

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 Betty Hall

Robert Hall


Mary Hall

Zina Hall

Byrne Inouye

Celeste Heleson

→



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 Kituchi 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 (\$496.00), 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} ~~Mr.~~ 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 ~~Ellis~~ Sill

Elder Mangum


Elder Wheeler

Elder Joos (pronounced Joe)

Hermans ~~Ellis~~ Brui

Hermans 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, prayed together, eaten together, sung together, laughed together, and experienced the MTC together. What more could one ask of their friends?



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

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|---------------|---|
| 6:00 - 6:30 | Arise and prepare |
| 6:40 - 7:25 | Breakfast |
| 7:30 - 11:00 | AM Class (Sister or Hermmana Smith) |
| 11:00 - 11:30 | Book of Mormon Reading |
| 11:30 - 12:20 | Lunch |
| 12:30 - 3:45 | PM Class (Elder Jal Guerrero) |
| 3:45 - 4:15 | Topical Gospel Study |
| 4:20 - 5:10 | Dinner |
| 5:15 - 7:15 | Evening Class (Elder Powellson) |
| 7:20 - 8:10 | Gym (Basketball or Volleyball) |
| 8:30 - 9:30 | Evening Class (Elder Powellson) |
| 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. Its 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 endowments 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} ~~1:45~~ eat dinner. 5:15 go to branch meeting. Meet branch 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,



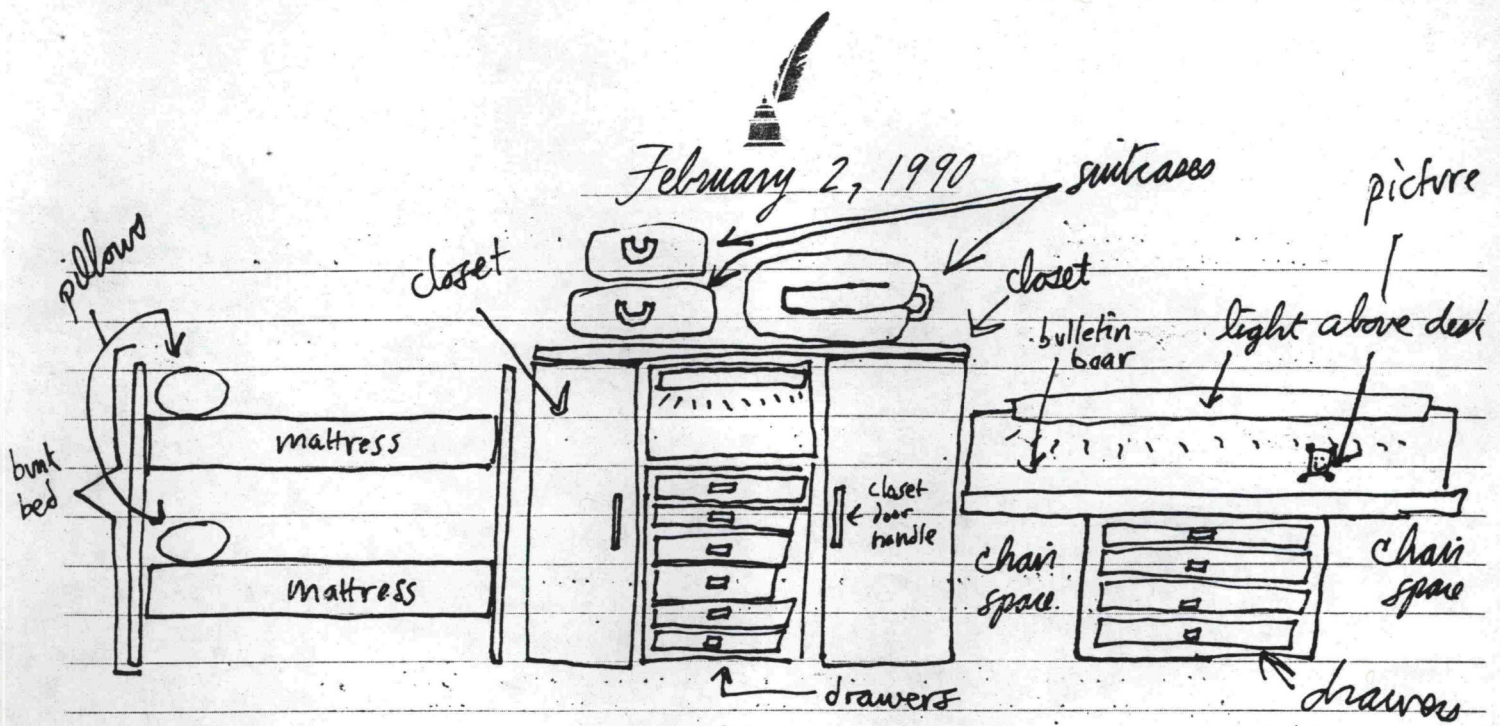
hang up suit, put on pajamas, write in Journal,
say prayer with companion and other pair of companions
that share room. 10:30 go to bed.

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 Piregan 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. Piregan offered to shake 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 (Hannah) Smith, Elder Sal Guero, and Elder Puelson. Each one has individual talents and gifts which makes ~~the~~ learning from them a productive and enjoyable experience.

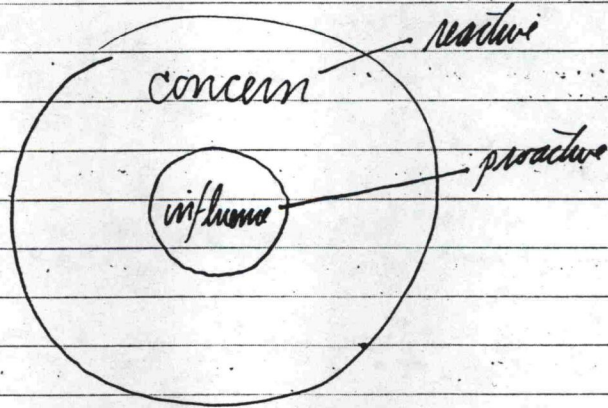
Tomorrow we begin speaking Spanish as much as possible. It's exciting and difficult and I'm looking forward to it. So far we have had several tests and quizzes in class and my lowest score has been a 94%. That means I should be able to do as well as anybody in my district. I hope I'm right.

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


February 5, 1992 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 but 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 distant goal and so it will also be an important priority to help others who need it.

Yesterday there was a fantastic friend given by Dr. Steve Coey. 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 by their environment. The outside decide 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 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 - fellowshipping

If all was perfect in the church, the members would be doing the finding and the fellowshipping 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.

