

April Hallmanck.

Dear Children:

Enclosed is a copy of Dad's latest revision of his hymn. Does this inspire any of you to try your hand at writing a hymn? Ginger and Liz have taken a hymn writing course at the Y--or at least it was included in a course at the Y. Whatever. You can tell I'm not sure of my facts.

I didn't realize so much was involved in writing a hymn. You have to fit the words to the music or vice versa, then there is the problem of making the most important words which you want accented, be accented--by holds in the music or on a high note???? anyway, it's not as easy as it sounds. If any of you want to write music use the modern approach. It sounds as if it would be easier, as they make up words to fit one simple melody (played loudly & over repeated over and over. At least that is what it seems to me.

If any of you are planning to visit us this summer here are some dates to remember. We won't be home from July 13 to July 28th as we are taking a tour to Alaska. The tour up the coast of Canada, from Vancouver, takes one week. Then we will debark from the boat and take a bus tour of one week around Alaska, ending up in Fairbanks, from where we will fly back to Salt Lake City. The cheapest way to go is to take the Alcan highway to Alaska, but we've always wanted to take a cruise up to Alaska. Wonder if I'll get seasick? It's a BYU sponsored tour, and Jonssons and a new couple in our ward, the Smiths, are also going on the tour.

We will also be gone from the 13th to the 28th of April, as Dad has a speaking tour of Oklahoma. He is going to read up on oil drilling, as ~~this~~ ^{Oklahoma} is oil drilling country.

We will get back just in time for me to enter spring semester at the BYU. I will take one class, Early American History. Fall Semester I took an incomplete in one class and did the paper this semester. One of the books I used for a reference was one of the History Books which Tracy Jr. used in either High School or college, and it was interesting. He marks all over the place (no wonder he didn't sell his books back) (and I am glad he didn't as it was an excellent reference book for me,) and I didn't have to worry about the book getting over-due. When he read something which agreed with his own thinking, he would make little comments in the margin. I was going to give you an example but couldn't find the book momentarily. ~~It~~ ^{He} was by Comanger and another author and covered the US to 1865. Tracy can have it if he wants it after I graduate, which may mean never.

We have had an early spring. My flowering Crab Apple outside the living room window only bloomed on half the tree this year. I think the spray company missed that half when they did a dormant spray. I wonder if a dormant spray done after the blossoms are on would keep the fruit from setting. ~~Sett?~~

It is beautiful now. I love spring. The flowers and flowering trees are so lovely, and the air is cleaner than usual. I don't think we will get any apricots this year on our big tree, ~~and~~ ^{but} weather permitting we will have a few on the new apricot trees. We will have a few sweet cherries and peaches. Maybe.

The early spring caught us unawares, so that I didn't get my roses pruned and the leaves have come out on the old stalks. Which does not make for the best quality roses.

Dad has been learning the computers we have. Now he is talking about getting a music composing set-up. Summer is coming and the farm will keep him busy, and maybe by fall he will forget about it. I don't know where we would put it.

Charlotte: I need a picture of Willis Tracy .
I missed. I wonder if anyone took a tape of that?
Betsy was on a panel at the Women's conference, which I am sorry I missed.

The trouble with projects, is that one spawns another. I got started putting the apples with pictures on Virginia's family tree, which I had framed on a heavy cardboard, and which has been waiting for a long time for me to get at. ~~the~~ *(near end of sentiment with a preposition)*

Then when I started to try to find pictures of our own children with their spouses to put in the holes she left in the limbs of the trees, I started looking for pictures I could use from our own collection---which led to going through my genealogy files. Currently I have three different projects going on in the family room which I will have to finish before we go to Oklahoma as I will not have time for such projects once I get back in school. So here I am writing a Hallmanack. What's your excuse?

D.J. will need some plastic surgery to open the socket of his one eye so that the doctors can put the size (don't know the name of the thing) retainer? in his eye so that the bones of his face will not grow unevenly. He can have an glass eye when he is a little older. Nancy has a good surgeon who comes over to Utah twice a month. He does only eye surgery of this type. It will be tricky-- not to cut nerves that will let the eye blink, etc. Nancy and Doug are doing a good job with him, and he is strong and healthy. Nancy had his hearing checked this week, and the doctors thought there might be some problem there. I don't believe it--he responds to sounds so well. ~~I guess the final one~~ They are going to do some subsequent testing, however, and I guess the final answers will not be in until D.J. can or can't tell us what he can hear by himself. I know you all continue to remember him--and his parents--in your prayers, as we do. Dan and Sherlene need ~~them~~ *their prayers*, too. Right now, I guess the thing we can do best for Sherlene is to give her moral support. She's going to have a lot of hard decisions to make--probably some of them against her will, in the future.

Be kind to each other, you wives and husbands, and spend time together--without the children. Have you ever tried to hold an adult conversation surrounded by your little children? I guess you could go in the bedroom or bathroom and lock the door. But they would probably be pounding on the door. Children have an aversion to closed (against them) doors.

We recently got back from California where we went to the Toolshow. Dad drooled over shop machines and I got several new orchids.

Virginia's was the only letter we received from you children. I know your lives get increasingly busy. what I can't understand is where is all that free time we were going to have when we retired?

Liz has a lovely new home and is in process of making it fit their life style. She will be teaching music in the private school next door to her next year. (her old school will surely miss her) . She will be paid for this, but will probably take out her wages in tuition for Erin and John who will attend the private school. Her wages won't cover both tuitions, however.

Charlotte and Bryan have rented a townhouse in Capistrano and if we had stayed the next day we could have seen the "swallows come back to Capistrano". The next month or two will be milestone ones for them, too, as they will be making important career decisions for Bryan.

I am increasing impressed by the splendid way you are raising the Grandchildren, and the Grandchildren's increasing growth in talent and intellect. Nancy has Carli in a home school this year and is teaching art to a group of home-schoolers in her neighborhood.

Karen is putting her new talents to work by keeping the books and doing the income tax for David's businesses. I hope that all of you are exposing your children to computers as much as possible. It's as important in their lives as s typing was in my generation. Technology is incredible.