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Dear Family,

Well, I am happy to say I'm in better spirits than the last letter. The sun is shining, Spring is popping up in spite of the cold spell we've endured, and I've started enough projects to make the house a mess again--so things seem back to normal.

They've been doing a lot of construction on N. Maple Avenue outside our home. They are putting in sidewalks and curbs and have widened the road across from us. I paid the construction crew \$125 to chop up all the trees they removed into firewood for us and as part of the job, they also cut down all the trees a landscaper tied red ribbons around in that front, wooded area of our land and which he was going to charge us \$250 to remove. While Dan was in Wash. D.C. I hired Steve Allen to help me stack all the firewood, and it feels good to have a wood supply now.

They built a high, staggered wood-tie fence across from us which looks very nice--once the sidewalks are in and the road is repaved, I think it will add a lot to the value of our home. Above the fence they leveled the land where they took out so many trees and planned to plant grass. I called Pres. Wood who is also Town Administrator and got permission to have them sow flower seeds with the grass. I bought out a seed sale last fall (10 packets for \$1.00) and was able to fill half a margarine cup with aster, sweet-pea, larkspur, petunia, dianthus, cockscomb, coreopsis, alysum, portulaca, bachelor's button, zinnia, forget-me-not, clarkia, african daisy, sweet william, strawflower, cosmos, and a couple of mixture packets. The planting crew mixed the seed in an emulsion with a little rye grass (in case the flowers don't make it), sprayed it all over the hill area, and covered it deeply with straw. I tried the same thing last year by hand in April all over the fields behind our house and I don't think one thing came up. So we shall see. Anyway, that was one of my enterprises last month.

Dan seems to be enjoying his new job with the Federal Systems Group which is headquartered in Wash. D.C. He was in D.C. again Feb. 4-9 for training, and when he was called in for a second week Feb 19-23, I decided to go with him. We drove up so I could have the car and for \$20 a day more I could stay with him in the Embassy Suites Hotel where the Company put him up. What a place. Very modern, fancy--each unit includes a huge, king-size bed with its own color TV and then a separate lounge area with fridge, table and another TV. With the room came an "all you can eat breakfast" downstairs each morning where you could choose from several tables of fruit, cheeses, yoghurt, muffins, cereals, or go order your choice of omelets or pancakes with sausage and bacon.

We stocked up each morning, took some muffins and fruit for lunch, dropped in for the free drinks they offered each evening from 5:30-7:30 (Dan and I used up their cranberry juice supply), and after all that food had a hard time eating out evenings (Dan was allowed to charge \$25 a day for food, in addition). One night we went out with Virginia and Barry to an Italian restaurant near that seafood place our whole family went to at the reunion in the old town. We had a good time.

While Dan went to meetings, days, I took off for genealogy research. The weather was fantastic--in D.C. the forsythia and crocuses were already out--so refreshing!

I first went to the DAR (Daughters of the Revolution) Library in D.C. to look up a book on the Mullikins which I hoped would save me a lot of research--but it proved a lot of Mullikins (or Mulligans) who were not directly connected). I also copied out some other good information on some other lines--a fun place to visit).

I spent one day at the courthouse in Culpepper, Va. (near Fredricksburg). I found lots of Gordon and Hall names, but did not prove a connection, but will do the temple work. I viewed a film at the historical center in Fredricksburg which left me very sobered. Did you know 100,000 men died there on both sides in the Civil War?! Ancestors and relatives of ours were on both sides. I have been doing wills and found one Milliken relative who had over a dozen slaves, half men, half women. He gave the name of each slave in his will, but did not bother to give the name of his "loving wife." I had viewed a poignant photo taken at Fredricksburg just after gunsmoke cleared after one of those battles and was surprised to see the photo reproduced on a marker and realize I was standing by the wall where so many men died and where that photo was taken. That was quite a day, driving 70 m.p.h. to keep up with the other traffic--we almost had another family casualty near Fredricksburg!

I also spent a day at the Hall of Records in Annapolis, Md. looking for Millikens and Woodcoxes. That is the most strict library I have ever visited. They practically fingerprinted me. But what resources! I could spend a month there. I did fine on the roads until I got to D.C. and tried to drive to Crystal City to our hotel. I about got killed several times--I'm sure my guardian angels worked overtime.

Another day was spent at the Federal Archives in D.C. Found lots of interesting Milliken and Woodcox pensions of men serving in the war of 1812 and the Revolution. It was "awesome" to go through those old files and actually handle pages they sent in from their Bibles to prove births, deaths, etc. I copied data as fast as I could and still have not sorted it all out--but did not find proof of a connection to our ancestors. But will still do the temple work--for certain they were all relatives.

Barry helped me sort through my Mulligan materials one night until 11 p.m.--it takes his kind of brain to tell who to eliminate. Sort of aggravating going through all those Sarahs four hours or so to eliminate all of them. But that's sort of what genealogy is. You spend most of your time proving where they were not and who they were not. But just one find makes it all well worth it.

We dropped in from time to time to see the Woods family (usually when we got lost--which was often) and Monday I got there in time to enjoy Rose Ellen's birthday party and eat some of her mother's famous cinnamon rolls. She also made chocolate chip cookies for me to gorge on while trying to make sense out of all that genealogy. I am not doing well on my diet--but what a way to go!

On the last day Dan agreed to meet me at the Library of Congress where I had planned to spend the afternoon after spending the morning at the Archives. As my husband ought to anticipate by now, I got involved at the Archives and was frantically copying out wills just a little beyond the time we were supposed to meet at the Lib. of Cong. So he finally headed for the Archives as I finally headed for the Libr. We eventually got together and for the life of me I can't understand why he wasn't very enthusiastic about my going to Washington with him again this week!

He just left for a seminar that is supposed to last Friday, then he'll come home and then he's going again Monday and Tuesday. I thought seriously of staying with Virginia over the weekend so I could do some more, but decided I had better sort out what I already have--and maybe not go up until Monday. I am caught in the middle between a daughter who is pushing me out of the house and a husband who is pushing me back. Laura really did great while I was gone--even kept the house clean. She doesn't have a boyfriend right now which helps me enjoy trips away more. 'Don't feel like I have to be here to see when she comes in!

We got back from Washington at about 2 a.m. Saturday morning, and I had to speak at Stk. Conference at 7 that night. I told myself each day in Washington that I could stay in the hotel all day and prepare my talk, but I just could not bear not to go do research. I did spend a couple of hours Saturday, but when I timed my talk just before we went, it was 20 minutes long and I had been given 5 minutes! So, I put aside my talk notes and just got up there and said what came to mind and talked for 9 minutes. Fortunately, they had allowed 10 min. for the musical number which only took 3, so our Stk. Pres., the last speaker, got up right on schedule.

I had fasted that day for help and certainly felt it. It was probably the best-received talk I've ever given. The members were so revved up about doing genealogy, the Stk. President had to calm everybody down and tell them there are times and seasons and all that! But people were lined up an hour later to tell me their genealogy experiences or ask questions, and I got several calls saying it was the best talk they had heard--especially on the subject of genealogy. So I felt very grateful and blessed because I ended up talking about things I hadn't even thought about for my first talk--it was as big a surprise to me as anyone there, for sure.

My first sentence covered what turned out to be the outline of my entire talk. It came to me during the opening song: "If in five minutes I could give you the key to closer family ties, new family relationships, better understanding of self and those around you, a heart filled with love and acceptance, an appreciation for history and better comprehension of current events, exciting travel and adventure, the most sublime temple experiences, and ability to anticipate death joyfully, rather than fearfully, would you be interested?" Then I told an experience for each category.

You can believe I talked fast to get through that in 9 minutes--I combined some of the categories. This sister came up before the Conference and asked me to please talk slowly, as she had to translate for the Spanish

speaking group. I told her I could not talk slowly--especially about this subject, but that she could sum up everything in three words: "GENEALOGY IS FUN!" Am I starting to sound like a broken record?

Mom, I mailed that family group sheet you sent and actually fit our family history on the one other side. We do appreciate your doing this. I hardly know a lot of my cousins and would like to get to know them better through this project.

By the way, Mom, it was a real thrill to see your book on the Langfords at the D.A.R. Library. Next to it was a book entitled More on the Langfords which referred readers to your volume. Cheers!

Liz, it was so much fun getting unexpected Valentines! What a delicious treat. It really made our day. And what's this, Dad, about smelling perfume as she leans over your shoulder while you're showing off at the piano as a teenager? Watch out or they'll start censoring the ward newsletter! Honestly!!

Laura helped decorate for the youth Valentine's Dance and helped with the games and program for what was apparently a real success! They think things are going much better in the Stake now that they have youth leaders doing most of the planning. I peeked in at the dance and it really did look terrific!

Laura has been getting up early before seminary so she has time to run each day and has run a lot of evenings, too. One thing about Laura. When she makes up her mind to do something, she does it! Me, I make up my mind twelve times and I still don't form a new habit. She has been running about a month now and without any dieting looks SOOO much more shapely. I am almost convinced to try it myself. Almost!

We have received two letters now from Daniel. He seems to be having a marvelous time at the MTC and truly be in the spirit of his call. I think I realized how very much I miss him when I could hardly read his letter for all the tears. A bucketful of joy to see him so happy and filled with the spirit of the work. I sent Mom a copy of the first one, as we were on our way to D.C.--but I'll type it up for the rest of you here so it will be easier for Mom to copy (and cheaper--though you'll miss his incredible art! (?).

Brother Jim Disanza, our new 2nd Counsellor in the bishopric called me in last week to ask me to teach the Sunday School genealogy course starting next week. It fits in nicely with my Stake call to work in the "Family History Library," so I was happy to accept. I've taught that course so many times now I can practically teach it in my sleep. Except I have learned that the best way to get the class to learn is to get them to teach the class. I actually consider myself the coordinator--not the teacher. Makes it a lot more interesting for me, too.

We are contemplating coming to Utah next Christmas instead of bringing Laura home. That way for the cost of one more ticket, we get to visit our family, since our vacation budget is next to nil this year. Mom and Dad, are you going to be in town? Laura says she'll want to come here to have a change and see her friends. But I'm telling her by then she'll have better friends out there, including probably some handsome young returned missionary we'll come to check out! Actually, she knows she is not allowed to even look at a man until she has been on a mission, graduated with at least an M.A. and had a few years of a good career. Ho, Ho!

Well, Mom, three pages isn't so bad, is it? Cheers for now! By the way, we did not get the 2nd sheet of Hunt Tracy's letter. Could you send it--we were really involved! I could also use that Wm. Hall sheet, please.

Love,



P. S. Mom says she wants to give up the Hallmanack because nobody is writing letters. And when mine are so long and I feel like I have to mail them myself, then she really doesn't have much to mail. So I'm sending this to her, long or no, because I don't want her to give up the mailings. Hey, all of you, write her some letters!