

Tracy and Betsy  
April 18, 1978 (Tuesday 7 pm)  
Hallmanack, volume ?

Gentle Readers (heh-heh-heh),

Once again the Hallmanack was wonderful and uplifting. Who can doubt the strengthening influence of a strong family? I feel so terribly frustrated at all the things we see around us out here and on television because so many are being deceived and I just can't stand the thought of all that misery. Ah me. Several members of my Sunday School class were in the "Senior Frolics" at their high school and I want to see them. Each act was rehearsed independently so none of my kids knew what was in store for the overall show; the girls were so embarrassed by the extreme crudity of most of the acts that they really felt ashamed. Most of the boys, however, couldn't comprehend what had upset them and me. It blew my mind. I have been fortunate to have become very close to most of them and they will pretty much speak their minds to me. It became clear to me that my natural revulsion is not naturally shared by anybody just because he's grown up in the Church and in a wholesome family. These boys, although they're not inclined to behave in immoral ways, still just couldn't understand what was offensive about it; one of them actually said he thought I must be "insane". This is a boy I love like my own brother! You can bet that I spent a lot of time on my knees over this incident, and it was all very instructive where my own children's future is concerned. Everybody had told these kids what is wrong, but they were really innocent in the sense that they had no idea why it's wrong. Generally speaking, television, movies, and books give an inaccurate picture of the relationship between sin and misery (to say the least!). You know, a drunk is "funny" etc. But they (my class) are all serious kids and I was heartened by the effects of my persuasive attempts. I would have felt quite despondent if I had failed to change their minds at all. I have enjoyed them so thoroughly and Tracy has been very supportive -- tolerated having them over at the house etc, etc.

Dad, I just love your recent letters. As far as I am concerned you can keep it up weekly and indefinitely. And Mom, you will never know how much I appreciated your encouraging words. I really was not prepared emotionally for this pregnancy (I only wanted a few more months!) and I've had some rather alarming physical symptoms as well. I've had to take it very easy which makes it hard on the rest of the family and makes me feel so useless. But Tracy has been wonderful and I am gradually feeling like myself again (emotionally, that is). It's not the thought of a new baby that bothers me; it's just BEING PREGNANT!

Virginia, THANK YOU for the pillowcases. They are loved and appreciated, treasured, cuddled, mangled and mauled (bewitched, bothered, and bewildered). Barry, I just noticed that your birthday was April Fool's Day (like Nancy's). I'm sorry we missed it -- Happy Birthday. How old were you this year? (I think we need a family group sheet -- or do we have one?) Wonderful to hear that Ginger may be expecting again! (Misery loves company? No, I didn't mind my first six pregnancies.) It still makes me mad to think of your R.S. president! How can she think that way!

Charlotte, how are you feeling? Bryan, could you remind us of your birthdate? I'm so glad you two (& 1/2) will still be around at Aspen Grove time.

If any of the rest of you who haven't had a chance to get to know him (Bryan, I mean) yet, would like testimonials from us 'ns who have a bit (oh whatever would I do without erasable bond paper? I just HATE to type!), Tracy and I both feel that Bryan is a very fine fellow indeed and just right for Charlotte. As well, he comes from an excellent family.

Nancy, we enjoyed your letter so much and are glad to hear that things are going well for you and Doug. Can hardly wait to see Carli.

Karen, your letter was great. The thought of how busy you must be puts me in a stupor. I've got to corner David when I see him -- I've got a few questions about his hiring and firing at Mega.

Sherlene, I went through my files on abortion but felt pretty sure that I don't have anything that will be new to you. I must admit that I feel pretty suspicious about somebody putting the anti-abortion people on the spot about "alternatives" because it draws attention away from the main issue, which is its rightness or wrongness. Obviously, in the particular sense the only alternative is to have the baby. When they talk in terms of "alternatives" they bring in questions of expediency, which I don't think should apply where human life is concerned, except in the most severe emergencies. In the general sense the alternative is not to get pregnant -- which is another can of worms. I admit that I too have been embarrassed once in a while at the behavior and rhetoric of some of the anti-abortionists. Most of all I am heartsick to have to deal with it at all. That such a practice is so widespread and accepted is really almost beyond my comprehension. It's the thought of the heartache to be endured by the deceived and misguided that gets to me worst. Ah me. I am running out of energy or I would add some thoughts that I have recently had on the subject. Maybe in the next edition.

What with Seminary, tax forms due, our landscaping project at our new meetinghouse, his Hebrew class, and my general feebleness lately, Tracy has really been overburdened. Would you believe he has done all the dishes for the last three weeks? Tomorrow night we are attending a Passover feast his Hebrew teacher is putting on. The Seminary kids just love him -- they think he's crazy, but they love him. It's a challenge just to hold their attention. Tracy usually manages.

I can hardly believe that we have a boy who is going to be baptized in less than a month. How the years do go. Tracy and I celebrated the tenth anniversary of our first date in March. All the children are thriving and making us proud. What will the next ten years bring? Ah, me.

We think of you all with love all the time, and Grandpa Langford too. Keep the faith, Hold down the fort, etc., etc., etc. And I hope this comes round again before Aspen Grove.

Yours truly and much love,  
Betsy and the rest of the HTH Jr.s

*Love to all*

*Tracy Jr*