

18.VI.1947.
T.O.

22/5/75

Family Rec.145.

Mendez Cyril	Head.	M.Cl.	52	Labourer
Rooms Ann	Wife	F.Cl.	41 8.7.	
Colly Raphael	St/sn	M.S.	15	
Mendez Lucille	Dau.	F.S.	10	
" Louise	Dau.	F.S.	7	
" Easton	Son	M.S.	5	
" Dolores	Dau	F.S.	3	

A delayed wedding.

"At last Miss Ann is going to be married" was the general comment at the marriage ceremony of Mendez with Ann Rooms. They live in a grass hut on the parochial road to All Sides and not far from the main road. They have already 8 children and Miss Ann is expecting the 9th soon. Her eldest daughter married and went to Kingston but was deserted by her husband, came back home where she is now with her little baby. The family of 11 lives in two small rooms with tiny wooden windows which are carefully shut for the night as duppies like to throw something through the windows or they even may enter the house.

Ann Rooms is from Rose Valley which is somewhere near Balaclava. She was very eager to be married legally, but the husband was reluctant. "He is a devil" as neighbours comment. Not long ago he was running after his wife with a machette and threatened to kill her. He often beats her. ~~However~~ Nevertheless they decided to marry and the ceremony was celebrated to-day. Some people think this decision was due to the fact that the daughter married - but it is not quite clear.

The ceremony was fixed for 11 a.m. At 1 p.m. the Rev. Gallimore - who was to marry them at their house - wasn't yet there and the groom was still away dressing at his friend's house Mr. Copeland. Near the house a "booth" was erected. It was a kind of "summer house" made of palm leaves attached to a wooden structure. At the entrance the palm-leaves were plaited which made a pretty decoration. Inside was a large table and benches (borrowed from neighbours for the occasion). Some of the guests sat there ~~and were waiting~~ waiting for the ceremony. In one room of the hut was a table and other guests waited. Miss Eda brought there also her small organ on which a relative of Ann Rooms from Rose Valley was playing. Altogether there were about 40 guests. Ann's mother and two other female relatives came from Rose Valley for the occasion. One was a "smart" girl in a bright red dress, straighten hair ~~and~~ a lot of rouge on her lips, powdered and eyes underlined with grease. The other relative in a smart pink dress and pink hat played the organ. The mother was dressed in a simple blue dress with a white apron and a white kerchief on her head. The girl in red sat in the room near the couple. The mother was standing modestly outside near the door. I took her first for a servant. Before Rev. Gallimore arrived the bride was in the next room all the time dressing. Miss Jimmie at the last minute send somebody for flowers to make a bouquet. ~~xxxx~~

At 1.15 p.m. Rev. Gallimore arrived galloping on his horse. He had in his hand ~~xxx~~ a long roll of papers. The couple sat in the grass hut behind the table. She was in a new white dress, white stockings, white shoes and white hat. Mr. Mendez had a white coat, dark trousers a "floral" tie. The best man was "Prother Howard" the "balman". He was also a week ago best man ~~xxx~~ at Miss Napier wedding.

The eldest son was also dressed in white and ~~widex~~ had green eyeglasses, which are worn - I was told- with the best suit. The children however were not in the room where the ceremony was performed. From time to time we could only hear the grand-baby praying in the next room.

Rev. Gallimore started with a speech with the constantly recurring motto: "Marriage is honourable". He said there are men who have children in different places and don't care for them. "It is a common life," he said. The bride was very serious all the time. ~~The xvhrkxyvvdvrvvaxhvxvheavzvmvdxhaxvbkvkv~~
~~fvccvfvckvv~~ With her black face powdered white she looked full of awe as she were ~~atvhr~~ appearing at her last judgement. The groom was in better spirits, ~~but~~ moderately serious. Rev. Gallimore read the text from his book. He made to repeat the couple the words of promise, and when they made a mistake he made to repeat them again. The groom had to repeat four times one formula which he didn't get right. Rev. Gallimore commented on the "husband head of wife" explaining that it ~~did~~ didn't mean the husband can bully his wife, but has to think about the needs of the house. The minister pronounced all the formulas in a direct tone (not ceremonious) strong and serious but in a way as if they were addressed personally to this couple. He warned them at the end that their marriage will be what they make of it and will have to give account at the last judgement to God himself. During the ceremony a neighbour

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the old Mr. Smith stood in the door way. He is the old man without ~~the~~ nose. He was not dressed like all the others in his best clothes, but untidy. All the time he made some frivolous remarks commenting the minister speech. Rev. Gallimore told him without turning his head "You are all for jokes Mr. Smith, and we don't want jokes here". But Mr. Smith didn't pay attention to this and continued his uncalled for remarks.

Mr. Smith lives nearby with a girl who is younger than his own children. She was very poor and as he rents a lot of land she lives with him. One day Mr. Smith stripped himself and showed some boys his genitalia to convince them he is "all right" (As he has no nose presumably there was some doubt about integrity of his other parts of the body) He is the father of the shoemaker Smith who has plenty of children with very young girls in the village.

Another guest was fussy about the fact that the ceremony was being held in the house and not in the palm-booth where it would be much cooler and more comfortable for the guests. He was told that Miss Ann wanted the blessing in the home. While the papers were signed by the couple and their witnesses we sung to the accompaniment of the organ some hymns. After the ceremony everybody transferred to the palmbooth. There was a distinct lack of a person who would be the hostess and take care of guests etc. The couple moved like dolls, not knowing exactly what to do or what to say. The minister went to his horse and nobody thanked him nor asked him to stay. Miss Aimee said he should be asked to stay and went after him but he has already mounted his horse and said he had to go to Troy.

Now the couple was sitting in the palm-booth behind a table on which the wedding cake covered with a serviette was put. Four large and decorative loaves of bread. Here the first speech was made by the best-man "brother" Howard. Then he called the "president". This is the man who has to make a speech referring to the collection "for the cake". The speech is

made always in a jocular way. As a response the guests give money as long as the cake is covered. Only silver is given. One person may contribute several times. The "president" referred to the cake as a foreign lady who was in America and heard about this marriage and travelled all the way to be here. She was ashamed of being uncovered etc.

The fussy guest also started a speech. He said "Ladies and gentlemen" and then very angry took his cap and his stick and walked away. He said somebody offended him, but I couldn't see who and when. Some voices said he should come back, but there wasn't anybody to go after him. The couple sat firm behind the table, motionless and without a smile. Finally Miss Aimee found ~~xxxx~~ a female relative who went after the angry guest and brought him back pulling his hand and kissing him.

The cake was finally uncovered and the first slice was cut by two little children. At this stage I left the party, which lasted till about 3 p.m.