

February 6, 1988

Dear Family:

Last month has been a very busy for me. Work has really been picking up with the continued decline in interest rates. When houses are not selling then the inspection business begins to wane. The opposite is also true. My evenings have become more cluttered with report writing. I have not been able to spend as much time with the children as I would like to.

Mid-January I went with the scouts into the mountains and built igloos. They took all day to build so we stayed over Saturday night to sleep in them. We had 5 igloos for 13 people; 4 of which were adults. There were two igloos already built by another troop's campout of the previous weekend so we only had to build three. The troop has a spot they go to every year that is on the opposite side of the road from a ski resort. We parked in the ski-lift parking lot. Because we didn't hike very far from the parking lot we didn't need snow shoes, but they would have helped. The top two feet of snow was kind of a packed powder. The snow was over 8 feet deep. We never did find the bottom. Once in a while I would take a step and find myself up to the thigh in snow.

At noon on Sunday we had a short sacrament meeting with one of the councilors in our bishopric. He came up that morning. The temperatures were so cold that the sacrament water iced up within five minutes. The temperatures never got below 32 degrees at night in the igloos. The high was around 45 degrees. Some of the igloos got so warm that they fogged up. This happened when the boys played hard, were hot and changed wet clothes.

The basic rule of snow camping is, "Stay dry, stay warm." Everyone came well prepared for the cold. Most people wore wool clothing in layers. I bought a pair of hip waders just for the outing. We took a 4 week scout training seminar to prepare for the overnight. Proper igloo design is critical to keeping an igloo warm. I found the whole experience very educational. Everyone had a good time.

We took the children to the mountains to see the igloos and play in the snow yesterday. All the kids got to go inside of an igloo except Willis. Willis decided that he did not like wearing gloves and does not like the snow. The other kids thought the snow was great as long as dad carried them up the hill. The snow was too deep for the children to be comfortable. We had fun with the inner tube and plastic toboggans. We didn't stay as long as the kids wanted, but it was all that Charlotte and I could handle. We knew it was time to go when the kids started to get wet and Willis would not stop crying.

I have made a substantial addition to my article and resubmitted it to the Ensign magazine. If it gets printed, it will appear in the April issue. I do not know what editing they will do should

they decide to use it. I have received several favorable post cards from the magazine's editor over the past year on the original version. I would expect the title of the article to be, "The Sign of Jonah". The revised version provides additional information on the day of passover and first day in the feast of unleavened bread. The entire article is based upon scriptural rather than historical evidence.

I had my hearing tested last Monday. My hearing is way down again. The testing revealed that my hearing is now as low as it was when I first tested last October. It will improve again just as it always has. The disappointment however is that we have not been able to control the symptoms. I expect that it will eventually lead to surgery. This is not an emergency. I will be seeing my regular doctor again in March before any decisions are made. No dates have been set as of this writing to see a specialist. I might even be able to schedule the operation at my convenience.

We are taking the family to Washington D.C. for the Hall family reunion this year. We are looking forward to seeing as many of the Hall family that can make it this June right after school is out. We will all be meeting at Charlotte's sister's house in Arlington, Va. They have a large house, but we will still have some of us camping out in the back yard. We will be there the week of June 13-18th.

We have started looking at homes. We really haven't decided whether to buy or build. Right now we are just trying to find out what is available for what price. We want to buy a home that we can live in for a long time. We are in no hurry to jump. We have decided that we prefer living in the Snohomish area. I have not been bothered too much by the long commute, although we haven't placed any absolute restrictions on where we will live. We have only identified preferences. We have not eliminated living down south as a possibility. The primary goal right now is to keep high emotions out of any decision that would impede our judgement.

I am also finding out that looking at homes with different realtors is an excellent way to promote business. The realtors in the north end are finding out who inspects homes. My boss does not advertize his business and most of the realtors in the north end have been looking for someone in my line of work. If I can build up a sufficient base to draw from, I might go into business for myself. This type of a decision would be more than a year away.

Love: Bryan, Charlotte, Sarah, Hannah, Hyrum and Willis Weight