

Roland and Dora Mae

BOYD K. PACKER

I am grateful, brothers and sisters, to represent the board of trustees at this devotional service and dedication, and I think it is fitting that it be a devotional service in which this building is dedicated. I have three sons and a son-in-law who have graduated in the College of Engineering and Technology, so we're very well represented. And, we have a future here, too, as I will mention in a moment or two.

I love Roland A. Crabtree. I say that and at once tell you that I never met him. If I did, I do not remember it. That in itself will support a point I wish to make later.

No building on this campus is more honored by the name it bears than the Crabtree Technology Building. I say *that* knowing full well for whom other buildings are named—among them presidents and prophets and apostles.

I have the conviction that were they here to speak for themselves, they would join me in that expression and count him a man in whose presence they would feel trusting and comfortable. Surely one of them would describe him as the salt of the earth.

Now if you suppose that his gift of several millions of dollars is the source of my admiration, you are in error. That gift, while greatly appreciated, in one way is really a trivial

incident in all of this and almost gets in the way of what I hope to teach you.

I shall try to explain my feeling for Brother Crabtree by presenting three very brief insights. If you cannot understand my feelings thereafter, I doubt if a long personal interview would help.

Insight Number One

When he was thirty years old, Roland Crabtree was sprawled under an army truck in his little garage. A Cadillac pulled in, and the driver asked if the boss was around. "I hollered out that I'd be through in a minute," said Brother Crabtree. The customer responded politely, "Take your time, I just want to talk to you about a job."

The car had trouble with the left rear wheel. Several other garages had refused help. Brother Crabtree fixed the wheel. It took three and a half hours and nine dollars worth of parts. He charged him eighteen dollars. The man gave Brother Crabtree a thousand dollars and told

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him to keep the change. He refused; he said there wasn't that much to it.

Insight Number Two

In 1982 Brother Crabtree had a heart attack. Open-heart surgery followed—five bypasses! A week after he was out of the hospital he insisted that his wife drive him out to the project. When she wasn't looking, he climbed aboard a D-8 Caterpillar tractor and took off through the trees. He was gone for forty-five frantic minutes. He returned smiling and said everything seemed to be in place.

Insight Number Three

At the time of his death, Brother Crabtree was president of a special M.I.A. program for mentally handicapped people.

In order to put that third insight into proper perspective, I should tell you of a priesthood meeting that was held a hundred years ago. The meeting was held in connection with the reorganization of a ward. One Danish brother stood up in the meeting and said, "Vat vee need for da bishop is a man who doesn't want to be bishop, and I's here to tell you that I don't want to be bishop. "

The Salt of the Earth

I said I had never met Brother Crabtree. Perhaps I spoke at a conference in his stake, but he was not the stake president who met me. No doubt he was sitting with Sister Crabtree two-thirds of the way back in the middle, each with an arm around one of their handicapped children.

I love Brother Crabtree's name. It fits as perfectly as if a novelist had created a character and then afterward selected a name for him.

I love Brother Crabtree because he renews our faith in the rank and file of the Church. He generously funded a building, and that is deeply appreciated. But more than that, he is a symbol. He is the image of all of the other ordinary Latter-day Saints who love the Lord,

accept his calls, pay their tithes, and live the gospel. Their tithes and offerings, too, are in the new building. Each of them is quite as worthy to have a building named after them as Brother Crabtree would be embarrassed by having one named after him.

Brother Crabtree reminds us that while there are problems in the world, and one or two may cause great distress, there is that great body of stalwarts ever with us.

In ancient Israel, Elijah the prophet, in great discouragement, cried out to the Lord,

The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets; . . . and I, even I only, am left. [1 Kings 19:10]

Elijah was commanded to "Go forth, and stand upon the mount. . . . A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks" (1 Kings 19:11). After the wind came an earthquake and then a fire. But the Lord was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire—but "after the fire a still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12). And Elijah was comforted. The Lord said, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal" (1 Kings 19:18).

There are ten thousand, yea, hundreds of thousands of Roland and Dora Mae Crabtrees who love the Lord.

Since I didn't really know Brother Crabtree, someone may caution that I might get carried away in my praise for him only to discover later that he had some personal imperfections. Oh, I am very positive that he did. I don't know what they were, nor do I care. We have had enough and to spare of looking for imperfections.

And then, in this day—today, this moment in Church history—I love Brother Crabtree because he stands as a counterpoint to some of the things that recently have come on stage.

In the past few days, the curtain has gone up to reveal a terrible tragedy. In this drama,

someone, for some reason, has taken two lives. The victims, and perhaps the villain, are members of the Church.

The effect of all of this is a landslide of unfavorable publicity in the news across the world, and the name of the Church appears with innuendos and false assertions which challenge the very foundation of the Church.

These tragic events are cast in such a light by the media that the faith of some is being challenged, and of a few, beyond the breaking point. That is a tragedy in itself. A few are cast in starring roles in this heartbreaking tragedy. We may not know until the final scene is worked out who will be unveiled as the villain. Until then, as always, we support the forces of law and order, and due process. We lend our encouragement to them.

There is a great lesson to be drawn from this. How fitting it is, how refreshing it is in the midst of all of this, to pay honor to Roland and Dora Mae Crabtree. For in them we have our hero and our heroine. They walk on the stage to remind us of all that is right with the Church. Rather, I think this hero of ours rumbles into view at the controls of a piece of heavy construction equipment.

I remember the incident when Elisha's servant rose early and found

an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And [he] said unto [Elijah], Alas, my master! how shall we do?

And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

. . . And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire. [2 Kings 6:15–17]

Well, in this case, if we can't see chariots, which are not used today, maybe front-end loaders will do where we have the "salt of the earth" represented at a time of great stress and difficulty.

These Stalwart Heroes

Now I want to say one or two things about training and technology and its place at the university and in the Church. You will see the building. It is regarded already as one of, if not the finest of, its type anywhere in this country, perhaps in the world.

In order to show you the importance the board of trustees places on technical skills, I will tell you this. Several years ago the administration of the university brought to the board of education a reorganization of the colleges. Some colleges were to be renamed.

One proposed name given was the College of Engineering Science. It was rejected by the board. The board insisted that the words "and Technology" be added to the name. The college therefore bears the name the College of Engineering Science and Technology. That was done to emphasize to the administration of the university that we are not to neglect the practical work-a-day subjects, nor are we to ignore those who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and by skilled hands and trained minds.

That firm endorsement of technical education at Brigham Young University applies in full measure to young men and women attending the Utah Technical College here on the Orem campus, or in Salt Lake City, and all of the other such schools across the world.

I mentioned that we have a son-in-law and three sons who graduated from this college. And there is another coming along. Last winter, our sixteen-year-old found in the neighborhood, under a pile of snow, a 1948 Ford tractor—sort of. He asked if he could buy it. It had stood, I think, for fifteen years without being used. It was rusted almost away. But he saw something there, and I saw something in his seeing something there.

So, with another old tractor, we dragged it through the snowdrifts home to the shop and later to the high school shop. There, a shop teacher and our son worked evening after

evening to restore this tractor. Every few days it came again! “Dad, I found out that we’ve got to buy this or that.”

Strangely enough, he could find it. He got his driver’s license midway, and so off to Heber City he was for this part or somewhere else for that part. I, too, went with him to more than one city looking through junkyards for old tractor parts.

Then, as the bills mounted, someone made the observation that that tractor was a very expensive investment—perhaps a mistake. But I thought he made the mistake. He thought we were putting together a tractor. I thought we were putting together a boy. Somewhere in the middle of this, it wouldn’t work, and the shop teacher couldn’t find the problem. So we made a call to Max Peterson, eighty-four, long since retired, who spent his life with tractors. He showed up one evening, pointed out this and that to help my son, and then we were off again.

There is something significant and powerful and safe for this Church in the hundreds of thousands of Roland and Dora Mae Crabtrees who make their living by the skill that is in their hands and by what they have in their minds. I say again that no building on this campus is more honored by the name it bears than the Roland Crabtree Technology Building.

And I count it an honor to join with you, if you will join with me, and I will offer the dedicatory prayer.

Dedicatory Prayer

Our Holy Father in Heaven, we have assembled here on this glorious October morning for the dedication of a building on the campus of Brigham Young University, the Crabtree Technology Building. It is a beautiful building and a new building. It has been constructed using all of the engineering knowledge and technology of the past. Into it has been built, insofar as it can be built, the prophetic pattern that will accommodate it to

the use of things that are yet unknown and are as yet undiscovered.

We have walked through the halls of that building and have seen the young men and women sitting at the consoles of computers, standing before lathes, standing before other equipment, much of it remarkably expensive. Virtually all of it has come as gifts from generous individuals and generous corporations who themselves are making an investment, not in technology, not in the advancement of civilization in the sense that we can build better things, but an investment in young men and women, in boys and girls—this, that there might march through this college, as through the other colleges here, young men and women who themselves will be the salt of the earth. And then when the onslaught comes upon thy Church, as it has in recent years, there will be those stalwarts. We will know that “they that be with us are more than they that be with them.” And *our* eyes will be opened, and *we* will see upon the mountain the chariots of fire.

Now we dedicate this building unto thee, our Holy Father, for that sacred purpose. We count it fitting and in our theology and doctrine not at all unusual to dedicate a building for technology in a devotional service, within the bounds of prayer. For the Lord hath told us that there is no real difference between that which is temporal and that which is spiritual if our eyes can be opened.

We ask thee, our Holy Father, to protect that building. Protect all of the elements of it so that it will not be brought into disgrace by any teaching that might be false. Let no act of nature disturb or destroy it, that thousands and tens of thousands of young people may enter there to be taught and look into the great patterns of computer technology, and see in a sense, infinity. May they look through mathematics and through the other research patterns to realms where there are no bounds, where there are no measurements, and yet know that when the limits there are reached, beyond that

are the infinite doctrines and ordinances of the gospel.

We call for thy blessings upon the Crabtree family, and bless them for being them, and for being as *ordinary* as they are and as *extraordinary* as they are. Bless Sister Crabtree and the family and the memory of Roland A. Crabtree.

And now, by the authority of the Holy Priesthood in us vested, and in the name of Jesus Christ, we invoke that authority, that consummate authority, to the dedication and blessing of this building to be a signal and integral part of this campus so that young people may be taught, that they might live the gospel, and ultimately live in such a way that they might return unto thee, our Holy Father. Amen.