



Deborah Ann Coulam
Wheelwright

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Chapter IX

Mascarene Islands Mission 1984-1986

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150

September 14, 1984

Mrs. Ann Coulam Wheelwright
1836 Sunnyside Ave.
Salt Lake City, Utah 84108

Dear Sister Wheelwright:

You are hereby called to special service in Reunion Island as a representative of the International Mission.

Your appointment bring you the opportunity to serve among members and friends of the Church, and includes the authorization to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will receive you. Your mission president, Elder M. Russell Ballard, will provide specific direction and instruction in this special calling.

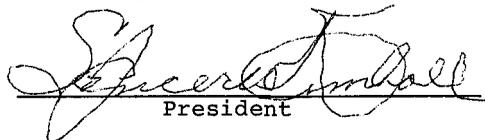
Your presiding officers have recommended you as one worthy to represent the Lord. It will be your duty to live righteously, to keep the commandments, to honor the priesthood, to increase your testimony of the gospel, and to be an exemplar in your life of all the Christian virtues. We repose in you our confidence and extend to you our prayers that the Lord will help you thus to meet your responsibilities.

The Lord will reward the goodness of your life, and greater blessings and more happiness than you have yet experienced await you as you serve Him humbly and prayerfully in this labor of love among His children.

Details concerning your departure date will be furnished by Elder Ballard. You should contact him as soon as possible.

We ask that you please send your written acceptance promptly, endorsed by your presiding officer in the ward in which you live.

Sincerely,


President

**Talk Given in Yalecrest First Ward
Sacrament Meeting November 11, 1984**

We all think that during the golden years of retirement there'll be lots of time for rest and relaxation and a lessening of responsibility. Now in some respects this has happened because all of our six children have now completed their education, their formal educations. They've married and become established in their own family units. But we've also discovered that it's through change that we make progress, and that there is no such thing as a time of retirement. In the past three years, I spent two years at the university and earned my BA degree. Max had the opportunity to teach graphics at Alta High for a year. By working in the extraction program at the stake center I've learned more about genealogy gathering. Max has worked on Temple Square and met many French people and taught them there, and he's become the day trainer on Thursdays. He also supervised and helped build a new family summer home for us at Bear Lake, along with a grandson and sons-in-law and those others that came to help. And then we moved and condensed our business from an office in town into our own home into just a one room office. These are all in addition to the opportunities that we've had working with the High Priests and the Relief Society here in Yalecrest First Ward. And we have been able to make many new friends. We also found time to visit with our children and our grandchildren and our returned ex-missionaries from the France Toulouse Mission, get to know them and their families better and to love them even more. These are the activities that we're going to miss so greatly. Instead we'll be meeting a new group of people, members of the Church and non-members, mainly non-members. We'll be speaking French again as our daily language, and we'll have many opportunities and the whole responsibility

of testifying and preaching of the truthfulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, without the daily commitment to the things that take our minds from this ordinarily.

The island of Reunion, where we'll be living, has a population of approximately 500,000 people, and they're of mixed ancestry and religious background, peoples from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Europe and Africa. At the present time there are two organized branches of the Church there, of about 25 members each. We also have six missionary elders and one other couple besides ourselves. Max will serve as district president of the Mascarene District. The district also includes the island of Mauritius, which is an independent nation of over a million people, about a hundred and fifty miles away from Reunion. They also have the same type of mixed racial background. We will be involved with active proselyting on Reunion, but on the island of Mauritius this is not permitted. But we do have about fifteen local members, and they have a branch that's begun to function. We have two couples there that supervise the small branch, and they are making many friends among the non-members and having them come to their meetings. We expect to receive recognition soon. There is a bill in the parliament of Mauritius that we hope will pass in the month of November, at which time they will be able to proselyte actively on Mauritius. So all of you pray for that.

This experience for us will be on a small scale in comparison to our experience while we were in France. With only six missionaries and four couples that's different than our 350 or so that we had during our course of three years in France. With only three small branches that's quite different than a dozen or so branches, and our branches were more scattered in France, if that's imaginable, but it's true. But we will have time personally to work with investigators and with the members, to enrich their lives

and to help them understand the principles of the Gospel.

There are three principal parts to any missionary experience. First of all is learning to love the people, then to speak their language, and then to testify of the Gospel truths. We've already built in our own hearts a love for the French people, and so we will have to take on the dimension of love for the other peoples that we haven't had the opportunity to know before. Hopefully our French will come back to us quickly and we'll be able to be effective in the language. And we know the Gospel. We know how it should be lived. We hope that we can be examples of how to live the Gospel.

We can hardly even say how much we appreciate the great support that we are receiving from our friends, from our family, making it possible for us to forget our current responsibilities and obligations so that we can serve this mission, take up this great challenge and this change in our lives and help these people. Now every one of you here today has had some kind of an influence on our lives. Some who don't know us very well, if you're new members in Yalecrest First Ward, you've influenced our lives just by coming to meetings and being a good example to us. The continued devotion of our own family is wonderful. We've been blessed, Max with brothers and me with sisters, who have continued in constant devotion in their families also. We appreciate this. We especially appreciate Lorin being with us today and making a tape that will be able to be made in sextuplet to have them for each of our children. We've had the opportunity to go visit those of our children who are away from us except for those who are in the Chicago area that we'll visit on our way east. And we feel that all of these families are living the Gospel. They're wonderful examples to us. They support us in every possible way. Our former missionaries, many or whom are here today, stay

firm in the faith, and it's an exciting thing for us to see them starting their own families and having them grow in the Gospel with them. It's really wonderful.

We had a choice experience Friday. We went to the MTC for just the one day to get an update picture. We went into lunch in the cafeteria, and those of our missionaries who are here will know who I saw when I mention her name. Dear Sister Mimié, one of the younger ones, one of the little young ones, is now a missionary at the MTC going to Quebec. She was a devoted member, she and her family, in Perpignan, and she has stayed with the Gospel. She told us that the branch in Perpignan is breaking ground for a chapel of their own. They have two strong branches, and they're in the Languedac District, which they hope will soon become a stake.

I couldn't sit down without mentioning my own dear companion. He's been a guide to me every day of my life. Now I didn't get married until I was eighteen, so I had eighteen years with my family, and I appreciate the influence they were. But my life has been lived with my dear husband Max, and I appreciate him, and that's one of the special blessings that we have on this mission of being together every day and doing the same things together. When we're home we get kind of fractured. I go my way and he goes his and we are so busy that we do social things together but not too many spiritual things together, and we'll have time for that.

I know that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is true. You all show it in your daily lives. I feel it every time I'm in an LDS meeting. I feel it every time I look into one of your faces and see your smiles. I feel it when I see the lovely babies and young people that are growing up. I know that Brother Kimball is our prophet for this day, and that he is the prophet even in Mauritius and Reunion, and that our Heavenly Father is watching out for those people, and He will watch out for us

while we are there. I know that the *Book of Mormon* is true and that it has references in it that will apply specifically to some of these people on this island, many of these people, and we hope to be a good influence for them. I appreciate the ward. We'll miss you all so much and we hope that you aren't afraid to write to us. Our address is on the missionary board, and it's easy, and we'd just love to hear from you, and I promise that I'll answer letters as quickly as I can and as much as possible. They may be group letters.

Thank you so much for coming today. And I want to express my thanks to my Heavenly Father for the blessings that I enjoy every day of my life. And I say this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The program also included the ward choir singing "O May My Soul Commune with Thee", a talk by Max Wheelwright, and the closing song of "God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again".

Nov. 18, 1984

The most important time of our preparation has passed. We are actually on our way & in Chicago with Scott & Jenette. Today we have been to church in their ward—the Parrys were down from Wisconsin. It was so great to be together. I love them all. Wish our life wasn't just comings & goings. We see our children in fits & starts—never for sustained periods, but I guess that is always true after they have become families of their own. The next year and a half with no family contacts may seem long but the time will pass quickly for the children. Max has been taking lots of pictures so we'll have them to refer to.

Our last week at home was hectic with many preparations, but we even got our Christmas cards addressed ready for mailing. I am honestly not anxious to start speaking French again but Tuesday morning

when we arrive in Paris we will have to begin again.

We had a wonderful week of training given to us at each & every dept. in the Church Office Bldg. & at the MTC. The newest programs were introduced to us, and we were given a pretty good idea of what is expected of us. Max was set apart as the district president of the Mascarene District (includes the 2 branches of La Reunion plus the branch on Mauritius). Bro. Carmack, a counselor in the International Mission, set him apart. President Eugene Hansen set us both apart as missionaries, representatives of the International Mission in La Reunion. Hard to imagine that this really is happening to me—to us.

Nov. 23, 1984

Scott got us to the Chicago airport early Monday morning. We arrived in Washington just before noon. We were able to meet with David King, the Church's overseas representative. He was formerly an ambassador to Madagascar and Mauritius so he told us a little about the people on these islands. Isabelle & George Foury were at the airport to meet us [in] Paris. We have traversed around & through the Paris area taking care of our business. Wednesday we met Pres. Fife & his wife of the Paris Mission and we got several letters needed for application for carte de jour, etc. From there we went to the office of Bro. Alain Marie, the public relations director for the Church in Paris. He gave us ideas for effective proselyting in Reunion—and information & ideas for radio spots. We also went to Torcy to the Church Distribution Center & ordered items needed in the islands.

I am getting anxious to see La Reunion—and start experiencing rather than worrying.

Sunday we went to church at La paroisse de Chatillon. Monday was our day to pack & be on our way to La Reunion. What a long trip. After 5 hrs. the plane set down on Jeddah—(Mecca) in Arabia—on the edge of

the Red Sea. Our second stop was in Madagascar. Tight security at the airport but not nearly so tight as at Jeddah.

Nov. 29, 1984

We have been in La Reunion two days and so far so good. The island is beautiful. The city is like a French city—less well taken care of perhaps but it is the people that really are different. Most people are colored to some degree or another—from golden tan to black—every variation possible. Wherever you go you see these mixtures. The downtown streets are very crowded—hard to find parking places, etc.

Today Max has been meeting with and interviewing each of the missionaries. So far the weather is most agreeable—just warm



View from the apartment in St. Denis

and balmy with lots of breezes. Our apartment is on the 3rd floor of a large apartment building way up high on the hill. We have a beautiful view of the ocean. We are in the treetops for sure. The apartment has a kitchen—not too bad—with an excellent refrigerator, a stove and a small eating area. There are only a couple of cupboards, a very low sink & no work space but we'll manage. The king-size bed completely fills the bedroom. The only drawer in the entire apartment is in a small desk. There are adequate closets & some shelves for clothing, etc. We will get by. Max has an office & I have a workroom. We could use a couple of comfortable chairs and 2 or 3 bookcases.

There is lots of work to be done—we must keep busy.

Sat. Dec. 1, 1984

We attended the baptism of the Morel family of St. Pierre. An excellent meeting and work well done by missionaries & Chion-Hock family.

Today we had good meetings here in St. Denis. We need more solid members. Not enough to go around to man the necessary assignments. Those who do have positions fill them well & the missionaries help too. The language is still my *bête-noire*. I need to study vocabulary & verbs. I am beginning to think that my mind is not capable of thinking in French simultaneously with speaking.

This evening we went into town to the city park & enjoyed a walk around—admiring the foliage which consists of large outdoor plants of the kind grown in pots at home. Very odd to see spider plant in a large area on the ground, rather than hanging from a basket. This is really a beautiful spot.

Dec. 6, 1984

We have been busy this week taking care of much needed articles in the apartment. We found a secretarial chair to use at the typewriter desk & we found a 3 shelf bookcase to use for the brochures. Today we found a reclining chair for me so now I'm on the balcony looking at the green foliage and the ocean as I write. Max put mosquito netting on our bedroom window & also his study.

The weather has been very fine. When the sky is overcast the heat doesn't bother me much but when the sun is overhead & there are no clouds, in just a few minutes I get bright red in the face & start sweating heavily.

Max is so able with the language. He is very verbal in French—it seems like more so than in English. He does so many things really well and is so willing always & seldom if ever unsure or fearful. Max went to Rotary meeting last night. I doubt that I will go anyplace by myself while we are here. The driv-

ing terrifies me even when riding. I can't imagine driving.

I have been trying to set some personal goals & am using the Pursuit of Excellence booklet as a guide—also the missionary handbook. There is so much we should do. Always striving to do better and yet to be loving to others and to yourself at the same time. I want to live a productive life & not just be a drag on Max.

I spent time this evening preparing some ideas in French for a talk to be given at church Sunday in St. Pierre. It can be adjusted according to the time left when I'm called on. Max has to speak after I do & sometimes the time is very limited. The French is coming better. The ideas I used I gleaned from a lesson on testimony that will be used in Relief Society here next November. Right now the R.S. book is about my only resource. We need our boxes to arrive from home. Everything that comes up missing we'll see when the boxes arrive.

An interesting & fun experience with a small boy who lives in our apartment building—He was outside playing when we drove up. He asked us to take him to the top floor in the elevator. He said that there was a broken step & then decided that wasn't quite true—that there was a hole & if you were careful it was fine but he really wanted to go in the elevator. Apparently his mother had refused to come down & get him & if he went down he was supposed to walk up the six flights. He was too small to reach the buttons in the elevator—about 4 yrs—very sharp & willing to take advantage of our kindness.

Dec. 7, 1984

Today is Pearl Harbor Day—42 years since it happened.

Today, Dec. 8, makes one month since our mission began officially. Things have gone well for us. I am starting to do a few morning exercises. Hopefully I can gain some physical strength while here. I'm sure the climate is better for my arthritis.

Dec. 10, 1984

Today is Max's 69th birthday. What a blessing he is to me—and to those he comes in contact with. He seems right at home with members and investigators and is really putting his best efforts to help the missionaries. We were at [St. Pierre] meetings yesterday. They had 30 people in attendance—17 of whom were investigators. They will have a good branch when these are all baptized.

The drive to St. Pierre is long—2 hr. and hectic—lots of curves. The road runs close to the ocean & in daylight the views are spectacular. The ocean is calm, ferocious, big breakers, sandy beaches, all varieties along the coast.

Dec. 12, 1984

We are on Mauritius visiting with the Perkins. The weather is not quite as hot but still very humid. Bro. Perkins has been working hard to get the Church recognized here but the legislature has closed again until March without taking care of this matter.

Yesterday we had a good visit with the Perkins & the Schmidts, and it was so interesting to hear about Mauritius & its strengths & weaknesses. It is a relatively new, developing country with a real need for industrialization. There are many unemployed—the young people all dream of leaving the island. It is so difficult to make a good living here. However, living is very cheap. The large home the Perkins rent costs about \$250 a month. Our rent in Reunion is about \$500 per mo. unfurnished. Quite a difference between the two economies.

Last night Max interviewed two fine young men who are ready to be confirmed elders.

We received a surprise telephone call from Salt Lake last night. We have authorization to buy additional cars. Also we got the news that the elders may now serve for 2 years instead of 18 months.

Bro. Cuthbert arrived. He is a comfortable man to be with. The Perkins & the Schmidts had really worked hard to get a good crowd for the fireside. There were 55 people there—many of them professional people, well-known in the community. Everyone looks to be of Indian descent with maybe some African mix. There are even more brown faces on Mauritius than on La Reunion. Friday morning we had a fine zone conference. Our flight back to Reunion was on a larger plane than we took over there. Uneventful and quick—45 min.

Our elders met us at the airport and then the 3 of us drove to St. Pierre. They had 28 persons there for their fireside talk. Saturday morning we had an excellent zone conference with us & the Robins & the 6 elders. The Spirit was great and we received more fine instruction from Elder Cuthbert after each of us had given our testimonies in French. I am learning better all the time & am much less fearful than when we were in France. Sunday morning we held regular church here in St. Denis—17 women in Relief Society. About 15 members (including 9 missionaries) in B of M class. A large crowd in the investigators class. We had both branches present.

The St. Pierre Branch had their Christmas party last night. We rode with the missionaries in the van & also had with us 3 children of the Payet family. The children all have trouble understanding me. I talk too slowly. They had decorated the hall with sprays of tree blossoms & balloons—very festive but not Christmassy. They had a tree, artificial, and they use colored foil in various shapes for their ornaments. The food is typically Creole—Indian. They served a salad of carrots, cabbage, onion all grated & with a yellow dressing—quite good. They had non-hot & pemint. Such hot food I've never before tasted—very common here & on Mauritius too are small 3 cornered pastries filled with spicy meat & vegetables. They also had a small roll stuffed

with sausage and some black fried chicken—not burned & not too spicy. They had fruit juice to drink, bread and a lettuce salad to finish.

Monday afternoon I went to the practice at the St. Denis Branch to see what I could do to help. I helped cut a costume & somewhat botched the neckline. I guess places like this are for humbling hardheads like me. I hate to do things wrong & I really want to be useful but so far I am only bumbling along without too much success. Hope I can find my place here.

Max fell off of the chair in his study yesterday & hit his back on his case. He has a bad bruise & probably a cracked rib too. He is really very uncomfortable. I spent most of today bringing the financial records up to date.

Yesterday was such a terribly hot day. We are fortunate to be on the hill where we get some breezes. I have been terribly homesick today. Max has gone to Rotary meeting & I had a good cry after he left. My mind knows that this is a ridiculous way to act but I feel so very isolated. There is a decided cultural shock here.

Our living room floor has many red flower blossoms on it. They have blown in from a neighboring flamboyant tree.

December 20, 1984

Today was a holiday, their independence day when they celebrate the freeing of the slaves in 1848. There was a TV special on last night showing the celebration on the beach—dancing with strong hip movement. Men & women but no touching, homemade instruments. They also drink lots of rum & get drunk. Alcohol is a curse throughout the world.

This morning there was a dramatic wind-storm coming from the sea. The wind was strong enough to lift the carpet from the floor. The large palm trees out front were really swaying & the ocean had whitecaps all over it—very dramatic.

December 22, 1984

The branch party was a real success. We had many people there and they all seemed to enjoy the two Christmas skits and the food and camaraderie. My continual sweating is a trial. I use lots of talcum & take baths often but I am fighting soreness from chafing. Wish I knew a secret way to lose weight quickly—or at all. My arthritic knees have been better lately.

Last night we had the largest, most dramatic, most complete rainbow we have ever seen. It was simply unbelievable. When sitting here looking at the ocean it is so peaceful and lovely. Like Max says—it's only when you have to move around that the heat is noticeable.

December 27, 1984

We went to St. Pierre Sun. evening and the meeting went well. I managed to be stiff & hard for the members to understand. I



Christmas in St. Pierre

make so many gaffes it is incredible. Max always makes up for my ineptness.

We went to dinner at the Chion-Hocks for Christmas Eve. On Christmas they use lots of candles. They also had firecrackers & all kinds of fireworks. The Chion-Hocks had decorated their living room very Christmassy with lots of balloons & tinsel & a tree. Sister Chion-Hock insisted that we bring the Robins and come back for Christmas dinner. I still feel most comfortable in English but I can follow most conver-

sations and make some response. I made some fudge and ended up making balls of it dipped in cocoa.

While Bro. Cuthbert was here we shopped for souvenirs & we bought a beautiful Manger Scene which we are enjoying. The animals are like local animals, as are the people.

December 29, 1984

The last two days have been quiet ones for me. Yesterday Max was preparing his talk for Sunday & I prepared the financial report for Salt Lake. Today he went off early to help Bro. Payet move a stove and refrigerator. He must have had errands too because it's now 2:00 p.m. & he hasn't come home yet. After so many years I guess I can't expect him to call & let me know when he's going to be very late. We keep looking for a good walking place. My arthritis is much better in this warm climate.

December 31, 1984

Tomorrow starts a New Year, 1985. The weather is getting warmer. Jan. is like July at home so we only have hot & hotter to look forward to.

In order to start the New Year out right I have made some personal goals and we are trying to come up with good decisions for the branches & district. The elders are doing much better since Max put the Americans together and the French together here in St. Denis. They say that a goal not written isn't really a goal so here goes—I am using the Pursuit of Excellence booklet as an aid.

Spiritual Challenges: 1) Strengthen my testimony. Express it often. 2) Study the *Doctrine & Covenants* in French with Max. 3) Work on being able to pray fluently in French. Be sincere and humble. Let the Spirit guide me. 4) Continue to keep my personal journal. Record more of my thoughts and feelings. 5) Work with Max in visiting inactive members. Be a friend to all. 6) Write incidents of my personal history—our family history. Intellectual Challenges: 1) Write a

segment of my life as a short story. 2) Read & learn about La Reunion & Mauritius. Try to understand the people. 3) Work on improving my French—spoken and written. Be able to give a talk with only a bare outline. Physical Challenge: 1) Become accustomed to this tropical climate. 2) Do stretching exercises. 3) Walk up stairs once a day. 4) Go for evening walks as often as possible. 5) Be temperate in my eating habits. Try to take a walk every day.

Service Challenges: 1) Fellowship friends of the Church. Have firesides at our home. 2) Keep up to date on correspondence. 3) Prepare and carry out a Primary program for the children of the branch of St. Denis. 4) Visit inactive members. 5) Find families as per relatives' instructions. Character Challenges: This is the area that gives me the most trouble. 1) Strive to go the second mile in my assignments. 2) Eliminate false pride from my character. Never act haughty or disdainful—especially of local customs. 3) Accept assignments & do them to the best of my ability. 4) Give proper credit for the works of others in talks or in writing. 5) Develop a love for and a dedication to missionary work. 6) Cultivate patience, tolerance and love for my dear husband. 7) Be courageous enough to acknowledge mistakes, to apologize when appropriate, to make things right if I have given offense. In just a month my goals have become more relaxed. I am not perfect.

New Year's Eve most of the branch went to the home of Sister Massei. She lives high up on the hill above St. Clothilde. They had fireworks & dancing. The children even love to dance. We (all the missionaries) left at 10:15 to be in at 10:30. Max is trying hard to get these missionaries united and thinking of the handbook rules. I have been working on Primary preparation. What a challenge. The materials I have are inadequate and my French is inadequate but I must try. The children need the discipline and the Gospel lessons.

Jan. 8, 1985

Every time we go in the car I end up being ill. I turn purple, get soaking wet & develop a severe headache. I love our apartment. There is always a little breeze and the temperature is never like it is outside & in the car. We are going to buy a new car to replace the old Citroen. I hope it has air-conditioning. I have been trying to write letters home & I get so homesick. Every day I study French for a couple of hours & every evening we read the scriptures in French.

There is nothing in English to read in this apartment. What we had I have read. Is the mission experience just to torture me? I love to read & can't. I love to talk & visit, & only when Norine is around can I manage—otherwise it's just meager sentences. I hate my inadequacy & I am doing my utmost to improve but it's more than uphill—it's two steps forward & 3 backwards most of the time. I get discouraged easily. I want to be different. Today marks 2 months of our official mission time so time does pass—in fact the days go quickly—it's just the minutes & the times I feel miserable & think too much.

January 10, 1985

Last night we went to a Rotary party and met an entirely different group of people—all French & mostly from some place else but here for their work. A few are natives but all are high class White.

The home we were at is up in La Montagne and is just lovely. The temperature was many degrees lower than high on the mountain. That area is really quite heavily populated but all individual homes. There were 50 people at the party & we were seated all at one long table on their porch—like I would envision doing at Bear Lake some day.

Naturally we are outsiders and very different as far as our temperate habits are concerned. No other way to get to know this class of people and they seem to accept Max well. He can carry on an intelligent conversation in French.

Standard dress around here for the men is a short sleeved shirt & slacks—with or without tie. Only occasionally do you see a leisure suit but white shirts are common. The women wear everything—mostly sundresses. However among this older crowd there were many dresses with short sleeves. They probably even dress up when the weather is cooler.

January 14, 1985

We had a lovely day Saturday. We drove up into the mountains across La Plaine des Palmistes to get to St. Pierre. What a beautiful area—mountains and green with fantastic flowers. There were hundreds of blue hydrangea bushes, fuchsias that grow almost tree height, begonias that climb over fences, azaleas, camellias—absolutely gorgeous—also a great many cannas. The weather is much less hot than down here but doesn't get below freezing in the winter. The communities on the other side going down to St. Pierre are lovely home areas and everyone grows fruits and vegetables—



something never seen on this side of the island.

We arrived in St. Pierre about 3:00 p.m. The branch members met at 3:30 & we all drove to the canyon above St. Joseph for the baptism. There is a beautiful river with clean fresh water in natural pools. We had to hike down a cliff & then we held the baptism. Certainly back to nature style. The 8 yr. old Morel boy was baptized and May

Rose Payet. We drove back home around the other side of the island—so now we've been all the way around. This is a beautiful place. Life is so easy you don't see many indications of industry or hard work. Homes are open to the out of doors, everything grows on its own & the French govt. subsidizes everything & everyone. This makes for a great state of ease or laziness.

We had good meetings on Sunday, and Sunday evening we invited Nelly Lycurgue over for dinner. She is a lovely young lady and a devout Church member. Today La Reunion is under cyclone watch. We have had terrible winds & rain for a full 24 hours—the waves are spectacular.

January 16, 1985

The cyclone has passed to the southwest but we are still having heavy winds and torrential downpours. We have to mop the kitchen floor every hour or so because the water comes in through the vent. We are finding it difficult to have enough to really occupy our time. Max is so used to physical activity and we just don't get any. I am tired of studying & reading—always in French.

January 17, 1985

The storm is still continuing. The rain has been almost continuous now for five days.

Yesterday I started writing my life history—trying to remember as many details as possible. This is a sort of therapy for me as well as reminding me of the past and hopefully helping me to understand and appreciate the many blessings I have received. I was given a bright mind and a healthy body to begin with, and I had an urge to do what is right and to push ahead all my life. One of the reasons I feel so stymied now is that I have no outlets for my usual track. My mind has to work in French and it doesn't want to. I need to be more humble, and willing to be a servant, not a leader. Sometimes it is very hard to be a wife—a woman. Now that my parental responsibilities are done, & I have Max to sustain, it is hard to know what my

duties really are. I can cook & clean & take care of our physical needs—but even there I can't do much. Max needs more physical activity and I need to walk. We haven't solved this problem and may not be able to while here. It was always a problem while we were in Toulouse too. The Church needs someone like Max here. He knows how to train the leaders. He knows how to help the missionaries, work hard and to be happy. He speaks French fluently and he is willing to do anything he's asked to do. Too bad he has a wife who feels so inadequate.

January 19, 1985

Max has decided that I should start my Primary class tomorrow so I am trying to become well prepared. I am using the basic children's manual which uses the scriptures and the basic principles at the child's level. My main problem will be the language.

January 20, 1985

No children for Primary today. We had only 2 investigators—14 members of whom 7 were missionaries.

I had to make a trip to the clinic yesterday & have an x-ray of my right foot. I hit my toe against the edge of the door—bent it to the front & thought for sure that it was broken. However, what actually happened is that it slipped out of joint & was not broken. It is very black & blue & hurts terribly if I move it. It is taped to the next toe to keep it immobile.

Sarah Payet is becoming a good friend of mine. She sits with me in church. She is 10 ½.

January 21, 1985

Today Max picked up our new car—with air conditioning. What an improvement. It's another VW Golf but rides very well.

January 25, 1985

We received word that 4 American elders will arrive tomorrow—2 from the Paris Mission and 2 from the Geneva Mission.

When we were with Robins on Wed. I got some good ideas from her to help me with Primary. We also measured the hall at St.

Pierre for the placement of curtains & yesterday we found some at a bargain price. Yesterday I completed the quarterly report for the district and between the three branches we had an average attendance at Sacrament Meeting of 30. Today we had more missionaries than others at the meetings. I had 2 Payet children in Primary—no problems whatsoever. I hope the manuals we ordered come soon.

Here in our apartment there is a lovely cool breeze. I do so appreciate every comfortable moment. We have received the items from Torcy that we ordered when we were there in November. While in St. Pierre Max and Mont hung the divider drapes in their small chapel. I am trying to come up with some lesson ideas for Primary. The children vary in age from 4 ½ to 9 and it's hard to cover the range.

February 1, 1985

Today two more elders came—these from the Brussels Mission. We received word from Salt Lake that the couple coming to replace Mont & Norine Robins are Bro. & Sis. Glen Barlow. He's a former French missionary & she's been a French teacher. They will be here Mar. 29.

February 6, 1985

We are at the salle this morning and I'm appreciating the air conditioning. Max is trying out the organ. We have no one to play it on Sundays and he feels that he shouldn't do it—he needs to train a member.

A journalist from the local paper *Ile Quotidien* came by to interview Max about the Church. He seemed kind but one never really knows what interpretation will be put on the actual write-up.

February 7, 1985

We have both been studying and preparing for Sunday and for zone conference next week. I really am pushing myself to think of ideas for Primary—now that we are holding forth for the whole two hours.

This afternoon we had an appointment with the commissaire de police regarding

our carte de sejour. He was most gracious and asked many questions about the Church, examined our passports and said all was fine. He suggested that Max send him a list of our missionaries with their date of entry—place of birth & present address & he'll be the intermediary with the prefecture.

February 8, 1985

We went to the marché this morning & stocked up on vegetables for the coming week. We will have lots of meals to prepare while the Perkins & Schmidts are here from Mauritius. Also I'll prepare the lunch for zone conference (19 of us). I am also preparing a short talk about patriarchal blessings.

Apparently some of our boxes have arrived from home & Max has gone to pick them up. I hope they are things we need. It's hard to remember what we sent after 3 mos.

We are really blessed to have good health. The heat saps our energy but so far no serious effects & my arthritis definitely seems better.

The young Muslim who runs the I.K. furniture store where we have bought several things lately is so pleasant—seems to be a very happy person. He is Indian but was born on Madagascar.

February 17, 1985

What a busy week we have had. Last Sunday we had 11 at Primary—this week 15. Nelly Chion-Hock is helping me—that will be a real blessing. I am completely exhausted but the children & the parents are so happy to have Primary that so far it all seems worthwhile.

We went up the Bois de Nefles in St. Paul and met the Adolphe family. Joelle, the wife, was in Toulouse when we were & knew many of our missionaries. She was baptized there—met her husband at an Affinites Mutuelles conference & then they moved here in 1983. They have been inactive for over a year now. We also met two young families who live in St. Clothilde near the former branch meeting hall. If all of these

people were active the branch would really be popping.

Today Bro. Chion-Hock & Nelly Lycurgue came by to get her application for a mission. She wants to go as soon as she can after school is out the first of August. She is also trying to learn music conducting & Max is helping her with this. She is a lovely girl—hope her dreams can be fulfilled.

We were so glad to receive our boxes from home. I have been lost without cook-books.

February 19, 1985

We have had cyclone type weather again today with torrential rains.

Last week we were interviewed by a journalist of *The Quotidien*. Yesterday a double spread page appeared in the paper. Generally speaking it was a favorable article but in two areas the reporter really incorporated his own ideas. He claimed that our church was anti-feminist—that every family was expected to have at least 5 children—that all women made their own bread, sewed their own clothes & submitted to their husbands. The other area was that we are racists—that because our 10th Article of Faith says that we uphold & sustain the law and that we are building a temple in Johannesburg shows that we believe in apartheid. Quite a turn around of logic. Also yesterday we had an interview with a journalist from the other paper *The Journal de l'île*. He lives just downstairs from us.

We had two interesting phone calls today, one from the missionaries in St. Pierre. A radio man down there says he'll give us some radio time to do our own publicity. Also we received a call from Joelle Adolphe asking that the missionaries come and give them the lessons again. It would be a wonderful thing if we could touch their hearts and bring this family back into activity. Oh there is a lot to be done here. We are waiting for the instructor's book so we can get many young people involved in seminary. There is such a need for Gospel teach-

ing. We need to start a girls' program on Sunday mornings as soon as we have a replacement for me in the Primary.

February 23, 1985

On Wednesday afternoon we took Elders Clawson & Zaminski with us to see the Alophe family. They were prepared for us with their scriptures—with good intentions & good attention. Also they promised to come to church on Sunday.

Sometimes we don't have enough to do here, and it's hard to know what to do next. It's much harder to wait on others than it is to do it yourself. We must develop more patience.

There have been a series of articles in the paper here about the Mormons. Yesterday the Catholic Bishop of Reunion wrote a scathing article about the Mormon Church & their treatment of Blacks in South Africa.

February 27, 1985

The sea is so elegant—a dark blue & then a clear aqua when the waves hit the shore. It's really impossible to describe the beauty. There are waterfalls that are really spectacular all over the cliffs and mountains as a result of this last rain. The temperature was much cooler last night so sleeping was easy.

March 2, 1985

What a day we had Sunday. The children in Primary were unresponsive & I felt like a failure after the two hours. Somehow I couldn't ever think of the right things to say & it's hard to tell if anyone understands. I bore my testimony but my language was poor. Why do I make it so difficult? I can understand everything, but oh me, I just don't do well at all.

We had invited the Adolphe Family & their friend Mr. Tellman to dinner so we invited the missionaries also. When Max came he brought Suzie Auberval with him so we had 11 here for dinner. Quite a crowd in this apartment & quite a feat to get the meal in this kitchen.

These people are country people. I believe that the Adolphes have a testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel but they have a hard time living up to it. They want to but earthly cares get in their way. It is hard to be different in this rural, casual, Creole society. Suzie would like to be baptized but she has a mother who feels very negative toward the Church. Suzie feels close to God—she wants to study & learn & do what is right—really an unusual 19 yr. old girl. I feel so fortunate to have been born to whom I was & where. What an uphill job it is to have the Gospel in defiance of all tradition. Catholicism has kept the people ignorant here. It's really a shame the adverse influence they have been on progress. They have been too willing to let the people remain uneducated. They give charity but no progression.

March 8, 1985

We took 2 elders to St. Paul & then went to the copy shop. Elder Montulet has started seminary & we have new students & no student manuals so we made copies for the new ones. There were 7 students there this afternoon. Hope they can all continue to come each week. These young people can be the hope of the Church for the future.

March 12, 1985

We had 4 good days on Mauritius with the Perkins & Schmidts. We arrived Friday morning and on the way back from the airport stopped at Blue Moon Bay—a beautiful sandy coral beach on the east side of the island. Saturday we all six went to lunch at a fine restaurant. Then we went to see a lovely waterfall up in the mountains.

Sunday they showed the Women's Conference during Relief Society and the 1 session of Oct. General Conference the other 2 hrs. There were 21 Mauritians there—they have 4 good families and several single young men. They are all of Indian-Hindu-Catholic background—dark skinned humble sweet people anxious to learn more about the Gospel.

Monday Max & Evan went into Port Louis & saw our lawyer who is going to try to get the bill passed making the Church recognized on Mauritius. We also went to see a very large Muslim home that may be for rent. It would be a step upward & give enough room for some time to come.

March 18, 1985

We have had a busy weekend with going to St. Pierre both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday we received a great batch of mail—letters forwarded from home. It is wonderful to have friends just about any place on earth. Wherever there are Church people we seem to know someone.

Wednesday Max interviewed a young Black girl for baptism & she was baptized in an ocean pool at St. Pierre Saturday afternoon.

The Robins leave today at 2:00. We will really miss their friendship. It has been great to have someone close by who understands our problems and that are our age & similar background.

March 20, 1985

The weather has become delightful—still very summery but with cool breezes & very little humidity. We had a letter from Rosemary. She says that they are going to be moving to Washington D.C. on June 1. Steve is planning to move to Boston in the fall so we'll have 4 of our 6 in the Eastern half of the U.S. Life is very unpredictable. I feel like a nomad myself. Quite often I am very weepy. I cry when I read the *Ensign*, or watch the Church video tapes. Guess I'm really getting sentimental in my old age.

March 24, 1985

We have been having a hard time coming to an understanding with the prefecture here. They do not accept any cartes de sejour from France & we had to go have a physical—no big deal, just took time but we passed okay. The doctor told me that I am overweight and must correct that—but then he's a smoker so I'll probably out-live him.

March 25, 1985

Wonder of wonders—it took all day but we both received a récipissé or temporary residence card today. They required a rent receipt, a copy of our passport, 3 small black & white photos, our dr. exam report, a stamped envelope, and a copy of our birth certificate. Now everything goes to France and in 3 or 4 months we'll get our cards. They still haven't decided how to handle the missionaries—but they could accumulate this information except for their birth certificates & they would have to send for those. Apparently what goes in France doesn't necessarily go here in Reunion.

Yesterday was a busy Sunday. Max showed the October Conference video tape. There were 72 people there—members and visitors. Probably a little hard for these people to see so many white faces.

Max & I have started studying the New Testament using the Church institute manual. We try to take a lesson a day & it is going well—although I think we could do more discussing. However, we are doing it and so far very consistently. We have read the D & C since coming here & that was enjoyable too. I don't get quite as much out of the scriptures in French as I do in English.

We received good letters from Cathy & Peggy this past week. Both families are very busy—bishops as daddies leave lots to the wife—but our girls are so very capable—as are the wives of our 4 sons. They all made good marriages which is a blessing. Sometimes I wonder how we could be so fortunate to be the parents of such very special spirits.

March 27, 1985

Both Monday & Tuesday evening we were able to take a short walk. I have become muscleless and easily fatigued because of the lack of movement.

Bro. Chion-Hock is going to call a Primary presidency. I'll have to help them get started but this will put the responsibility on their shoulders. I have really enjoyed

having to dig out the information and also the opportunity to know the children. They know me now & are friendly & loving. I can talk with them and they don't turn me off like some of the adults do. Being able to go into Relief Society again should help some in making me feel more like I belong to the branch. Sometimes I get so lonesome for another woman to talk to. Thank goodness I receive letters from family and friends and I can do my talking by letters to them.

April 10, 1985

This past weekend has been a very busy one. We met the Barlows Friday morning at the airport. Max talked to them Sat. morning—explained their responsibilities. We had 2 baptisms Sat. aft. at Chion-Hocks. Sister Suzie Auberval and Sister Marie-France Barret—both lovely young single girls. We stayed in St. Pierre for Sat. & Sun. & Monday. Monday the branch went on an outing up to the volcano area—really just a cow pasture but everyone had a great time playing games, hiking & eating. There were 34 of us there. The altitude up there is about



Branch picnic

7,000 ft. The weather is more comfortable this month—still lots of sun, but less humid.

April 11, 1985

Nelly Lycurgue was called as Primary President so I turned over the materials I had to her. She's very capable and the materials are excellent—now that we have everything in French. I enjoyed having the responsibility but the members need to do the job.

The worst part of being on a mission is not having regular jobs and responsibilities. I could do more than I am doing but can't see where I'm needed at the moment.

April 15, 1985

We just got home from a lovely weekend in Mauritius. Saturday the officers & teachers of the branch had a testimony meeting. It was really inspirational to hear their conversion stories—most have become members this year or last but one sister was converted in Strasbourg & one brother in Australia—but they are all native Mauritians of Indian & African descent. There were 11 lovely sisters in Relief Society and 6 children in Primary on Sunday. There were 34 at



Branch members

Sacrament Meeting—a record for that branch. They are fine, humble people.

April 19, 1985

No letters from home this week. I feel so cut off from everyone & the month's delay makes all news late. We do get our *Church News* promptly so we keep up to date on Church events. We have only been gone from home five months but in some ways it seems forever.

We went to St. Pierre yesterday. The Barlows are settling in well but are worried about not doing enough. I always have that feeling. I have read 4 fiction books in the last 2 weeks, 2 in French, 2 in English besides *Church News & Ensign*. I need to be doing more French study but don't have the right books.

The cooler weather has brought the shrubs & vines into full flower again. There are so many beautiful colors. The hibiscus are various shades of red, the bougainvillea vary from deep fuchsia to a pale lavender-pink, the alamanda are a brilliant yellow, the oleanders a vibrant pink. I have an orchid plant in a pot on our balcony and it is showing vigorous growth so I have hopes of seeing a flower too. I don't know anything about raising orchids but this is the climate for them.

April 21, 1985

Last evening a young student from Mauritius, Marc Colin, was baptized.

I had a bad dream night before last. I dreamt that I was in a prison of sorts & had been there for a whole month without receiving communications, without going out, without any reading material.

Yesterday we received some good letters from our Study Group friends and a nice long one from Georgia. It was great to hear from her at last. I wrote her a long letter. In spite of our many differences, she is always easy to talk with & to explain feelings to. She is a sensitive person.

I would like to start a genealogy class if anyone is interested. Max doesn't think it's a priority item & I guess it isn't but it is what interests me. When we get home that will be one of my priorities.

April 25, 1985

The Primary is now on its own. Nelly & Suzie are both trying to do so much right now. Max has called them to be district missionaries to teach Creoles who have difficulty understanding the French. They both attend seminary. Suzie is becoming very interested in her genealogy studies. Nelly is doing the home study missionary course & also directing the branch chorale. Both of them are attending the university so have their time & their minds divided but they are intelligent, sincere & enthusiastic.

Today we are going to St. Pierre with more chairs & furniture for them. They had

45 to church Sunday—the branch & the missionaries are excited.

April 29, 1985

Max received word that another car has been approved for the mission so he can put 2 elders in the Le Port-St. Paul area. Friday we went to St. Paul & found an apartment that would work well for the missionaries and also as a meeting hall. We have to wait until the 2nd of May to get final word on it.

Saturday we had Nelly Lycurgue and Suzie Auberval to lunch & they spent most of the afternoon here. Sunday I was able to attend Relief Society and Sunday School for the first time in several months. I also gave a talk in church on genealogy, journals, histories, etc.

When Nelly & Suzie were here on Saturday it was fun to see their happiness and sense of fun together. They are really enjoying their Church association and new responsibilities.

The bougainvillea are all in bloom again, poinsettias are turned red & they are real trees, the sea is beautiful. May must be one of the best months on the island—lots of sunshine, little rain and cooler temperatures (70s).

May 1, 1985

Today is Labor Day here and a holiday. Max & I had a great day with the 10-11 yr. old children of Primary & Nelly & Suzie. That



Primary activity

age are supposed to have two activities per month. Today was their first. We went to a nice clean park in St. Paul where there are natural springs & grottos. Nelly had planned a lesson, singing and a fun treasure hunt.

May 6, 1985

We went to St. Pierre Saturday for Max to do a baptismal interview. Sunday morning we went down there again. The folks in that branch are so humble and loving. They are kind about our poor French too. Of course Max's French is great.

I hope when we all get together in August 1986 we can organize as a family & publish a newsletter, etc.—to keep the cousins all better acquainted. Each family seems to be doing well—each in their own way but they have much they can contribute to each other.

May 12, 1985

We received news from Peggy yesterday that Craig has received his call to the Santiago Chile North Mission. He goes in the MTC July 18. We are proud to be his grandparents.

This is surely an interesting place to live—there are foods from all over the world. On our refrigerator we keep a tray with packages of cookies & crackers. Right now there are cream crackers from Ireland, coconut cookies from South Africa, tapioca wafers from Mauritius & cookies from France. We have juices from Holland, meat from Africa & fresh fruits & vegetables from Reunion.

During this past week we have had several dates here with investigators and missionaries to show the video cassettes of the Church films. These are fine experiences for us because we get to see how the missionary pair handle their teaching & we also make the acquaintance of prospective members.

May 17, 1985

Yesterday the two branches had a combined outing in the mountains. Both branches rented buses. There were 55 from Saint

Denis and 46 from St. Pierre. Tomorrow we are having a baptism of 4 women, quite different each one and they have a good spirit. We desperately need priesthood. The "have fun" syndrome is hard to combat with the men here. Strong men who can be priesthood leaders are in desperate need.

Nelly Lycurgue received her mission call to the Paris Mission.

Received Mother's Day cards from Jim & Cathy today and letters from the Sewing Club girls. I really do love to receive mail. It is my lifeline with reality. Max is so much more dedicated than I am but that's because he has very specific responsibilities.

May 21, 1985

I had asked Phyllis to send me MTC French books & they cost a fortune to buy & mail. I need this daily study to help me keep up a little. We don't speak much French except on weekends & my mind is like a sieve. I have to learn & relearn constantly. I got my hair cut again today. While I waited for Max afterwards I sat in the post office & watched the interesting people. What varieties—saw a White mother & child who were so unkempt & dirty that everyone shied away from them. Generally the people here are very clean & a dirty person really shows up. There are public water taps all over so people can wash. There is a public washing place where many wash their clothes every week—also take baths, wash cars, etc. Reunionais are used to using cold water & a big bar of soap for all purposes. They can really get greasy dishes clean with only cold water & detergent.

May 29, 1985

Today is our 46th wedding anniversary. My life has been so greatly blessed with such a fine husband. He is always thoughtful, always willing to help with anything, very competent and very loving. We have a good life together. He seems very content with whatever assignment he receives and just goes forward & does his very best. Yesterday we went shopping a bit & I bought

two pretty violet silk roses for myself to wear on my grey dress. Max takes photos & has them printed but otherwise no special treats. I'm sure he misses his physical activities like gardening and pottery and he so enjoyed his time on Temple Square. Hope he can do that again when we get home.

What will eternity be like? I hope I have some definite assignment where I can speak my own language and not just drag behind Max. I feel I have strengths that are not used at all when on a mission that's French. Our fine family is a testimony of the efficacy of the Gospel in the home—in spite of our both working & not spending enough time with the children—they are all such fine citizens. We are so fortunate to have them all succeeding in their personal lives and within their families.

May 31, 1985

Today was marché. What a lovely display of fruits & vegetables. Everything you can imagine—good quality and good prices.

June 2, 1985

Mother's Day here today. Yesterday Max had his first organ class with 6 students—well received. The Primary had a program & refreshments for the mothers. The children are great, the only people I relate to.

Today was a good meeting day. The Relief Society lesson was on revelation. I need help on my personal revelation. I have a talk to prepare for zone conference next Sunday—maybe that will help my attitude. I haven't really caught hold of what I am supposed to do on this mission. The Missionary Study Program is a good one so I am going to start it this week.

The chorus is making progress on Sunday evenings. We have learned 3 or 4 songs moderately well & we'll be singing at district conference next weekend.

June 4, 1985

Last night I had a horror night with my legs. Only bed rest seems to help. Today I feel like I am just getting over a long illness. I really am not coping well but I'm sure it's

just me & would be as bad at home, except maybe I wouldn't feel so guilty about being non-productive.

Yesterday afternoon a young woman came to see *Man's Search for Happiness*. She has waited on us at a Chinese gift store and I suggested that the elders contact her. She is a good contact and may be taught I'm sure. She is a trained pharmacist but no job here in her field so she runs a gift & souvenir shop.

June 7, 1985

What a miserable week this has been. I've not been out of the apartment except down in the parking lot. My whole person—body, mind, spirit has been at a low point. We received a letter from the prefecture yesterday saying our missionaries weren't welcome here on the island. Bro. Fuller went through the same thing just a year ago and thought he had it all resolved. Now Max has to see a lawyer & find out all the possible ins and outs—too much—Satan is trying to get a strong hold on us all. I prepared my talk on scripture reading but didn't really feel much personal inspiration. I often feel the Spirit strongly at unexpected moments but not at my command. Mable & Glen are also discouraged—especially with the language & the feeling of belonging. It would take years to get that feeling when communication is always so strained.

I am writing in my history of the years on 12th East. What a blessing to have been there instead of some wartime place during the war. I have had so many blessings in my life & with Max as my husband, continue to have them.

June 10, 1985

La Reunion is a beautiful place. We have a modern clean apartment. We have excellent missionaries to work with and very fine members. This past weekend was a landmark occasion—the first district conference of the Mascarene District. Sunday Max started with a meeting for the three branch presidents at 8:00 a.m., followed by a youth

meeting at 8:45. They had 25 between ages of 14-23—really great with missionary work as the theme. Also talked about seminary. At 10:00 there was a general meeting—87 present including children & missionaries. Theme—keeping the Sabbath day holy. We had a missionary zone conference, lasting better than 3 hrs.

June 15, 1985

We talked to Steve twice yesterday. It was so good to hear his voice. He is still trying to get all their reservations finalized for their trip here. We are certainly looking forward to seeing them.

June 21, 1985

I started the seminary-institute Old Testament course today. I would like to go right through the course. I have many study & personal activities but very little interaction with people. I keep trying to think of things I could do to be of more service but don't know which way to turn. Max volunteers my help but no one takes him up on it. I don't get visiting teachers nor do I help with it. I decided to make a list of all the things I do do—not loving, people-oriented activities at all—

1. Study
2. Prepare talks as requested
3. Keep personal journal-photo album
4. Correspondence
5. Help Max-financial reports-typing-filing
6. Household
7. Reading-French & English
8. Misc.-needlepoint-TV-puzzles

This week has been somewhat better than the past 2 weeks. I have had less arthritic discomfort & we have had people at the apartment several times.

June 29, 1985

Today Max has his organ class & then we are going directly to St. Pierre for their branch conference.

July 6, 1985

Max & I listened to our favorite patriotic choir tape to remind us of the 4th of July.

The 14th of July is the big French celebration but we don't know if they'll do much here.

I cleaned out the spare room this week so it can serve as a bedroom for Steve's girls. Got my hair cut this week & actually had a conversation with the hairdresser.

The flowering shrubs are so beautiful right now. The tangerines and oranges are at their peak & delicious. Hard-skinned avocados are cheap & plentiful. There has been a cold snap here & I have even taken to wearing hose & a sweater all day. It's strange here. I am very sensitive to the cold & Max isn't at all. At home Max was the one complaining of the cold. It's like we have to be contrary to each other.

I didn't comment on last Sunday's branch conference at St. Pierre. It went well. There were 37 there for Sunday morning. This was a good number for the 1st anniversary of the branch. Their first meeting just a year ago had 4 people present. There are more families in St. Pierre waiting to hear the Gospel.

Received a letter from Rosie. Apparently they went to Bear Lake over Memorial Day weekend & found all okay except for great evidence of mice. Funny, I was thinking of how I had left food there & there would be mice. Tom set traps & not only the cheese disappeared but also the traps. What a nuisance insects & animals can be—but they were there before we were.

My mind continually wanders from home, children & then Reunion & reality. I hope as I get older my mind will stay active & the children & Max won't have to deal with senility. It was such a blessing with Dad's last days to be able to talk to him & he would understand.

July 7, 1985

We had a wonderful day at church here in St. Denis. The Relief Society lesson was on keeping journals. I never put enough of my inner feelings—I don't want to appear

cold & unfeeling but sometimes it's hard to write just how I feel.

We had a really super testimony meeting. The Spirit was overwhelming. We had 3 investigators bear their testimonies. We'll have some baptisms this month. There were 47 people to meeting & we had several absences because of illness. Last evening we had our regular Sunday choral practice. A good group and we are learning many songs. Who will take Nelly Lycurgue's place for this activity & also for the Primary?

One of the problems on this mission is no availability of a temple. Hopefully we can see one or two on our way home. I have been feeling better lately since I started dressing warmer. The temperature never gets below 60-65° but I take a chill in my legs & joints when it's that cool. I just don't move enough—the apartment is small and there are few reasons for going out.

July 14, 1985

We arrived here in Mauritius Friday afternoon. The time here on Mauritius is always very relaxed for me. We always are fed too well and eat too much. Max & Evan are looking at properties to rent & have 3 possible choices. Now they must make a decision and go through all the negotiations. Today at the meetings it was very evident that a building is needed soon. There were 45 to Sacrament Meeting in a room designed for 35.

July 22, 1985

Steve & Margaret & family arrived Tuesday evening. Thursday morning we all went on the helicopter tour of the island—very intriguing & exciting. Thursday afternoon we spent at the Chion-Hock cottage at St. Gilles. Kids collected shells & had a great time. Friday & Saturday we went to the beach at the Novatel—better for swimming and snorkeling. Sunday we all went to church for branch conference. I spoke in Relief Society. It was a good experience for Steve's family. We always feel at home with his family. The one week stay here was a

wonderful interim for us. A great halfway point in our mission. We are really so blessed to have such opportunities with our family.

July 26, 1985

This has been a busy week since Steve's family left. The missionaries came by to plan part of the Open House Wed. evening. The Open House was a great success. There were between 30-40 new people who came by the chapel. The missionaries answered questions about their panels.

We got word yesterday that Bro. & Sis. Wirthlin & Bro. & Sis. Jensen will be coming here to La Reunion Aug. 20 & 21st & then to the temple dedication at Johannesburg.

Tonight Max & I are watching a 30 year rerun of major news events. Hard to imagine that so many years have passed. Some of these events seem much closer. I guess as we get older time just eclipses—passes without us knowing it. It's hard to realize our children are as old as they are.

July 29, 1985

Had a good series of meetings yesterday. Had our last choral practice with Nelly Lycurgue. She has made great progress as a director & the singers are doing fine.

Max is worried about the problem with the prefecture. I hope he can get an appointment & get it all resolved soon. When Elder Spencer left they detained him because he didn't have a carte de sejour to turn in. He doesn't want to have another missionary go through the same agony in August. When Elder Ricks came in Max had to get him a return ticket before they would let him through.

August 5, 1985

Today is our halfway day on our mission. I guess if I've made it this far I can go the rest of the way.

Max is taking Bro. Raux with him to the prefecture today. Hopefully they can speak to someone & get the ball rolling on our problems. It is very hard to have patience for months at a time.

We went to St. Pierre yesterday leaving here at 7:00 a.m. We always enjoy being with the Barlows, & it is interesting to visit with members, but oh we need more in St. Denis. Max set apart Bro. Rifosta & Bro. Morel as counselors in the branch presidency in St. Pierre—a real forward step. Wish we had 2 such brethren here in St. Denis.

August 11, 1985

Yesterday Rufine Lycurgue was baptized at St. Gilles. Max went without me. The missionaries didn't care for the beach atmosphere & the almost naked women. We shouldn't hold baptisms there again.

The meetings went well today. Sis. Menard gave the lesson in Sunday School. She is having to learn a lot about the subject. Being a new member she knows little or nothing about the pioneers of the Church & the *Doctrine & Covenants* but she is very bright and will succeed in the calling.

August 14, 1985

We [went] for a ride up the Ranges of St. Francois. All of the island it's the same way. The poor are often right next door to the rich. The poor live without running water in their homes—they use a tap for their water. I don't know what they do for sewage. They do mostly have electricity but dirt floors are common. Everyone is clean & when you see people on the street it's hard to know their financial situation. Blacks don't have cars generally—they walk & walk & walk—uphill or down & long distances. You seldom see overweight people here except among the older women, & for sure they are not terribly poor if they get plenty to eat.

We received the new missionary training material from Salt Lake—information given to the mission presidents at April Conference 1985. Max is supposed to hold several zone conferences to train the missionaries.

August 25, 1985

Bro. & Sis. Joseph B. Wirthlin came to visit us. He is the area director/president for all of Europe & Africa. They arrived Tuesday

afternoon and we had a fine member meeting Tuesday evening. We had 60 people from the two branches—an excellent turnout. After the branch had prepared good refreshments.

Wednesday morning we had our zone conference with the elders. Bro. Wirthlin was pleased with our statistics—improvement in numbers in all areas except Melchizedek Priesthood holders. We do need to find men. Wednesday afternoon we drove around a bit & then caught a plane for Mauritius. We had a zone conference type missionary meeting Thurs. morning—got temple recommends & then spent the afternoon sightseeing & shopping. Thursday evening we had a fine member meeting—65 present including many investigators. The branch has moved into a larger building—thank goodness.



*Elder & Sister Wirthlin
with the couple missionaries on Mauritius*

August 28, 1985

All week I've had this terrible cough. Also a very stuffy nose & I feel poorly. Max is so busy preparing for the series of zone conferences on the new teaching skills for the new missionary discussions. Quite a lot of work involved for him.

Max has an appointment with the prefecture tomorrow afternoon.

News we receive from home is all good. Zella Smith is going on a mission to Mississippi. June & Mac Little have put in their papers. It's just that time of life for those in our age group who are willing. I know that Max was called to administer this area at this time. He relates well with the missionaries & keeps a good hold on their activities. We can see excellent progress in the district as a whole.

September 2, 1985

What a disappointment. No luck with the prefecture—he just said 3 only—ridiculous. Max is still fighting and hopefully combined with prayers we can soften their hearts & minds. We feel so helpless & it all seems so unnecessary. We are good citizens & only contribute to the economy & the betterment of the people—never do anyone any harm. The devil is really working overtime against us.

September 7, 1985

I have been on my diet for 10 days now & have lost a few pounds but always with me this goes very slowly. The trick is to keep going and not get discouraged.

September 11, 1985

Last Sunday was a highlight day. We had good meetings in the morning here in St. Denis then went to St. Paul for the first branch meeting ever held there. Held 3 meetings of 40 min. each. Because we had 8 visitors from St. Denis there were 25 people present. It's exciting to be part of new developments. I made the Sacrament cloths, & we bought 30 chairs. We are using the basic manuals for all the classes.

Today we had an excellent zone conference with the missionaries. We will have a series of 4 to introduce the skills necessary to use the new discussions.

September 14, 1985

Yesterday I finished making the curtains for the apartment in St. Paul & Max got them all installed last evening. It took 4 hrs. for

the installation but they really give a more finished appearance to the meeting rooms.

Max sent off a letter to the prefecture explaining our position & asking for relief or fair treatment on the cartes de sejour. We hope that the new missionaries that come will be French or CEE [European Union] or have valid cards from metropole so we can keep our full complement of 10 elders and 2 couples.

September 27, 1985

We have been having some very busy days lately. Max has held district meetings with the missionaries at St. Pierre the last two weeks. Tuesday the Hatches arrived to replace the Perkins. We were able to meet them for half an hour at the Reunion airport. Max has also been preparing materials for the next zone conference & there has been lots of typing to be done. Also I wrote out in French, from the sub-titles, the 3 talks of the couples' conference. The members found it difficult to follow the reading & also take notes. I will type them up & distribute to those who would like copies. Actually it's been great to be busy enough not to have to hunt for things to do. Today we are on Mauritius. Bro. Oscar McConkie is arriving to have legal meetings tomorrow all day.

September 29, 1985

We have had a wonderful weekend with the missionaries and members. Saturday the men finished the legal work so the Church is now a fully organized legal corporate entity here in Mauritius. To celebrate the victory Bro. McConkie invited us all to his hotel [for dinner], the Saint Girand—a beautiful spot on the northeast side of the island. There were many courses, hovering waiters, beautiful service—all in all a memorable experience.

Sunday of course was the real highlight of the week. There were 57 people to the meetings and we had 4 fine meetings—Relief Society—I spoke extemporaneously in French to the sisters & gave them a report on our branches in La Reunion. I was

amazed but I was able to do this quite fluently. This meeting was followed by a Sunday School class. Then we had a lovely Sacrament Meeting where the first all-Mauritian branch presidency was installed. Bro. Oscar McConkie spoke. He gave a very stirring testimony of the [doctrine that] every kindred, tongues & people will have the Gospel in their own land, in their own language. He read from Revelation. We are certainly on the frontier and it is exciting to see things happen. After the Sacrament Meeting and a short recess the members held a farewell testimonial for the Perkins. After, they served refreshments, cookies, crackers, punch & popsicles.

October 4, 1985

Tuesday we went into Port Louis with Bro. McConkie and met the American Ambassador to Mauritius—just a courtesy call. We went back Wednesday to get registration cards for all of our American missionaries. There is no ambassador or even a field office on La Reunion so in case of emergency the representatives on Mauritius would be responsible for us.

October 7, 1985

We had a great Sunday. It's like coming home when we come to St. Denis. The members are all warm & welcoming. The fast & testimony meeting was great. Many of the children bore their testimonies. They are such fine children & are all growing in the Gospel. They feel the Spirit and are learning to express their feelings. We are both feeling well. My new diet is helping me.

October 10, 1985

We had a missionary zone conference yesterday where the skills for building relationships of trust were talked about and demonstrated. How could anyone not believe that the *Book of Mormon* is the work of God? I have been following the missionary study guide & am now reading in 3rd Nephi—the time of Christ's coming to the American continent to teach the remnants of the people there. What an exciting

story—how blessed those people must have felt.

October 11, 1985

A sad, difficult day. The prefecture refuses to budge on his rule of 4 resident missionaries on this island. Now to figure out possible alternatives.

October 15, 1985

We are going to have to rotate our American missionaries to Mauritius every 3 months. Max has worked out a plan for the 3 who have arrived most recently. All of our others will be gone by Dec. 20 & they will be allowed off the island. Bro. & Sis. Schmidt will come to Reunion for their final 3 months to work in St. Paul. Our first new missionary will arrive next Sunday. They are sending a Frenchman.

October 21, 1985

Today is my 65th birthday. Hard to believe that I am really that old. My body feels old but not my mind. I still have so many weaknesses to overcome—my physical problems, my lack of desire to do much, seem to be quite an impediment.

Max received a letter from the prefecture last Friday telling us to get these elders off the island now—so we are going to have big changes this week. Our four elders who still have time to serve but are out of legal order will go to Mauritius. The other 2 will come back here later. Our other elders who were due to go home in November will go home this month instead. This will leave us with only 4 elders on the island until the end of Nov. when we'll get 2 more. The Schmidts will move over here in Dec. to finish their mission & then we'll just have 2 on Mauritius. It's a real hassle & all because the prefecture really doesn't like Americans & Mormons. We'll have to move missionaries before their three month's visitor stay is up—and keep asking for French replacements.

October 22, 1985

Max got tickets today for 7 elders to leave the island—4 to Mauritius—3 to go

home. It is a real shock to the elders & I'm sure there will be strong reactions from members & investigators. By the end of December we'll be back to full strength but in the meantime St. Pierre & St. Paul will be abandoned. We hope the Barlows can stay with no problem.

Max & I have been listening to Conference tapes as we travel & the messages are so great. We'll miss one more Conference & then can catch it direct. In a way I envy these elders going home but I'm also glad we still have 6 mos. to go. I need to try harder to be of service to Max & the missionaries and also the members.

October 26, 1985

This morning Mrs. Lycurgue and her daughter Lalita are being baptized. That makes 4 from their family. We visited the prefecture & got us squared away. We pick up our carte de sejour Monday. Mr. Rosier is a disagreeable man & really detests us. He wouldn't write a note to the airport authorities, in fact he called them & told them to fine us 300FF for each outgoing missionary who was out of order.

October 28, 1985

Sundays are always so busy and tiring but they are also the frosting on the cake. The children's program in Sacrament Meeting was superior & we had a full meeting hall—many visitors. I'm sure we'll have some more baptisms soon. Max played the organ well for the Primary program & also for the chorale. He is so talented & so needed. Marc Colin conducted Sacrament Meeting for the first time.

November 12, 1985

Yesterday we had a 2 branch outing to Nez de Boeuf—up by the volcano. A good crowd of about 75 people. The weather was beautiful at 9:00 a.m. but by 11:00 there was heavy fog & after lunch it rained. The crowd just kept playing games, dancing to cassette music, etc. in spite of the weather. We took the Payet family with us in the mission van. Their children are easy to be with and their

baby is as good as gold—never complains. Sarah is now learning English in school and loves to practice her new words. She said "I love you" in English. I do get along well with children.

November 20, 1985

My talk went well on Sunday. I'm still very nervous & guess always will be but I can see some improvement. At least now I can prepare on my own & come up with good French. There were 68 people at the meeting—a record for a Sunday. Chorus practice went unusually well. We have been learning two of Lorin's numbers to sing at district conference, "Star Bright" and "Help Me Teach With Inspiration".

Bro. Hatch called from Maurice & he had been given trouble by the immigration authorities over there about our young elders. Maybe this rotation system won't work—seems like for every step forward there is another stumbling block.

Max found a good piece of property as a possible branch building & land. Bro. Mourik called & will be coming down to see it.

December 5, 1985

The past 2 weeks have been busy—hard work but good to be so involved. The Hatches & the Schmidts arrived the day before Thanksgiving. We had 14 here for a very nice dinner followed by a missionary testimony meeting. Friday was spent getting ready for district conference & then Sat. & Sun. were the big days. Very successful meetings. The evening teacher training meeting was well done also. Sunday morning Max conducted a youth meeting at 8:30 & then at 10:00 the general session. It was an inspiring meeting. He called Bro. Hatch & Bro. Barlow to be his counselors & called Sis. Hatch as R.S. dist. pres., Mable as Primary dist. pres. & me as Young Women dist. pres. We'll probably have another training session the end of February.

Monday Bro. Peter Mourik arrived to look at property here & in St. Pierre and to

give patriarchal blessings. He gave 9 blessings in St. Denis on Tuesday & gave a great fireside talk. Max did the translating of the blessings. Wed. afternoon we went to St. Pierre—he gave blessings again—16 in all plus spoke at an inspirational fireside. They have asked me to transcribe the blessings—a big chore but I'm sure I'll enjoy the challenge. Max & Peter are in St. Pierre again today looking at properties. That present situation is just too small & too hot!

December 9, 1985

They found a great building in St. Pierre—just perfect for the branch for years to come. I am starting to do the transcriptions in French of the blessings given—29 in all so lots to do. This week is loaded—guess it's always feast or famine. So far I have done 6 of the St. Pierre blessings & they are really inspiring. The Schmidts will not be going to St. Paul—a great disappointment to them & to us. They have a residency card for Mauritius—the Hatches do not—immigration is giving lots of trouble.

I was able to bear my testimony twice yesterday & use the language. I am becoming more confident all the time. Max is now 70 yrs. old—in generally good health. We are blessed.

December 16, 1985

A very busy week. These blessing transcriptions take a lot of time. I was able to get one romper made for the Christmas gifts and I shortened sleeves on 12 shirts for missionaries.

Summer has really hit. The daytime temperatures are hot and sweaty but the nights are fine. Schools will be out this week & then there's 2 months of vacation.

December 21, 1985

We've had a busy few days. The St. Denis Branch Christmas party was Friday night. With a minimum of expense & a maximum of everyone working together it was a great success. There were many investigators present and a good time was had by all. The children presented the Nativity story with

action, costumes and narration. The young adults presented a modern dance, slide type presentation of the Second Coming of Christ—the choir sang “Star Bright” and there was lots of food for all to enjoy. The Relief Society had gifts for everyone, even all the visiting children.

December 26, 1985

We have had a great week so far with good Christmas spirit. I continued retyping the blessings. They are now all finished and will go off to Bro. Mourik in Frankfurt today. It has been a wonderful experience to type them—even if a lot of hard work. A very good exercise in French—verb agreements, etc. as well as a spiritual feast.

Tuesday evening we had all the missionaries here including the Barlows for a lovely turkey dinner with all the trimmings. We also told of our at-home Christmas traditions and then read the Christmas story and sang Christmas songs. Christmas Day we opened the gifts we have received from the children. For Christmas dinner we went to Sis. Massei. She had 21 of us. One long table enough for all the adults & the children ate outside under a tree. It was great & the food was super.

January 2, 1986

A new year has begun—really just another day but when we restart the calendar is a good time to reflect on just how we are doing, what progress is being made, etc. I get discouraged evaluating myself because I make little progress—however I can see real progress in our relationships with the members. They seem to trust us and like us.

During this past year many members have been called to positions and are serving well in their callings. This is a great step forward.

With myself, I am certainly more comfortable with the weather, the people and the language than a year ago. My spiritual attitude is still weak. I look at everything from such a practical point of view and

don't leave enough space for inspiration and spiritual reflection. My scripture reading has gone well. I have just 50 more pages to finish the D & C & then I'll start on the Old Testament reading as assigned for the whole Church this year.

Because this is the beginning of a New Year I guess it would be a good idea to recap some of the events & successes of the year. A year ago I was unhappy about being here & just couldn't seem to adjust to the heat & humidity. We hadn't really discovered just what we were supposed to do—and I especially had a lot of time on my hands. We were not well integrated with the members and I felt left out of all. We are now well accepted. We have many new fine members, and I have found things to do. I am happier and much more able to express myself in French—a real help to my self-esteem. Max has had continuing opportunities to help each of the branches progress. We can see a great deal of increased activity and more willingness to serve and many have been called to positions. Today the St. Paul Branch had its first morning meeting—whole 3 hr. block & it went very well. The testimonies were excellent & many were born. We feel very encouraged at the good attitudes of the members & friends who attended.

January 14, 1986

On the 11th we had 6 baptisms in the district. Max was able to find a collapsible swimming pool for St. Pierre, and they were able to hold their baptism right at the chapel. They baptized a fine young couple and 2 eleven-year-old girls.

Last Thursday the Relief Society had a special meeting and decided that learning to sew was what they most wanted to do for Homemaking—so they are going to meet again this Thursday to get started. There are only about 3 of us who have ever made clothing so the interest is high.

January 15, 1986

Yesterday afternoon I took the car & went up to see Chion-Hock's pineapple plantation. The driving is an experience in & of itself—the roads are just rocky, narrow, twisting mountain paths. I parked my car at the end of the paved road & then went to the top in Chion-Hock's 4-wheel drive—a necessity up there. After every one had picked & eaten lots of pineapples we hiked on up to their water supply—a lovely spring & waterfall. The temperature was perfect and the views spectacular. It was a quiet time in nature's beautiful setting. I can really understand why people have homes up on these steep mountain sides. When you get there it's really worth it.

January 18, 1986

I am home alone in the apartment—have read from the scriptures—the *Good Housekeeping* for January—*Forbes Magazine*—caught up on letter writing & accounting and am really at loose ends. I need to start preparing boxes to send home but don't feel so inclined—instead I reread the Dec. *Ensign* & all about Pres. Kimball & his wonderful life. What an example for all of us. I can think of so many things to be done at home but am so limited here. I can participate & help with lessons—always have a listening ear—try to be loving & friendly toward everyone—give occasional talks—help with reports—typing & accounting, but occasionally I just run out & have lots of time to think, & what I think about are the things I need & want to do at home.

I really want to become an expert genealogist with good research—complete records, histories, etc. plus preparing temple work & doing it. To do all that I would like to do I must organize well because people are important in our lives & spending loving time with children and grandchildren—and also friends—remembering birthdays, writing letters, and also having guests as Max enjoys so much. He wants guests to meals often & he will always be



Relaxing in the apartment

inviting people to stay with us. We need to do all of the things we both enjoy to the fullest extent of our physical & mental capacities. At the same time we have homes, grounds, gardens, business interests, etc. all to be taken care of and we mustn't become so busy with just daily living that the projects don't get done. How to manage this? It will be a challenge. We have learned to become more open with each other in discussing needs and hopefully this will carry over at home. We need to make big decisions together. We have not always been in the habit of doing this & then there is some resentment from the one left out of the decision. We need to carefully monitor our financial situation—take care of what we have & make it last. I hope there will be meaningful church assignments for us—particularly for Max—he needs that stimulation, and he is an excellent planner & executor.

Quote from Neal A. Maxwell: “Any advantage we have in the world to come will result from the added knowledge and the intelligence to apply truth that is acquired here. It's up to us in our varied situations to make the interplay of our time & talent & treasure add up to significant accomplishments in our development of the key eternal attributes & the everlasting skills. Techniques bereft of love will be of little help. We need

to be grounded, rooted, established in the Gospel.”

“What life is all about is the development of the eternal attributes and everlasting skills.”

January 29, 1986

Yesterday we went to St. Pierre & met with the owner & the notary re the purchase of the home there. There are still a few problems to iron out but they don't seem to be insurmountable.

February 5, 1986

We went to Mauritius Saturday to spend the weekend with the Hatches. Sat. evening we saw part of the Priesthood Conference and also part of the Women's Conference. Hatches have a small TV-VCR setup. They had a robbery during the week & had many small items taken but they were glad the video was still there. It's traumatic to know that someone has been in your home and through all of your personal belongings.

Monday us & the Hatches went into Port Louis for lunch at the City Club cafeteria—very nice change. Then we went shopping. Max wanted to buy a lovely piece of white coral for each of our children & us so we bought 7 pieces & had them boxed for individual shipping. The men met with two lawyers & made some progress toward resolving some of the difficulties over there with immigration. Max also bought a lovely coral necklace for me—beautiful pink color.

February 7, 1986

Yesterday marked the day of our 15th month on our mission—only 3 months to go—the time is passing quickly. For the past few days we have been in the path of the cyclone Ernestina. It is still about 200 km west of the island and moving south. We have had extremely heavy rains and winds—the streams are full. There will be minutes when we have enough quiet to open our door to the balcony & then more wind & rain arrives & we have to close up. When we went to the marché today I didn't wear a raincoat & was literally soaked to the

skin. I had to undress, towel down & change all my clothes. My shoes may take days to dry out. It's warm enough that you don't get chilled—even with the wind. From our apartment we can hear the water in the stream running down the gulley and also the surf pounding a mile away. The water & sky are both gray—there are tremendous breakers. It's really quite spectacular. The elders in St. Paul are without electricity & water & are somewhat worried but they'll be safe in their apartment. Can't get much missionary work done in this kind of weather.

February 13, 1986

Tuesday we had the 6 elders & the Barlows here for a zone conference. The whole thrust of the meeting was first meetings—how to find new contacts to teach. This is the hardest part of missionary work. They all do well at teaching, but finding new people is just hard work & must be done with the Spirit.

February 17, 1986

Yesterday was the usual extra busy Sunday. We went to meetings in St. Paul. After everyone got there, there were 30 people present including 7 friends. I spoke in Sacrament Meeting about genealogy.

Friday night we had a call from Salt Lake about using the new reports sent to us from Salt Lake for a district—so we now have a regular bookkeeping system. It will be a little more work but will be accurate for a change.

February 23, 1986

The Hatches arrived Thursday afternoon. We all went to observe the sewing class Thursday night. This has been a great activity for the sisters here and they are all learning new skills. It is delightful to see & feel their enthusiasm.

March 2, 1986

Today was Fast Sunday & we had an excellent testimony meeting. We had an excellent lesson in Relief Society on chastity. This is a concept that is not recognized by the Catholic Church—especially as per-

taining to men. What a blessing it is to have a husband in the Church & to see our children living good lives with faithfulness to their partners. We see things on TV & read books that are not conducive to pure thoughts. It's hard to imagine a world more wicked than this one now is—there are so many deviant behaviors being condoned by law & by the public.

March 9, 1986

Wm. & Ruth Ashby are the new couple to replace Schmidts. He will be the assistant district clerk in charge of Mauritius. They are fine people with good Church experiences and will be good teachers on Mauritius.

March 12, 1986

It's interesting as I sit here to hear the children outside playing. Right now they are singing—arguing about some of the words but these children are very congenial with each other. The parents are educated people and seem to be genuinely interested in their families—but not enough to listen to the Gospel. We as Americans just do not inspire their confidence. A French couple with children would have a better chance.

March 26, 1986

Sat. afternoon Mar. 15 Mable & I conducted a hands-on workshop for preparing visual aids for the Primary & parents of St. Denis. We had 18 women besides us—quite a crowd but a lot was accomplished. We also visited the Adolphe family & it is a real miracle to see the progress that family has made in a year's time. They let us take pictures of everyone together—they now eat meals together, have family home evenings and go to church—all as a united family.

The Barlows arrived Thurs. evening & stayed overnight & then all 6 of us went to Mauritius early Friday morning. Saturday the 22nd we held the workshops & leaders' meetings for their branch conference. The Sunday meetings went very well also. I enjoy the Young Women assignment. All day Monday we rubbernecked. Steve [Hatch]

had rented a minibus so all of us could travel together. We shopped a lot & bought nice souvenirs, shells, etc. & just generally had a great time.

Tuesday morning we had an excellent zone conference with the 4 elders & the 4 couples. After lunch all together we & Barlows returned to Reunion—all in all a most satisfying weekend but it's sad to realize that we'll never see those fine people again—our last trip to Mauritius. The people we meet & enjoy are the real bonus on a mission. It's hard to realize that we'll be going home in 6 weeks.

April 1, 1986

Friday evening Bro. Rifosta & Sis. Barret were married in a simple ceremony in the branch hall at St. Pierre. Mable had done a magnificent job of decorating the hall with



The beach

the help of members & Elder Anderson. They had built an archway of chicken wire & paper roses—used plants, etc. & made the hall lovely. There were over 40 people there. Our first marriage here. Yesterday the branches of St. Denis & St. Paul combined for an outing to Le Brule—high on our mountain, probably 100 or more hairpin turns to get there. I am tired today.

April 7, 1986

Yesterday was the anniversary of the organization of the Church and time for General Conference in Salt Lake. We really miss such events in this faraway land. It will

be wonderful to be back home but we will really miss these fine people who have become our friends.

The meetings here in St. Denis went well yesterday. The testimony meeting was outstanding. There were 16 investigators there and nearly every member bore an excellent testimony. The Spirit was strong. We'll miss these meetings. Today Max painted at the missionaries' apt.

Marc Colin came by for supper last night and we discussed a genealogy fireside for Tues. night. Tomorrow we go to St. Pierre to sign the final papers on the new villa for the branch of St. Pierre.

April 12, 1986

I have spent most of this week preparing the materials for the Young Women's section of the district conference. I have also sorted photos & prepared photo collages—one for each branch. Mable has prepared a sketch of a family flag for us & I will try to get it made up in felt this week. These are examples of activity projects that the Young Women can do.

I need to become a trained reading teacher. I have a strong feeling that that is something worthwhile I could do. I have wished many times that I could do that here. Thursday night was sewing class again. It's been surprising to me to see how the enthusiasm has held up & how many things have been finished, and they keep starting new things too.

April 14, 1986

Yesterday we attended church in St. Paul—our last time there. We'll miss these people so much. They have really become our friends. We have seen marvelous progress. Last night we had a good chorale practice. The group will sing for district conference. Today we went to the Cirque de Salazie with the elders from here & from St. Paul. It was a beautiful sunshiny day. We counted at least 40 waterfalls—32 on one big cliff side. The peaks are rugged & the vegetation is luxurious—some of the most

dramatic views to be found anyplace. In the past month the big news here on Reunion has been the eruption of the volcano and the viewing of Halley's Comet. We haven't actually seen either phenomena except on television & through pictures in the paper.

April 15, 1986

Tonight the big news was that the U.S. had attacked Libya—a most frightening event from this perspective. We are closer to Africa and Arab countries than we are to the U.S. This action will not make our American missionaries any more popular. France is always sitting on the fence and seldom comes out in direct support of the U.S. If this trouble accelerates we may change our travel plans.

April 20, 1986

Sunday we went to St. Pierre for meetings. The branch gave us a lovely picture book of La Reunion as a take home souvenir. Steve & Margaret called to convince us not to come home through Europe. The European airports are targets for the fanatics & the situation is just too critical.

April 29, 1986

Bro. Mourik was here Wed. & Thurs. & left Fri. afternoon. He gave some patriarchal blessings, and he & Max visited several properties. I will have 5 blessings to type. Saturday night was a great event. We had a district talent show with great eats afterward. It was really wonderful. Everyone had gone to a lot of work and really prepared well. It was exciting and great fun. St. Pierre women had prepared a skit of a modern ten virgins—5 couples did a western round dance and the young girls did a native dance. The group from St. Paul did a story & a funny skit. St. Denis did a fashion show with the seminary group and the Primary children all had costumes and did a dance. The Relief Society had come through with some very good food and there was plenty for everyone, even though we had over 125 there. The Sunday meetings were also very successful with over 90 in attendance. It's

amazing the growth we have seen in our year & a half here. It's hard to imagine that we are really leaving next Tuesday. The Hatches were here with us until noon today. We have spent time getting them acquainted with all we have been doing. Bro. Hatch is taking Max's place as district president.

Sunday church services at St. Denis were excellent. Everyone seems to feel sorry to see us go. We had a very fine testimony meeting with just about everyone bearing their testimony. Sunday evening we had chorale for the last time with many more in attendance than usual. Most of the members from St. Paul came too. It was a real fine soiree in our honor, with refreshments & many fine sentiments expressed—much more than we expected.

Monday Max & the elders took our big box to the airport—80 lbs @ \$10 a lb—quite an extravagance. Hope we really wanted what we sent. Tuesday morning was final packing, washing, etc. Barlows came at 4:00 & they took us to the airport—a big group at the airport—Marc Colin, Lolita, Giovanni, Rufine, the whole Menard family, Sis. Massei & family, some of the Payets, all of the Chion-Hocks & our friend Margorie Burnot. Like a dream to actually be through.

May 11, 1986

What a busy fun week. The plane trip was fine. We arrived on schedule & Mac & June Little were at the airport to greet us. They have a nice apartment in Benoni (Johannesburg suburb) & are letting us use their bedroom. What a privilege to be with special friends. Wed. a.m. the Rysers arrived about 7:00 & the 6 of us set off for Kriezer Park. It was an all day drive & we arrived at the entrance about 5:30 p.m. Because of our late arrival the only accommodations available were at the Skukuza Guest House & such luxury. We each had a beautiful bedroom suite & there was another large building with cooking, eating & lounging facilities—also two servants. The Blacks really

have a lower status here—not at all like La Reunion.

We drove through the park Wed. afternoon & all day Thursday. All in all it was a successful animal viewing expedition. Mac Little was the driver. We were comfortable & the only mishap was once he stopped too suddenly in an effort to dislodge the baboons who were all over the car. June & I both fell off the seat & got a few bruises but nothing serious. Friday we went through the northeastern veldt country—high mountains heavily forested, beautiful streams & waterfalls. Quite a trip.

Saturday we went to the lovely new Johannesburg Temple—only 18 in the session—so quiet & peaceful & beautiful. We spent the rest of the day at Gold Reef City—an amusement park built over the old gold mines. We didn't go down into the mine but saw African dancers, Zulu tribe, & that was most interesting.

Saturday evening we spent with the Von Tonder family. After a good visit we took them all to an ice cream store for a treat. We had a fine time. They have a wonderful family.

Sunday we went to church here in Benoni with June & Mac. They are doing a tremendous work here and are so needed with new converts, preparing families to go to the temple and working with inactives.

Monday we went to Pretoria & got our visas for Brazil. We went to Rysers' darling apartment for dinner. They had invited some new members & we had a delightful evening. Max called a Mr. H.J. Wheelwright & he & his wife came over for a visit. Very nice people and he was very interested in our Wheelwright Family organization. He had souvenirs from the 1850s—a Wheelwright pocket watch with J. Wheelwright instead of the numbers & an old mug also inscribed J. Wheelwright. He is from Shropshire, England.

Tuesday we left for Brazil at 1:00 p.m. We went straight to our Cocacabana Beach

hotel. They served a super breakfast & then we took an all day tour of Rio. We went to Sao Paulo Thurs. a.m. After checking in at our hotel we took an afternoon tour of the city. A very highly industrialized city but many lovely buildings—different architectural styles. Thursday evening we took a cab to the Sao Paulo Temple. Friday we walked in town & rested before going to the airport at 5:00 p.m. By the time we got to Miami Sat. 7:00 a.m. we were glad to see Diana Knight. She took us to their home. Don has changed jobs & will be working for U.P.S. in Louisville, Ky. It was great to see them.

We caught the plane to Boston at 12:00, arrived at 4:00, & were so happy to greet [Steve's] family. Sunday, May 18, the whole family sang together in Sacrament Meeting.

Margaret, Max & I went to Sturbridge Village today, an interesting old but restored 1700s New England village. We drove out to Cape Cod & took the ferry to Martha's Vineyard. The children stayed out of school to be with us. Wed. Margaret & I went shopping to buy me some new clothes. The blossoms are so beautiful here in the Boston area—hydrangea, lilac, pink trees—and the beautiful trees allover, quite a sight to see.

We left Boston in the early evening Thursday. It was great to arrive in Washington to see Tom & Rosie & Max. Max talks a blue streak. On Friday Tom took the day off & we went into Washington to the Air & Space Museum and also the National Gallery of Art. Max is easy to handle now so we had a great time. We went to the temple with Tom & Rosie Thursday night. That was enjoyable.

May 24, 1986

We left Washington in the morning and had to change planes in Chicago with about a 2 hr. wait & then on to LaCrosse. Great to see Peg & Jim, David, Ann, Susan, Amy & Steven.

Saturday evening Peg had an Open House here for Dave & ward members &

friends. He graduated from the university with a chemistry major last Saturday. Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. was Sacrament Meeting & Dave's farewell. Events such as this are the real frosting on the cake for us as parents & grandparents. Craig is doing well on his mission—it will be a real blessing to have two out at the same time.

Scott & Jenette & Sarah came up from Chicago for the weekend. Sarah is a real darling. Jenette & Scott are doing well. Monday was Memorial Day. Susan's school band had to play at a special Memorial service so we all attended it, down by the edge of the Mississippi. The rest of the day we just spent visiting and relaxing.

June 1, 1986

Because of early morning fog in Chicago our plane from LaCrosse was delayed. The Chicago airport was a madhouse. We were met in Salt Lake by Scott Bult and also my Mont & Norine Robins. Salt Lake Valley is a beautiful place this time of year. Everything is green & there are so many beautiful flowers. We are glad to be home.

Talk given in Yalecrest First Ward Sacrament Meeting June 8, 1986

I've got to look around a little bit first and see all the people that I recognize. And I want to thank all of you, all of our old friends, our relatives, ancient missionaries and more recent missionaries. We love every one of you. It's a thrill to be here, even though I have never become completely unworried about giving a public address. It's much easier in English. But I must tell those of you who suffered with me through our first mission that it was lots easier the second time around. The language came much easier and maybe the people were a little sweeter and kinder, I don't know, but I didn't hear very many complaints.

We've had a wonderful experience. Many of you have probably had the question why

we send missionaries to such faraway places. I'd like to read just a couple of verses from the first section of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. "Hearken O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together. For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men: And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days." [D&C 1:1-2, 4]

It's pretty wonderful to know that we are disciples that are chosen in these last days to go to the islands of the sea. The Mascarene Islands are about 500 miles the other side of Madagascar, which is east of Africa. They're south of Arabia, west of India, in the middle of the ocean, the Indian Ocean, and they're a long ways from everybody, about as far away as you can get from Salt Lake as it is possible to be. Takes about the same distance to come home any direction.

An island is a small place to live. It's very confining. These islands were about 75 miles from one end to the other, which isn't very far. The island of Reunion has 500,000 inhabitants and the island of Mauritius has a million—really quite a few people, when you stop to think about it, but they're very confined. They're confined by lack of natural resources, no great opportunities for education, and especially not for adult education. They grow up with the idea that if you haven't received all the education that you're going to by the time you're twenty that you'll never have another chance. And so the Church does wonderful things for them. It doesn't matter what their beginnings are. They can be the most humble, and we had illiterates joining the Church as well as those who were well educated. We had those with pure white skin and those with colored brown, just a little darker than mine, all the way to the very blackest. And

every one of these people was wonderful and had super spirits and a desire to grow and learn more of the Gospel and to learn more things. They just needed to learn, learn, learn. And I thought that maybe today I'd just tell you some of the easy, maybe simple things that they learned. They won't seem like such great things to you here but they were great things to these people.

In the branch of St. Denis we had a large group of Relief Society ladies. By a large group, I mean we had fifteen. That was a large group. We had three young women, and it was decided last Christmas that they should make Christmas gifts for the children. They really wanted to make Christmas gifts for the children but they didn't know how. And it was discovered that there were only three of us that even knew how to sew, that had ever even tried to sew. Well, we managed to make some gifts for Christmas, with a lot of effort by the three of us that could sew, and a little less effort but some effort by the others, as much as they could do to help. And it was decided that a sewing class was very badly needed. They have large families, lots of children, lots of needs for sewing, but they didn't have the equipment and they hadn't had the opportunity to learn. So we started a sewing class, and we had a sewing class every Thursday night. And every woman in that branch, plus some extras that were friends that came, plus a couple of young men from the Young Men's program, that found out that the girls were making shirts. They wanted to make shirts too—these big shirts. They're the style over there too. Every single person made at least a skirt. Some made skirts and shirts. Some made more than that. And we had three sewing machines from all of those that were there. That's all there are. But they decided that they were branch property practically because now everybody needed to use them and they became very generous. And the offshoot of all of this was that they learned to love each other very, very

much. These women saw each other every week, and they found out that just because a person had had more formal education didn't mean that he knew one bit more about sewing than the one who hadn't had any education at all. And they learned together.

In our branch of St. Pierre they had an interesting thing happen to them. We have Brother and Sister Robins here that served in St. Pierre so they'll be interested in what's happened in that branch. For our last district conference it was decided to have a district talent night for the Saturday night meeting, and that required a lot of preparation for everybody. Those in St. Pierre didn't think they had any talents and that they'd have to get busy and do things as a group. Well they put on a show—every branch put on wonderful events, but the branch of St. Pierre really went to work. With the help of one young elder and one of the sisters, one of the couple sisters, they learned to do a Western square dance. And they had costumes and they really performed. They were right on time. Bro. Sperry, you'd have been proud to be callers for them. They didn't miss a beat. They were thrilled. They'd never tried anything like this. Now they want to have a regular dancing group—a group of sisters, because there are always more sisters than there are couples, at least in beginning areas of the Church. They put on a skit of the parable of the ten virgins in modern dress and with modern connotations and it was wonderful. It was just a delight to everyone. It was serious and it was funny. It was good. And then the Primary girls, of which all of a sudden like we had six that were ten and eleven years old. Can you imagine that in Primary, Norine? Baptized members of the Church. These Primary girls learned a native dance and had costumes to match. Well, these are wonderful things that happened. And then, the new branch president, Brother Phillippe Rifosta, married the Young Women's leader,

Sister Barret, and we had a wedding, and decorated the branch with chicken wire and paper napkins, kind of like you do on a float. It was just something, paper roses all over. It was beautiful. And they found that they could have creativity and learn how to do those things.

I'd like to read just a couple of quotes from the testimonies of Brother Rifosta and Sister Barret. Brother Rifosta says, "Miracles have happened in my life since my baptism fourteen months ago. At the age of 51 I'm so happy to have finally met the true Church of Jesus Christ. I know that the Gospel is the shortest road between man and God."

And then his new wife said, "The great changes that have happened in my life since meeting the missionaries tell me why I'm here. I'm so blessed and I will devote all of my life to the service of the Savior." These are lovely people. He's of Indian descent; she's of French descent. They make a wonderful couple and leaders of that fine branch.

As couple missionaries we were called often to look into seeing what inactivity problems were and why someone wasn't coming out, and we went to meet the Adolphe family with the help of the Schmidts, who are here today. They had been in Reunion and were now serving on Mauritius, and they came over and introduced us to some of the families. This family was having terrible problems. Their family life was in chaos, but when we came Sister Adolphe remembered us because she had been converted in Toulouse. And she was so thrilled to see a friend. She felt like she didn't have any friends. She'd married into a Reunion family, and everybody there were relatives and she was an outsider. But she had a friend in us because she'd met us in Toulouse. She knew some of the missionaries. She got out her missionary scrapbook and showed us pictures of some of our missionaries and how thrilled she'd been at her

baptism, and this encouraged her to want to come back to church.

We tried to work with the family and we didn't know all the answers to their problems, but we had a dear friend, Sister Elizabeth Ryser, who was serving over in Johannesburg, and we knew that she was a trained family marriage counselor, so we wrote to her and got some ten steps for this family to follow. And with Max serving as one of the home teachers, and one of the younger brethren as his companion, they went home teaching to that family. We had the missionaries teach the lessons to them again. And they've become active. And we now have a branch in St. Paul and they're the backbone of the branch, and we love having them there. She's the Primary president, one of her daughters teaches Sunday School and another daughter teaches Primary. And we're thrilled. These are her step-daughters that she wasn't speaking to when we got there. So we're thrilled with the progress in that family. She had this to say in her testimony, "After two wonderful meetings with you two, first in Toulouse and then here on Reunion, where will we meet again? My dearest wish is that we will be worthy to meet together in the Kingdom of God." What more could a missionary ask for?

Sister Schmidt and Brother Schmidt could tell you more about Mauritius, but I want to just say a word about this fine island. The work is progressing there more rapidly than they can even imagine. They had wonderful baptisms while they were there, but now they have baptisms every Sunday. The missionary work with the young elders has really taken off. One young sister there—these people are poor—talking about growth and their potential for growth and the things that they can learn—one young sister works in a small grocery store. She earns less than fifteen dollars a week for a forty-five hour week, but she's saving for a mission, and yet she has to help support her family at home. But she knows

she can do it, and she's now the branch librarian, after having been trained by Sister Schmidt. And she's doing a good job of it. And she loves to read the stories from the *Book of Mormon* and she uses the stories that have the pictures for the children, to teach the children, and it's wonderful to see her doing this.

You can really understand how precious the Gospel is when we see these people. An example of someone who had everything when she joined the Church, at least according to worldly standards, is a Sister Menard in St. Denis. She was well educated. She'd been raised as a good Christian. She came from a lovely family. She had a good husband, fine children. She was living a good life, always considerate of her neighbors, but when the missionaries came to her door, she listened to them. And one day in our living room, when we were showing some video cassettes, she and her husband were there. We asked her if she was willing to be baptized, and she said yes. She surprised her husband, herself and the missionaries. The woman added so much to the branch of St. Denis. She was needed there. She's just there for a short period of time. Her husband's in the army and had been transferred there from France. After three months as a member, she was called to be the Gospel Doctrine leader, and the things that she taught in the church history lessons last year and Old Testament lessons this year were as fine, as well studied, as inspirational and spiritual as any that we've had in lessons that we have here in these well developed wards. She's also been called to be the leader of the Young Women there. So you see that people do double

duty. In her testimony she says, "The most essential part of my discovery since joining the Church is the discovery of my own true value and also the fact that I now understand the true nature of God. I can see the happiness that the Gospel and the priesthood can bring. We're all truly privileged to be part of God's Church."

My life has been greatly enriched by the experiences we've had on these two beautiful tropical islands. I've learned to greatly appreciate even more than ever my own dear husband and his leadership abilities to guide without being too pushy but to guide. I've learned that the Church is needed by all peoples of every race, and even in every climate. By the way, I'm freezing here today. I didn't think I'd ever complain of being cold because I've been a year and a half too hot. Now I'm cold. And I've gained a greater appreciation for our own family and their willingness to serve the Lord wherever they are called, and of course an appreciation for missionaries throughout the world.

I know beyond doubt that the Gospel is true and that the Lord loves us, and that he wants all of his children to have the opportunity to hear the Gospel, that when mission calls are made they're made under His inspiration, and that we're sent to the place that we're needed at a specific time, and that this is our opportunity, and it's up to us to make the best of that opportunity. So I urge all of you who haven't had that wonderful opportunity to think seriously about taking advantage of it and going on a mission, whether you're young or old. It's wonderful. I love the Lord and I love the Gospel and thanks again for being here. And I say this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.