

David Dalton

History



Brigham Young University
Professor of Viola/ Literature/ Pedagogy
Interview: 2009

Education

BM, Eastman School of Music, 1957

MM, Eastman School of Music, 1961

DMA, Indiana University, 1970

Interview with Mike Ohman

The purpose of this discussion is to learn about *you*. I have some prepared questions, but we'll probably diverge from these questions. We're especially interested in your stories. The plan is to get a picture, as well as a written document, that will go into the library archives, along with the transcribed interviews of other music faculty. The interview will also go online.

I remember you when I was a first-semester freshman, taking a beginning class in music appreciation. Your wife came and sang for us, and you were extolling the virtues of "good" music in the Church vs. other music that's not so good. You put other words to the song "Temple by the River", your wife sang it, and you asked us to consider what the music was doing for us.

You broadened our horizons, because as a young boy, I had played that piece for Jessie Evans Smith to sing in our ward conference. So I was interested in your perspective on the piece.

It was obviously a stab to your heart.

In fact, it was not. It was an opening of my mind to new concepts. So I thank you for that.

That happened during my "irreverent period."

Yes, it was, and *that* was an opening to me, as a freshman at BYU—that BYU had professors like *this*. That was how I met you and Glenn Williams.

We did some lecturing, "officials proclaiming," about music in the Church. We tried to differentiate between what we called *good* music—a topic always subject to debate—and music that could be classified as "Mormon pop." Over the years, we've wondered if the strictures have become tightened, with regard to appropriate and inappropriate music in the Church. I support such strictures. For instance, the *main* instrument in our church services should be the organ. I don't think anyone disputes that. The other instrumental body we should use is the choir. Of course at the heart of our worship services, as far as music literature is concerned, are the hymns.

But it's come to the point now, and it saddens me a little personally, that the great composers of religious music in Western culture—Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Brahms, and others—have become, seemingly, persona non grata in our worship services.

I have viola students who play well enough to perform very decently in sacrament meeting,

and very recently I said of a transcription for viola by Fauré, “This is very beautiful—very sedate, very worshipful music. Why don’t you ask your music director if you can play it?”

The student replied, “No, I can’t even approach them. Unless I play a hymn, I can’t play.”

In German, that’s called “päpstlicher als der papst”, which means “more popish than the Pope.” That’s my viewpoint. I don’t disagree with the major tenets of what the music service should be in the LDS Church, but I’m saddened by the fact that so much of the world’s wealth of religious and spiritual music is no longer allowed in many, many of our congregations. We wouldn’t say, “No more Isaac Watts. We can sing no more texts written by non-LDS authors.” We don’t do that.

So when you took my class, that was during my “irreverent period.” I’ve mellowed since. Actually, I came to a bit of a crisis—my own crisis. I was steeped in music. I’d been to a wonderful school—the Eastman School of Music. When I was in my doctoral studies at Indiana University, at one of the first meetings I attended in the Bloomington Ward, a marvelous LDS singer, Roy Samuelsen, stood up in sacrament meeting and sang “**Die Almacht**” (“The Almighty”), by Schubert. He had a good accompanist. I thought I was going to cry; I was pinned against the bench. I thought, *This is so elevating, so transporting.* That was in 1967, and he wouldn’t be allowed to do that today. If he’s still living, and in voice, he will sing that at my funeral. It was a glorious performance.

I thought, *Why can’t we have more of this?* I was disturbed by poor taste in the choice in music, and worse than poor taste is that people don’t even bother to rehearse their music well. They can make a shambles of what they perform. Members who are called upon to give a talk are very prayerful about it, but sometimes the music is ill prepared, not what we should bring to the Lord’s supper, to the sacrament table.

So I was disturbed, and I knew people who told me they didn’t come to sacrament meeting anymore because they couldn’t stand the music. That’s too bad, but I have a feeling for them. Then I decided, *I believe in the gospel whole-heartedly. All right, I can’t expect the Church to give me absolutely everything I need in life. It cannot satisfy my yearning for what I think is the best in music. But I can still learn from my fellow congregationalists. Many things about the gospel are elevating, marvelous, and enhancing to life.* I decided, *Okay, when something in church is sloppily done, in bad taste musically, I’ll just let it go by me.* I’ve had great peace of mind ever since.

When I was bishop, I had to control a little bit. Only a couple of times did we have torch singers who slipped by. I trained my counselor and the music director, and they were wonderfully responsive. They made sure that as much as possible, the music was worthy of the spirit of that very important meeting.

Where did you get your early life and training as a musician?

My early training was pitching hay, threshing grain, and doing all those farm activities in Springville, Utah. My dad was a cattleman, and he also farmed. He had a dairy in Sanpete

County, which I frequented as *little* as I possibly could. We had acreage around Springville and Mapleton, where we raised essentially grain and alfalfa, feed for the cattle.

I don't recall if it was my idea, but when I was around eight years old or so (I think it was my mother's idea—she was into culture), I found a violin under the Christmas tree. I would have preferred a bicycle. That was, shall we say, the beginning of the end. I took to the violin to a certain degree. My friend had a violin that had a cherry color to the varnish, and I much preferred his violin. I was jealous of it.

I started my lessons with the man who was then the high school music director in Springville, Harmon Hatch—a good man, very versatile. He did very well with the orchestra—we had one of the best orchestras in the state at that time, and one of the best bands. He was my teacher up until junior high school. Then I went northward to Provo to study with John Hilgendorf, whom anyone my age would remember. He was from Germany, and a great developer of orchestral strings.

When I entered high school, our mutual agreement came very easily—I went to BYU and studied with Lawrence Sardoni, a violin instructor, and he was also the director of the BYU symphony. BYU had one orchestra in those days. I entered BYU in 1952.

My second year, three of us musicians from the BYU symphony—a cellist, a flautist, and I—decided to go down to the big city of Los Angeles. We found a job in an airplane factory, where we built the dividers in the fuselages. At night, we practiced, and on Saturdays, we

took our lessons. I took lessons from Harold Wolf, who was still a resident of California, and he had been a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He was plucked out by Maurice Abravanel, long-time director of the Utah Symphony, and had done one season as the concertmaster of the Utah Symphony. I studied with him in the summer, and that was very, very enlightening. I was still studying violin. Wolf was a wonderful person for me at that particular juncture in my life.

When I came back to BYU for my second year—my sophomore year, which turned out to be my last year—I studied with Wolf in Salt Lake City and joined the Utah Symphony. Professionally, I was sort of in the “big time.” I remember playing the suite from *Daphes and Chloe*, which I had never heard before, and *La Mer*, by Debussy, which I had also never heard. I was back in the second violins, just trying to stay afloat. One of my riveting experiences happened when Abravanel conducted his first Mahler performance by the Utah Symphony. (He went on to record the whole cycle of Mahler symphonies—the first orchestra in the world at that time to have recorded the *full* cycle, quite an accomplishment. In the first movement, when the opening quiet theme of the *Mahler First* appears again [hums it], then it goes parumph! parumph! parumph! Fortissimo in the horns... I'd never heard that gliss effect before. That was a very vivid experience.

At the end of that season, I was called on a mission. I remember Harold Wolf had said, “You aren't going on a mission, are you?”

I said, “Well . . . no . . . Eventually, yes.” It was not long after that I was practicing in the

basement of the Springville Second Ward chapel when the new bishop came down. (He'd replaced my father as bishop.) He said, "Stop practicing, David; I think it's time for you to go on a mission." That's the way he approached the call.

I said, "Well, I've done such and such, and I'm in the Utah Symphony, and I'd love to go on a mission, but I think maybe after next year."

He said, "No, I think you should go now."

I was twenty then, the age you went on mission. I said, "All right, let's do it." Just like that. Very informal.

I was called to West Germany. There were two missions in Germany at the time: The North German Mission and the West German Mission. Years later, at that bishop's funeral, I told the bishop's wife, "You know, he was persuasive at that time. He didn't want no for an answer. He simply said, 'It's time to go.'"

I wanted to go anyway, but not at that particular moment. But as I look back, I see that it was very, very fortuitous that I went at that time.

When I stepped into the Frankfurt office of my mission, President Kenneth B. Dyer, with a small group of missionaries, said, "Elder Dalton, I'd like to speak to you."

I said, "Surely, President."

"I have a few minutes before dinner," he added.

He took me in his office and said, "I understand that you are a concert violinist."

"Oh, no, not really," I protested.

"Well, somebody wrote on your papers that you were the concertmaster of the BYU Symphony for two years."

Which was true.

"Well, if you are concertmaster of the symphony, that makes you a concert violinist."

"All right, President."

"Well, good! We have a tour planned for you. The Major Conant of the 12th Army Air Force is our liaison, and he is in the chaplains section of the U.S. Air Force, Occupational Forces. We have all these engagements, starting in Berchtesgaden, at the all-LDS soldiers conference. You'll be on the road for a month."

"Really?" I asked. "What about my accompanist?"

"I've told your accompanist, and he is sweating. It's Elder John Schreiner, down in Munich. That's Alexander Schreiner's son."

So I sent the program to him, which was pretty much my sophomore recital program at BYU—Brahms, Mozart, Paganini, the "Chaconne" of Bach, and some smaller pieces. In less than thirty days, I got to play the "Chaconne" twenty-one times. By the end of that time, I said to myself, *I'm getting a little familiar with this piece by now.*

I was feeling guilty, however, thinking about my poor missionary friends who were out in the cold, knocking on doors. We were picked up at airports and flown around in C47 Goony birds. We were picked up in a

Mercedes Benz by a chauffeur and taken to the place where we were to play. We usually played in interdenominational chapels on bases.

One of our most wonderful experiences was out at **Dittbullock**, in the western sector of Germany. We played in a wonderful chapel. "I've invited some of the townspeople to come," the gentleman who had arranged the visit said. So about fifteen minutes before the hour when we were to begin the concert, the church bells in the chapel started ringing. Then buses pulled up, and the place was packed! That gentleman had gone out to surrounding villages and invited people to come to the concert. Afterwards, some of them came up and said, "Oh, it was so wonderful. We have never heard a concert on violin. We've never heard that before." That was very gracious of them.

Then the mission president called and said, "We're taking you to France. We have four concerts at Charmont, Loan, Nancy, and Châteauroux. We'll fly you there, and all arrangements have been made.

I said, "But of course that's out of my mission field."

"Six weeks or so ago, I wrote the First Presidency for permission for you to go out of country," he explained. "I've never heard back from them, so that means you can go."

The president of the French Mission, Harold W. Lee, said, "We welcome them here. Just don't bring them to Paris."

He was protecting us. We all know the reputation of Paris.

At the end of the tour, my mission president said, "We're so pleased with how this tour has gone, we're working on a tour to the Mideast countries.

I didn't want to go, even though it sounded like an adventure. I wanted to get out on the doors.

After we tracted in Schwarzbayern, which means "very Catholic Bavaria," during those winter months, sometimes tracting days without getting in a door, I thought, *It would be nice to be down there in Tripoli, or Cairo.*

I was fortunate that my mission president wanted to use my music. I later went on a smaller tour in the North Rhine Westphalia area, around Essen and Düsseldorf, and places like that, with my then companion, a pianist and composer, Newell K. Brown. Several years later, I crossed paths with him at Eastman, where he was getting his doctorate in composition. I actually premiered one of his works for orchestra and soprano, which my wife Donna sang with the Salt Lake Symphony. I told him, "Newell, it doesn't matter what you write, nothing will enjoy the longevity of your "I hope they call me on a mission."

How were your concerts on your mission advertised?

Flyers were distributed. We were called "Elders" on all the programs, "Sponsored by the Chaplain Section of the 12th Army Air Force and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Our pictures on the program were accompanied by a brief biographical sketch and our purpose for being in Germany. So people knew we were

missionaries, whether they wanted to know or not.

I had a wonderful girlfriend at home. I had loosened all ties with any young lady prior to my decision to go on a mission. I didn't want to be diverted from the work by a female back home. But through interesting circumstances, I had to keep a promise to a friend of mine who was singing in the A Cappella choir at BYU, directed by Newell B. Weight. I told him I would go with him on the spring concert in 1954. We would just go downtown for a sandwich or something. I thought, *I've cut all ties. What am I supposed to do?* I looked around the choir and said to myself, "*Well, there was a gorgeous creature in front row, with long, black hair, and stunning eyes.*" I'd known her before, because in the fall, there had been held what was called the "*Student Review*," a musical comedy done on the Joseph Smith Auditorium stage.

I was the concertmaster to that production, and in one of the scenes, there was a French can-can dance. That was the only part that the young men in our pit orchestra had memorized by heart. I remembered this very nice looking girl from then. I'd said hello to her on campus a couple of times, but that was all. I found out her name, but that was it.

Months later, at the spring choir concert, I said to myself, *I know her slightly. Maybe she would go with me.*

That started it. Talk about "the stone cut out of the mountain" I don't want to be sacrilegious, but the friendship went quickly. In five weeks, the courting became very intense.

So she remained faithful. I didn't "pin" her. If you pinned a girl in those days, you were obligated to become celibate, or go to a nunnery, so to speak. You didn't date anybody else. It was a cruel fate. I told this girl, "Date as much as you want. If you are still interested and I'm interested after my mission, then we'll talk further." Toward the end of my mission, we were still very, very much in love.

So now I had a dilemma: I thought that after my mission, I would like to go to the Vienna Academy of Music and study, even though I'd never been there. Of course it had a big reputation—it was Europe. So I asked my mission president, "Would it be possible for me to do that?"

He said, "I believe so, but I'm not sure."

The Church was much more liberal at that time with post-mission experiences for missionaries.

He added, "I think it's a good cause. You should develop your talents, etc., etc."

I told him, "There's this one problem: I've got this young lady at home, and we'd like to marry in the Swiss Temple." (I'd been at the temple dedication in 1955 when President McKay came.)

He said, "I wouldn't worry about the young lady. There's more than one fish in the sea."

I said, "Well, for me, there's only one fish in the sea right now."

"Why don't you go talk to Elder Adam S. Bennion?"—who was on tour in Germany at that time, dedicating the Heidelberg chapel and doing some other things. I was taken

along on that tour as a comic relief, or something. I was supposed to play my violin before Elder Bennion spoke.

I did talk to Brother Bennion on a boat going down the Rhine River. I said, “I have an aspiration to go to the Vienna Academy of Music.”

He said, “I’ve heard your talent, and I think you should go.”

I added, “There is a problem. My girlfriend and I are getting close to being engaged. My missionary companion is going to pick up a diamond in Antwerp on his way home. He’s going to give it to my dad, and my dad is going to put it on her finger at graduation.”

That was my plan, and it actually came to fruition some months later.

Brother Bennion said, “You go down and enroll at the Vienna Academy. Leave the young lady to me. Leave the young lady to me.”

So I went on faith, on counsel from an apostle.

As the story goes, it wasn’t long after that he returned to Salt Lake City. At the beginning of fall quarter at BYU, Elder Bennion called up the BYU administration and got Vice President Harvey L. Taylor on the phone. He said, “Do you know a student by the name of Donna Glazier?”

“Do I know Donna? I’ve known her since she was a child.” He’d been superintendent of schools in Mesa, Arizona, where Donna was raised. “Of course I know her.”

“Would you please get her on the phone. I need to talk to her.”

So he invited Donna up to the Church Administration Building. In essence, he said, “This is going to work out. You two are in love. It’s going to work out. But I ask you to be patient. Just be patient.”

She said, “Okay.”

Plans went forth for her to come to Switzerland and marry a released missionary who had completed nearly a semester at the Vienna Academy. I was going to continue on and get my diploma. But her father defaulted on the money, and she couldn’t afford to come over. So I decided, *Do I want my diploma, or do I want Donna?* I made the right decision: I didn’t get my diploma, but I got something much more important—I got Donna. I came home and we married in the Mesa Temple. Donna’s last home in Mesa was right across the street from the temple.

During the time I was studying violin at the Academy, I became interested in the viola—a major juncture in my life. My teacher at the Academy also played the viola. She had been a student of Karl Flesch—who doesn’t mean anything except to string players.

Theoretically, I learned the viola clef by myself—which is different from the treble and the bass clef, something you always have to learn.

When I came home in August, my parents and Donna met me at the boat in New York City. We tried to find the Juilliard School of Music, where I intended to audition, but we got bad directions and couldn’t find it. So we went up to Eastman School of Music, where

Gerry Long, a BYU graduate, was studying. He set up an audition for me. It was August, and there was only one member of the faculty in the area at the time—the director of admissions.

He heard me. I asked him, “When will I hear ye or nay?” He gave me some theory and other things.

He said, “Our school starts on the 12th of September” (or whenever it was). “We’ll let you know.

I told him, “I appreciate that, because we’re going to get married.”

We went by Niagara Falls on the way home, for a pre-wedding honeymoon, chaperoned by our parents. Then we went home and married.

I didn’t hear from Eastman, so I called them up. I was told, “We’re actually meeting tomorrow.

“We’re only a week away from when new students come in.”

He said, “Yes, I realize that.”

The very next day I got a telegram: “You’re accepted to the Eastman School of Music.”

Then Donna and I confronted reality: we had no money, no automobile. “How are we going to get there?”

We’d left a notice on travel board at the BYU student center (which was then the Herald R. Clark Center), saying that we wanted a ride to the New York area. An Alberta cowboy, who played at the Utahna dance hall down by the Provo Tabernacle, said, “Yeah, I’m going

back there. I’d be happy to take you with me, if you split expenses.”

I said to him, “We’d like to leave as soon as possible.”

“I can’t leave until Saturday, because I’ve got a dance job.”

I think I was supposed to appear on Tuesday. So we came over to the Utahna, we packed his car with our wedding gifts and everything we needed, but then, “Wait, there’s only room for two people in here. What are we going to do?”

We arranged that someone could lie laterally behind the front bench seat. We traded off driving and drove straight through. There were very few freeways or turnpikes back then, so we had to stop at every red light. It took us something like fifty-four hours to make the trip, arriving at four o’clock in the morning. We landed in the student apartment of Gerry Long and his wife, Christa, who were kind and loving toward us. They said, “Lie down here and sleep. And by the way, you have a violin audition at nine o’clock with the string faculty.”

I played the Bach Chaconne, but I had not practiced seriously for over a month. I had even taken my violin on my honeymoon to the little mountain cabin in the White Mountains of Arizona. I remember I got it out one night, looked at it and said, “This is neither the time nor the place.” So I put it away.

I was admitted, and the people were very kind to me. I’d had some theory at BYU three years before, but a much different system than taught at Eastman. The results of the theory

exam were atrocious. But the faculty gave me a chance. I did miserably in the first half of the theory class, but the teacher said, “I’m interested in how you ended up here.” I got a decent grade, once I caught on.

Before I had taken all these entrance exams, I asked myself, *How in the world are we going to pay for this?* When I lined up to pay at the “teller’s window” in the big hall at Eastman, I kept working my way to the back. We’d just told our landlady of the apartment we’d found that we couldn’t pay for two weeks, because we had no money. I didn’t have a scholarship or anything. *How will I tell the Eastman people that I have no scholarship—nothing?* The lady at the window said to me, “Mr. Dalton, you owe so much.”

This was Ivy League tuition. I said to her, “I’m very sorry. I don’t have any money.” I remember that she looked up at me over her glasses. The pen fell out of her hand and rolled off on the floor. Again I said, “I’m sorry, I don’t have any money.”

She said, “Well, you’d better go talk to the treasurer, Miss Davis, right around the corner.”

I talked to Miss Davis, a gray-haired, bespectacled matron lady with a lovely smile. She said, “I understand you have a problem.”

“Yes, I’ve always wanted to come to Eastman. I’ve had this in the back of my mind for years. Friends of mine and people from my former university, BYU, have been here—John Halliday, Crawford Gates, and Glenn Williams. Ralph and Gerry Long are here now. I’ve really wanted to come.”

She said, “Ah, yes, and now you’re here.”

“But I don’t have any money.”

“You don’t have any money? You’re a transfer student?”

“Yes.”

“Well, you’re very courageous, aren’t you? You haven’t prepared to pay?”

I said, “I haven’t really had an opportunity to prepare.”

“What have you been doing?”

“I’ve been three years in Europe, and some of that time I was a missionary for the Mormon Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

She settled back, gave me a nice smile, and said, “You’ve been Mormon missionary? Where?”

“In Germany.”

“That’s very interesting. A couple of years ago I made a tour in Europe and came back on a ship. I was assigned to a table where there were several handsome young men, and they had done a mission, probably like you had. They were coming home and they were telling me all about their work. It sounded very impressive. So that’s what you’ve been doing? We’ll just work this out.”

I added, “My wife, fortuitously, has just got her degree in elementary education, and there was an opening in the Rochester School System—somebody had just quit. She will have a job, in which case she’ll get her first paycheck at the first of the month. I promise that we’ll come right from the bank and pay whatever needs to be paid.”

She said, “Well, divide your paycheck up, so that it will be manageable for you.”

She was very reassuring, very wonderful.

I said, “I would like to qualify for financial help, if I possibly could.”

“Just be the best student you can be. In the spring, there are several applications you can make. It’s kind of a gentleman’s agreement that we can’t give scholarships to transfer students; that may appear that we are “buying” students away from another university. As the treasurer of the School of Music she was very kind and understanding. I accepted her explanations.

I’ve always felt a debt to those returning missionaries on that boat at Miss Davis’ table. They gave her a very positive impression, which helped me.

At Christmastime, after my first semester, I found the halls pretty empty. Donna and I lived down the street in our upstairs Bohemian apartment about a twenty-minute walk from the school—though it was much cleaner than the vintage Bohemian apartment. The students had a line of personal mailboxes at Eastman, in which we would get personal letters or announcements.

I noticed late in the afternoon, as I was passing the last time on my way home to my apartment for Christmas vacation. I noticed a letter addressed to “David Dalton, from the Director of the Eastman School.” I found that curious. I opened it up, and it read, “You are hereby awarded an Eastman Fellowship for the next semester”—which was the last semester before spring. “Your duties will be to play in the Eastman Symphony.” Eastman had two symphonies, and I was already in the Eastman Philharmonia, Howard Hanson’s

orchestra. Doctor Howard Hanson was the “Dean of American music” and a very exciting composer. My duties were to rehearse on Thursdays for two hours, and on Saturday mornings for two hours, and then play the orchestra’s concerts.

My tuition was paid—totally, unexpectedly. I didn’t think I was supposed to get anything for a full year. That was fortuitous, very wonderful.

After I’d been there three years, I remember that Dean Burton, dean of students, summoned me to her office. This may sound like bragging, but I’m just quoting what she said. Using the royal we, I presume, she said, “*We* have observed you Mormon students here for many years. We just want you to know that we have great, great respect for the Mormon students who have been here. You’ve been by and large excellent students, a credit to the Eastman School of Music”—words to that effect.

This applies to the students I’ve mentioned who had been there.

That same fall, another stroke of good fortune was that all majors of violin performance were obliged to take one semester of viola—I think for their edification, their erudition. I went to the viola teacher, Francis Tursi, a gentle man, and a gentleman, and a marvelous violist—and for me an effective teacher. He said to our group, “All right, you can check out a viola. I’d like you each to take a piece of music. Some of you don’t know the clef as yet. So study the clef enough that in a week’s time, any of you who wish to perform can do it.”

I’d already learned the clef theoretically, though I’d never had a viola in my hands. The clef presented a real problem to the other students. So I volunteered to play at the next

meeting. Tursi said, “Well, David, you’ve actually met the minimum requirements, so you can be excused from the class.”

I thought, *Darn, I really love the viola*, and I’d really taken a liking to him. I asked him, “Do you mind, Mr. Tursey, if I *stayed* in the class? I’d like to learn all I can to refine my skills on the viola, though they are very low.”

He said, “Fine.”

My eagerness to remain in the class must have impressed him; I don’t know. After that, he’d invite me once a week to have a brown bag with him and just talk. I think maybe it was because he was a practicing Catholic, and he had a curiosity about a returned Mormon missionary, though we spoke very little about religion.

I advanced a little on the viola, and then in about October, a few weeks after the beginning of the season of the Rochester Philharmonic (which was strongly affiliated with Eastman at that time—most of the principal players were Eastman faculty, and even more of the students were playing there as well, by audition with the conductor, of course), Tersi and I were walking down the hall. He turned to me and said, “David, I just got a call from the administration of the Philharmonic. One of their players has resigned, for domestic problems or whatever. The orchestra needs a violist immediately. I’ve recommended you.”

I said, “But Mr. Tursi, I’ve only played the viola for several weeks. Yes, I can get around in the clef if it’s in *moderato* or *adagio* tempo, but anything in *presto*, I don’t think I could manage.”

“You think about it, but if you decide to accept the position, I’d be happy to recommend you.”

I went home and talked to Donna, to see how we could work it out with our schedule. The orchestra rehearsed Monday through Thursday from 9:30 to noon. Our concerts were Thursday nights. I needed to figure out how I could do that within our schedule. She said, “I think we can do it.”

So I told Mr. Tursi, “Okay, if you feel that confident, I’ll accept that job.”

I stepped right into the viola section and immediately started sweating. The first concert was conducted by Eric Leinsdorf, who later became conductor of the Boston Symphony. We had a guest soprano by the name of Margaret Harshaw, a Metropolitan Opera Wagnerian soprano. We were playing a lot of Wagner’s music, and our last piece was Brünhilda’s Immolation scene from *Götterdämmerung*. My thought was, *I know who’s being immolated here. It’s me!* It was a sea and swirl of black notes! I was skimming across the top of the string—the biggest fake job I ever did.

For three more years, I played viola in the Rochester Philharmonic—which was extra income. That, with Donna’s job and the Eastman fellowship, got us through. We finally bought an old car—another long and deviating story, which I won’t go into.

We made it through Eastman and had a wonderful experience there, though the theory my first semester was one of the hardest experiences I’ve ever had in my life. I was the least prepared, least knowledgeable student in the class. But it ended fine.

As I approached graduation, what was perhaps the major fortuitous thing in my professional life happened. Still at Eastman, I was wondering, “What then?” We’d had our first child, Alison (who later became a violinist

and a longtime member of the Chicago Symphony). I said to Donna, “I’ve had a yearning: I want to take you back to Germany to my mission field. I want to give you the advantage of immersing yourself in the culture.” She had studied German two years. “I want you to become fluent in the language. I want to share that culture with you.”

I started looking everywhere I could for scholarships. I applied for a Fulbright, but those people said, “We’re very sorry. On the basis of your record, you don’t qualify for a Fulbright.” That would have left us sitting petty in Germany; the Fulbright was a very generous stipend. “Our rule is that if you have lived in the country of your choice, either Austria or Germany, within the last five years, you cannot return there. But, they added, there is one scholarship a year awarded to an American music student by the Bavarian Cultural Ministry to the Munich Hochschule of Music. That we can award you, if you wish it.”

It wasn’t as generous as the Fulbright, but it was a door opening, and it was enough for me to live on, though not for a wife and child. So I had to supplement that scholarship. I wrote and wrote, but nothing seemed to materialize. The Eastman Philharmonia made a trip to Washington D.C. to play in the Pan-American Festival, in April 1957, Howard Hanson conducting. When we had some time off, I was walking on the mall from the Washington Monument to the Capitol Building—just walking. Very much on my mind was, *Gosh, we’re going to go to Germany, but how are we going to be able to live there. What are we going to do?*

This particular moment is one of the most precious of my life—I had an impression. Actually *more* than an impression. “Go see Senator Wallace F. Bennett!” He’d been a long-time senator from Utah.

I actually ran to the Senate Office Building, and it was getting near five o’clock, when the offices close. I finally found his office and knocked on the door. The receptionist, who was very hospitable, asked me my business. I said, “I’m from Utah, etc. I’d like five minutes with Senator Bennett, if possible.”

“Actually we’re closed,” she explained, “but let me ask the senator.”

She returned and said, “Yes, you may see him.”

I walked into his office, where he had a big pile of letters. He very courteously said, “I’m signing letters. If you don’t mind, I need to continue to sign these, but tell me what I can do for you.”

I told him my story: “I just need more money, but, to my knowledge, I have exhausted all my resources for supplemental funds.”

He said, “Well, I think you’ve come to the right man. My son plays the viola in the Utah Symphony.”

The son was for a long time on the philosophy faculty at the University of Utah, and he was a fine amateur violist.

He continued, “Actually, I’m in a hurry. I need to go to a reception for the German Cultural Attaché this evening. Let me see what I can do for you.”

I gave him my address, and he later wrote a letter, confirming that he had talked to the German attaché about my problem. “The cultural attaché promised he would get back to you. I know your deadline. I know when you’re going to Germany—in September. Don’t contact me. I can’t do anything until I hear from the attaché. But I assure you that

you will hear from me before you depart. I will call you; don't you call me."

We were literally driving to catch the ship at Hoboken when we got a telegram from Senator Bennett, saying, "The German Cultural Attaché says that you have been awarded the Deutsch Akademische Austauschdienst supplemental scholarship for your studies in Munich. You may pick up your check every month at the Secretariate at the Hochschule."

That helped us through the ensuing year.

Another thing had happened. At the end of my four years, in 1961, after fulfilling all the requirements in the study of the violin (I got to play a concerto with the Eastman Rochester Orchestra), all the time taking the lessons that I could on the viola from Mr. Tersi, with my violin teacher's permission (especially during the summers), I did a couple of recitals on the viola. By that time I had pretty well decided that the viola was my "voice" (for many reasons that I won't go in to).

Then in the spring of 1957, the rumor mill started among the students. "We hear that Mr. Tersi is not going to be here this summer. Do you know who's going to replace him? . . . William Primrose"—the "god of the viola." "He's come from Los Angeles, where he was making recordings with Heifetz and Piatagorsky, who were also living there. I had just graduated in May. I told the administration, "I know I'm a graduate, but is there any way I can enroll in this class?"

"Certainly. Pay the fee, and if Primrose will take you in the class, that's fine."

It was a combination of private lessons and that class that really brought me to the viola.

When I auditioned for Primrose, he made some pointers. Then one day he invited me up to his office. He said, "I'm rehearsing for our faculty for a chamber concert. Would you like to come and sit in the corner while I do my practicing?"

"Certainly! I'd love to."

When I listened to him practice, my thought was *I've never heard anything like this in my life. I cannot believe the dexterity of his fingers, the fluidity of his bow arm, and everything else.* To put it in the vernacular, I was absolutely blown away.

I'd not only crossed my bridges, but also burned them behind me. I never played the violin again after that. I became a violist. At the Hochschule, I was a violist. Primrose helped me line up a viola in Europe, which I purchased.

Those events began many things and gave a direction to my professional life that I would never have dreamed of.

Primrose and I corresponded while I was in Europe. When Donna and I came back from Europe, I was hired to teach at a small Methodist college, Southwestern College, in Winfield, just outside of Wichita, Kansas. That small college had about eight hundred students, and this still impresses me: the entire student body was required, at some time during their four years there, to take one semester of music appreciation, and one semester of art appreciation. The school offered only a bachelor's of music education, but the music students were versatile. They had to play a musical instrument. Some of the college students, even though they were vocalists, played in the violin or viola section. All the music major students also studied voice, to a degree. I thought that was all remarkable.

I was there for one year, 1962-1963, replacing the string teacher who was off working on his doctorate.

I got a letter from Crawford Gates, from BYU. I'd of course played concertmaster in the orchestra when he conducted the Oratorio Choir. He was now chairman of the music department. The letter said, "We'd like to invite you to join the faculty at BYU."

We wrote back and forth, and the offer sounded good. So I came to BYU in 1963; Our second child, Melissa, had been born in Winfield, Kansas—our "Cowley Country Kansas Kid."

My office was at the Social Hall for one year before the HFAC opened. I remember "Little Carnegie," a building where there were about twelve practice rooms, and no acoustical buffeting in the cinderblocks. Some outstanding musicians nevertheless came out of BYU at that time, two of whom I'll mention. One was a tuba player, who was drafted and played tuba in the army in Germany. He came back to BYU, finished his degree, then came to Eastman. He lived in our same apartment building, Cherry Beauregard. He was there one semester, and got a telegram: "Josef Keilberth, of the Bavarian State Opera, has invited you to become a member of the orchestra."

Cherry left Eastman and took that position. For several years, we crossed paths again in Munich. He had a professional career in Germany for several years, then returned to Eastman, where he earned his doctorate—the first DMA awarded in the country to a tubist—a BYU graduate from Fillmore, Utah.

The doctor of musical arts was the brainchild of Howard Hanson and other Eastman faculty, so that people who were performing musicians could be accredited, or viewed, with

much more credibility by the theorists and the musicologists. Especially if you taught at an American university, that designation was important.

The first DMA in bassoon awarded in the U.S. was also to another BYU graduate, Glenn Williams, from Kemmerer, Wyoming. People are not aware of that. BYU has produced some pretty solid music graduates.

People hang their mouths open when I tell them that. We are very insular here sometimes. Who knows us here in the Rocky Mountains? I've encountered that attitude at BYU.

We spent three years at BYU, where I mainly taught viola. Lawrence Sardoni taught violin. I also developed a chamber music program, of which there had been none to speak of. One of the reasons I had doubts about coming back to BYU after my mission was that there was no chamber music program. Every faculty member was split in many, many pieces, and chamber music wasn't a viable program. So that became one of my major faculty responsibilities, along with teaching viola primarily, and violin secondarily.

I carried on a correspondence with Primose and asked him if I could come down and take a few lessons. He lived on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles at the time. One summer, I took about three lessons in his home on the William Walton concerto. The next summer, USC inaugurated the Institute of Advanced Studies, the brainchild of Jascha Heifetz. He, Primose, and Piatagorsky were the heads of that institute. I enrolled in the Institute and took lessons for maybe a month or six weeks in that summer program, with the full intention that if I were ever to get a doctorate, I'd go to USC—because that's where Primose was. Some of my BYU colleagues had just finished their doctorates there, or

were in the program. They said to me, “Don’t go down there. The music history faculty will *kill* you”—words to that effect.

I still intended to go to USC. In the meantime at BYU, there was a big surge, under President Wilkinson, to gain more credibility by having the faculty get *their* doctoral degrees. A fairly high percentage of the faculty did not have their doctorates in the 1960s, perhaps the majority.

So one day I had an appointment with a very kindly man, the college dean, Conan Mathews (an artist). He asked, “What about a doctorate?”

I said to him, “I’m a performer. I really don’t know if I need a doctorate or not.” In other big institutions, performers are full-time faculty, Eastman, Juilliard, etc. You didn’t need a doctorate.

He replied, “Here, you do. You don’t *have* to get one, but I can promise you that your incremental pay will rise, as well as your faculty status, if you wish to advance to full professor. You need to get a doctorate.”

I said, “Okay. Fine.” I resigned myself to it. I’ll think about it seriously, and I still had USC in mind.

Then Primrose wrote me, “I’m leaving USC and going to Indiana University.” (He had his reasons for that decision, which I won’t go into.) “If you come, I will have a scholarship prepared for you.”

That was encouraging. In 1966, after I’d spent three years at BYU, I got a call from my old teacher, Harold Wolf, who said, “Dave, I’m going to the South.”

“You’re leaving the Utah Symphony?”

“Yes, it’s time for me to leave. There’s a new professional orchestra in Mobile, Alabama, and their setting up a professional quartet.”

That really, enticed me, though not the Mobile symphony so much. Two things really interested me: the chance to play in a professional quartet, and things were happening politically in this country, and the epicenter was in the South. This was right after the freedom riders and the freedom march. I’d never been in the South, so I thought, *I need to be educated. I need to be enlightened.* That was a great pull.

So I asked the dean, “This is a little bit of a detour, but I’d like this opportunity.”

He said okay and worked it out that I chose to take a “noncompensatory leave of absence,” which meant that I could not get a sabbatical salary from BYU.

The experience in Mobile was very eye-opening. It was a very interesting and instructive time for us in many respects—politically, socially, and in other ways. It was also quite a good experience professionally in the quartet and also as principal violist of the Symphony.

Then, at the end of the season, the orchestra started to run out of funds. “We’re sorry, we can’t have your checks to you this week, but we’ll have them next,” and so forth. After that happened a couple of times, I thought, *Oh, boy!*

In the meantime, Primrose and I had corresponded, and he asked me, “Are you coming here?”

I decided to go to Indiana University, where I remained for three years—1967 to 1970—working on a doctorate in viola performance under Primrose. That was a wonderful

experience, though the musicologists got to me with some very, very burdensome requirements which they imposed on the performance majors. We used to say, somewhat combatively, “If you are going make us sit in the same classes in Medieval music with your doctoral musicologists, then they should come out on the stage and perform as we do.”

“Ah! Ah! We’ve never heard of such a thing,” they countered.

So my experience at Indiana was great, because of the association with Primrose and some of my colleagues—who set a very high standard of performance. But the onerous preparation to be able to fend off, or answer the questions on minutia, regarding *Ars and Antiqua* was arduous. But I did alright.

I had to write a short thesis, not a full-blown dissertation, on the literature and chamber music of my instrument. One of my topics was the Bartók viola concerto, which Primrose himself had commissioned. It was the last work that Bartók composed, brought to performance by Tibor Serly. Besides making an analysis of the piece, I could actually interview Primrose. Primrose got me an entrée with Tibor, who was in New York and was a composer in his own right. He was Hungarian by birth, a violist by practice, and played with the Cincinnati and Philadelphia Orchestras. He knew Bartók very well. After Bartók’s death, the family asked Serly to take Bartók’s Viola concerto manuscript and bring it to publication form. It took him a few years to do that, but he did it.

Primrose premiered it in 1949 with the Minneapolis Symphony, and it has since become the most popular of modern viola concertos to be played today. At the recent International Primrose Competition, the six finalists had to play a concerto. Five of the

finalists chose the Bartók. It’s an enduring and endearing work, especially for us violists.

So I was able to go down to Tibor Serly and get the story of how he went through the manuscript and brought it to publication form. That was part of my thesis, and my interviews were published in the *British Music Journal* (??). Every once in a while, I will see lines from those interviews in some orchestra program notes. A lot has been written about that concerto, in particular in a book on Bartok published by Oxford University a few years ago.

I thought my thesis was a worthwhile contribution. Just before we left Indiana, Primrose approached me and said, “My colleagues have asked me many times to write my memoir. I’ve started it repeatedly, by putting a piece of paper in a typewriter and rolling it up. Then my mind goes blank. But the interview you did with me on the Bartók concerto seemed to go rather fluently.”

“I’m glad you thought so.”

“I think that’s the way I should get my memoir done. Would you mind helping me write my memoir?”

What does one say? “Yes, master. Yes, yes, of course.”

You don’t ask, “Why don’t you talk to my agent?” or “How much is in this for me?”

So through a series of interviews, one of which we did at Indiana University, and others when he came to BYU in the early 1970s, we produced a memoir.

But before I finish talking about Indiana, I’d like to talk about a very fortuitous thing that happened to Donna.

While we were still at Eastman, Donna did a little studying for a year with a graduate assistant there. I recognized that Donna had talent, though she was rather self-effacing about it. When I enrolled at the Hochschule in Munich, she enrolled as well with a wonderful teacher. He was upset that we were going away from Germany, because he thought that with more development, Donna might have had a professional career in Europe. That was his opinion, but we went home.

When we went to Indiana, we mutually decided she would get a job—she'd done clerical work and had taught school. But several thousand wives of I.U. students had the same idea—so there were no jobs.

We had money, and in the summer, we saw that there would be productions of the IU opera—Mephistopheles, by Boito, done with big voices in the old stadium. One lead performer was a Utahn, Lila Stewart (she later became a member of the BYU faculty), whom Donna had known slightly in her early days at BYU.

The second production *Albert Herring*, by Benjamin Britton. Albert was played by Lila's husband, Val Stewart, another Utahn. And both were doing very, very well.

I said to Donna, "No clerical job. No teaching. You've got to get in this program. Don't you think you should? It starts in a couple of weeks."

Staffing the operas at IU involved big auditions for the whole year. IU had the reputation of putting on an opera every weekend during the school year. We were inspired by that.

I remember waking up after seeing these two operatic productions, and we were mightily

impressed. I was thinking, *My wife can't be sitting behind a typewriter with this opportunity there, if she can qualify.* We welcomed the chance for Donna to prove herself. So we had the chutzpah to walk into the office of Dean Wilfred Bain, who had built the Indiana School of Music and opera program into the empire that it became.

Bain said, "This is no problem. Of course, prepare yourself. The auditions are about a week away. Be prepared to sing for the voice faculty. We are casting for the entire season.

We then asked, "What about getting in to the masters program?"

"Well, were you a music major?"

"No."

"Have you had some music classes?"

"Yes, I was a music minor about ten years ago."

"Okay, just try. We'll put you in line to audition. Let's see what happens."

There persons, administrators, who stick out in one's career—people who are flexible.

So Donna sang, and she was assigned right there to the role of Manon in Massenet's Manon for that semester. The four years we were there, she sang a lead in an opera virtually every semester—from *Manon* to Eva in *Meistersinger*, the countess in *Marriage of Figaro*, etc... In at least three of those operas, her male lead was Roy Samuelson, a BYU graduate, who had a career as a fine singer here and in Europe and had become a professor at Indiana University.

All this was another bit of very good fortune.

Now it came time to find a job. From all I could tell, BYU still had the door open. I was undecided, because when I'd left for Indiana, I'd been frankly a little depressed over two things: too much work, too little pay. I didn't want to live in BYU's old former army shacks, Y-View Village again.

Glenn Williams and his wife, Barbara, were good friends. I'd known Barbara when she was a colleague as one of the concertmasters in the Eastman Philharmonia. Their romance started the next to last year when I was at Eastman. I remember that Glenn invited me over to his bachelor's apartment one day and said, "David, I'm in love. I'm really in love."

I said, "Barbara?"

He said, "Yes."

"I don't blame you for being in love with her." She was a wonderful, tall, statuesque, beautiful girl, and a fine violinist.

He said, "There's one problem."

"She doesn't love you?"

"No, I think she loves me, but she's not a member of the Church. I've invited you over because I want you to convert her."

Just like that!

He continued, "You've been on a mission. You know how to work this."

I told him, "It's not quite that easy, particularly in this situation, where she is merely an acquaintance of mine. I wish I could help you, but don't know how I would do that. May I make a suggestion? Call up the missionaries."

He said, "Okay, we'll do that."

So he engaged the missionaries, who tried to teach her in the lounge of the women's dormitory. But there was too much disturbance and distraction. That didn't work.

When he complained, I said, "Bring them over to our apartment. I'm in school most of the time and Donna's teaching. We'll give you the key."

That's what they did. This was toward the end of their both being in Rochester. We were invited to one of the last missionary discussions she had around our little Salvation Army table. We all knelt down, and a missionary asked Barbara to say the prayer.

It was very touching. *This person has practiced praying*, I thought. She knew the verbiage. I was next to Glenn, and he was becoming weepy. It was a very heartfelt experience. So he and I have had a long association, and he's a dear friend. Both have been among our closest friends.

Back to thinking about not coming to BYU: I told Glenn, "I felt frazzled, I worked so hard at BYU. And the salary! I'm not going back and live in those huts."

Glenn responded, "Oh, it's much better now. Everything's improved in the last four years."

He became very reassuring. I had a plane ticket to come to BYU and play a recital and to talk to the powers that be. Then on the way back to Indiana, I was to stop at Wichita State University, to audition. I knew the head of the string faculty there, and I knew some of the people from when I was at Southwestern College. I knew the string players, and I'd taught in that area before. I thought I had a pretty good chance of being hired there.

BYU made a very agreeable officer. I thought, *Okay, we've got friends here. My folks in Springville*

are getting older. The Red Rock country is in Utah. Those were the three main factors in my decision to return to BYU in 1970.

The association with Primrose continued. We corresponded. In 1972, I invited him to come out and give a master class. We were still working on his memoir. I thought we'd do it in dialogue format. But if you aren't John Grisham or Danielle Steele, you won't get your book published very easily, unless, of course, you're a politician of ill-repute.

I wrote publishers here and there, and then BYU said, "We'll take this book and publish it." BYU press was in full swing at that time. "But we want it in first person, not in dialogue."

I agreed, and then I had to rewrite it all in first person. Then the press hired an editor to help out, and it was published in 1978.

In the meantime, Primrose was coming back and forth. He lived in Japan several years, then three years in Australia, after retiring from Indiana University. Before his retirement, I'd asked him "Where are you going to go? Would you like to come out to BYU?" He'd concertized at BYU and had played a couple of times with the Utah Symphony. This was in the old days, when great artists went all over the place. He liked Utah, but no, he'd settle in Australia. He'd married a Japanese woman, Hiroko, whom we had known at IU. (She'd had three children by a previous marriage.) She was a superlative teacher of young string students. When they were in Japan, Doctor Suzuki had asked her to go to Australia and strengthen the string Suzuki program there. Primrose went with her, and that's how they had come to Australia.

Prior to 1977, the year before the memoir was published, he paid visits to us. He'd stay a day

or two, maybe a week. One day he said, "Someone said I'd better have a complete physical exam at my age." He would have been in his early seventies then.

I told him, "I'll get you an appointment."

So we went down to the Utah Valley Hospital, and he had a thorough exam. The report came back in a few days. The doctor said, "Mr. Primrose, I have very bad news for you."

Primrose asked, "What is it?"

"You have a terminal disease, bone cancer."

Prostate cancer had metastasized into the bone.

He asked, "How long would you say I have to live?"

The doctor said, "About six months to six years, depending on the treatment you have done. The only thing now in your favor is your age, because the older you are, the more slow growing this particular type of cancer is."

That was a blow. I was sitting with Primrose right across the table from the doctor.

Life continued, and I was worried. All the time we were doing Primrose's life and career, we would careen off to the side about the viola—the viola per se, viola technique, viola literature, and so forth. He would say, "No, that doesn't belong to this book. We need to do another book on the viola."

"Another book, by the genius of the instrument, hasn't been written yet." I was concerned about his health foremostly, but also about the fact that that book had not been written.

I went to the administrators at BYU, and I wish to pay tribute to some of them, those who were very sympathetic and who, over the years, had been very supportive of my professional activities in this country, and also beyond. (I hope that what I tried to do, accrues to the benefit of the university.) The administration said, “Yes, we will send you to Australia to do this book.”

This was in August. Christmas didn’t work out for Primrose. I could go in May, nine months later. In the meantime, Primrose was having treatments to forestall advancement of his cancer—not cure it, just forestall it. I spent a little more than three weeks in their home south of Sydney and interviewed Primrose every day. I had asked my BYU students, “What would you ask the master of your instrument, about the instrument, if you were sitting across the table from him?” I had also gone to other pedagogical books on string instruments and culled out questions. So I went to Australia with a sheaf full of questions.

We spent many hours in interviews, and it was a very enlightening experience. We’d interview in the mornings, because that was about all he could tolerate. We’d have lunch, both take a rest, and then go walking, or watch Australian rugby, or do something like that. After dinner, we might listen to or play chamber music. He’d asked me to bring my film collection, my medium format slides. For some reason, he loved to see my slides. Every time he came to Utah, he’d ask, “What about those slides?”

I told him, “I’ve showed you what I consider my best.”

“Do you have more?”

“Well, yes.”

“I want to see every one of them.”

He was the only one—and still is the only one—who had up to that point seen all of my slides—the good, bad, and indifferent ones.

So we would watch slides or play chamber music. He might invite some people in.

I could see that he was in a sort of “viola backwater” in Australia. I thought, *He still has something to give, but he’s in the wrong corner of the planet.* That country has produced some fine musicians over many centuries. But he wasn’t being utilized there.

I put the question to him, “Don’t you think it might be better if you moved to the United States? While you’re in that country, I’m sure you’ll receive invitations to visit and teach here and there, as long as your health holds out.”

The last summer they were in Australia, he and Hiroko were visiting us in Provo, seated at our kitchen table. I said, “Let’s list the pros and cons of staying in Australia or moving to Provo.”

This was in late summer 1978. In February 1979, he phoned and said, “Get us a house. We’re coming.”

In 1979, BYU was hosting two events: The International Viola Congress, of which I was host; and the first ever international competition for viola alone. There had been competitions in Munich and Geneva, where viola was a category of the overall competition, along with clarinet or voice or some other instrument. But this competition was the first exclusively for violists. It was a cooperative arrangement between the Snowbird Institute and BYU.

Primrose had moved to Provo with his wife and three children just a couple of months

before. They lived on Grandview Hill in Provo, a five-minute walk from my house. Donna, who by that time had also become a Realtor, had negotiated the house for them—the house of the former head of the Department of Communications, Bruce L. Christensen. He moved out and Primrose moved in.

Primrose was in Provo three more years. I worked on the viola manuscript, and it was a lot of work. I was given a sabbatical leave to work on it, but with all my other activities, I wasn't working very fast. I knew that it wasn't going to be published for a number of years.

Primrose died in his home on Grandview Hill on May 1, 1982. His services were held in downtown Provo at St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

I wanted, if possible, to have a major publishing company do the book. I had about three publishers in mind, but Oxford University Press, in business since the fifteenth century, has a worldwide distribution network, and Primrose was British by birth. Oxford took the manuscript and published it in 1988. It is still in print. Three years ago, it went into a Japanese translation. A German translation is now forthcoming: "Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose".

On one of Primrose's visit, about 1974, we were walking across the quad between the administration building and the library, toward the fine arts center. I said to him, "Mr. Primrose, what are you going to with all your memorabilia—your programs, etc."

He said, "I never was much of a collector." (They all say that, by the way. These people don't realize what they have up in the attic.)

"And what about your private music library? What's going to happen to all that?"

"I've never given it a thought."

I said, "Well, we all go someday. Don't you think it would be a good idea to make an arrangement for a consolidation?"

He conceded, "Well, I suppose it would be a good idea."

"What would you think about a university library, where scholars and students and professionals would have access to it? After all, people are interested in you."

"Hmmm. Did you have some place in mind?"

"I whirled around, pointed at the library, and said, 'Right there! Right there!'"

We sat down with the library administration—Sterling Albrecht and Dean Larsen, with Tom Mathiesen, a representative from the music department; and Hal Goodman, music department chairman. We wrote out a document, and items have been coming since then. We're talking about more than thirty years of collecting.

Then we had the opportunity, when the library was extended in 2000, to create a place—which we had *yearned* for—a space of our own, for what became the Primrose International Viola Archive. We started with a few dozen viola scores in the library, and now in 2008, as we speak, that figure has climbed to eight or nine thousand viola scores—the largest collection of viola music in the world, and it's become an important research center for the viola. People come from Berlin for instance and other places to do their research here.

That was a major accomplishment, but we also felt we should have a *specialized* room for the collection—specialized furnishings, a

specialized ambience in a room. I'd seen the luscious woodwork in many of the European libraries, and the smells of everything. I thought, "That's what we need, as a tribute to Primrose and his European heritage. And also as a tribute to the origin of the viola."

The library and BYU administration said, "That's all fine. You can have a special interior design, but you will have to raise \$100,000 for it."

We got a couple of bids. The first people we consulted were modernists, and we couldn't persuade them to do it any differently. Their offer just wasn't appropriate.

Then it was so fortunate I met a gentleman in San Diego, through my brother, someone I'd never heard of before. He headed up an organization of Old World craftsmanship called Artisans Dubois, craftsmen in wood. He worked for the likes of Steven Spielberg, Bill Cosby, and Jenny Craig. But how could we afford him? I interrupted his basketball game with his kids and talked to him. "Would you be interested in doing a project in the BYU library?"

"Yeah, I think I would," he said. "That's my alma mater. In fact, two of my kids are going to school there now. Yes, I probably would."

My burden was his opportunity. With the approval of the vice president's council, for a special project, we went ahead. It was going to cost \$100,000 to do the two rooms—the Primrose room and the PIVA room. So I had to start humping and get money.

The campus administrators and planners were wondering, "We don't know if this will work or not? How do you nickel and dime musicians? There aren't many moneyed musicians out there." I went out nevertheless, and the money started to come in.

We were going round the bend toward the finish line, or we were going to stumble in the cinders, one of the two. Two large gifts came at a very telling point. One of the gifts came from a former student of mine whose husband worked for Microsoft, Brian and LeeAnn Morgan. The company would match the gift of this former student. Another gift was from Peter Bartók, the son of Bela Bartók. He gave the largest monetary gift of all.

There were still some hurdles to overcome, but we opened the rooms on March 1, 2002, and it was an exhilarating feeling to have that done.

Some of the workmen at the physical plant at BYU said, "This is really nice. If I were you, I wouldn't let the president know about it, because he'll want one." I thought that was about as fine a compliment as we could receive.

This has been a significant contribution to this library and to the world of viola. It was you, David Dalton, who did it.

No, I did it by myself, I With help from a lot of generous and understanding others.

But were it not for you, it would never have happened.

I will admit to that. I don't appreciate everything that happens at BYU, but I do appreciate many things—and the one thing I did appreciate was the administrative encouragement and support. I might have been turned down on some more minor things, but not on the really important things concerning what BYU *can* do. Ever since I came to BYU in those early years—and I've taught at two other institutions—there is at BYU an extra burden, but a beautiful burden

or responsibility—we're teaching the children of the Church. That gives additional motivation to perform as best we can.

When I had other opportunities, for example, when I became editor of the *Journal of the American Viola Society* for fifteen years, I got help from the administration, and it was over and above my other duties. I became president of the American Viola Society, and then I became president of the International Viola Society. Again, this was all over and above my regularly duties. I was also asked to do special projects. I greatly appreciated the support of the university.

That's why I'll say, "Yes, most of the credit comes to David Dalton. But if this person hadn't been there, or if a person less sympathetic had been there, if the campus planner or somebody else had been rigid, or if somebody had thrown up a big hurdle—it might not have happened."

The path was made clear for you, and along the way you had several wonderful experiences of that same kind. I'm sure we could talk about the Lord's influence in your behalf.

You've had quite a career, not only as educator, writer and performer, but in the Church as well. You've been a bishop and had a number of other callings.

It's interesting when I was called as bishop. I had been on several high councils in my home stake. During one of those callings, I invited the stake presidency to a couple of concerts I conducted. One was at the Cathedral of the Madeline in Salt Lake City, when I directed the Salt Lake Symphony, a very good community orchestra—there are amateurs in it, but also some professionals. The stake presidency also came to a concert at the Assembly Hall on Temple Square.

When as bishop, I said to my stake president, "I'm carrying carious loads, President. It's not just a menial thing, to conduct the Salt Lake Symphony." I was also, at that time, president of the American Viola Society. I continued, "Would you counsel me to give up some of these assignments?"

"Heavens no," he insisted. "I enjoyed your concert. You ought to keep on with the Symphony. You'll know what to do. I'm not going to advise you to give up that job."

I said, "Well, I know it is a wonderful opportunity to serve as a bishop." It was very time-consuming. It's not only the time, it's the psychological and emotional commitment, and the overall drain on one. The exhilarating highs are wonderful things. But at times, you feel the energy just sucked out of you. However, a bishop is sustained perhaps in an indefinable way.

So I kept on with all those things. I wonder in retrospect, "I don't know how I did all that." I had good counselors.

A friend of the Primroses, who was the minister at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, said, "I'm so busy, so busy," and so forth. "I've nothing else to do except my church work." But he had only a secretary, and of course some volunteers. But he didn't have the support structure that an LDS bishop needs.

Of course there are some things that only a bishop can do, and nobody else. And I did those. I would say that my five years in the bishopric led me to conclude that I would never covet that position. But having had the experience, I would never, never have wanted to give it up or not have had that unique opportunity.

I should also mention that my professional activity at BYU was with the Deseret String Quartet, of which I was a founding member. The founding members were Percy Kalt, first violin; Barbara Williams, second violin; myself as the violist; and Robert Ashby, on the cello. We had several different cellists, including Suzanne McIntosh. After her we had Julie Bevan Zumsteg, then Gayle Smith. When Percy left, Christopher Kimber, from Australia, played with us. Later, we had a marvelous colleague who had been the leader of the Sydney, Australia string quartet, who had been recommended by Primrose, Harry Curby. He'd come on two different occasions, trying to breach the gap. We also had Roger Drinkhall, cellist for a season or two.

Several things happened such that we decided that the quartet as such was not functioning the way we wanted it to. So we became the Deseret Piano Quartet: Irene Peery on the piano; Barbara Williams, violinist; Steve Emerson, a marvelous cellist (he was with the Utah Symphony); and myself. We explored new repertoire, and we were together about four years. Then Barbara retired, and the quartet dissolved.

There's not been a permanent faculty quartet since. Faculty members reconfigure themselves and give spring concerts. Sometimes it's a trio, or a piano quartet.

It's been slow to rebuild again.

The quartets were a big commitment.

We have four children. Alison is a professional musician. Melissa played cello up through high school, and then she became a very good singer. She sang on Norwegian television with a jazz ensemble, and she could also sing Schubert beautifully, and Cole Porter wonderfully.

Hillary studied voice at BYU. She was a humanities major and sang on a Salute to Youth concert with Joseph Silverstein conducting the Utah Symphony.

Our last-born, Aaron was born in Provo as was Hilary. Aaron was intractable terrible as a student of violin. He destroyed teachers, including his father. One of my students came out crying, from trying to teach him. Then we got him on clarinet. Still he would never do anything, nor would he sing anything. But he told us we were allowed to come to his Provo High School production. (Now this is a parent talking about a child, so I might get carried away.) When he came on the stage, the audience practically rose out of their seats. The cast had done a production a couple of nights before; we attended the third night of "Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat" with Aaron as the Pharaoh.

Someone said, "This young man is so good on the stage." And his voice was not bad at all. He added, "This young man is a 'stage' animal." We have birthed a stage animal!

Aaron had always had a low, loud voice—in fact, in the neighborhood, he was called "the kid with the megaphone." When he went through puberty, his voice didn't change. He had a natural loud voice, so still in high school, he went to my friend Bob Downs and took some voice lessons.

In college, he became an English major, thinking that might be a springboard in several directions. He wasn't sure what he was going to do. He eventually became a quasi-music minor. He was wanted in the opera. In fact, as a freshman his first role was Sarastro, in *The Magic Flute*. He also sang the role of Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Giannischie*.

He decided to apply and audition at a couple of major schools. He was accepted at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

I didn't say too much about it, but I thought, *How in the world will he ever pass the entrance exams?* But he did. He labored over the theory. It was like his mother's experience at Indiana, when she had to go through that.

He did well at the Conservatory. He sang Judd in *Oklaboma*, when he crossed over from opera to musical. The city has every year what it calls the Cincinnati Academy Awards, which are given to the best in theatre and opera. Aaron won the Academy Award for "Best Supporting Actor," as Judd.

Then he asked himself, *What if I don't get a job with my voice? What am I going to do?*

So he decided to diversify. That year, the University of Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Conservatory inaugurated a program in which you could get an MBA and also a master's in fine arts administration.

Aaron's first job was in promotion for the Cincinnati Museum. Then a friend invited him to come back to a .com company in Utah. He became the CFO. I saw a cartoon in the *New York Times* about then which showed all the .com companies going over a waterfall.

So now what does he do? He is now an officer in Prestige Financial, for the Larry H. Miller empire. He also, thankfully, sings in the Tabernacle Choir. That's how that has played out.

I did quite a bit of conducting while at BYU; the Philharmonic, Symphony, Chamber Orchestra, and several operas. I will always appreciate the diverse professional opportunities BYU afforded me.

The Music and Dance Library invited me to deposit my memorabilia in the Primrose International Viola Archives in the Lee Library as the "Dalton Papers". They're contained in about 75 archival boxes. Hmm... my life in boxes?



David and Mike