

Weds, Dec 27,

Dear Folks and People:

Two weeks in the country and all is well. Did I tell you I was in the Delmas 19 House? Delmas is the main road which runs up Port-au-Prince to Petionville, and the streets coming off it are named Delmas 1,3,5, on the left side and Delmar 2,4,6, on the right side. That's about all the order there is to it though.

Delmas 19 is about across from Delmar 34 or so, and Delmar 75 is around Delmar 52 because the streets are anything but evenly spaced. "Street" is a very broad term for a (sometimes) very narrow passage. Delmar 19 is an actual road that's fairly wide and fairly paved. Our house is Rue C Colomb #2 just off of it. My companion's name is Elder Peter Nevelle Nebeker (10 E's and no other vowels!) and he comes from Everett. It looks like he'll be a good trainer, and we get along just dandy. He's only been in the country for six and one half months, but he speaks really good Creole. Right now I'm serving as an ALC. That stands for "Area Leader Companion", "Area Leader" is another name for senior companion, so the whole thing is just a fancy way of saying that I'm a junior companion. The wall above my bed has "GREENIE" written on it in beautiful one foot letters of green chalk, which I haven't bothered to wash off. Elder Nebeker jokes that he doesn't have to train after all because his greenie already knows the language. It's true that I can usually get my point across in Creole, but I still have difficulty understanding the rapid-fire gibberish that comes out of people's mouths here. Elder Warnick is in the same house with me, along with his trainer, Elder Egan. Elder Harris the other person in the house, is currently the odd man out in the mission, and will have a different companion from the office staff every two or three days for another week or so until he gets someone permanent. He has the distinction of being the only missionary out of 40,000 to be assigned to the area which includes City Soleil, the poorest place in the poorest mission in the Western Hemisphere, and possibly the world.

There are four sisters in our district, too, two of whom I knew in the MTC because they came here one month before us. Sisters Gianni and Strange, with their companions, Sisters Becker and Baumchan(?) Cool sisters, all of them. Sister Giami is an art student. It's really a good district, all together. Three of the others from my MTC district, Elders Barnet, Tanner and Kimball, are in the next district over, Delmar 33. Yesterday morning we went tracting because we didn't have any rendezvous set up (It's words like that, which we even use when we're talking English that will be the hardest to remember in English. Besoyoik???(With french markings, yet?): to oust, uproot,

missionaries were sitting on chairs on the other. I've seen three bats on different occasions so far, but none very well.

The five of us were all going to call home from an investigator's house Christmas, but we never got through to the US. Sorry.

Jan 3. Unforgivable of me not to have finished this letter. Especially as I had time to. I should have sent it as is.

The money system here is based on "gourds" which are defined as being worth 20 cents US. But gourdes are completely worthless anywhere but in Haiti, whereas the dollar is recognized worldwide, so people are willing to give more than \$1.00 Haitian for \$1.00 American. Right now the percentage is around 42%, which means that if you go anywhere except the official exchange places, you get F10 gourds for \$1.00 U.S. (as in a check)

1/100 of a gourd is a "kob", but the smallest coin you see is the "inq kob" or american penny. There is also a Haitian mint coin of the same value, but the most common are the familiar US Pennies. You wouldn't believe how many of our pennies wind up here--and once they're here, people keep them tight. There are still 1908 50 kob pieces (worth 10 cents--larger than a quarter) in common circulation all over the place.

I have enclosed two 1-gourd bills, both of which were printed in 1987 (in Munich) one of which has been circulated and one of which I got fresh. Please to be very careful to wash your hands after handling the disease-impregnated one--believe me, you have no idea where it's been. It's not the dirtiest bill in circulation, either--they get so that they're no longer passed flat, but as little brown wads you can't even see any writing on.

Love you all Elder---(And I couldn't decipher the name after the Elder) (Grandmother)

Now that Zina is at the Y we get to see her frequently. This keeps us up somewhat on what is going on at the Tracy Hall house but she is usually too busy to talk much and she would probably say the same thing about me.

Daniel, by now you are settled into the MTC schedule. One thing, I'll bet you are getting more sleep. At night?

Uncle Wendell is home now, and has gone up to Wellsburg to finish his house up there. They are living there, so you know it is almost finished.

I have just finished sending all the letters out to the Hall and Langford cousins, and have put the deadline at March 30th. I hope all of you will get me your sheets and histories. I know you are all busy, but so am I, and if I can take the time to do this, you should find the time to fill out the sheet on your own family and a short history on the back of the sheet, and get it to me. I have decided that any of the cousins ~~xxxx~~ including my own who are not at least interested enough to do this, will not get a copy of the whole bunch. If they are interested, they can borrow a set of one of their other brothers and sisters and copy it--only I didn't tell them that as I want to get all their information. If we did this once every generation, we could keep track of the migrations and growth of the Ernest Langford family--and see it grow. With my own family, you can expect me to come and see you and get the information if you don't send it to me. (That ought to scare you.

Enclosed is a copy of the money in Haiti. They never retire it or renew it but just let it stay in circulation until it dies a natural (or unnatural death).

Sherlene says she has a letter to send out, but it is another Bartholomew book, so she is mailing it to all of you directly.

Dad has just come home to take me out to dinner (Fridays) and I am not dressed--I'd better get moving.

Love, Mom