

309 South 13th East

Our apartment at 309 South 13th East was a two room apartment with a bath, a small kitchen, and a living room. Along the north end of the living room was a closet and double doors that hid a letdown bed. Above the bed was another closet, which we used to store things. It had a gas heater in the living room that furnished all the heat for the entire apartment. You can imagine that the bathroom, which was off the kitchen and the further most from the heater, was sometimes very chilly in the winter.

We moved there in June of 1940 after Tracy had received his bachelor's degree at the U. He was working at the Bureau of Mines and the job paid the magnificent salary of \$2000 per year. We felt rich.

The apartment was quite dingy so I coaxed the landlord out of wallpaper and paint and Tracy (reluctantly) papered the front room and I painted and fixed it in general. This was our first real home. It seemed nice to be by ourselves.

In addition to working full time at the Bureau, Tracy was also taking a couple of classes at the university towards a master's degree in chemistry. He would make up the time in the evenings at the Bureau.

Tracy was having one weakening bout of tonsillitis after another, so finally Dr. Skidmore recommended that he have his tonsils removed. This proved to be very hard on him. Adults don't do as well as children do with a tonsillectomy. Afterwards though, his health improved significantly as far as upper respiratory infections were concerned.

In the fall of 1942, Dr. and Mrs. Bonner wanted to go to an American Chemical Society meeting and they asked us to come and stay at their home while they were gone and take care of their dog.

Their dog was hardly any problem at all and we really rattled around in their two-story house on 13 South near 13th East in Salt Lake City. Here I had my first experience with "morning sickness," which proves to all the naysayers that morning sickness is not "all in the mind." I had never heard of morning sickness. I spent the two weeks the Bonner's were gone sucking on lemons and eating crackers trying to subdue my nausea.

When Mrs. Bonner came home I told her I hoped there were not cracker crumbs all over the house. I told her my symptoms and she just smiled. "You're probably pregnant," she said. I was, but that had never occurred to me. The nausea, not too severe but a definite nuisance, lasted for about three months. But I was so excited about having a baby that I was willing to go through that small discomfort.

We realized that we would have to tighten the budget to eke out the price of our expected baby. We drew up a budget and planned to put away so much each month so we would have enough by the time the baby was born. We carefully put in different envelopes the amounts we would need for food, rent, tithing, etc. But somehow each month we didn't seem to have money left to go into the envelope for the baby's birth.

I was still having trouble with eczema, and so whenever I needed to be in the water, I would use rubber gloves. On this particular day, I had a leak in one of the gloves, so I got in the bottom drawer in our kitchen where we kept the tools. I was looking for a can which contained the rubber cement and the patches to fix my gloves. I couldn't find what I was looking for, so I started opening other cans in the drawer that might contain the patches. Imagine my surprise, then joy, and then anger when I opened a can that contained \$130 in bills. Tracy had been squirreling away money to pay for the baby without my knowledge.

That's why there never seemed to be enough money to put in the envelope for my confinement. Obviously, to me, he hadn't trusted me enough to save together for this big occasion.

You can imagine that when I confronted him with my discovery he was chagrined, but he explained that he was just making sure we had the money when we needed it. I told him he had better not ever do that again. I was very hurt that he had not trusted me enough that he felt he had to "secret" away the money. I was furious. To his credit, he never did do that again. Sometimes when things were tight, I would ask him if he was sure he did not have a talcum can squirreled away some place, but he never did. We never again had any money problems. All our finances were out in front and together we planned and saved and spent.

On May 9, 1943, our first child and first daughter, Sherlene, was born at the LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City. They had to use forceps to facilitate her birth. She was born at noon, the very day she was due. On Mother's Day! I didn't realize this until Tracy brought me a bouquet of beautiful roses and a Mother's Day card. She had a slight bruise on her forehead and her head was slightly misshapen. But even that could not keep us from thinking she was a beautiful baby. She weighed eight pounds, and 11 1/2 ounces.

At that time, they kept a woman in the hospital for two weeks after birth. On the 10th day they let her dangle her legs on the side of the bed and sit in a wheel chair for a while before they sent her home. Of course they sent home a weak mother.

Tracy had to carry me into the house, and I don't know how he did it because I had gained enough weight during my pregnancy that I am sure he was carrying more than his own weight.

In those days, they did not do anything to encourage the mother to nurse her baby. They just sent her home with a bottle. I had a terrible time trying to nurse her. My breasts were impacted and swollen and I was in agony. After I got out of the hospital, Tracy took me to Ogden to stay with my mother for a couple of weeks, and when I went to a doctor to see what I could do for those impacted breasts, he didn't give me any help at all.

Finally, in September, while we were again watching the Bonner's house while they were at another American Chemical Society meeting, I realized she was getting all her nourishment from the bottle and I stopped nursing her. I never even tried nursing any of my other children. The doctors are smarter now than they were then. And the mothers are more persistent.

She really was a beautiful baby and always smiling and bubbly. When I took her down to the doctor for her check-ups, people would stop me on the street to admire her.

The first time I took her for a check-up was probably six weeks after she was born. I had purchased those belly bands which wrap around the baby to hold in the umbilical cord wound (an item that is no longer used). It was a warm day in June and I had dressed her in a hat and sweater and she was wrapped in a blanket. The first thing Dr. Skidmore said to me was, "Get those clothes off that child. The only thing she needs during the summer is a diaper." Well, I couldn't go quite that far! After all, part of the fun was dressing up that cute baby. But all she wore for a long time, unless I was taking her to church, was a diaper and a shirt.

The spring is a wonderful time to have a baby. It gives the baby three months to get healthy for the winter ahead. Each day I would put her on a blanket on the lawn for some sun, and then I would rub her with baby oil. She was tan and healthy by winter.

Tracy was just as bad as I was. He would put her in the buggy and take her to the grocery store, which was half a block away just to show her off. You never saw such proud parents!

Since we didn't know anyone at the university ward, we took her home to Ogden and blessed her in Tracy's home ward, the 18th Ward, Mount Ogden Stake on August 1, 1943. This made it possible for both the Hall and the Langford grandparents to be present at her blessing.

Many funny things happen with the first child. So much emphasis was placed upon everything being absolutely sanitary around a child that when we realized we did not have enough diapers for Sherlene, Tracy went down and bought new diapers, all wrapped and sealed in. I'm sure it was a sanitary enough package to use on her little bottom. I made Tracy put them in the bathtub and wash them with soap and water and dry them before I would use them. Oh the trials of new fatherhood!

She soon outgrew the little crib we first put her in. I'm afraid that the second-hand crib we bought was not very sturdy. Sherlene would wake us each morning by pulling herself up to the end of the crib and rocking the crib back and forth until we held our breath for fear she would collapse it. She was a very sturdy child. I never seemed to get anything done except take care of that baby. I stood in awe of Mrs. Beard, the wife of one of the organic chemistry professors at the U of U, who had three children and still kept a neat house that was much larger than mine.

With the added washing produced with a baby in the house we knew we had to have a washing machine. The war was on and washing machines were scarce, so naturally second hand ones were expensive. The one we bought I'm sure was overpriced, but we had to have one. Washing diapers by hand was out of the question with my tendency to develop eczema. We paid \$50 for an almost worn-out Thor washer. But it seemed that I was always washing, and I was grateful to have it.