

Summary of Personal Accounts

Description: [5 year old hospital patient in Salt Lake City, Utah](#)
Author: Carroll, Geraldine
[Info Categories:](#) N, P

Description: [14 year old on farm in Lewiston, Cache Valley, Utah](#)
Author: Hortin, Brent W.
[Info Categories:](#) E, N, P

Description: [Young man in Salt Lake City, Utah](#)
Author: Hust, Lloyd B.
[Info Categories:](#) B, E, N, P

Description: [University student in Salt Lake City, Utah](#)
Author: Jacob, Dorothy E.
[Info Categories:](#) P

Description: [8 year old at home in Brigham City, Utah](#)
Author: Jensen, Robert
[Info Categories:](#) E, L, N, P

Description: [University student in Salt Lake City, Utah](#)
Author: Wilcox, June Hansen
[Info Categories:](#) N, P

Information Categories

A -- Aid:

provide medical services, shelter, donations, loans, advice, encouragement, implement safety measures

B -- Building Damage:

structure itself plus windows and chimneys (typically damage visible from outside the building)

E -- Earthquake Description:

where, when, duration, direction, sound, motion, number and timing of aftershocks

G -- Geologic Effects:

changes at the Earth's surface, fault scarps, rockfalls, landslides, ground cracks, ground subsidence, sand boils, water spouts; effects on springs, lakes, wells

H -- Humor:

I -- Impact:

changes in daily routine; rumors; influx of reporters, politicians, cost in dollars

L -- Lifelines:

effects on transportation: roads, bridges, railroads, airports

effects on communications: telephone, telegraph

effects on power, gas, water, and sewer lines

effects on dams

N -- Nonstructural Effects:

effects on plaster, furnishings (typically damage or rearrangement of furnishings visible inside a building)

P -- People:

effects on and responses to, during and after; deaths, injuries, near misses

R -- Recovery:

clean up, rebuild

S -- Scientific:

explanation of the day

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Geraldine Carroll

Vernal, Utah

February 1996

Location at time of earthquake: Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah

February 1, 1996

...regarding an earthquake in SLC in March 1933[1934]--the biggest one ever. I don't have the exact date.

I was a 5 yr. old child in a ward at Holy Cross Hospital--on the main floor. There were 8 metal cribs in the room which had 2 swinging doors in the center of one long wall. The beds were on rollers & we rolled 1 way and hit one another & then back the other--etc. The doors were swinging, and people all over the hospital were screaming. The stone cross on top of the hospital was dislodged & crashed thru the roof and floors making a horrible noise. None of the kids were hurt, but I'll never forget my rolling back and forth and getting hit.

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Brent W. Hortin

Midvale, Utah

December 1995

Location at time of earthquake experience: Farm in Lewiston, Cache Valley, Utah

December 22, 1995

I was just short of 14 years of age on March 12, 1934. I lived with my family on a farm in Lewiston, Cache County, Utah. Our place was located about a half mile from the Idaho border in the center of the valley.

At the time of the quake, the area was in the throes of a measles epidemic. I fell ill with them the evening before the quake. I really felt bad during the night and my mother was up with me most of the time. Mother had made a bed for me on a couch in the living room. Shortly before the quake my older brothers Sherman and Kenneth had departed to catch the bus for North Cache High School at Richmond, Utah. Mother had returned to bed and father was returning to the house from doing farm chores.

I was awakened by the shaking of the house and furniture. My mother felt the shaking and gyration of her bed and being half asleep thought that my older brothers were shaking the bed trying to get her up to fix their breakfasts. My father was at the back door when he heard a loud noise and rushed in to the bathroom to steady the hot water tank which was banging against the wall. He said that if he had not done this, the tank would have broken loose and fell from its stand. It had been plumbed in to the water jacket on our coal stove. After we calmed down I went back to bed, dad left to do spring plowing and mother did her usual household tasks. At the time we were without a telephone or radio to obtain any reports of possible damage.

At around 11:00 a.m. we received a rather strong aftershock, which really got my mother's and my attention. Mother bundled me up with a covering over my eyes and took me outside to set on a stump. I guess she felt we might get another shock right away. The sunlight bothered my eyes. I did not feel very good and after 20 or 30 minutes returned to the house and went back to bed. I recall my father was doing his spring plowing with his horses and the seagulls were following the plow as the soil was turned over, to devour the worms.

My brothers said there was quite a lot of excitement at high school when the aftershock occurred. I don't believe there was very much damage from the quake in the area. It was reported that a man riding a horse in Box Elder County near the epicenter, had the horse shaken off its feet.

After over 60 years and having heard of many terrible earthquakes occurring all over the world, I must conclude that my personal experiences were insignificant. The fact that it stuck in my memory is due to the fact that I was quite ill at the time.

I have experienced a number of minor earthquakes but I believe the 1934 quake was the strongest. In a strong earthquake it seems like a great outside force has taken over and that there is nothing a person can do about it.

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Lloyd B. Hust

Brigham City, Utah

December 1995

Location at time of earthquake: Salt Lake City, Utah

November 1995

At the time of that quake I was living in Salt Lake in a home just west of what is now third west. When the house started to shake, I thought at first that it was a freight train switching two or three blocks west of the home. Then as the shaking became stronger, the light which was hanging from the ceiling in the room where I was, began swinging violently back and forth. It was at that time that I realized that the shaking was caused by an earthquake. There was no damage to the home at the time, and the only damage I heard of was done to a school building at Kelton, which is not far from Hansel Valley. The building wasn't destroyed, but it suffered sufficient damage that the school board decided that it wouldn't be safe to continue using it as a school house, and from that time on, the small school in Kelton was held in a railroad car, which was on a siding there. The interior was remodeled and it worked out well as a one room school building.

A month or so after the quake, some friends and I visited Hansel Valley and I snapped a couple of photos of the terrain there. I was 25 years old at the time. As I remember it, I believe there was a newspaper article which indicated that the center of the disturbance was at Hansel Valley, and I believe it gave directions as to how to reach the place. As far as I know, there weren't many people who visited the place at the time.

Regarding the length of the shocks: As I remember it, I would estimate that the first shock lasted not more than two or three minutes.

Regarding damage: there was none done in any of the homes in our area. No objects fell during the shocks.

Regarding location: The address of the house where I was living was, and is, 325 Ouray Avenue. Ouray Avenue runs west from third west between what was then third and fourth north. I believe the streets are now numbered fourth and fifth north.

I do remember that there were several "after shocks" in the days following the quake, which kept us "quaking in our boots" to use a pun to express the situation.

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Diary Entry and Brief Interview:

Submitted by: Dorothy Easter Jacob
Salt Lake City, Utah

Location at time of earthquake experience: Main Shock: Home in Salt Lake City, Utah
Aftershock: Park Bldg. Library, University of Utah

DIARY ENTRY

The best class I ever attended at school was that under Dr. Frederick J. Pack, on Geology. We had just got through studying earthquakes when one came along and gave us a very splendid opportunity of studying it in reality. The trip I took with the class to the epicenter was the grandest one day trip I have ever taken. I was thrilled all the way there and back and I still get a thrill thinking about it. In the picture [newspaper clipping] I am standing about where the middle of the line is. I shall probably write a detailed description of the day so I can always remember it exactly as it was.

Excerpts from INTERVIEW

We had just been studying earthquakes, and this happened and I was so thrilled. About 8:00 in the morning, March 1934 it happened. I was home and in bed, because I didn't have any classes that day. We were upstairs in a big brick home. And I could see down the hall to the front bedroom, when my brother came running down the hall with just a towel wrapped around him and said, "Now, Mother, don't you worry. It's just an earthquake." He was visiting with us, and he had lived in California and was used to earthquakes. I got up and was so thrilled about it! I wondered what was going on up at the University, so I went up to the U to see what was going on, not knowing there was going to be another one.

I went into the Park Building and into the big room on the second floor that was the library. It was a kind of a study hall with big long tables. There were some other girls there. I sat at one of these tables, and I was sitting there reading with my hands on the table when I felt the preliminary motion, back & forth. And I thought, "Uh-huh! There's going to be another one." And so I said to the girls, "There's going to be another earthquake. And they looked at each other and they looked at me like I was crazy. How did I know that? And all of a sudden, it came. And those big chandeliers, they just swang like this. They jumped up, and I jumped up too. I was scared, too. I ran out and went down the stairs and here came Dr. Pack. He was coming up the stairs. And he didn't see me. I came down and was outside, and then I went home. So, that was my experience with earthquakes.

Did anything fall? No. Only the chandeliers moved. It was a huge room and there were maybe six going this way and six going that. Maybe more than that. You know that's 60 years ago. And those girls thought I was crazy, but I knew it was coming from what we had been taught, you see.

And then when we went back to school. Dr. Pack had already been up there, and he had investigated. He came back and said, "Now we're going to take a field trip. " And some of us went in their own cars and then we had a big bus. I went on the bus. On the way up there the poor man driving the bus had engine trouble. And, we'd have to stop and wait and see what he could do to fix it. So we were an hour or two late getting up there.

We saw the big cracks in the Earth. And there was a crack, and then about as wide as this

room, maybe 20-30 feet there'd be another crack. And then you'd go again and there'd be another crack. And we'd just step over them. Some were about 12 inches. And they were deep--about 20 inches. It wasn't the same on all, and it wasn't a straight line. In between these cracks were these mud volcanoes. Anyway, it was very interesting and so enjoyable, and I was thrilled to be able to see this.

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Robert Jensen

Brigham City, Utah

November 1995

Location at time of earthquake: Home in Brigham City, Utah

November 25, 1995

I remember the Hansel Valley quake very well being eight years old at the time. According to attached newspaper accounts it happened a few minutes after 8:00 a.m. on Monday, Mar. 12, 1934. I was in the kitchen of our two story brick home at 429 W. Forest St., here in Brigham City, UT. I was getting ready for school, as were my older sisters. At that time school started at 9:00 a.m. The dishes in the kitchen cupboard began to rattle and the house shook. We recognized it immediately as an earthquake, and although not panicked we were very excited. I ran outside and I remember that the electric service wires to the house were shaking rather violently. We had much to talk about for a few days. This was my first earthquake experience.

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Questionnaire

Completed by: C. June Hansen Wilcox
December 1995

Location at time of earthquake: Main Shock: Home in Salt Lake City, Utah
Aftershock: Park Bldg. Library, University of Utah

Date or Year of Earthquake Experience: Spring, 1934

Where were you? Salt Lake City, Utah

If inside, describe the building and specific room: Kitchen -- two story dwelling

What were you doing? I was pressing a skirt next to a cupboard full of dishes.

What happened? What did you see, hear, feel? What did you and those around you do?

I was eighteen years old, a freshman at the U of U, and was pressing my skirt at 8:00 a.m. to wear to school. It was the first day, Monday, of test week. Suddenly the ironing board moved and the dishes in the cupboard began rhythmically clattering. My mother shouted "Earthquake!" and grabbed my little eight year old sister and almost flew out the back door.

How did you feel?

The feeling was one of helplessness, excitement, and fear. It was both awesome and awful.

Additional Information:

Later that day, I was in the original U of U library (located on the second floor of the Park Building) when the second sizable jolt happened. Naturally all the students reacted verbally as well as physically. The stern, crabby old librarian, was really angry because she always demanded absolute silence and perfect behavior in "her" library. One of the girls sitting next to me whispered, "She acts as though we caused the earthquake." There were minor damages to structures around town, including our City and County Building. Throughout my life I have felt several earthquakes, but this one was the most significant.

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