

As we appropriately thank and worship our Savior and try to obey the admonitions of His Latter Day Prophets, I realize that it has been a long time since I put pen to paper. So let me tell you some things about Henry C. Hall who was born October 11, 1858. I'll begin with the subject of Horse Drawn Street Cars.

Before street cars were electrified, the cars were pulled by horses along wooden rails that were capped with a thin strip of steel.

This enterprise, which spread from city to city beginning in the 1850's was a major operation.

The Vanderbilt family wealth was generated, initially, from their horsecar holdings.

Following are some U.S. statistics concerning horse-powered street car lines in the year 1880.

- No. of Horsecar Railways: 415
- No. of Cars: 18, 000
- No. of Horses: 100, 000
- Yearly Hay Consumption: 150, 000 tons
- Yearly Grain Consumption: 11, 000, 000 bushels
- Miles of track: 3, 000
- Passengers Carried: 1, 212, 400, 000
- Employees: 35, 000
- Investment:: \$150, 000, 000. 00

Some mules were employed on the street railways. They had advantages and disadvantages. One disadvantage was a mule's stubbornness. It would often just lie down and refuse to work or it would head for the "car barns" where it knew there was hay and grain to eat

On the positive side, a mule could be toilet trained.

Horses could not be trained in this respect. Consequently their accumulated excrements were knee deep in some areas of New York City and the odor was unbearable. This was the era of the long skirt and you can well imagine Madam's problems in "keeping her skirt clean".

My Grandfather, Henry C. Hall, was the first man to drive the street railway car when it was introduced into Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1882. Cedar Rapids employed mules to pull the cars.

My grandfather, Henry C. Hall, of whom I speak, was born in Lafayette, Allen County, Ohio. My great grandfather, also named Henry C. Hall, was a merchant who owned a small store in Lafayette. Unfortunately, he died on October 20, 1858 leaving five children: Clarissa, Hannah Ellen, Esther, Mariette and Henry C. who was 14 years old at the time. Tragically, Elizabeth Staley, Henry's wife, died two years later.

Great grandfather's will was probated and gives an interesting account of about 100 persons who owed him money. My father and mother, Howard and Florence Tracy Hall made an effort in 1949 to locate his store only to find that it had been torn down the day before they arrived.

Henry C., the youngest of the children, was sent to live with his grandfather William Hall. On obtaining his majority at age 21 years, he received, in cash, his portion of his father's estate.

With part of his cash, he bought a team of horses and a wagon and started west, buying and selling scrap iron along the way. The farther west he went, the more valuable the scrap iron became. Upon reaching Mount Vernon, Iowa he stopped to rest and stayed awhile. I estimate that the trip lasted 90 days and covered about 900 miles.

While there, he met Mary Ann Woodcox and, after a short courtship, married on November 29th, 1883. It is rumored that Mary Ann's parents, Alfred Woodcox and Naomi McElroy, for unknown reasons did not fully appreciate the sterling qualities of my grandfather. Consequently, Henry had to steal his bride-to-be with the help of a ladder to a second story window. They then continued west to Cedar Rapids where grandfather sold the horses, the wagon and the rest of the scrap iron. With the proceeds, they purchased a home on Second Avenue (also called Eagle Street). (I have been unable to determine the location of their home from the old-time maps). Their oldest children, Saint (Sam) and my father Howard were born there.

Soon after taking up residence my grandfather obtained the street car driver position already mentioned. The pay was good and the work enjoyable, but he was still attracted to opportunities further west. So he moved again.

Incidentally, my wife, Ida-Rose, blames my grandfather for handing "Junk Genes" down to me. It's true, I look for steel in junk yards first before buying new steel to build experimental high pressure/high temperature machines capable of transforming graphite into diamond.

I'll bet you did not know that old railway axles make excellent tie bars for my diamond making machines. I've bought tons of pounds of ductile-iron steel from a Canadian company that went bankrupt.

I simply can't resist a bargain in steel and probably have 20 tons of it stored in front of my machine shop located at 1190 Columbia Lane in Provo. Ida-Rose worries about what she will do with it if I should be the first to die.

Railroading was in our families blood. My father, Howard Hall, followed in his fathers footsteps until going into the transfer business previously mentioned.

My Hall ancestry does not come from the pioneer Mormon family genealogical lines and tracing our ancestry has proved to be difficult. My grand parents were nominally non-active Methodists and not at all interested in such things.

Briefly, my father was converted to the LDS church by my mother, Florence Tracy, before they were married in 1918 in the Salt Lake Temple.

I was their first child and they named me Howard Tracy Hall. To avoid confusion between my father and me, they called me Tracy and I have signed my name as H. Tracy Hall for a very long time.

My fathers life dramatically changed after he joined the Church.

