

19.7.47.T.6.
Saturday
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Fam. Rec. 157.

Larmond Margaret Head F.W. 72.2.2. Labourer Odd jobs
Russell Adina Dau. F.S. 40 Retired.

Mrs. Larmond lives in a tiny house on ~~the~~ the New Road. She was born in Santa Cruz. She used to work with "Pure white people". "Ministers, gentlefolk." She used to nurse white babies and "The Missis said only good morning, and good evening." She married a man from Warsop and came here to live. He bought an acre of land. The house was broken by the hurricane and she lives now in the small house which used to be her son's work-shop. She had many children but most of them are dead. "Thanks God they died as Christians" She is Wesleyan but cant go to Church- she is too old. "But I live Christian, I couldnt harm even a lizard, it would be a great sin." "Shether ya are poor or have the house fool of money - she said - you have to stand before God like a child. She talked with conviction and strenght. "Do you think I am an old fool" she asked in the middle of a sermon-like speech.

Her son lives in Rock ~~Grass~~ ~~Spring~~ Spring. He is a shoemaker. She rents most of her land. A little round her house is cultivated by her grandson "My little grandson he is a big man" He comes from time to time from Rock Spring. There are young bananas and yams. She lives with her little greatgrand son Cheval. It is a child of about 5 years of age. Neatly dressed, smiling unusually unrepresed. "He keeps me company, all he can do is to talk to me" This is the child of her son's daughter's. The last lives with her husband in Christiana - the little boy said. Her husband died long ago and was burried ~~in~~ near his sisters house. Mrs. Larmond doesnt remember her sister in law name.

A tree for each child.

Near the house there are 3 palm-trees. "There was one for each child. Two of them died, so the trees are for me." The mango tree was planted by her son. In the garden there is a stick on which hangs a bottle with some liquid in it. "It is to keep children from stealing in the garden" Inside there is "Just a little water". The land is for her son "It is his" "I live here just to keep company to the land."

Saturday
18.10.1947
T.O.

"Jesus only know how I live" said Mrs. Larmond, and I don't think anybody else could decipher her budget.

Possessions: She has under an acre of land. This is rented by her son who is a shoe-maker in Rock Spring. In her house- the tiniest I have seen is a table and a bed. There is no room for a chair. Under the table there is a wooden box with her possessions. She has a Sunday dress and hat and some rags she wears for every-day. The little greatgrand son (she says he is 3) has one suit - quite respectable - which he wears continually. The wattle kitchen ~~is~~ is supported by two boards. It has big holes in roof and walls. There is one black pot, an empty barrel and water is kept in a tin. The little pan in which the child brings water from spring leaks.

Mrs. Larmond says she is 91 (77 by census) and she constantly speaks of her young years, it is difficult to keep her to the present topic. She use to work at Bethlehem school. "There were pupils - big women. I carry for them mangoes. For 50 I carry 50 mangoes, one for each. They give me food and jam, - more than I could eat. Now I am alone: no mother, no father, no sister, no brother I am an orphan". (She has a son and a lot of grand and greatgrand children.)

The land. Taxes for her land are paid by the son. "Taxes - my son has to worry for them, me poor, me have nothing". Occasionally her son or great son come from Rock Spring and cultivate the land. Last March the son planted a few bananas, the great son planted some yams. She planted behind the house a little patch of cane. "To suck when there is nothing to eat". The little greatgrand son planted a dozen of peas and a few escallions. There are two or three coffee trees, two mangoes, a few citruses and 3 coconut palms. She showed me a letter from the Public Works Department requesting her to cut one of the coco-nut palm because "it is likely to impede the traffic". She is very worried about it. "It is a good-size tree, my son planted it before the war". Somebody advised her to write to Falmouth. She asked somebody who was passing on the road ~~xxxx~~ going to Rock Spring to tell her son to come and see the letter.

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"Income" To-day Mrs. Larmond sold a few coco-nuts from the tree which will be cut. One boy climbed and took 2 nuts. He promised to bring for it 3 d. Another boy got 2 nuts. He brought for it a few sticks for fire. ~~xxxx~~ easterday she gave 2 nuts to a neighbour, who gave her in exchange a little piece of bread. That was for breakfast for the little boy and herself. When there are mangoes she sells ~~xxxx~~ or exchanges the fruits in the same way. Also oranges which are ripening now. Her son does not help her regularly "He give a little when he have". She gets little presents and help from neighbours. I saw some sugar in the kitchen and asked her where she got it. She went to see a neighbour yeasterday who has just boiled some sugar. "Miss Mag he say have this little sugar, and he give me a little piece. It was for tea". Most of the day she sits in front of her house near the road. Everybody greets her and she greets everybody "Good morning my son" Good morning my daughter". A few weeks ago when I was at Ignatius Dixon's (it was a Sunday evening) she came there clad in her good dress and with her little boy. She came in front of the house and asked Dixon for his daughter. He told her to go and see at the back of the house. "I don't like to go by the back" she said and walked through the hall.

The adopted great-grand son. "My son has four so he give me that one to keep company. He couldn't walk when they brought him". The child is certainly exceptional. Possibly it is the result of the loving care and "Montessori method" the grand-mother is unconsciously using in bringing him up. He is not shy at all, cheerful and happy. He asked me my name and repeated it. He asked me for my green eyeglasses and amused himself looking through them. He pointed to my bag and wanted to know what is inside. Examined carefully the contents. But he does not do it in a personal-curiosity manner. You can see he is interested "in the problem in general". "While I was talking with Mrs. Larmond he took the fire sticks which were brought by the boy and carried them to the kitchen. He went with a little leaking pan to the spring and brought water. All this without being told to do so. When I went to the kitchen he showed the tin which he has filled this morning with water. In the yard I noticed a tiny little table made of sticks. The grand-mother explained that he made it to amuse himself. She explained that she does not let him go to other people's yards because they curse. "My children don't go to peoples yard. I won't have cursing". There was also a piece of metal hanging on a string from a branch. This was a bell little Cheval made. He brought an old machete and struck it. It produced a nice sound. He was very happy and let me strike his bell. He planted some peas and escallion which he waters himself. The grand-mother showed me an old cover from corn flakes. She explained that on this she teaches Cheval to spell. "When he spells "Flakes" I try the Royal Reader". The child looks healthy and is not thin at all.

"You ugly black boy" said the grand-mother when I was praising him. "No" said the child smiling. "My son cares for Cheval's clothes".

Meals. I could not get from Mrs. L. what she ate yeasterday and what she is going to eat to-day. As I saw smoke from the kitchen I managed to look in the black pot which was on fire. There was some tree-bark boiling. I asked her what it was for. It was mahoganny bark which she was boiling to have a dye for the house-floor. "I can't bear a floor dirty" she said. "Shake" (Stanford Carter the butcher-boy) was passing with his tray of meat on the head. She stopped there for a while. Mrs. L. asked him for 3d worth of meat. She said the boy who took 2 coco-nuts will bring her 3d. But Shake would not sell such a small amount of meat. He sold 1 lb to a man who was passing and wrapped it in cane-leaves which he took from Mrs. L. cane. Shake also took one of her coco-nuts, split it with his machete and drunk the milk. Mrs. L. must have approved of this behaviour because she did not comment on it. When he went she only complained that he would not sell a small quantity of meat, and she can't afford more. When asked how she manages for her meals she said she believed in God and he helps her. She does not buy milk. She used to buy in the shop, but now it is long ago since she could afford it. And the flour in the shop is not good. "I was with white people, I was used only to the best, I can't eat this flour, it is no good."

Mrs. L. had two sons but one died. "Before he died he said smoking does not harm you. Nothing can harm you if you do the good way". She gave me two oranges from her tree. "I am poor but I can give. I wouldn't give it to anybody but to Miss Eda and to you". (When I came I gave her right at the beginning a present - half apound of fat- and she did not beg during the whole visit as on previous occasions) I gave a few pennies to the child. He handed it to her.

Additional information (Miss Eda)

Russell Adina (who figures on the census) was Mrs. Larmond outside daughter. "She had it for a white man". She - Adina - use to back bammies and sell it on the square, "he had fits. Than she became "so" and they took her to the lunatic asylum. When there were riots in Kingston and they set fire to the asylum she got burned and died. (Mrs. Larmond never reffered to this daughter). Mrsxx Miss Eda laso says that Mrs. L. gets maintenance from her son who used to have a business and is a shoemaker. "She gets help allright but she wouldn't tell you". She belongs to the Methodist church but never comes now. I believe the support from her son must be more than she says. The child couldn't lock so fat on the erratic food she tells she is giving him. "She is a schemer" says Miss Eda.