

Family Record 99

III

Sunday,
July 4, 1948.

Ed. F.

Interview with Ezra Gordon

Ezra, 24, was born in Ballard's Valley. He has been living in Logwood Ribbit Town for 14 years now. He first came to Bull Savannah on hire - "as a servant boy" to Mr. Wintward Elliott. The premises on which he lives is Elliott's. He lives alone in a room given him to live in ~~xxx~~ by Mr. Elliott in exchange for his duties as "overlooker" i.e. caretaker, of the place.

Family History

His father Stanley Gordon is now in Old Harbour. His mother Maud Banton died in Ballard's Valley before he was able to walk. He was raised by his "grandma". He did not say which of his parents parent that was.

CAREER

Before he went to work with Mr. Elliott, he had used to share house with Francella Simpson of Shaddock Hill. While he yet lived at Shaddock Hill Mr. Elliott had called him one day and asked him if he would work with him (Mr. Elliott). Mr. Elliott called "Winty Elliott" said he would pay him by the month.

"Mi tell him yes. Him sey him will give mi 15/- a month to work with him as a yard boy. As a was so little a tell him a would work with him for that. When time a turn big, him put mi down here to live an overtake the place for him. Him not payin' mi no wages; him jus' put mi down here to live an' overtake the place for him."

Ezra, called, "Brown-Man," gets his meals free of cost at Mr. Winty's, but provides himself with clothes. - "Sometimes a hire to him by the day work at 2/- a day." Work is usually to cut grass, plant cassava and other crops etc. - "Sometime when Mr. Winty don't have no work to do, a hire to them other one. Pay usually is 2/- per day; some employers "pay 2/6 according to how y'u can work."

Sexual Relationships

"A don't have any girl frein' right now." He had to have one named Unice Simpson. They broke up.

Cause of break

"Wi," that is, Unice ~~had~~ ~~himself~~, "have a child an through a doan have anywhere to put him (i.e. them) him leave mi, for him sey, if a man doan have anywhere it wouldn't be wisable to stay with that man."

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Mr. Winty's attitude: He had asked Mr. Winty to allow him to take his girl and child into the room he ~~hasx~~ been given to live in, but Mr. Winty had said -"him (she) caan come here;" befor sh^e fi come here, I must leave."

paid
Monies/for his relations
sex

He has/relations with an occasional 'casual' on Saturday nights chiefly, but "under (under =unless) a man really daon have somewhere, them daon look y'u-up."

"Some a the girl them y'u don't have to pay ~~themxxxxx~~, but when y'u done y'u know, y'ugive them a satisf~~e~~ faction. Some a them y'u have to pay all \$1. (4/-sterling.) fi it."

His advances -contacts for:

"All like y'u go to a dance or so, an, y'u si a girl, y'u treat him up an' so on, but if y'u don't have it to treat him up, that girl gone from y'u."

"Sometimes/ y'u sen' a frien' to find out if all ~~ixxall~~ business is working well. If everything is workin' well sh' will tell the frien' where they might meet and when." A friend is used as a 'go between' when the woman desired has a regular boy friend with whom she shares house, or maintains close relationship.

Asked if there are many girls he contacts in this way he said -"yes, plenty of them! he would not be drawn into naming any of these girls however. -He does not remember the names of any of the e casuals. (I ~~did~~ not believe this) Explaining the reason he forgets he said -"We jus' ketch them, use them, leggo (let go) them an' them gone!"

Attitude to offsprings from relationships as above

Asked if he would admit parentage to a baby born to any such a casual, he said: -"If is a wile (wile = wild, i.e. woman or person having sex relations with many different persons) woman, the baby woulda ha fi born fust. ("fust"=first) After it born y'u go an look 'pon it; -look if it favour y^u anytime after 9 days." ("favour = resembles)

Means of determining parentage

He thinks he can be sure in regards to whether a baby is his or not aby examining it anytime after birth. He would go on the ninth day to examine such a baby -on the ninth day only, only because a baby's mother

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does not leave the room of confinement before the 9th day. He examines the feet and hands of such a baby; he pays special attention to the nails of the feet as well as the hands. He -"look at him hair to', an' according to him hair" he decides whether he should or should not accept paternity to the baby.

Sites of his sex relationships

He has his relationships -"in th grass piece as well as in the bush," never in his room. He never worries to carry "them" to his room. Now and agsin he stays with a girl in her own room ~~forxxxxxwx~~ throughout a night.

This interview with Brown-Man took place in his room. He lay on his back on a wooden bed on which there was a straw or grass mattress. There was a single covering of cotton material. This like the clothes he was wearing was revoltingly dirty.

The room and furniture:

The room had one door, one window. The window is not the louvre paned type; it is amde of boards nailed together to make a plain surface, and hinged laterally. Door and window were open. The cement floor appeared to have been swept. There was a rudely made bench on which I sat, to ~~wrixx~~ make notes on a table made even more rudely than was the bench. There was a half ~~burnt~~ smoked cigar -~~some~~ made, with the fire gone out from it, lying on the table; there was nothing else on the table.

There wre two suits of clothes hanging from the roof-thatched roof of the room. One of these appeared to be of black tweed material. The other was a kind of cotton of green khaki coloured material sold always at a rate higher than the price per yard for drill and khaki. These suits it appears, are his dress clothes. The black-clothed ~~material~~ suit was covered over with paper.

His face had a number of half healed wounds. His hand also. This perhaps was the result of his throwing him self against stones when he became drunk at the dance held at Eustace Seniors on June 30. (See File 25: Village institutions -)

His plans: -"Fi a poor man like mi noh have anybody here, is a shaky plan"-i.e. he has no plans at all -he is drifting with the tide of times and things.