can just remember that impression when he first came back. How did World War II affect your life? Under what circumstances did you first learn of the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

Tracy: Well, I was studying this electricity and magnetism book that I had just mentioned in our little apartment there in Lucy VanCott's. Mother was playing checkers, or some other game, with some of the single men there, which she often did while I was studying. (Ponders a moment, then asks of Ida Rose) What game were you playing with those boys when I was studying when we heard of the bombing?

Ida Rose: We were putting a puzzle together.

Tracy: It was a puzzle you were putting together. OK! And I don't know whether I was listening to the radio. I think I was listening to the radio while I was studying. Yeah, I used to build radios when I was a kid. So we had a radio. Old beat up radio that I was listening to while I was studying. And just suddenly there on the 7th of December 1941. Yeah, we had only been married 3 months. "The Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor!" And you heard it too, about the same time and came in to tell me, but I had already knew it because I was listening to the radio.

Ida Rose: Somebody came running into the room and said, "The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor!" And I said, "Where's Pearl Harbor?" And they said, "Hawaii!" And I said, "Oh, they wouldn't dare!"

Tracy: There had been trouble brewing between ... Of course, the Germans, you know, had already been fighting Great Britain and there had been some trouble between the Japanese and the U.S.A. We didn't pay that much attention in those days.

Ida Rose: I didn't even know there was any problem.

Tracy: But, that's the news we got. Yeah, we were scared because we knew what that meant. Young men going in the service.

Ida Rose: My mother had told me that. And I wondered if I ought to marry Tracy or not .... and I was really surprized when she said, "Yes, I think you should get married. You might just as well have a little bit of happiness. There's a war coming.

Sherlene: So she knew that, huh?

Ida Rose: And I didn't pay much attention to it even then because ... I didn't know. I knew that the Germans were fighting over in Germany, and I knew that there was a World War going on, but it just didn't touch us. It hadn't even ocured to me.

Sherlene: So then what happened?

Tracy: Well, we had to get a classification. A draft classification right away, and, of course, at first they weren't taking marrieds. So I was deferred for awhile on account of being married. And then you came along and that added to the deferment.

Sherlene: That's why you had me!

Tracy: So if you had kids, that helped a little. But then, eventually, everybody was going into the wars. You finally knew they were going to get you. And rather than be drafted, I enlisted. But they would have had me anyway in a few months. And the reason I enlisted



was that I didn't want to be in the Army. If I was going to be anyplace, I wanted to be in the Navy. And I had heard that you could get ... I wanted to do something technical. I just didn't want to be a guy shooting a gun and that sort of thing. And I had heard that there might be the possibility of getting into electronics, if you were in the Navy. So, I enlisted in the Navy ... You didn't know for sure who they would take. Because on some days they would put you in the Army. Some days they would put you in the Marines. Some days in the Air Force. Some days in the Army. No choice!

Ida Rose: They just had to fill quotas.

Tracy: But, you know, a lot of scuttlebut goes around, and we got that on this day, they were definitely going to be taking you in the Navy. So I definitely got in the Navy. I applied to be an officer. You see, I had a Master's Degree in chemistry, and with a bachelor's degree you were eligible automatically to become an officer. I was working at the Bureau of Mines

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. They had just cut my father's mouth to pieces, and he went