

Tuesday  
15.4.1947.  
Informant  
Allen Watson.  
T.O., J.O.

Allen Watson is the owner of a shop with hats. The shop is at the far end where roads cross near the Baptist Church.

He comes from St. Elisabeth. He was born there. He went to Kingston to learn his trade. ~~Hexvsthsdxx~~ It took him 2 years and three months to learn his trade. Then he wanted to open a shop in Balaclava, but could not find a place there. Everyone was occupied. He met there some friends who advised him to ~~xxxxxx~~ go to the mountains. He came to Worsop about three years ago. He did not know here anybody. He was a complete stranger here. His wife is from Balaclava. She works also in the shop.

Mr. Allen Watson buys hats in St. Elisabeth. It costs him over three pounds to go there. He also writes for his goods and they are sent by post. It costs also. He has a stock of about 25 semi-finished lady's hats and about 20 finished with ribbons. He takes hats to wash them, to fashion them and to dye them. It seems it is his main business. He knows the names of different kinds of straw. Some kinds do not grow here. They grow in St. Elisabeth and people knit them. There were about 7 hats drying in front of his shop. He was engaged in washing a hat in hot water ~~Hexvsthsdxx~~ He took J.O. hat and showed it to his wife asking her what kind of straw it was. She said after a while "banana". He was glad patted her on her shoulder and said "Good girl". He showed us some bank straw and other kinds. He said banana hat is nice when somebody handles it with care. It is not good for a labourer. It would be spoiled if worn in rain. And it would crush if loads were carried on it. He said they make them nicely in Jamaica. They improved.

Mr. Allen Watson had at the beginning a shop in All Sides near Chung's shop. But two years ago he changed the place. He thinks it is a better one at the cross-roads, as everybody passes there.

Watson ~~xxxx~~ lives in the same house where his shop is. He does not have land and does not cultivate anything. He does not want to be worried with picking bananas, digging yam, digging Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes. He wants to give all his attention to his trade because he is dependend upon it - it is his living. He thinks he is doing well. When crops are good people buy and his business is good. When crops are bad, the business is not so good and he must wait for a better period. When he makes enough money he wants to open a shop in St. Elisabeth. A shop near the market.

In Watson's shop there are two long counters, and a table where big irons were. On two walls behind the counters there were shelves. Three big cardboard boxes were full of finished and semi-finished hats which he bought. On others shelves there were old hats ~~which~~ he was cleaning or dyeing for his clients. Still on other shelves there were wooden forms on which they fashion the hats.

Mr. Watson does not make hats himself. He finishes the ones he buys semi-finished. His main business is to clean, wash, dye and fashion ~~hats~~ old hats which people bring and ask him to do it for them.

He said the price of the new finished lady's hats were £ 1 for one and 18 sh. for another.

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On my way to the hatter's shop this morning I met almost at the front of the post office a little boy. He was walking a few paces behind J.O. and myself, so I addressed him. Only afterwards I realised he was sent purposely to accompany us. Yesterday we met in the fields a man - Berrice Campbell. He said his house was behind the hatter's shop. I told him I shall go one of these days to the hatter to buy a hat and he said it to Mr. Watson. Thus he sent the scout to accompany us to his shop.

The little boy said he was 11 and his name was Macdonald. The hatter he said "is my father in law - my mother married him". Asked whether he had sisters and brothers he said "plenty of them" but could not give the exact number. He is in his second year at school. He was born in Manchester where his mother lived previously.

He accompanied us all the way. Just before Watson's shop we told him to go and tell his "father in law" we are arriving and went for a few minutes to the Chinaman shop to buy cigarettes.

When we arrived at Mr. Watson's shop himself and his wife were pretending they were very busy with something. The shop was obviously tired / as compared with the previous day we visited it/ and Mr. Watson was wearing a clean white shirt and apron. We said good morning and were greeted very solemnly. I proceeded at once to choosing a hat. I chose a semi-finished one to have the opportunity to come once more as a client to Mr. Watson. I told him I preferred to have one finished by himself and we discussed the details of the finishing of the brim, the colour of the ribbon, the form of the head. He asked his wife to show me their assortment of ribbons. There were about 4 kinds of ribbons in a small carton.

He said the price was 18/-. I gave him 10/- in silver on account. I put it on the counter and counted it. He called his wife and showed her the coins. I thought that perhaps one of them was not good. He said solemnly: "It is business" and asked the wife to count it, all the time looking at her attentively. When money was duly counted by the wife he seemed to forget about it and left it as I put it on the counter. He took the hat I had chosen. He liked his pencil and wrote something inside the hat. Then he held it up high up and called to his wife: "Look No 4" then he showed it to his son and said "Number four" He showed to each of us the hat inside which was written the number four / I noticed a number four was also written on an enamelled basin - I do not know whether No 4 was the consecutive number of the hat sold that week or just a sign he used/ After having shown everybody the hat he put it on a side-table, and seemed to have finished the business part ~~of it~~ and his face changed from very serious and concentrated to more easy and smiling expression.

Watson's wife son- the 11 years old Macdonald is an apprentice in the shop. He said he can't make hats but he knows how to wash them. He wants to be a hatter too. Watson said "It's how they learn" He said his wife did not know about hat and "I learn her"

Professional  
cry of  
Watson.

Watson knows Mandeville. He had a shop there just before he came to Worsop. He had a shop for one year and seven months. He couldn't do good business there because there were ~~xxxxxxx~~ as many as 6 hatters. "Too many of us" So he moved to Worsop "I never regretted it".

He knows also Malvern, he passed through Malvern selling hats.

~~Thx~~ He is the only hatter in Worsop. There is not one even in Troy. There is one in Albert Town, but according to Mr. Watson he does not make sych"improvements" as he / Mr. Watson/ does. The district is good. Best day for trade is usually Saturday.

ches and  
religion.

"I were roman once. Since I come here I see no roman church, but I cross". / Here he crossed himself. He joined the Baptists ~~xxxxxxx~~ because his wife wanted him to do so. "She drive me to the Bapris because she is Baptist". He said however that if he went to town he would go to a roman church. His mother was a "born true roman". So was his father. He said there is a beautiful roman catholic cathedral in Kingston. They have four big bells. Two facing one side and two the other. If a man marries he gives one £ 1 and one bell rings. If he is richer he gives £ 2 and two bells ring, if he is still richer he gives £ 3, and £ 4 and £ 5 and 6 and 7 and even as much as £ 8. And all the bells would ring during all his wedding trough. Mr. Watson's conviction was that this money was not spent "on drinking and driving in a car" the priest "does not put it in his pocket". They use it to help the poor. They have schools, where boys are trained to be ~~xxxxxxx~~ carpenters, or tailors according to what they are able to do. There is a school for paupers - very poor people. There each child gets every day a halfpenny or a penny. They have a school - St. George. They train for priests and nuns. They spent this money for the people.

Mr. Watson took off his hat and performed some religious catholic ceremonies. He crossed himself, took the holy water, kneeled - as if in front of the altar. He did it with reference and serious miming. He said he liked this church and the ceremony. When somebody is ill the priest comes and prays for him. If the man committed murder or other sin - the priest prays for him all the same. And if people have sorrows the go to the "box" and tell the priest. "It helps" said Mr. Watson.

He told he rents his house from Mr. Woodfine, who lives in the house across the road. He is an old man "A ripe man" said Mr. Watson and at our request sent his son to tell Mr. Woodfine of our intention to come and talk to him. After a while the boy came and we could see through the window Mr. Woodfine was dressing / he apparently was having a rest in his bed/. Mr. Watson accompanied us to Mr. Woodfine and introduced us to him and his son.

5.5.47.  
T.O.

/ Children/

Oscar Watson. C.H.28

Monday.

Oscar Watson is the son of Mrs. Watson and adopted by Allen Watson the hatter. He is about 10. There are no other children in the household, but Oscar said he had "plenty of sisters and brothers". He was born in Manchester.

~~Th~~ I met him for the first time in his father's shop. He was busy washing a hat.

A few days later I met him as he was coming out of Chin's shop. He accompanied me till his father's shop, where I was going. He told me about the school: how it is divided into 3 houses, who are the persons after whom the houses are named, that younger children don't belong to houses etc.

He answers questions fully, not by mere "Yes Maam."

Met him again last Saturday. He bought at Chin's shop 3 d. worth fish. We walked together. His favourite dish is rice with meat. He prefers meat to fish. He did not go to school on Friday / ~~Saturday~~ on Saturday there is no school/ But remember what he learned on Thursday. It was about Sahara - it is the biggest desert. It is in Asia, but agreed he was mistaken - it is in Afrika. He enumerated the parts of the world. Could not remember Europe. He knows that ~~xxx~~ Kingston is a city in Jamaica, but said did not yet know what or where London and New York were. He reads also at home. He has a book. It is about how to make a little garden. He expects to be hatter like his father. He can't make hats but knows how to wash them. He asked me when I will come to the shop to fetch my hat.

On the evening the same day I met Mr. Watson. He said he teaches his son to behave properly. When the child fights in the street with other boys he spansks him. He teaches him to be polite. ~~xxxxxx~~ He was very pleased when I told him his boy is clever and does not waste time at school. He said he always tells him to be obedient to the master and mistresses at school. Knowledge is "a treasure inside my head. If I have a cow, a calf, a donkey, somebody may steal it" But what he has inside his head is secure.