

February 20, 1977

Dear Family:

Just finished reading the Hallocaust which came delivered in Person (the way I would like to have it delivered each time) via Elizabeth and her family. We have enjoyed having them so much that I just realized that I forgot to call Barry and Virginia and Sherlene and Dan and families during the excitement of the festivities. I think the real reason was that by the time dinner was over I was too tired to think straight. After all, I am now 56 and that makes me almost a senior citizen. I am beginning to feel like one, too. It was a lovely day, though. I would like to have eliminated the morning part, but being a Bishop's wife that was not possible. We had to go to an "senior Citizen's" party, held annually by the stake. We took in a morning movie at the Scera (you will be happy to know they have redecorated the theatre and have added NEW SEATS. Those were getting really sad, you know. There is one innovation which you won't like. They have eliminated the "lover's seats" which were put every so often at the ends of the rows) The movie was "Song of Norway" from which we came away sniffing sentimentally and wondering why the hollywood moguls don't make "those good movies" any more.

I am afraid that Hallocaust is such a catchy name that it has already stuck, but think that Elizabeth's suggestions are good ones. Everybody vote as to which name he or she likes best and make your own suggestions. I vote for Liz's Hallmanack, for it is "sticky", too, and I like her Hallways, but doubt if I could remember it. I have already had to look it up twice to type this letter, which is a further indication of the decrepit state of my brains.

There is one thing wrong with this system, and I would like to suggest that instead of each one of you taking your letter out yourself, that we let it return to a central depository (which I will volunteer to be) and I will take them and put them in envelopes or files or whatever so that we will have them on record. If you put in pictures or things which you want returned to you, you can remove those when the letter comes around, but when the letters get back to me I will remove all the old ones and leave the newer ones in to be read, etc. These will not belong to me but will be property of the "H. Tracy Hall" family organization (to be organized in future) and will be passed on to that organization. It will make a good reference history at some future date. Open to veto by anyone who wishes to do so.) Or if someone would like to volunteer to be "secretary" of the organization, we will send the letters to her or him or whatever.

I had a lovely birthday, thank you, all. Your turtles were promptly gobbled down by Ginger, and did not do good to my diet at all, but then I am constantly getting "No good" to my diet so no worry. I will take your contribution (too substantial, you shouldn't have done it) to buy an orchid with me when we go to California. I can probably get a nice orchid for that amount. And now I will have plenty of room for it in my greenhouse.

Tracy I was impressed with your vocabulary. (Can that boy really be MY son. He surely didn't get his brains from his mother, or if he did, he took all of hers and left her bereft of any. Maybe the father had something to do with that, eh?) "doubt, speculation, and apologetics that fill the cottony mouths of the sectarian theologians or the strident theatrics that fulminate from the mouths of the fundamentalists," indeed! I always said you missed your callings. I am interested in your interest in the Jews, Tracy, but do not like the idea of being one of the mothers of the "Prophets to the Jews" left lying in the streets of Jerusalem for three days. Please to confine your efforts to the Jewish West Coast.

(Oops. Picked up the wrong piece of paper)

~~These are all diagonal lines. Diag.~~

I am glad that you are all taking the advice of the church and getting your year's supply of food in. Nancy and Doug and David and Karen are doing it too, but I will let them tell you about that. Dad decided that we had enough wheat for the three of us, but we decided to get another 500 lbs for insurance in case of catastrophe and everyone came in from the coast or whatever. (500 lbs of wheat wouldn't feed us all for long, but it would help in an emergency.) As Liz said we could all "cummune" out on the farm. (Bring your tents). I have to fill all my two quart jars with water. I am going to "can:" them, and put them on the shelf with newspapers around them and between them and just "leave" them for future reference. Hope we will never need to use them.

The thing I feel from reading your letters, is your great strength in the gospel, and nothing could make us happier than to know our children are living close to the Lord, because we know that as long as you are close to the Lord, that there is no earthly "unhappiness" which will throw you too much. The Lord really meant it when he said: 'My peace I give unto you--not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' "Take my burden upon you, for my yoke is easy and my burden light." It is wonderful to know that our posterity is growing up bathed in the light of the gospel, and learning of their heritage in that gospel, which is the greatest earthly heritage that a father and mother can bestow. All the gold and silver of the world cannot compensate for lack of christian ethic and gospel principles for your children to cling to in times of trial and trouble, and those will come to all of us sooner or later in our lives. That's what we're here for, isn't it--but it is a comfort to know that our Heavenly Father is there to comfort and sustain and encourage.

There is a feeling of spring in the air in Provo these last few days. The ground is sufficiently thawed out in Payson that I am going out Monday (feb 22) and take my little hired boy and dig in the asparagus roots. In a few years you kids will have to plan to come to Utah when the Apricots, Peaches, or whatever are on so that you can can all this stuff we are planting. It is kind of a relief to know that I don't have to put up 10 bushes of tomatoes or peaches or apricots anymore, but at the same time I hate to see things go to waste and it will go against my grain to give away peaches, etc. which I know my children and grandchildren would like to be munching on all winter.

I guess you know I am going back to school this year. I am thoroughly enjoying it. And I know that if Betsy didn't have all those little children and if Karen didn't have hers that they would both just love to be back in the class room. I think that education is wasted on the young. They cannot enjoy it like I do, I'm sure. I just wish I had the time to really do what I would like to in my classes. I am taking humanities 101 from Jon Green this semester and would like to have more time to look up musicians, writers, poets, artists and etc and know more about their lives. After I saw "Song of Norway, I wanted to go home and look up the life of Grieg and see where he spent the rest of his life--did he have children--etc. Some of the music with which I was familiar in the movie, I had not previously attributed to his pen. My trouble (and I doubt if I'll change) is that when I listen to music--I just enjoy it--I pay no attention to who wrote it or when or why--so that if someone should ask me how I liked a certain symphony I would just have to say "Huh?"

However, we are going to "death of a salesman" next Wednesday, "The opera next week and also the Bolstoi? Ballet that will be part of the community concert offerings in March. John and Wendy Hall brought me Velasquez's "The maids in waiting" (a print) from their Semester abroad. By the way

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Also thank you Liz for the escape literature. (actually, not so escape--good stuff) Charlotte gave me a huge box of genealogical "clear" cover sheets and I intend to make a book of remembrance of all the weddings so that the children can look at it when they come grandmothering. And I loved the pictures, Sherlene. I am appalled (as I am always when I see myself mirrored in a store window or a photograph) with the weightiness of my carriage, and always resolve to do something about my figure. I am literally a "Big Mama." (Oh, dear! why do I like all those yummys that DO so much for me.) That is a wonderful picture of Dad and I will take it to Ogden next time to show him. That's another unfinished project that I am going to do--write the life History of my Father for him, but Ginger's volunteered to do that for me. I will just make a carbon of her work.

Oh by the way, Ginger, Most of all I loved the "mash" note. I love you too, and will put your mash note among my memorabilia. (wrong word, or something). Too lazy to look it up. Dad went out to get me a birthday present of four folding children's chairs to put up to my table, since my chairs are all split, but couldn't find any. Took Greg with him and Greg kept saying "do we HAVE to go to another store?"

I received an interesting letter from a Mrs. White in Oklahoma saying that she had read about my book in a genealogical helper and could she obtain a copy of it. She said that she had in her possession a letter (1840) from David and Margaret Bethurem to her progenitor a Dr. Joseph Kincaid. Whoopee! Hope they know more than I do about the family, and that they can clear up some points of non-knowledge such as what is the maiden name of Margaret Kincaid, wife of John, who was the father of James, wife of Margaret Bethurem, if you can figure THAT one out. More next time if I hear from her before then.

Daddy has been one sick feller, but I hope that he will get better now. He had a bad day yesterday and today has a sore throat, but went to church, anyway. I do hope he doesn't get back to where he was before. He had a pretty good week last week and I had (have) hopes that he is on the improve. He is a good man, your father, among other things.

We have ordered three dwarf apples, two dwarf apricots, ten thornless boysenberries, 100 Asparagus roots, two or three walnuts, a pecan (which won't live, I'll bet--at least not out in Payson-- two pear trees (maybe those didn't come through) and two cherries, for the payson farm. The house isn't finished as yet, but is coming along.

We thoroughly enjoy having David and his family back in Provo. It is nice to see the grandchildren a little more. We also enjoy having Nancy and Doug around. Where Nancy is there is never a dull moment. She has inherited some of that energy that her grandmother Langford had and she can do almost anything she sets her mind to doing. Carli is a cute little thing and smart as smart. She is not yet six months old and can turn herself over from back to front and front to back and is soon going to be crawling. If I grow like a proud grandmother you've got to remember that Carli is the first grandchild I have been able to watch grow. Now I can watch Michael grow too. (And Stephen and Mark). Of course I have the smartest, cutest grandchildren of anyone--but of course. Emily and Greg just came up the stairs all dressed up to go to Sunday School and they look so cute you can't believe it.

We will try to catch Sherlene and Dan and Ginger and Barry this afternoon. All are coming over to dinner (lunch) this afternoon and we will try then. We have enjoyed having Liz play and sing this morning--and wish they could stay longer. However--we are grateful that they made the long, long trip to see us.

Wendy is going to Portugal on a mission and is now in the LTM.) and as I knew nothing about that particular artist I took him as one of my assignments in the class and thoroughly enjoyed looking ~~he~~ and his art up and studying it a little bit. I got two ~~++~~ ++'s on my paper. (One plus excellent, ~~xxxx~~ a 0 satisfactory and a - unsatisfactory.)

I am taking that gruesome 170 History course and while I love History usually, to try to digest 700 pages of American history in 5 weeks is something else. I am proud of me. I came out with a 90 in the test. 100 on the module (the role of the West in Am Hist) and now have two other tests to get through, one on the constitution and one on Issues in Am History, but I think the worst is behind me in that course.

I also am taking health--didn't pass the test to avoid taking that. Then I have BOM which I am taking from someone who I don't care too much for, and will have all my groups when I take a Geology course next semester/

You can tell that I am hurrying. This afternoon we are going to try and take Liz and Marty out the the farm. I missed the boat. I should have done that this morning as we don't have Sunday School until 12:30., and if I go out this afternoon I will have to sluff choir practice. Guess which I will sluff? Yup. Choir practice.

If I get back I will go over to try to salve my conscience. Wonder how Liz feels about someone sluffing choir to be with their children. Family First. (Just listen to the rationalization.)

Liz and Marty left early this morning (this is next morning after I wrote the above). Daddy went to church yesterday and put in a full day but didn't feel well at all. He is getting a sore throat. Last night he had a fitful night. He has been consistently insomniac with this illness. I can tell how he feels by how he sleeps. I am somewhat tired myself this morning as I could not go back to sleep after Daddy woke up at 2 and then Liz and Marty left at five so I decided to just stay up and get a little work done.

Robert (Delbert's boy) and Denise, his sister are here in Provo going to the Y. Denise just arrived yesterday and we haven't seen her yet. Robert came over Sat evening while we were all here with a room mate of his that he wants to line Charlotte up with. I'm afraid he didn't get a warm reception (the room mate) we were all too involved.

Now I wonder how I kept the house as clean as I did when you kids were growing up. When there is a bunch of little kids here, the house is a shambles. It's worth. it. you kids can make my house a shambles any time. However, I am wondering how I am going to like those drooling kids drooling on my new carpet I have ordered. Better cancel it, I guess. Tear up the present carpet, sand the floor, seal it, and let em drool. I am also having second thoughts about the carpet I ordered. Liz said that she read that gold is the worst color of all to keep up. Yuuck. I'd better ask around. And maybe I should get a different type carpet than the one I ordered. It's similar to the one in the bedroom and that one is hard to keep looking nice. Mrs. Norton has one in her room that looks indestructible. ~~Hinnnnnn~~. I guess I told you that we lost totally 1/3 of the orchids, another 1/3 is doubtful and 1/3 will survive but will probably be retarded a year's growth. Now things look even worse, now that rigor mortis (literally) has had a chance to set in. I will be surprised if we save any of the other 2/3s.

Keep up the good works, and let us know what you are doing through the hallocaust or whatever.

Love, Muzzer

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