

Change -

There IS Life After Death

How do I know that there *is* life after death? Because of an experience I had while living in Schenectady, New York, where my husband was employed as a research associate in the General Electric Research Laboratory. We lived there from 1948 to 1955.

At the time this experience happened, I was Relief Society President of the Schenectady Branch. My Counselors were Elaine Maddock and Helen Barton. The Branch was truly an extended family. Most of the branch brethren were transplants from the intermountain west and employed by the general Electric Company. Most of us had young children. When there were new babies, and /or illness in a family, we took care of each other. We had to! Travel by air was almost unknown at that time, and it was very difficult for our mothers to come and help us at the time of the birth of a new child, or when illness occurred, because of the distance and expense. The branch was small enough so that we knew each other as well, almost, as if we had been blood brothers and sisters.

While we lived in Schenectady, a new convert family joined the Branch. Natives of New York, the wife was a descendant from the original dutch settlers of the Albany-Schenectady area of New York State. To maintain the privacy of this family I will call them Brent and Mary Wall. Mary would do anything for anyone and we all loved her. She was known in the branch as "best cook," and was our chief source of new recipes. Her husband, Brent, was a building contractor and was soon building a new home for us as well as for several of the other branch members.

One Sunday night when many of the members of the branch were at a Branch fireside in one of the member's homes, the Branch President, Jack Hopper, motioned to me to step into the next room. He told me that Mary had just died at her home, suddenly, of a stroke or a heart attack, and that Brent had called and asked him to come to their home as soon as possible. President Hopper requested that I accompany him and his wife to the home. Tracy had invited one of his associates at the Research Lab to be the speaker that evening, and said he would come to the Wall home as soon as he could get away.

We arrived quite soon after she died. The doctor had as yet not arrived to examine her. Brent, of course, was quite distraught. It was my own first-hand experience with death, and to have it happen to someone as close to me as Mary, was a very traumatic experience. In fact, it is difficult to put into words even now the feelings I experienced during that time. I remember that I did not sleep much the next few nights.

Because Brent was new in the Church he had asked the Branch President to handle the funeral arrangements. My daytime hours were occupied with making plans and preparations for the funeral. One night, while we were at the chapel rehearsing some choir numbers for the funeral, Elaine Maddock, my 1st counselor, motioned for me to follow her into the foyer. There she told me that Mary had come to her the night before.

"Did you see her?" I asked, surprised.

later that summer. When she told her story to the temple President they waived the usual name clearance procedure and let her go right through the temple for Mary.

Yes, there is Life after Death, and when necessary the dead are allowed to communicate with the living. There was no worthy adult member of the Church in Mary's family. Mary loved missionary work and had once confided to me that she would be the happiest person in the world if she could just always be doing missionary work. Was her endowment needed so that she could do missionary work among her people on the other side? Any answer would be sheer speculation. Needless to say, this experience has been to me an added testimony of the importance of temple work and there is no doubt in my mind that Elaine's experience was true as she related it to me.

I would appreciate it if this experience were treated as sacred by the family. It is important to preserve the privacy of the family concerned in this experience. It should not be published outside the family.

Ida-Rose Hall