

## Hollywood, Florida

On 22 November 1944, Tracy completed his training at Plattsburg and was assigned to Advanced Indoctrination training at the Hollywood Beach Hotel in Hollywood Beach, Florida.

He came home on leave and we spent his leave packing our belongings and moving out of the apartment. In December we boarded a train to Hollywood Beach, Florida, and arrived at our destination on December 11, a beautiful, sunny day. It was the first time I had seen an ocean and the water at Hollywood Beach Hotel was a beautiful turquoise blue. We took off our shoes and walked in the warm sand and waded in the waves that washed ashore. Palm trees were everywhere and there were myriads of blooming trees and flowers. Tracy settled us in a hotel and reported for duty at the Hollywood Beach Hotel, an exclusive tourist hotel that had been turned into a naval training school.

We soon found out to my dismay that the training was in "Navigation" and designed to train deck officers for LSTs and other small craft the Navy was using in amphibious operations against the Japanese. The length of the training was two months and we expected that the men would be shipped out on assignment immediately thereafter. I realized that this might be the last time we would be together before he was assigned to permanent duty.

We had a wonderful time at Hollywood Beach. Tracy had to attend classes during the day, but the beach and commissary were open to the officer's wives and most of them spent the day on the beach getting beautiful tans. Not me! As soon as I got a little too much sun, I would break out with eczema. Between classes, the men would come out on the beach and talk to us. There were motorboats that could be rented for a ride in the ocean.

Sherlene got a beautiful tan, which looked gorgeous with her blond hair. At first our eighteen-month-old baby was very wary of those waves that came rolling in from the huge expanse of water, but as time went by she became less afraid and liked to stand near the edge of the water and watch the waves wash over her feet. We kept a very close watch on her, because, besides the water, another danger everyone had to watch out for on the beach was a jellyfish called the "Portuguese Man of War." It has long tendrils which when contacted, emitted a stinging substance that could kill if the exposure was great enough. Even a light dose was very painful. Sometimes they would wash ashore and there was a danger of stepping on them unawares.

On the beach I became acquainted with a lovely Latter-Day Saint girl named Marion Mott. Her husband was taking the same course as Tracy. They had a little girl about the age of Sherlene, and they played together in the sand. Her husband was a wonderful man interested in joining the Church, but his family was opposed to the idea. After we left Hollywood, Florida, she wrote me that before Clinton (his name) had been shipped overseas, he had been baptized into the Church. After the war her husband took a position at the University of Utah.

While we were in Florida, Sherlene and I lived in a one-room apartment near the hotel. It was the middle of the season in Florida and prices were high and places to rent were at a premium. We shared the bathroom with other tenants on the floor. There was no kitchen and I did all my cooking in one pan on a hot plate and washed the dishes and

our clothing in a small sink in our room. We lived very frugally while there, because Tracy's billet was considered "temporary." For that reason only Tracy's transportation was paid by the Navy whenever we moved. For this reason we had to save enough money to follow Tracy to the place of his next assignment.

One thing that we ran into while traveling during the time Tracy was in the service was that some people referred to those of Jewish decent in a very derogatory way. While I was in Utah, I honestly can say that I never heard derogatory remarks against Jewish people. The suggestion that a Jew was considered to be something less than a "white man" came as a shock to me.

Where we were living in Florida, however, I got more than a suggestion as to why some Jewish people were treated with this derision. There were a lot of apartments like mine in the town and Jews are like Mormons—when given the opportunity, they have the tendency to congregate. Some of these families were on vacation and some were the families of service men who were stationed in the area. Some of them were noisy and vulgar and profane. Many nights we could not get to sleep until the wee hours of the morning because of the noise on the other side of the wall and when they held parties, the noise got even more raucous as the liquor flowed.

Judging all Jewish people by the above criteria however, is just as bad as lumping all Mormons, or for that matter, people of any race of any religion together. So I guess I should repent of the above remarks. Especially as we also met some very nice Jewish officers and their wives while we were traveling around. People deserve to be judged for themselves.

We missed going to church because we could not find a branch of the church in Hollywood Beach. Near the end of our stay in Florida we found there was a branch in a nearby city, but we would have had to get there by car—and that we did not have.

There was a girl living in one of the apartments on the first floor. She was about my age and she had a son about six to eight months old. We got acquainted and she was very honest about the fact that she was living with an enlisted Navy man who was not her husband. Her husband was an Air Force officer who was overseas at the time and she was using the money he sent her every month to support her lover. Furthermore, she was pregnant by this sailor she was living with and was seriously considering having an abortion. I don't know why she told me about all this—maybe she just needed another woman to talk to. I knew she was Catholic, and asked how her church felt about such a thing.

She said, "Oh, I'll have to go to confession and pay a penalty, but then it will be all right." She never intended to tell her husband.

We spent Christmas in Florida and it did not seem like Christmas. This was the only time we missed having snow on the ground in December. There were orange and grapefruit farms not too far away and there were many stands selling orange juice for five cents a cup. We drank a lot of orange juice!

My mother had asked us to send her a coconut if we could, so we found one that had fallen from the tree and the owner of the tree said we could have it. The local postman said the coconut could go through the mail with out any more wrappings than just a firmly attached address card. Mother used it for years, just as it came, as a door stop.

Towards the end of the two-months training for Tracy at Hollywood Beach, Tracy noticed an announcement on a bulletin board announcing that there were three openings in the Electronics and Radar Officer training class at Bowdoin College, in Brunswick, Maine. Of All the men interviewed (and there were quite a few) to take the test, twenty were chosen. Tracy was one of these. This was what he had wanted to do in the service from the beginning.

Of those twenty taking the test, three were chosen, a chemist (Tracy) and two chemical engineers. Tracy was surprised at the outcome, because many of those taking the test were electrical engineers. He said that though the electrical engineers lost out because the test was geared to general science instead of engineering.

On February 8, 1945, we took the train from sunny Florida to Brunswick, Maine and disembarked from the train in a blinding snowstorm. There was at least four feet of snow on the ground. Quite a contrast from the warm climate in Florida!