

H. Tracy Hall oral history, tape 13,14

Today's date is August 8, 1977. We're at Sherlene and Daniel Bartholemeu's home on Green Ridge Avenue, in White Plains, New York. This is Howard Tracy Hall, Sr., doing oral history for Sherlene and the questions are being asked by my daughter Charlotte Hall. She got transferred to Sherlene Hall. Alright!

Sherlene: OK. Let's see. How far did we get?

Tracy: Why don't you start on that, "What are the goals for the rest of your life?"

Sherlene; OK then, What are your goals now for the rest of your life?

Tracy: When you get older you start worrying more about your eternal salvation, so...

Sherlene: Oh, you're going to repent, huh? (laughter)

Tracy: Yeah. But, the things you didn't consider sins when you were younger, you sort of refine yourself, or try to, anyway. You know, you become concerned, and I notice it with the other older people in our ward too, the things, I'm sure, they wouldn't even have worried about earlier, they now worry about trying to perfect themselves.

Sherlene: Oh, really. Like what?

Tracy: Oh, I don't know off hand. It's just an observation. So one thing is just to try and be more righteous and not slip. Just like some of our older church apostles and others have said, you still have to worry about slipping when you're ninety-five. So you just hope, you know, you can stay on the straight and narrow and strive harder to do it. Satan won't give up ever on you. So, one goal is to be more concerned about spiritual things and maybe let earning a living and other things ... becoming famous not be such strong goals.

There are still lots of things I would like to do, though. I wish I could get the money to be completely independent research wise. Have a good machine shop and a good research lab. I want to quit teaching, which I plan to do next year.

Ida Rose: Money isn't a bit important, (laughter)

Tracy: And spend full time on research for my regular working days.

Sherlene: How about a mission?

Tracy: Oh, I suppose that could come later on. I thought that they were going to call Mom and I on a mission when we were called in to see the stake presidency last... early last July.

Sherlene: I was there.

Tracy: When I ended up being bishop.

Sherlene: I remember that. You came home and I could tell by the look on your face that I knew exactly what had happened, but you wouldn't tell me anything.

Tracy: Well, those are my general goals. What's the next question?

Sherlene: How would you rate your general state of health during your life?

Tracy: Probably below average. I have always had health problems ever since I was a little boy. But, I can get along. I don't know how to characterize my health problems. In a way I've always caught the flu and had sore throats and that sort of thing, you know. Every year almost, several times. I had the mumps twice as an adult. Since I was 35 years of age, I've had the mumps twice.

Ida Rose: You got those from the children.

Tracy: Yeah, I know. What other diseases have I had?

Sherlene: High blood pressure.

Ida Rose: Oh, your requitsial infection.

Tracy: Oh, yes, I had a requitsial infection that almost did me in, or seemed like it was going to do me in when we first moved to Provo. Down in that little house out in Orem. I had requitsial infection which Dr. Wallace was able to analyze and give me chloralmyciten for, which is a dangerous drug to use, but I finally got over that. I sometimes wonder if I don't have a return of that disease because I have the feelings which are.. I feel like I have a fever, but I don't have a fever and things like that. It returns periodically. Those kinds of diseases are related to malarial diseases, which you never really are cured of and which you have symptoms of from time to time.

And recently I have had very serious bouts with what seemed to be viruses. The most recent one did me in for a whole three months. So I haven't had the maximum of health and strength and vigor that I would like to have, but I've done alright.

Sherlene: You still don't have high blood pressure do you.

Tracy: Last time it was measured, it was not that way. Now I have been free of high blood pressure for the past twenty years as near as I know.

Sherlene: I can remember a time when Mom said the doctor told her to get ready to be a widow. What did he tell you?

Tracy: Oh, at about age 35 or 40. Yeah, that's true!

Ida Rose: Don't plan on being anything but a widow after you're forty.

Tracy: Yeah.

Sherlene: But you got over it.

Ida Rose: Then they found out that he had (something about thyroid)

Tracy: Yeah, I have taken what they call proloid. It's a thyroid extract of some kind from animals, and I take a little of that from time to time and it seems to be healthful.

Sherlene: How about the health of your parents?

Tracy: Well, my mother had quite a bit of trouble. She had very high blood pressure from middle age on. A lot higher than mine ever was. And she lived to seventy-nine. She had

thyroid trouble ... had a thyroid operation at one time. My mother had trouble with her eyes too, and had to have these tear ducts removed in both eyes at one time.

Sherlene: I didn't know that.

Tracy: But, my mom worked very hard all her life. She cared for her boys and she really worked her fingers to the bone, literally, for all of us. My dad, of course, he had a mild heart attack at age 65, and I think my father, Howard Hall, had high blood pressure in his older years, but he wouldn't take the medication that the doctors offered him. He wouldn't take it.

Sherlene: Why? Did he, just kind of ...

Tracy: Oh, just felt... I don't know. But, see, he lived to 85. He lived twenty more years.

Sherlene: Maybe that's why. Those medications really kill you off. We don't really know what he died of. I think with better care from these doctors he may have lived to have been 95. I think Dr. ... a dentist decided that .. well, my dad's false teeth. He had his uppers and his lowers removed like many of that generation did. And they weren't fitting very well. And one doctor, here he was, 85 years old, decided that he needed to cut his gums away to smooth out that irregular gum line and then they could give him a set of teeth that would fit better. And I talked to them about the operation. So did my dad. "Oh, very minor, you know. We're just going to cut minor, no big deal at all. No problem!"

But, man, after they had dad in there for the longest time operating on him. I think an hour or an hour and a half, they finally let me in and I was appalled. They had just cut my father's mouth to pieces, and he went down hill after that. He couldn't stand that ordeal. And I think that's what really got him ... did him in. I was just sure my father would live to be at least 95 years old, maybe 100 years old.

Sherlene: He looked so young.

Tracy: My dad looked young and he was healthy and vigorous all his life. Exercised all his life.

Sherlene: What do you like most about your wife?

Tracy: Oh, I can name one thing! Let me tell you some of her good traits. She's not afraid of work. She takes initiative and gets things done. She is ... Everybody likes her. She has a likeable quality. Everybody in the ward or neighborhood, wherever we are, they always like Ida Rose. She talks good. She knows how to converse with people. She fills in some of my vacancies. I don't ... I'm not as gregarious as my wife. She is gregarious in a good way. She can talk with people and get along with people. I appreciate her for her efforts with the children where she was unstinting in raising her kids. That was her first order of business, and she did it. She was a beautiful young girl, but she is beautiful now, but in a different way.

Ida Rose: You don't get olderer you get betterer! (laughter)

Sherlene: Mom's sitting her with this big grin, (more laughter)

Tracy: Love is different when you get older. Isn't that right, Mom?

Ida Rose: It's better.

Tracy: It's, you know, when you're first married, it's that passionate love ... but its a milder ...

Ida Rose: More enduring.

Tracy: Yeah. More enduring. Deeper kind of a love, when you get older because you've had all these experiences together and that's what life is sort of all about. You know, living it out... experiences together. I think we have probably been a pretty good team because she compliments my deficiencies, and I hope I compliment some of hers.

Ida Rose: Certainly do!

Tracy: Let me give you some examples. Many women stay in bed, don't get up in the morning. But when the kids were growing up, boy, Mom was up in the morning, you got a good breakfast. If you weren't going to get another good meal all day long, you got a good breakfast.

Sherlene: At six o'clock every morning, on the dot!

Tracy: It was earlier than that some times.

Ida Rose: We started at five in Schenectady. Later on we got up later. But it was five for a long time in Schenectady.

Tracy: That says a lot about a woman. You know, she has that concern for her family. That you're going to get the day started off right, with the chores done.

Sherlene: Your instruments practiced.

Tracy: Your instruments practiced.

Ida Rose: Family prayer.

Tracy: Family prayers, scripture reading, and a good meal. A good breakfast. I love her for her talents. She is very talented at growing things. She has a green-house, and I'm proud of her green-house. I like her green-house! (laughter) And her orchid raising and all that stuff. She's generous. She's not stingy. You know, she gives her flowers to people. All kinds of good deeds. I can't name any one thing. There are lots ... lots of things. She ... I've probably been more reluctant than I ought to have been as a husband in washing dishes and things like that, but she lets me get by with it.

Ida Rose: When I was working and we were going to school, you always helped me. You helped me with the washing and, of course we were doing them by the hand, I'm glad you did. Besides I had eczema. But you helped me with the dishes and everything. When I got through ... Whenever I had a baby Tracy always took over and cooked and he'd take the night shift for the first week. We could set our babies bottles ... he could do that. I never nursed my children. I wasn't very good ... moo cow! (laughter)

Tracy: Go on to the next question. We'll never get through.

Sherlene: If you were to describe Mother to someone who had never met her, how would you describe her.

Tracy; You mean today? Well, I would say that nice gray-haired lady (laughter) who...

Sherlene: Who has two terrific burn marks.

Ida Rose: Yeah!

Tracy: Yeah, you didn't mention the fire. Mom tried to save the house one time when ... She had some fat on the stove that caught on fire, and she has burn marks all over her forehead

Ida Rose: And I have some distinguishing marks ..

Tracy: Yeah.

Sherlene: She really was brave. I remember that. The whole kitchen was on fire, and instead of running out of the house and calling the fire department, she tried to fight it singlehandedly. And after she had done it I remember Daddy bawling her out when he found out.

Tracy: Oh, you know, when somebody's injured you don't know how to bawl them out. I didn't at the time, but later on I told her ...

Ida Rose: Did you ? what you was looking for. Why didn't you get out of there?

Tracy: Save yourself, not the house.

Ida Rose: Oh, I was guilty. I had a guilty-conscience for my stupidity. If it had been somebody else's stupidity ?

Tracy: Well, I would describe her as being very pleasant and talkative in a nice way. In that people would really enjoy being with her and talking with her, and I would tell them some of the things she does, like raising flowers and things like that.

Sherlene: What are some of your happiest memories of life with Mother?

Tracy: Well,

Ida Rose: He has probably already covered this!

Tracy: The happiest times! Well, before any kids come along, you have happy times just because you're young and way in love, you know, and marriage is all new. That's happy. That's happy times. Then the children start coming along, and the birth of your kids is a happy time. You're always glad for the new kids. We always were. We didn't not want any of our kids. We wanted all of them. (laughter and sighs of appreciation) So births were happy times.

Ida Rose: I was only going to have five and now I have six! We just knew they weren't all here.

Tracy: But, I don't know if I can remember any specific really happy times. Family reunions have been very happy times Something that we want to continue. Family is the thing that means the most to you. Would you agree to that?

Ida Rose: Oh, yeah!

Tracy: Family, by far, is the most important thing. It's more important than your accomplishments. Or your work, or anything. It's ...

Ida Rose: The older you get, the more you realize this.

Tracy: Yeah, and what you want to see, most of all, is for your children to succeed. Particularly to be in the church. That's what brings the real happiness. Is having your kid grow up and do their duty in the church. And do what is right, because that becomes a major happiness to parents.

Ida Rose: Not just the children, you know that they'll be happy.

Tracy: Yeah, that's the greatest area of happiness, really. Our vacations were happy times. All of our vacations. I wish we had taken more of them. We were conservative financially. I was a lot more conservative financially than Mom. For example, we rented a trailer a couple of times and went on trips. Maybe you remember them. And, boy, those were really fun times. Particular that time when we went up to Washington and swam in that Clakimus Creek area, lake and ...

Sherlene: That must have been while I was on my mission. I don't remember that.

Ida Rose: We took our ..

Tracy: No, that was a rented one. We had the Fiat.. and the Ford ..

Ida Rose: At Clakimus! You're right!

Ida Rose: But when we went up to Canada, we had our own.

Tracy: Right! OK, if I was doing it over again, I would have gone in debt to have bought a house trailer to pull behind the car, and taken more trips with the kids. When we finally got to where I felt we could afford to buy a house trailer, you know, pay cash for it and all that, then the kids didn't really want to go.

Ida Rose: They were older ...

Tracy: See, first you were older and working and gone and then ... nobody wanted to go. The trip we took with ... was it with Virginia and you and Nancy to Canada. Now, that was a happy trip. And we really enjoyed that.

Sherlene: You came and picked us up in Illinois on your way, I think.

Tracy: But that was almost the last one of a vacation. Now we did come in the house trailer to

Ida Rose: That's when goes to ... she went up to Canada for some purpose. We came back east with the trailer, too.

Tracy: That was fun, too. But, see, it wasn't with the whole tribe. While they were all tittle. If I had done that over again, I would get that vacationing equipment at an earlier date. But these outings with the kids, they were really fun. Other happy times were proud times. You know, like kids graduating from high school, and graduating from college.

Also, seeing the kids accomplish on musical instruments. You know, if I would play the piano. I can remember playing the piano while Tracy played a difficult piece on his violin. That was a happy time, and I probably did similar things with all of you. At least earlier in my life. When you were in plays and any accomplishment of your kids brought real happiness to both of us, and I'd say those were the kinds of happy times we really had.

We've had happy times together. Sometimes, we've ... you know, the kids can get to be a drain on you. I can remember taking a few trips when someone offered to tend the kids and we'd go off alone. We went to Montreal. We took two or three genealogy trips, where we left the kids with somebody else. You know, be on a second honeymoon with your wife. Those are happy times. We've had more and more chance to have those and, of course, eventually, Charlotte will get married and we'll be back alone. And I've been wondering what that's going to be like. I bet we'll feel lost in many ways. Here we are back just like we were before we had any kids.

Sherlene: Back where you were. We'll send our little chillens to spend the summer with their grandparents. ...(laughter)

Tracy: Get along with your questions, daughter.

Sherlene: OK. Hardest times?

Tracy: Hardest times! I don't know. Illnesses are hard times

Ida Rose: All those fevers and measles and mumps and chicken pox ...

Tracy: Mom has had a couple of bad operations. One when I was away in the navy when that doctor operated on you and ended up just taking your appendix out.

Ida Rose: Which didn't need to come out!

Tracy: Then she had her hysterectomy. I think that was a serious operation that could have, you know, could have gone wrong.

Ida Rose: Did you worry about me when I had those operations?

Tracy: Well, sure!

Ida Rose; I didn't worry about me! (laughter)

Tracy: I'm glad you didn't. It was sad at the death of our parents. My own mother and Ida Rose's mother. And my father... those were sad. One really sad thing was the loss of our nephew Randy. Randall Hall, my brother Eugene's son in that bad scout accident, in which 13 people, 5 of them from our Pleasant View First Ward were killed. That was a very, almost terrifying time, you know, not knowing whether Tracy and David were safe, and hearing over the radio the death of Randy. That was a sad, really sad trying unhappy experience.

Sherlene: And Donna!

Tracy: Oh, yeah! The death of Donna. David's wife of only three and a half months. That was very sad.

Ida Rose: Now, I didn't even think of die deaths.

Tracy: We've been very fortunate in not losing any of our own children, and so far, none of our grandchildren. I can't just off-hand think of any other really sad or unhappy times.

Sherlene: What would you describe as the hardest experience of your life?

Tracy: Well, one very hard experience was the General Electric experience when they were not giving me credit for the synthesis of diamond which scientists had been trying to pull off for over 150 years. Those were very trying times.

Ida Rose: I think if it hadn't been for the church, it could really have been a lot worse if it hadn't been for the faith he had.

Sherlene: What would you change if you had your life to live over?

Tracy: Well, one can sometimes get in a reflective mood and wonder how it might have been if you married somebody else, or all kinds of things, but I've never given it any, you know, serious thought. Just things passed through your head. You know, what if you'd taken this job and not that job, but, I really never dwelt on anything like that, because I don't believe it's constructive. You can't live your life over, so you just better take today and do the best with it that you can.

Scientists have minds that... creative people have minds that imagine everything almost, and that's why they're creative because they're imaginative. I've imagined what would have happened if I hadn't... What if I had gone to work for DuPont, and this, that, and the other? But, I never dwelt on it or, you know. I don't think I would really change very much. A life is filled with disappointments, happiness, experiences, troubles, a few fights with your wife and a few fights with your kids, but, that's all the experience the Lord intended for us to have. If we were just one smooth happy sailing vessel, we wouldn't be getting what the Lord wanted us to be getting here on this earth.

Sherlene: I guess you've sortof touched on this, but how do you feel about the family you raised? Tracy: Very good! We're poud of every one of them.

Sherlene: What kind of a routine did you and Mom establish when we were growing up?

Tracy: Oh, I think you grow and perfect yourself as you grow. We were inexperienced, but somehow or other it's better for inexperienced parents to raise kids than experienced ones, I guess. They've got to ... it seems ... They're programmed for it by the Lord. I'd hate to have to start raising kids over again right now. I don't think we ... I think we sort of grew into our routine. Mother was the leader of it, I would say. I give her credit for starting the early morning routine and sticking to it.

Sherlene: I guess we already talked about the scripture reading and early breakfast and the practicing of the instruments, getting the chores done before we went to cello, to violin, to piano.

Ida Rose: Later on voice lessons.

Tracy: The theory was that then the kids could play after school and they wouldn't have to do any of those things. They had already been done early morning, so they could be with their friends after school and whatever they wanted to do, they could do.

Sherlene: After raising all these children, what is your philosophy on child discipline?

Tracy: Oh, we had conflicts in our family over child discipline. I was not quite as authoritarian as Ida Rose, but, and we had disagreements. I thought she was unreasonable at times.

Ida Rose: I was.

Tracy: But in the main, I felt, you know, she was with them all day. She had the main responsibility and was taking it, so I should minimize my criticism, but I did criticize her and make her cry.

Ida Rose: But you never did it in front of the children! Never! Never!

Tracy: Yeah, I never criticized her in front of the children.

Ida Rose: Nor did he let the children know that he disagreed with me. He would get me aside and say, I think you're too rough here, and you shouldn't have done this. In fact sometimes he was very definite. And sometimes I'd back down. And then I'd have to go tell the kids that I was wrong.

Sherlene: Gee, if we had only known that, we could have played up Dad a little bit more.

Ida Rose: It wouldn't have done you any good because we stuck together.

Sherlene: We always thought Daddy was really having a fight with you.

Tracy: He was sometimes when the kids were getting out of line. In fact, I... who was it you gave such a spanking to that they were ...

Tracy: Oh, Nancy probably got the biggest walloping of any kid when she was about sixteen years old. I really got fed up and really let her have it The last spanking of my fatherhood! (laughter)

Sherlene: In fact, mat's the only one that I've ever even heard of.

Tracy: Oh, no, I've spanked the kids. Not nearly as much as Mom, but ..

Sherlene: I don't remember ever getting spanked.

Tracy: Oh, I would .. well. I ... See ... I ... I ... My, my anger is slower than Mom's, as a rule,

Ida Rose: His boiling point doesn't boil as fast.

Tracy: And I can be pushed further before I explode. But, I will eventually explode, and have on several .. I think on most of the kids. Probably even with you, Sherlene, is that you don't remember it.

Sherlene: What is your philosophy on child discipline? Do you think they should be spanked from time to time or...

Tracy: Oh, yeah!

Sherlene: Dryker's philosophy on the natural logical consequence?

Tracy: Oh, no, I think spanking is the logical consequence of bad behavior on the part of kids. No. I believe ... I believe in the ruler.

Ida Rose: Dryker's system ... you've lost control .. and kids enjoy it. (laughter)

Sherlene: Why don't you just... This isn't one of the questions, but I'm just sort of curious. How would you, just shortly, describe each one of your kids.

Tracy: Shortly?

Sherlene: Yeah, you take each child and describe his characteristics.

Tracy: Well, everyone of them is different. And an interesting thing about kids that you soon learn is that to treat all your kids equally and even-handedly, and that's what you want to do.

Ida Rose: That's impossible!

Tracy: On the surface that's impossible, because every kid is different. And every kid has to have different treatment. Furthermore, as life progresses, the situation changes. The first kid has benefits and disadvantages and the last kid has benefits and disadvantages. You just can't get away from it. We were poor with the first kids, and when the last kids came along, we were a lot better off. So the last kids along gets the best financial deal, but they don't get the discipline, and particularly the self-discipline of the first kids. So there are advantages and disadvantages of where you stand in the family. And what a parent has to do is try to, you know, circumstances change as time progresses. Just try and make it as fair as you can, but you probably can't really make it absolutely fair. And every child needs different treatment. I don't know how to characterize my kids. I'd have to think about that quite a bit.

Sherlene: You know somebody twenty centuries from now might be

Tracy: They're all ... Well, I would say ... I would say every one of our kids were very intelligent. Not a one of our kids was dumb. They were all highly intelligent. Everyone of them... were highly intelligent. Of course, the whole pattern of the gospel is to improve yourself, and the improvement doesn't necessarily come at the same time with everybody.

Take David, for example. I've sort of had him pegged that he was maybe not one of our brighter kids, maybe the... maybe at one time I may have thought that David was the kid with the least promise in intellectual areas, but it was just that he was more of a late bloomer and things happen in peoples lives that change them. I think that Donna's death really sobered David up a lot. I don't know if you would agree with this analysis .. Well, his mission did, too. But, you see David really buckled down and studied that year between the death of Donna. A year and a half, I guess it was, before he married Karen. You know, he had to forget this horrible experience, and he did it by burying himself in work. Mainly his school work. So, of all of our kids, who has the most education now? If you had said it would be either Tracy or Sherlene, maybe you have as much as David. Let's see, David has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. A master's degree in it, and a master's degree in business. And probably has had more years in college than any of the kids.

Tracy, you would characterize as very brilliant but slower. He works slowly. But... I work slowly. He's more like his dad in that respect. I'm sorry that Tracy didn't get his PhD. I think he should have gotten that so he would be a member of the PhD club. Not that he isn't just as smart as

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Saying that Tracy, Jr. didn't get his degree at Berkley. Oh, a number of reasons, just that the hippy culture that exists even with the professors, who are holding a required course in a beer hall on family evening night instead of in the regular classroom situation at the school. Tracy refused to go to that course. The only course he lacked to get his degree as far as course work was concerned. Then they have those professors down there that figure they keep the slave labor on for five years ... Tracy had done plenty of work for a thesis, but this professor Phillips, who was his major prof wanted to keep him there about five years before he let him out.

Tracy should have staid at BYU. He'd of got his PhD. He'd had a better thesis even, I think than what he ended up with at Berkley. Tracy and Betsy thought they should go to Berkley. And maybe they should, I don't know, but I wish they hadn't.

I don't know how you characterise the kids. They are all different. All have their virtues. Let's go on to another one.

Sherlene: I think we should just go down and describe their personalities.

Tracy: Personality is pretty hard to describe. Sherlene's personality is in some ways like her mothers. In that she is a good talker, and interesting and likes people and easily becomes acquainted with people. Your personalities of you and Mom are both outgoing personalities. Tracy Jr. is like me. Tracy Jr. has an introverted personality. An inward personality. He's a thinker. He's a dreamer, but a dreamer ... by a dreamer ... thinkers and scientific and creative people are dreamers. They dream. They day-dream a lot. That's the way you come up with things. You're very good at writing. Tracy Jr. is good at writing. Tracy could have been a poet. He could have been an English major. In fact, Bob Thomas wanted him to be. All of you have musical talents, personality wise, Tracy's personality ... he's a little ... I don't know how to say it. Maybe unpredictable on what you might expect him to say.

Ida Rose: He's got a subtle sense of humor.

Tracy: Yeah, he has a very subtle sense of humor. Tracy Jr. has. A very dry subtle sense of humor. My brothers are that way. Eugene and Wendell are that way. David. David is very businesslike.

Ida Rose: He gets things done real fast.

Tracy: Yeah, David works fast And he gets things done. David is ambitious. He is industrious. I don't think he is ob ... He's not at all obnoxiously ambitious. As much as I've seen of him lately. All of you seem to have a religious nature.

Let's see. We go on to Elizabeth. Elizabeth ...

Ida Rose: She's our most musical.

Tracy: She's probably the most musical. I don't know how to measure musical ability. True musical ability. I think you had some ability that even Liz wouldn't have. You have ... you could hear the piece and play it on you cello. Liz could do that, but I think your ear might have even been better than Liz's. But Liz has perfect pitch.

Ida Rose: Liz never had to be coaxed to practice.

Sherlene: Well, Liz had something artistic. A gift. She has a natural, sure she has worked at it hard, but she has a real gift... something heaven sent.

Tracy: Charlotte is our quietist child. She inherits that from her father. Because my natural tendency is to be quiet.

Ida Rose: I thought you were ?

Tracy: You know better than that! (laughter) Charlotte ...

Ida Rose: You left out Virginia.

Tracy: Oh, all right. I thought something was the matter. I was down to Charlotte already. But, I'll continue with Charlotte. Charlotte is a peace maker type. Probably more of a peacemaker than any member of the family.

Ida Rose: She is the strong silent type

Sherlene: She's the kindest.

Tracy: Yeah, she is strong, silent, kind type.

Sherlene: She never yells.

Tracy: I would rate her spirituality high. I don't know as I've seen Charlotte blow up. She may have done at sometime in her life, but I haven't seen her. I've seen Liz blow up I think it takes quite a bit to make Liz blow up. Virginia. How do you describe Virginia? Virginia is a

Sherlene: She's like her nickname, "Ginger." Lively and spicy and creative and sweet ... sweet, too.

Ida Rose: Virginia is very good with kids.

Sherlene: She's fun! She's ?

Tracy: I think Virginia has tried to follow her patriarchal blessing, and some of the other kids have, too. Her patriarchal blessing mentions something about teaching the public schools of the nation, something like that, or teaching the children of the nation. So she became a schoolteacher to try and exploit that Of course, the ones who have been on missions - Sherlene, Tracy Jr., and David. They all overlap their missions. There was a six months period when we had three missionaries out. And then Liz was the first one married. And then Virginia went on a mission and then Charlotte went on a mission, so three of our five daughters and both of our sons went on missions. And we hold the record in the ward and have for years. No other family in our ward that has sent five of their children on missions. (at that time)

Ida Rose: Especially daughters.

Tracy: And we didn't particularly encourage our daughters. We just let it happen.

Ida Rose: They all wanted... really wanted to go.

Sherlene: No, you didn't at all. In fact, you practically tried to talk us out of them.

Ida Rose: Just wanted to make sure if you wanted to go.

Sherlene: You certainly didn't apply one ounce of pressure.

Ida Rose: ? in fact, worse.

Tracy: Nancy, the youngest, is an extremely creative person in art and probably could also be in music. But she definitely has the artist likeability in the family and it's natural. We never could get her to develop it. We hope she'll still have time in mis life to get that done. But, that's her really creative thing. We're happy to see that she's turning out to be quite a good mother, I think. Don't you?

Well, that's a brief run-down on our kids. We've got to move along.

Sherlene: Hey, what do you think about politics?

Tracy: Oh, politics is for the birds. I'm very conservative in today's political arena, if you want to call it that I think the country is rapidly going to pieces. I'm particularly concerned about the national debt, which, I think, is the main cause of inflation. I'm concerned about the welfare program which I think just perpetuates itself. And never does .. it ruins people. And perpetuates the jobs of bureaucrats and politicians. And we'll probably never be able to change it on that account It turns out that politicians just seem interested only in perpetuating themselves. Hardly any of them ever want to leave their positions and their perquisites and their public ... their place in the public eye. I don't know. I worry about our country. I believe that politicians are betraying our founding fathers in the way they conduct our affairs.

Taxation is terrible. Beyond the point of no-return, almost. The government assumes that it can spend our money better than we as individuals, and that's not true.

Ida Rose: We have many good men in their trying, but it certainly is impossible to ?

Tracy: But they are certainly in the minority.

Sherlene: Why are you a republican instead of a democrat?

Ida Rose: Just for ? sake (laughter)

Tracy: Well, the main reason is that Republicans in a general way are more conservative fiscally and socially. They want less welfare, lower taxes, that kind of thing.

Sherlene: What do you think of the Watergate affair?

Tracy: Oh, it.... well, nobody in my family will agree with me on this. I'm alone. I think that Nixon was no worse than Franklin D. Roosevelt. I think he was better than Johnson, and I think he was more honest than Kennedy. And I think he was framed. I

don't approve of what any of these men do. I was deplored to hear that Nixon swore.

But, it was a political thing. Y

Because you could have taken Johnson and impeached him for more reasons than you can try to impeach Nixon. And you could certainly have done it with Franklin D. Roosevelt, and many of the others. I think it ... now you asked for my point of view. I think he was framed. You could have just as well have done it with several other presidents, including Kennedy. And have just as much ground for trying to impeach him.

Sherlene: But would you characterize Nixon as ... you're speaking relatively with other presidents, say there was not that contrast with all those other presidents would you think Nixon was a good president?

Tracy: Well, I think you have to the contrast. I was disappointed in Nixon as being too liberal. I thought he would be more conservative.

Ida Rose: What did you think about the cover-up?

Tracy: I didn't think ... well, it was wrong. But I don't think it was the, you know, the crime of the century. It was described by his opponents as "The Crime of the Century!" It was not that. It was just bad ..

Sherlene: Well, what kind of a man would you want to be as president of the Unites States? Who ... would you have chosen if you could have just chosen someone?

Tracy: Oh, David O. McKay and President Kimball.

Sherlene: That's what we need, I guess. A prophet president!

Ida Rose: Joseph Kennedy I would have voted for.

Tracy: Which Kennedy? You mean David Kennedy. Yes! He would impress you as being a really good president.

Sherlene: I guess this next question has sort of been covered. What kind of a man was Truman, Eisenhower, Roosevelt, Johnson, Kennedy, Nixon. Do you have comments on any of them in retrospect.

Tracy: Yeah. Eisenhower was the best of those presidents.

Sherlene: If you were president of the United States, what are some of the changes you would like to make?

Tracy: Well, I've sort of hinted at them already. I think it is next to impossible for any president to make any changes because of the entrenched bureaucracy. But I would strive to make it so people did not become wards or slaves of the Federal Government. In a sense, those on welfare are slaves of our federal government There is no way they can have any pride of accomplishment or anything else, and yet, these people are in the system for three, even four generations and they want to continue it They're enslaved. They're trapped in that system, and, it may seem cruel, but it would have been better to let them have gone a little bit hungry, you know, and had to work for it.

The church plan is best in the welfare plan. Try as much as you possible can to have them earn as much as they receive. Just don't give it to them.. That's the biggest mistake in the whole welfare program. Also, having the welfare program administered nationally is

bad. I think private charity is the only kind of charity there should be. Government... what we really have... Socialism is a religion in a sense. It would not admit to that, but Socialism and Communism are religions. And what we have is a state religion in the United States of America. It's as far as our temporal affairs are concerned. It has taken over and is putting its nose in the business of the churches and private organizations. The government leaders would say, "Well, the church has failed, and didn't take care of the people. Well, the government has had forty years and has spent hundreds of billions of dollars, and they haven't solved a single problem. I think private charity would have done a better job.

Sherlene: No one can afford private charity anymore, because they are so busy paying taxes to fill the welfare bill.

Tracy: I believe in limited government. I would strive for limited federal government, whose primary purpose is to protect us from aggression, and to take care of a minimum number of things, and let the people truly exercise free enterprise. That's what I would be for.

Ida Rose: Tracy for governor! Tracy for...

Sherlene: I would vote for him. I can remember being in a grass-roots ... I can't even remember what it was anymore. Political situation. Town meeting, or something in Provo, where they voted you in as a

Tracy: A delegate. Delegate to the state convention. First to the county convention and next to the state convention.

Sherlene: I can remember I was very proud because there were two or three nominations and then someone nominated Daddy. And everyone was supposed to keep their head down and not look. And it was a big room. All filled with all kinds of people. In fact, we were sitting toward the very back and I peeked when they raised their hands. And I think almost everybody in the whole room voted for Daddy.

Ida Rose: They usually do it by secret ballot.

Sherlene: I saw everybody raising their hands

Tracy: It could have been done that one time. I wouldn't remember.

Sherlene: They told them to lower their eyes. They weren't supposed to look, but I peeked.

Tracy: That's the only time I've ever done that. They've asked me to do that. They get later. But I've always declined. In fact, Howard Nielsen wanted to know if I wouldn't, you know, why didn't I get into politics and try and go up ... But I don't think that's my ... I wouldn't do very well in politics.

Sherlene: At any rate, I was very proud that day when so many people voted for you. That was the next question. Have you ever considered going into politics. Have you ever considered becoming an educator, and going into administration of some kind?

Tracy: Yeah. In my mid forties I realized that many scientists have the option of becoming administrators and are frustrated to know whether to stay in the laboratory or become an administrator. I kept working towards more and more being an administrator. And I

dreamed, "Well now, should I really try to be an administrator. Should I really try to become a college president? Because, you know, it's been in the family with my Uncle Aaron and what-not. Yeah, a lot of those thoughts went through my head in mid forties. They say that's a time of re-assessment, but I decided in favor of staying in the laboratory and not becoming an administrator.

I had had some administrative job offers several times. I was asked to apply for a job as Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Missouri at Raleigh. I declined that invitation. I was invited to throw my hat in the ring for the presidency of Weber College a few years back, and I did and then after awhile I got to thinking about it, I got cold feet and withdrew my name. I was offered one time ... I've been contacted several times by that management recruiting firm, Boos, Allen, Hamilton, and I've never taken any of their offers. I was once offered the directorship of a scientific laboratory that Kennecott Copper wanted to establish. I was told we could build the lab anywhere we wanted, even out in Utah, and I could pick my own men and my own personnel. It was to be a lab of about 100 people. I declined that. They said name your own salary, and I declined that. Mom was a little disturbed that I didn't pursue that one a little further.

Kennecott finally built a laboratory in New Jersey. I think they call it the Legemont Lab. And that was the lab I had the offer on. General Electric tried to hire me back on a couple of occasions. The first one was, I suppose, maybe after I had been out in Provo for about two years.

Sherlene: What kind of a salary did they offer you?

Tracy: Well, I talked with Hal Bovenkirk, and said, "Look, I'm the kind of a guy who is probably worth a hundred thousand dollars. How about sixty-five thousand." He says, "Oh, I think they would consider that kind of salary!" That was about 1964.

Ida Rose: You work as much as ? for that! (laughter)

Tracy: A little bit more than I'm making at the BYU.

Sherlene: I have here, but you've discussed it, I think. What have you been doing at BYU in teaching and research?

Tracy: I've taught mostly freshman chemistry. I have taught special courses on high pressure about every other year for quite a number of years. When I first went to BYU there was no one there who was expert in the more advanced areas of science. Such as quantum mechanics and statistical mechanics. And I taught those courses because there was no one else to teach them. But, when, in a couple years of my being there, they had hired chemists and were expanding the department quite rapidly and got people who could handle those courses.

I've taught chemistry for chemists at times. I've taught freshman chemistry for everyone. The course I've taught the most is Chemistry 105, which is chemistry for physics people, engineers, medicine, dentistry. I've taught advanced physical chemistry once, I think, but the trouble with teaching advanced courses is that I was out of that for so long as director of research that certain people got entrenched in teaching those courses, and then when I was free from being director of research there was just not the availability. And in some respects I really didn't want to spend the time it would take to build up the particular laboratories, but, in the high-pressure area ~ chemists, physicists, chemical engineers had taken high pressure courses from me for years.

Dan: What about lecturing?

Tracy: I do a lot of lecturing. I'm called on to lecture to all kinds of classes on campus. Art classes, psychology classes, chem engineers are always having me lecture. The chemists have me lecture a few times a year.

Sherlene: What do you lecture about?

Tracy: Well, high pressure and making diamonds, but also a lot on ... creative persons can do other things besides chemistry and I get ... In art I had one crazy thing I did in art. Sort of the Hall rectangles if you want to call them that, vs the golden rectangle. I have a whole series of rectangles of interest that I have mathematically developed. And I have lectured to the audience about that. They call me over to psychology and other courses to speak on creativity and, you know, what makes ... how come people are creative and why are you creative? What do you think creativity is? Things like that

Sherlene: What do you think creativity is?

Tracy: Oh, that's an hour lecture. We can't get into that one.

Sherlene: Is that on a tape somewhere? We ought to have some of those, you know.

Tracy: I don't think so? I've lectured to the college of business. Student groups are having me lecture all the time. Here, there, and everywhere.

Dan: The year I graduated, I noticed that various graduate degrees that were being awarded in what areas and through the graduate professors. I think you were the one who had more degree. You had more students who were associated with you than anyone else.

Tracy: That could have been at times in the past, but that's been going downhill, and that's one reason I'm becoming discouraged with being at BYU. Graduate students, just nothing but downhill in the sciences and they just aren't any students to work with. My last student to work for a PhD was Carl Johansen, and, man, that was probably five years ago. Maybe longer than that. I've had to work with undergraduates. We've had some good ones, but we've had some poor ones. And we just can't continue that way. Let's see, I was going to say something else. What was it?

Dan: Why is it going that way? Do you see any particular kind?

Tracy: Opportunity. People are going into medicine and biochemistry, because there is no opportunity. Nobody is hiring in the other areas.

Ida Rose: Industry-is now prefers engineers ..

Tracy: Industry is hiring mainly bachelor's degrees. Physics is way down. It is hard to get a job as a physicist. Geologists have been way down. Chemistry is down, but not as much. Chemical engineers still get jobs, but not chemists. Oh, it's not quite that bad, but it's bad. To only have six people working for a PhD in a year when there are 32 professors, that's bad.

Ida Rose: I can see you have to compete with the big name schools.

Tracy: At the big name schools, one professor will have 30 students, see. also, there is ... people are arguing in the scientific magazines that most universities shouldn't be in

graduate work. There's not that many people to be trained. There's not that much need. They think there ought to be half a dozen universities .. mainly the Ivy league, Cal Tech, and a few others that produce the PhD's and the rest of them don't even try.

Dan: Have there been a drastic cut in money going into basic research?

Tracy: Yeah.

Dan: From government and private?

Tracy: Particular the dollar figure stays about the same, but inflation has cut in in half, and the overhead at the universities ... When I first started our overhead was 15%. Now it's about 80%. Look, you have a thirty thousand dollar grant and the BYU is taking 80% as overhead, you don't have a very big grant. It's cut by a factor of 3, since I first went there 22 years ago. So you've got three or four thousand dollars to play with. Nothing! You can't do anything!

There are other bad things. The Freedom of Information Act makes it so that when I write a proposal and send it in to the National Science Foundation, you know it used to be reviewed confidentially by a few people. Now, it's public property. Anybody can come in and look at that. How many scientists do you think are going to share, say their best secrets, that they want to try their best ideas. They aren't. What they do is try to put out an idea that they judge will get them the grant, but doesn't really tell them all their big ideas.

Dan: A decoy idea!

Tracy: Yeah, a decoy idea. Right! And I don't like that kind of business.

Sherlene: Tell about Jesse Evans Smith and the diamond earrings.

Tracy: Well, I don't remember the exact details of that. But she was prophet Joseph Fielding Smith's wife, and she knew there were

Ida Rose: Brother-in-law of the McConkie's.

Tracy: Right, and she was somehow aware of our diamond making business in Provo and knew that we made these black megadiamonds. And we had cut a few of these into tie tacks and things like that. And I don't know the exact details, but we got the message from Ben E. Lewis, vice president of the University, that Jesse Evans Smith wanted us to produce for her a set of these black diamonds for ear-rings. And she wanted it to be known that she had pierced ears, so they had to fit her pierced ears.

Well, it's not all that easy to produce a set of ear-rings. It's really quite a job. The diamond is hard and very difficult to lap. Before we got around to doing it, sister Jesse Evans Smith passed away, so we're sorry we hadn't somehow got the things made in spite of the obstacles and difficulty and got them off to her. If I meet her at the Pearly Gates and she wants to know where her ear-rings are.

Sherlene: Didn't she get a couple of requests? It seems like Dad didn't get around to it and then ... Didn't she finally even contact you on that?

Tracy: Well, it came from the highest authority that we ought to get something to her. But, we didn't ever get it done.

Sherlene: But you did make something. You did have something started ...

Tracy: No, we hadn't. We never did ever start it for her.

Sherlene: Oh, didn't you?

Tracy: No, we've made tie tacks. I've worn one around myself. I made one kind of a thing for Mom. And there are a few around.

Sherlene: How about the time that Indian came to see you and you put him to work carrying lumber.

Tracy: Well, .. a rather important Indian, this is over in India. An India Indian came to my lab on the 24th of July. I had forgotten that I had an appointment with him. I was down to our shop on Columbia Lane doing some work with a student that I had hired to put new doors clear across the front and make these doors insulated. And all of a sudden I get a call that here's this Indian, and he had an appointment with me. And so I told Mom ... I was rather perturbed because I had been busy and hadn't had any time to get at these doors. I said, Well, tell him in a polite way to cool his heels at the Royal University Inn and I'll take him to lunch. Well, I finally decided at 2:00 o'clock it was getting late enough that I better go take him out to lunch. So I went and picked him up and said, "Look, let's wait a little bit for lunch. I've got a student down there working and we just ran out of lumber. And I've got to see if there's someplace in this town where we can get some lumber.

Ida Rose: It was on a Saturday.

Tracy: Yea, well, it was a holiday, the 24th of July, so we chased all over town trying to find a place open where we could get some lumber. Finally I ended up clear out in Pleasant Grove. I noticed a light on in a lumber store there and a bookkeeper was there working. So I banged on the door and talked him into letting me in. So, he sold the 2 x 4's to me and then I had him help me carry out the 2 x 4's and we tied them on top of our green Chrysler and hauled them back to the shed, and I said, "Well, let's just talk here while we work." So I put him on

Sherlene: Did you have lunch in there somewhere?

Tracy: Not yet, so we... I had him hold one end of the board while I measured it and cut it off and had him there working with us. Finally it got to be time that we finally got to lunch around 5:00 o'clock or so.

Ida Rose: He had to be at the airport. I think you are a little off on your time. He had to be at the airport at 5:00.

Tracy: I'm not sure. Five o'clock came

Sherlene: You had to walk up to the university somewhere in there.

Tracy: Yeah, I think he did walk up to the University somewhere in

Ida Rose: He could have walked up to the University first and save time that way.

Tracy: Oh, yeah, I guess that was it. The university was vacant that day.

Sherlene: No, he called and asked for a ride. And you told him to go ahead and walk.

Tracy: No.

Sherlene: That's the way I heard it.

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and people seemed to gladly pay it.

Sherlene: What happened with G.E., did the