

Lucy VanCott

When Tracy and I knew we were going to be married before he started his senior year at the University of Utah, we went to Salt Lake City to find a place to live. The chief specification for our lodging was that it be as inexpensive as possible. The one we found cost us fifteen dollars a month, all utilities included (big money in that day). We finally settled on an apartment in the home of a former dean of women at the U of U, Miss Lucy Van Cott. She lived at 440 S. University Avenue, which ran a block above 13th East, which bordered the University. This was about the closest anyone could be to the University. She had never married.

Some of the residents had been living there already for a year or two and had picked up some stories about Miss Van Cott. One story when she was dean of women at the University of Utah was about how she laid down strict rules regarding the need for the women students to be certain that their “bloomers” were not showing while sitting on the lawns. I wish I had the exact dates she was dean of women, but the “bloomers” might give some idea of the era. We moved there in 1941, and it had been a long time since girls’ underwear was referred to as “bloomers.”

The house was a typical bungalow with one story and a basement. The house faced the University grounds on the east. The entrance, however was in the middle of the south side of the house, with three or four steps up to the main level. On the main floor was Miss Van Cott’s apartment, which was a little larger than most of the apartments, then our apartment and directly across the hall from us was Mrs. Marsh’s apartment. The bathroom was between Mrs. Marsh’s apartment and ours at the end of the hall. Next to Mrs. Marsh was another apartment, and next to it was Miss Van Cott’s kitchen. Just east of Miss Van Cott’s door were stairs leading to the basement. The kitchen and all the apartments downstairs led off the hall at the bottom of the stairs.

The kitchen was shared by all the tenants except Miss Van Cott and the apartment downstairs, which was occupied by Flora and Juan Whiting, brother and sister, and a friend of Juan’s, Eugene Robertson. Flora was a new elementary teacher. This apartment had a small kitchen. Eugene was a farm boy who paid Thora to cook for him by supplementing their groceries with produce he brought from his family’s farm. Eugene went on to become a surgeon and later settled in Provo, Utah to practice medicine. We were never in this apartment, but we presumed that it had at least two bedrooms.

The kitchen had a laundry type sink, a large table and a stove. There was also a piano in this room. Directly across from the kitchen and north of the Whiting’s apartment was an apartment occupied by a couple of boys. I can’t remember their names. One of them was a “Judd.”

There was an open storage room on the east of the kitchen and one thing I definitely remember that was stored in this room was an antique washing machine, which Miss Van Cott let us use when she found out I had eczema on my hands and arms. I do mean antique. But we were glad to have the use of it.

Miss Van Cott believed in fresh air to sleep in, so much so, that all the bedrooms were screened in, open air bedrooms, just large enough to hold a double bed. So they were warm to hot in the summer and cold in the winter. The beds left something to be desired as both mattress and spring sloped to the center. But that was all right, because in

the winter, those sheets on those beds never were anything but cold—in spite of trying to warm the bed with two or three hot water bottles each night. We were glad to have each other's body warmth. Once you got into the bed, you didn't want to move one inch away from the middle. That was OK for Tracy who had always had a brother in his bed, but I had always slept alone, and in spite of the fact that we were newlyweds, I had trouble adjusting to having another body in the bed with me. It was all right for preliminary cuddling, but when I wanted to go to sleep, if I moved away from the center, it was *too* cold. This helped me to adjust to my problem of closeness. Miss VanCott was probably right about the fresh air, however, because we were very healthy that year.

Our apartment was small. What can one expect for \$15.00 a month? The whole apartment was about 8 feet wide by about 12 ft. long and a door opened onto the sleeping porch that was just large enough for a double bed. There was a small couch barely long enough to lie down on if you bent your knees a bit. There was a closet, a dresser with three drawers, and a couple of straight chairs.

The bathroom for the top floor was also small. It contained a bathtub, a washbasin and a toilet. There was a hook on the door to hang things on and a towel rack. The fixtures were old-fashioned but serviceable. After securing the apartment for the next school year, we returned to Ogden to prepare for our wedding.

Although I had been preparing since our engagement in July for our marriage, it had only been six weeks since we had decided to get married and that is not very long. Tracy had to start classes on October 1st, and had to have an interview with my bishop, who was A. Smith Murphy, and Tracy had to see Bishop DeMick. Then we both had to be interviewed by our stake president.

At the time a premarital examination was required to test for venereal disease. When I had my premarital exam, Dr. Rich told me that I had a tipped uterus and that I would have a hard time getting pregnant, and even if I did get pregnant I would probably have to stay in bed the whole nine months to hold the baby. He was so wrong. I never had trouble getting pregnant or carrying a baby. Quite the opposite! I guess I was typical of youth. They think they are indestructible and I was no different. I didn't worry about what he had told me at all. I don't know if I even mentioned it to Tracy. (Although, if I didn't, I should have!)

We decided to get married on Wednesday, September 24 and have our reception on Saturday the 27th. I can't remember addressing invitations—maybe my mother and sister tended to that. We arranged for the cultural hall of the 9th Ward, my home ward for almost my whole life. When Tracy was interviewed by his bishop, the bishop told him that he hoped that Tracy would become his son-in-law. That was not too far-fetched, because at one time Tracy had had a crush on his daughter, Katherine, but that had been quite a few years in the past. Katherine never gave him a tumble.

Tracy's brother, Eugene, was to be his best man. My attendants were life-long friends, June Wheeler, Barbara Bailey and Joyce Hansen. Joyce later married Tracy's brother Eugene. Mother made my wedding dress of a pretty white taffeta and my sister Iola, offered to make my veil. Mother offered to make Tracy's mother's dress, a blue crepe, which was very attractive on her, and mother made an ecru lace over blue taffeta for herself. My father even agreed to stand in the line. Irma my oldest sister was going to handle the gifts. The High Hatter's offered to furnish the music and we didn't even think to arrange for pictures, but one of Tracy's 18th Ward friends, Darrel Redder,

brought his camera and took some pictures. If it hadn't been for him, we would not have had any pictures of our wedding. We have ever been grateful to him. Mother had a beautiful fall flowers in her garden and we planned to use there for decorations, but there was a fierce wind just before the date of the wedding that ruined all my mother's flowers so we had to buy flowers.

Tracy arranged for his friend Rudean Allred to take us to the Salt Lake Temple from Ogden, the late afternoon of 24th. His car was a model T Ford, but unlike most model T's it was enclosed. I can remember driving out of the driveway as Mother watched and waved and shed a few tears. The bishop had told her she could have a temple recommend to go with us, but she said she would wait for Dad to get ready to go. Tracy's mother went with us, and Rudean also went through the temple with us. Tracy's father had to work and even missed standing in our wedding reception line.

I don't remember what time we got to the temple, but we planned to get the last session. Tracy had arranged for a room for three days at the Mission Motel in the West part of Salt Lake City, near a crippled children's hospital—it was the Shriner's Hospital. It was almost eleven o'clock when we got to the motel and we were both very tired, but I felt sorry for Rudean and Mother Hall who still had to drive the approximate 50 miles home to Ogden that late night. The Mission Motel is no longer in existence. They didn't ask us if they could tear down our honeymoon hotel! We still have the receipts!

We spent Thursday and Friday going to the State Fair and touring Temple Square in Salt Lake. We took some pictures and had a wonderful time. Saturday we returned to Ogden. Friday night there was a big storm in the Ogden Area. The rain and wind was so fierce that they destroyed all the flowers we planned to use for the wedding. We had to arrange to buy our flowers on Saturday and to put the finishing touches on my gown and veil. The reception was a huge success. All went well, but everyone was tired when the reception was over. We stayed in Ogden until Monday and then proceeded to Lucy Van Cott's apartment on University and settled in. Tracy started his senior year at the University of Utah on October 1, 1941.

One other thing I need to say about the man I married. When I was a very young girl, all the time I was growing up, I often prayed to my Heavenly Father about the man I wanted to marry. I pled with Him to send me a good man, a man who would be strong in the Church and who would be a good father to my children. I must say that Tracy more than answered my many prayers. And at the golden age of almost 80, I still think I was the most fortunate girl in the world to marry Tracy Hall.