



REV. AND MRS. DOUGLAS PARSONS AND SONS

Preacher's Wife Visits Haiti & Finds Poverty Abundant

Rev. Douglas Parsons has been called as pastor of the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church near Peachland.

He and his family are formerly from the Ashe Baptist Association in West Jefferson.

Mrs. Parsons (Betty) had an opportunity to go on a tour of the mission fields in Haiti Nov. 1. She accepted and here is the dairy she wrote while on the tour.

Monday: November 1, 1971:
The Native Missionary plane left the Douglas Airport in Charlotte at 3 in the afternoon. The flight was begun with

prayer.

At 3:40, coffee was served with a large donut.

At 5 p.m. we were over Cape Kennedy. Looking down from the left side of the plane was a most beautiful sight, with the sun shining down on the space center.

At 5:25, almost everyone was singing and praising God, shouting over the song "I'll Fly Away." Then we sang, "I'm On My Way," then "Amazing Grace," enjoying the blessings of God.

The plane seemed like it was just floating in the hands of God. If there was ever any

fear, there certainly wasn't now! Then we sang a little of "Jesus is Coming Soon."

At 5:50 we were flying over a storm over the edge of the Florida coast.

At 16000 feet, it is now almost dark. The storm has affected the plane very little. At 6:20, coffee was served again. It is completely dark now. The plane is flying very smoothly.

We landed at the Port-au-Prince airport at 9:00, 8 p.m. Haitian time.

The people are very nice to us. They had a made up band playing for us as we got off the plane. Even a peaceful old black dog lay at the foot of the plane steps as if to be guarding us.

We filled out a little form giving our name and address along with a \$2.00 fee to enter their country.

Then we entered the Native Missionary bus and went to the Caribe Hotel, which is leased by Native Missionary. It is a huge, beautiful old run-down hotel. There are twin beds in all the rooms on which we have no pillows, only a sheet.

We had goat meat and rice for supper at 9:45 with fried bananas.

Then someone really began playing the piano and we sang and praised the Lord. At 10:15 we boarded the Native Missionary bus again bound for the orphanage. We found the little sad looking boys and girls all in rows on cots with a sort of bamboo type mattress and just a sheet over them. They were all naked except for a little shirt. Some of the cots had as many as four children on them.

The grounds around the dorms were very muddy with very little grass.

Marshville Home
Maxton: Scottish Chief
Mebane Enterprise
Mocksville: Davie Co. Enterprise
Monroe Enquirer
Monroe Journal
Mooresville Tribune
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The grounds around the dorms were very muddy with very little grass.

The dorms were of blocks with tin roofs and concrete floors. There were plank doors.

As we passed through town we saw people lying on the streets sleeping. It is a most pitiful sight. I've never seen such poverty. It is so poor that it even has an odor.

We are now back in the hotel and ready for bed at 1:20 very tired and sleepy. We had to carry our luggage up three long flights of stairs, and were warned very strictly not to drink water, as it would make us awfully sick. They had special water for us.

Tuesday, November 2, 1971: We were awakened by sweet music played by Rev. Matthews. I had a wonderful four hours rest.

We went downstairs to a breakfast of eggs scrambled in tomatoes, with a piece of bread and a banana. Strong coffee and juice to drink.

Then we started out for the other orphanage. It took us four hours to travel 40 miles over very rough and mountainous roads in the Native Missionary buses.

There were people all over the roads all the way. Children with no clothes and everyone was barefoot. Men driving cattle with just a rope around their horns. Women had heavy

loads upon their heads in baskets or large bowls.

We saw many women and girls washing their clothes in the muddy creeks and rivers. They hung them over bushes to dry. There are lots of beautiful cactus plants. Some very tall ones made hedges around the yards of huts with palm leaf roofs and no furniture in them, except maybe a small table.

There was no grass at all around the houses. The edge of the roads were as sloppy as pig-pins. But the people didn't seem to mind. They followed the bus, running and begging for money or something to eat. It is very sad, making us realize that we don't have any real poverty at home in America. They call us rich, and praise God! we are.

Their animals, cattle, goats, pigs and donkeys are all tied in the fields and yards and even on the side of the roads. The bones are very visible in all the animals.

Only a dog once in a while and very poor looking chickens run loose. We only saw one cat and a big rat. There are roaches and lizards and some mosquitos.

We arrived at the orphanage and had lunch of chicken, potato salad and fried bananas with juice to drink.

It is on the edge of the ocean where large sea shells come ashore.

The buildings are of concrete and very poor with only a few beds.

I saw the hungry fed. They were eating from their hats or large banana leaves, picking up handfuls of rice and eating it from their hands.

One old man's foot and one hand has rotted off. Oh, My Lord, how they beg us for something good or a piece of money! and we're not allowed to give them a thing. They would mob us if we did.

Brother Matthews took a picture of me holding a beautiful little girl named Guenie. I only put my arm around her, and she wouldn't leave me. When I sat she sat on my lap, and when I walked she clung to my hand. She didn't leave my side until after church that evening when we entered the bus for the motel. God only knows what real effect this has had on me.

The large church was full of people sitting on slab benches with no backs.

They honored us by seating us in rows behind the pulpit, where we sang to them, then they sang to us. There was a band of young boys who played for us and all the people praised the Lord constantly.

An American from Florida had sent the band pieces to them. They were wonderful. You can now begin to see why they honor us so much. They know they're helped by the Americans.

We are now ready to board the bus for the long, very hot journey back to the hotel. A group of little boys, which had run up beside me to hold my hands and walk with me kissed me bye and little Guenie runs.

My heart breaks. How I would love to bring them home with me and give them some of the love, good food and nice clothes that my children have. God help me to help them in some way, while I live in the comforts of my country.

About twenty miles down the road, we have a flat tire. The native boys change it and we go a short distance and have a blow-out.

It seems that we are being tried for patience. We must wait for a new tire, so we get out of the bus and the natives began to gather around us. We are very tired, but are treated well. Young boys pick coconuts from large coconut trees and give us milk to drink from them. They brought us bananas also in large baskets upon their heads.

We waited two hours before the tire came. Then we were on our way again. Only a little ways down the road the bus stopped at a little market building to pump the tire a little more. But before it was finished another missionary bus came for us and we reloaded, bound once again for the hotel, with a long hard two hour drive ahead of us. But we made it fine, arriving at 7:30. Supper was ready for us and we were starved.

After the delicious meal of meat, beets, carrots and potatoes, we sang and had a wonderful service in the dining room. Then we headed to our rooms hoping for another good four hours rest to prepare us for another blessed day.

Wednesday, November 3, 1971:

We arose at 6:30 to a beautiful sunshiny day. The temperature is about 100. Our bodies felt sticky all the time.

We had breakfast of scrambled

eggs with tomatoes again, and bananas with coffee and juice.

At about 9:30, the orphans were brought to the hotel. Brother Buckanna put a little bony boy in my arms. He put his little arms around my neck and clung to me. If he left me for any reason, he always found me again. They remember us by the clothes we wear.

Then I picked up a little boy who reached for me. We went into the dining room for services. I could feel this little fellow's stomach gripping before he started to cry and reach for the kitchen. He cried himself to sleep in my arms.

I had a large bag of stick candy which I passed out when they first came. They climbed all over me reaching their little hands, each trying to get just one little piece.

These children really respond to a little love. They can look so sad and you give them a smile and they just light up. I can't begin to tell just how much my heart goes out for them.

Then came the best meal we've had since leaving home—fish, sweet potatoes, pintos, lettuce salad and carrots with beets, which was served at 2:00.

We went for a tour of Port-au-Prince. Over the mountains and down the hills it was beautiful. The mountains looked like velvet material crushed until it makes all kinds of waves.

We came into the city and saw the white house which they call the palace. It has a population of about 400,000. Mobs and mobs of people all over the streets. The sidewalks were filled with things to buy. Most of their merchandise is hand made from mahogany wood. They will really jew. They may ask \$6.00 for something and you may jew them down to \$2.00.

It's lots of fun just to trade with them and try to make them understand what you mean. They speak French.

We came back to the hotel to rest for a few minutes. Then we went to church at the first orphanage. The service was by candlelight and a little girl sat on my lap and went to sleep.

When we got back to the hotel, we had a very small

helping of ice-cream and cake. No supper tonight.

Thursday, November 4, 1971:

We were awakened by 5:00 by brother Matthews' singing. We packed our things and carried them down the three flights of stairs to the lobby, where we had our last breakfast in Haiti.

We are now preparing to enter the bus bound for the airport. It has been a most glorious week. Perfect peace of mind with no worry about home.

At 10:00 we were in the Native Missionary plane ready to leave for home. The take-off was very smooth.

At 11:00 we were flying over the largest country of Central America, Nicaragua, 1,860 miles away from home. It's hard to believe that I've spent two days and three nights in the native countries. It has been a trip of sheer pleasure and contentment.

At 12:00 we were served Haitian cup cakes with coffee. It has been a very smooth flight all the way.

We landed at an airport in Atlanta, Georgia, at 4:00. We ate our first American food in four days. I had pintos and hominy with a large hot dog and chilli, tea to drink and a piece of cherry pie with ice-cream. M'mm boy!

Then we boarded a bus owned by Rev. Matthews or the Native Missionary and were on our way to Charlotte. It was a rough ride as the bus had no seats except folding chairs. It is used as an office for Native Missionary. By taking this bus we saved Native Missionary about \$965 because it cost them \$1000 just to set the plane down at Douglas Airport.

We stopped for a rest and a cup of hot cocoa at a truck stop somewhere in South Carolina. We were very cold as the bus had no heat. I took some things from my suitcase to cover my legs and feet.

We sang most all the way to Charlotte and had a wonderful feeling of togetherness in the spirit of the Lord.

I wouldn't give my experience of this trip for anything I've ever seen or known. I think it has changed my outlook on life and made me a better christian. I thank God for the opportunity he has given me to see this starving country. It has made me to realize just how much God has blessed America.

I know this was a gift of God given to me for a purpose. May God Bless everyone who reads this is my prayer.