

Typed copy of Daniel's 1st mission letter for family: 7 Feb 1990

HIS ADDRESS: Elder Daniel H. Bartholomew, 2005 N. 900 E. #201, Provo, UT 84604

Dear Mom, Dad, and Laura, Hola!

It is now 9:26 a.m. on Wednesday, February 7. The day has hardly started and yet I've been able to go through an endowment session for a man named Blas Calero and eaten my breakfast. It is preparation day and I am currently doing my laundry.

The feeling here in the Mission Training Center is absolutely wonderful! The Spirit is so strong here! Just being here in these buildings makes your testimony grow. We spend all our time learning the language, gospel doctrine, door approaches, praying, bearing our testimonies, reading the Book of Mormon, and listening to the instruction of Church leaders. I've never experienced anything like this in my life. Love, Daniel (Elder) Then he lists his expenses. He then copies out pages of his journal for our info:

January 31, 1990 (Wednesday)

Today is a wonderful day! My first day as an official missionary in the Mission Training Center here in Provo, Utah. I have met my first companion. His name is Curtis Neal Gardner and he seems to be quite the agreeable guy.

I was fortunate to have friends and family to see me off because I had to say Goodbye to my immediate family (Dad, Mom, and Laura) at Newark Airport in New Jersey. With me at the MTC to see me off were: Grandpa and Grandma Hall, Grandpa and Grandma Bartholomew, Uncle Tracy and Aunt Betsy Hall, Robert Hall, Mary Hall, Zina Hall, Bryce Inouye, Celeste Heilesen.

I was very happy to see all these people and I really appreciated their being here for me. I also got mail today(!) from Elder(?) Yoshihiko Kikuchi congratulating me on my mission call. He helped my parents get back together. He is truly a great man with a positive influence on my life!

President Pinegar gave the message which introduced us into the MTC and he helped us relax with his warmth and humor. Afterwards, family and friends and the missionaries were "separated" so to speak and we got down to business.

We paid for our board and room (\$496.), bought books, had our hair checked (I needed to get a haircut and did so), checked our immunizations, went to our first class (we were introduced to the teacher, Elder Powelson), and now I'm here preparing for bed. It's been a hectic day and I'm tired, but I am so grateful for the opportunity to become a representative of the Lord!

My district consists of Me, Elder Gardner (my companion), Elder Henderson (district leader), Elder Bingham, Elder Sill, Elder Mangum, Elder Wheeler, Elder Toos, (pronounced Toce), Hermana Bria, Hermana Briggs. I love 'em all. They are a great bunch of people and we've learned a lot together. We have also felt the Spirit together, laughed together, and experienced the MTC together. What more could one ask of their [his, Daniel] friends?

Our daily schedule ("No rest for the wicked!")

6:00-6:30, Arise and prepare. 6:40-7:25, Breakfast. 7:30-11:00, AM Class (Sister or Hermana Smith). 11:00-11:30, Book of Mormon Reading. 11:30-12:20 Lunch. 12:30-3:45, PM Class (Elder Sal Guero). 3:45-4:15, Topical Gospel Study. 4:20-5:15, Dinner. 5:15-7:15, Evening Class (Elder Powelson). 7:20-8:10, Gym (Basketball or Volleyball). 8:30-9:30, Evening Class (Elder Powelson). 9:40-9:55, Companion Planning. 9:55-10:30, Prepare to Retire/Prayers/Retire no later than 10:30 p.m.

Today we also learned some basic ways to pray in Spanish. It's a little scary, but ya gotta start sometime!!

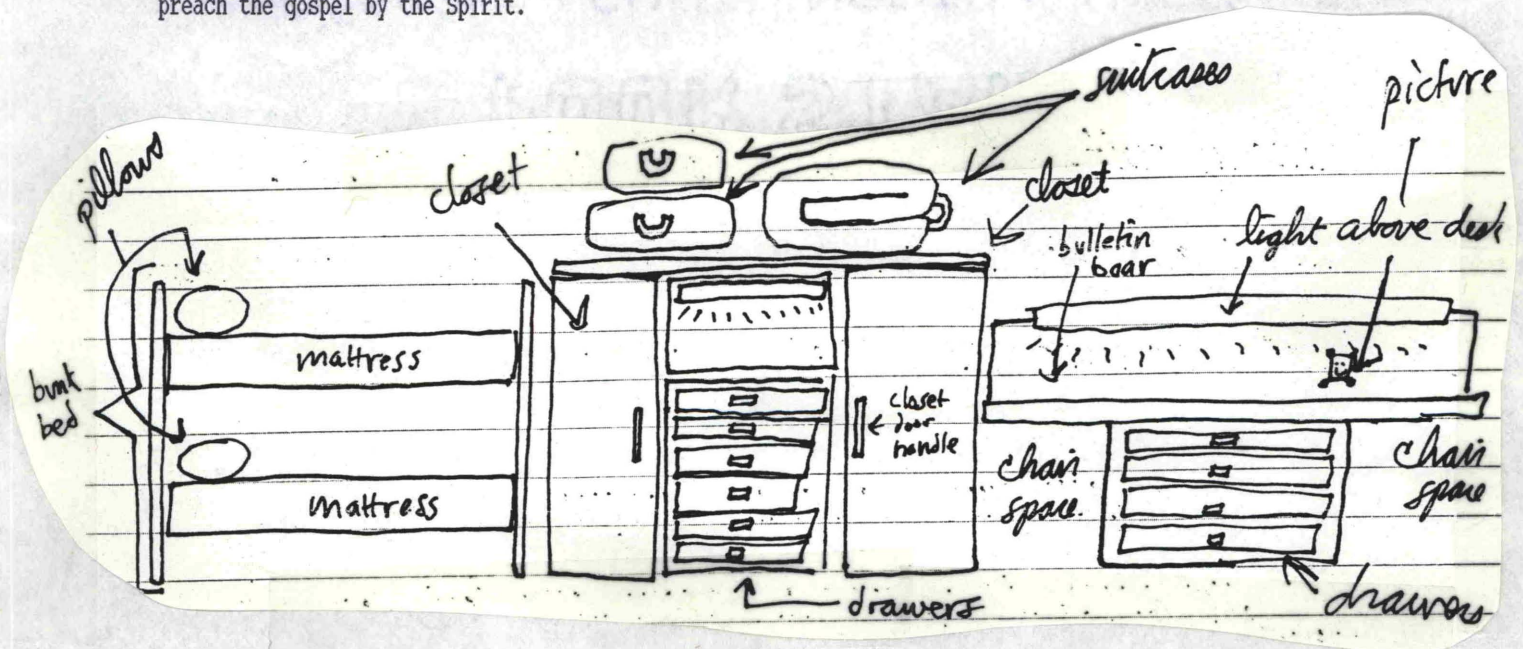
February 1, 1990 (Thursday)

Work.work.work. They keep us so busy here we don't even have time to think about sin. Get up at 6:00. Shower, get dressed, say prayers, go to breakfast. Go to meeting at 7:30. Take notes and think about what's being said. President Pinegar is a wonderful soul. Go to class at 9:30. Meet the teacher, learn, take notes. 10:45 go to temple orientation. Take notes, think, gain insights into plan of salvation and endowment that you didn't have before. 12:00 Eat lunch. 1:30 go to class. Learn more and take more notes. Spanish is such a wonderful language! 4:45 eat dinner. 5:15 go to ranch meeting. Meet ranch president, his counselors.

Introduce yourself to people in your district. Listen to advice and messages given by peers, branch president and counselors. 8:00 go to class. Learn more, take more notes, and yes...more Spanish! 9:30 go home, write in journal, brush teeth, hang up suit [I knew the day would come!], put on pajamas [you are getting civilized!], write in Journal [you already said that--but keep it up!], say prayers with companion and other pair of companions that share room. 10:30 go to bed.

My purpose as a missionary:

My purpose is to invite all to come unto Christ and be perfected in Him so they can gain eternal life and to preach the gospel by the Spirit.



Each room in the MTC houses four elders (2 pairs of companions). Two companions share a side of a room that looks exactly like this. Yessir. I sleep on the bottom bunk on my side of the room. Elder Gardner (my companion) sleeps on top.

Across from us are Elder Bingham and Elder Henderson. Let me tell you, these are a great bunch of guys. That's a good thing because we spend practically every minute of the day together, and if we didn't like each other we'd be clawing each other's lungs out.

I love the 'ol MTC. I'm learning Spanish and more about the scriptures and eating that great MTC food (which gives you gas and constipation). President Pinegar is a wonderful man and we love him because we can tell that he sincerely loves us. He sent a letter to my companion just because they both have something in common in that they share the condition of ASTHMA. Pres. Pinegar offered to share a fix of his asthma medicine with Elder Gardner anytime which almost makes me wish I had asthma.

I played basketball in Gym today!!!

Today we also learned scripture study skills:

Scripture Study Skills

1. Background: who is speaking? who are they speaking to? what is being spoken about?
2. Define words and phrases
3. Recognize lists
4. Put your name in the scripture

Interesting question: What is the difference between knowing the gospel and knowing the gospel is true?

- Plan and set goals and then evaluate progress.
- Read D&C Section 4 - Awesome!!!

February 3, 1990

It has been quite a day. The Missionary Training Center is an absolutely incredible place. My testimony has grown and I feel closer to God than I have felt in a very long time.

I've learned a lot in my classes. My teachers have taught me a lot. Their names are: Sister (Hermana) Smith, Elder Sal Guero, and Elder Powelson. Each one has individual talents and gifts which makes learning from them a productive and enjoyable experience.

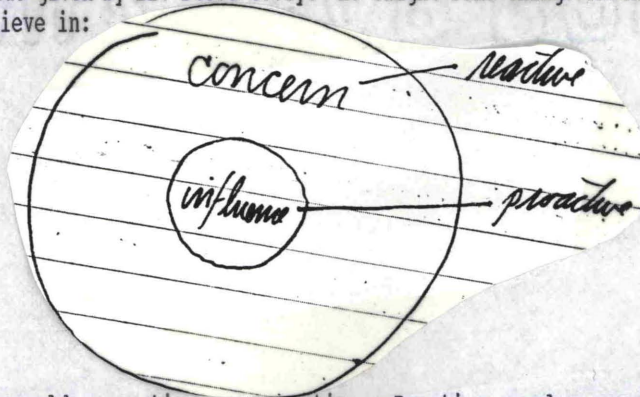
Tomorrow we begin speaking Spanish as much as possible. Its exciting and difficult and I'm looking forward to [sic]. So far we have had several tests and quizzes in class and my lowest score has been a 94%. That means I should be able to do as well as anybody in my district. I hope I'm right.

Anyway, I've got a lot of things to do still, so I'm going to end here. Adios.

February 5, 1990 (Monday)

Today I have set a goal. My goal is to be fluent in Spanish by the time I leave the MTC. This will mean a lot of hard work ut it is certainly possible if I really set my mind to it. I feel that the key to this is studying hard and speaking the language whenever possible. This is also a district goal and so it will also be an important priority to help others who need it.

Yesterday there was a fantastic fireside given by Dr. Steve Covey. He taught some things which I am absolutely fascinated with and that I really believe in:



There are two kinds of people in this world: reactive and proactive. Reactive people are strongly effected on [affected, Daniel] by their environment. The outside decides their inside. External acts on internal. The person then becomes dependent upon the outside influences and the environment acts on him.

A proactive person works within his sphere of influence rather than the concerns of the world. He subordinates feelings to the greater cause. A proactive person does what he is capable of doing regardless of what others are doing. He sets his own standards and sheds himself of concerns about or comparisons to what other people are doing.

This requires conscious effort on the part of the individual. Jesus Christ did this better than anyone. Example: After Jesus had been nailed to a cross he was still capable of forgiving his enemies. He subordinated his feelings to the greater cause. Not easy, but that is what made Him so perfect, so noble. More thoughts on this perhaps later.

February 6, 1990 (Tuesday)

Today was a good day. I learned a lot about the responsibilities of missionaries. Here it is. The Conversion Process: 1- finding, 2- teaching, 3- baptizing, 4- fellowshiping.

If all was perfect in the Church, the members would be doing the finding and the fellowshiping and missionaries would be spending 100% of their time teaching and baptizing. Instead missionaries spend about 80% of their time finding and 20% of their time baptizing, etc. Oh, well. It's something to think about.

Daniel--I might make a few mistakes in reading your handwriting (beautiful as it is). If you want to edit this and return, I'll fix it in the computer. I'm sending a copy to Mom, as she wants to share it with the entire family.

I'm sending along a letter from Laura. We enjoy your letters so much. They truly fill my heart with rejoicing!

Love, Mom

No date--Letter #2, received about February 28, 1990

Dear Mom and Dad,

Thank you very much for the letters. Every day we wait to see if we get any mail and it's really fun to open them up and find out what's going on.

The MTC is still a great place to live, and my companion and I are really drawing close. There have been several times when I've felt the Spirit really strongly and I know that the Church is true. I love what I'm doing and I really wish that I had experienced something like it earlier.

Our personal time here is very precious because it is in short supply. I've been getting up an hour earlier than I have to (5:00 a.m.) and I'm going to try 4:30 because there's more stuff I want to do.

What I do is study scripture, write in my journal, shower, get dressed, make my bed [amazing!], and my companion's as well [you've got to be kidding--can he still get in it when you're through?], and pray.

I have to confess that I bought an extra. I got myself a CTR ring for \$18.00. My mind tends to wander and I often catch myself humming blues and rock tunes. My ring reminds me to focus on God's work with all my heart, might, mind and strength (see D&C Section 4). So far it's working.

I also bought a jump rope for about 5 or 6 dollars which I use to "jump start" my day. I get really sluggish in the morning and I find that 50-100 turns of the rope gets my blood pumping (sometimes my brain even starts to work!)

I am really learning a lot from my teachers and all in all this is the best experience of my life spiritually. Thank you to both of you for preparing me to do what's right. I love and miss you. Love, Daniel Bartholomew

P.S. Please send \$80 to Murdock Travel Agency for my insurance needs on my trip to Guatemala. I've spent just about all the emergency money on a haircut, the books I've needed, etc. The only extra was the ring which I feel was necessary. Please send me another \$50 emergency money if you can. Anyway, I love you [and our money]. Adios! [Daniel, Dad called Murdock--I don't know what he worked out. I thought the insurance was just \$30--which I sent last week, along with another \$50 emergency. If you need any more emergency, there will be an EMERGENCY, all right!]

[He wrote the next page in Spanish, which is an abominable suggestion his father made so he could practice HIS Spanish. Laura translated it for me. I do not take any responsibility at all for any misspelled words and forget their weird punctuation!]

?Como estan ustedes? Quinen una carta en Espanol? Es no problema! Es facil! Me gusta aqui mucho porque el espiritu es muy fuerte aqui. Mi companero es un buen hombre y mi testimonio es muy grande

ahora. Yo recibo su9s cartas! Gracias por todo! Como esta mi hermana? Yo quiero que ella scribiria una carta para mi. Yo estoy muy triste porque yo no se de mi hermana ama oui. Sniff! Sniff! [Laura has since succumbed to this shameless pitch for sympathy and has sent him oodles of letters.]

Mis clases estan bien! Mis maestros aprendanme mucho a cecca de el evangelio de Jesucristo, los escrituras, gramatica y vocabulario de Espanol, y las charlas (the discussions).

Mi distrito es muy fuerte ahora. Durante la semana pasada nosotros tuvimos problemas pero ahora esta bien.

Well, that's enough espanol por ahora [yes, indeed!] As you can see, things are going pretty well. But we have had some problems (the tense (time?) I was having severe trouble with earlier). One of our elders here in my district has dyslexia and learning Spanish has been very difficult for him. He was considering leaving the mission unless they changed his call. We prayed and fasted for him and now he's staying on the original course.

Our A.P. (Assistant to the Pres.) in our branch is also facing a hard time. His father died two nights ago. His father was 49 or 50. Needless to say it was unexpected. Apparently he and his Dad were very tight. His parents were separated and all his other brothers and sisters lived with his Mom. His Dad willed everything he had to his son. Elder Brooks is un tough hombre and he's not even going to the funeral because he knows what he's doing is right. We're all praying for him and even though you don't know him, I'd like for you to, as well [we have been, Daniel--that's rough. A sister in our mission learned of her father's death while on her mission. He was killed when a rock flew up from the lawn mower and hit him in the temple--she did not go home for the funeral, either, but was pretty shook up for a while. If one of us dies while you are gone, don't try to come home either--we'll come to see you, instead. I swear Grandma Langford came to see me the week after she died--I could feel her presence and told my companion she was in the room before we ever got news of her death.]

Being here has been an extremely good experience, and it's getting better all the time. Stay happy, know that I love you, Su(?) hijo, Daniel Bartholomew.

P.S. Dad, I don't need a Spanish dictionary. I have two, thanks anyway. I'm not sure about the electrical thing because we haven't had our culture class yet. For all I know we don't even have electricity there. I don't have your letter here with me right now, so I hope I answered the right questions (I'm doing my laundry, it's 6:01 a.m.). If there's more, I'll write ya a quik separate note and throw it in with this letter, I think. Love ya.