

P.D.29,Sbd.6.Household. 11.

3rd copy

Spencer Eleazar	Head	M.Cl. 38.	Farmaer	M.F.
Johnson Icilda	Wife	F.Cl. 32. 5. 5.	Homemaker	
Spencer Thelma	Dau.	F.S. 13.		
" Cynthia	"	" " 8.		
" Michaelis	"	F.S. 6.		
" Reginald	Son	M.S. 4.		
" Enid	Dau.	M.S. 2.		

Visit 15.10.45.
Interview with
Icilda Johnson.
J.O.

Family members.

The family is composed to-day of 10 people. There are 8 children to-day, 3 of who go to the school. The youngest, a boy is only ab.1 year old. His brother next to him is between 2 and 3, and ~~the~~ next child is the girl of ab. 4. Other children as ~~in~~ above. ~~Miss~~ Miss Icilda was ill to-day and stayed not so much in bed as on bed. She went to the doctor yesterday and the doctor prescribed her medicine which she is taking. All this from working to-hard. Heart trouble and nerves. Mr. Eleazar went to the field - to weed bananas. Only Michael was in the school. Other ~~school~~ school-age children could not go to the school to-day, because they have no cloths. They have only one ~~each~~ one dress each which they take on when they go to the school, but the dress must be washed and pressed on Saturday or Sunday. ~~Miss~~ Miss Icilda could ~~not~~ get no soap last week and so the children could not go to the school. They will go next week, if it will possible to get any soap. this week.

Children at ~~school~~ school.

Family history.

Miss Icilda was not born in Warsop. She was born in Ulster Spring, from where she came to live in Allsides about 20 years ago, when she was 18. She came here to - gether with her mother and her stepfather. She was the first child of her mother, born before he mother married another man. Her mother's name is Palmer - she lives in a shingle house to the right from the Allsides Rd going to Albert Town, a little above Charles Campbell's grass-house. Her mother had altogether 8 children. ~~She~~ Miss Icilda has 3 sisters and 4 brothers. Her sisters do not live in Allsides or Warsop. They went to live in towns - one in Kingston etc. Only her brothers stay here and they live with the mother. The eldest is 22 and the youngest only 13.

When her mother came to live here in Allsides, ~~she~~ they rented first of all a pice of land on the other side of the Allsides property /Office House/. Florence Eason mother of her husband lived also in somewhere there. They werent ~~in~~ their direct neighbours, but when going to the shop Miss Icilda used to pass through their yard. ~~in~~

In this way she met her future husband, Eleazar Spencer.

She married him ~~xxxxxxxx~~ shortly after she came to live in Allsides. It was 18 years ago - she was 18 at that time. She ~~had~~ started to bear children since she was 18. Eleazar built the house on the same spot where they live to-day and they moved to live here together. She had altogether 11 children, but only 8 are alive. She never had any children by any other man. She does not believe in living with more than one man. If people, who started to live together, part, it is frequently "because we /s.i.e. women/ are guilty".

Their house.

The house was built 18 years ago. From that time it was damaged and repaired many times, but they never get any help to improve or repair their house. Even after 1944 hurricane. But the house is more or less like that which they built 18 years ago.

It is a wattle house with a thatch and only very ~~xxxxxx~~ scanty grass-covering on the walls. The house has no floor - just earth-floor. ~~xxxxxx~~ Neither it has any windows. Two doors are leading to the house: one through the front-, and another through the side-wall. In front of their house a nicely kept rose-garden is planted - just to adorn the house.

The furniture is very poor and simple. A grass-partition divides the house into two miniscule rooms. ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ The first one, which can be entered by the front door, is her husband's room. There is one wooden chair /very rude and simple/ in this room - it serves chiefly for the purposes of prolongating the bed. A small table is covered with a very poor collection of glassware. The remainder of the room at the back-wall is taken by the bed. The bed is made just of a wooden platform supported by a wooden box on the outer side, and by some wooden structure ~~on~~ at the opposite side. ~~xxxxxx~~ It was covered with a sheet, but there was evidently no blanket. One tiny pillow served ~~xxxxxx~~ Miss Icilda to support her head. She was lying on the bed dressed, keeping the youngest child ~~xxxxxx~~ beside her. ~~xxxxxx~~ This bed serves as Miss Icilda explained me her husband and two ~~xxxxxx~~ of their boys. She sleeps in another compartment, where a similar structure serves her as a bed. She and her six daughters and youngest sons are crowded ~~xxxxxx~~ ever there ~~xxx~~ in the night. "Just like pins - we cannot even turn".

Poverty.

They are very poor, cannot afford to build any better house. Cannot even afford buying necessary cloths. ~~xxxx~~ Miss Icilda has shown me two pairs of old shoes, ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ one of which was really impressive for its ~~xxxxxx~~ holes. But Miss Icilda was of an ~~xxxx~~ opinion that they are quite good, need only some repair. Of course, the front part, she said must be thrown away, but the back part is still healthy. If only she could repair them. ~~xxxxxx~~ Another pair was much better, ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~

and there was no disagreement as to whether it can ~~xxxx~~ be repaired. Younger children were rather nicely dressed but the older one - Cynthia and ^Reginald - were ordinary working attire - dirtied and torn.

Meals.

We had a talk over how Miss Icilda manages to feed her children. Children do not get any fresh milk. From time to time she buys tinned milk for the youngest one - about 1 tin per week. It was a blessing when one could get such ~~xx~~ a tin for 3d. from Miss Eda. Unfortunately it is only for the babies - Willy, who is about 3, ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ cannot get this milk for himself. ~~xxxx~~ She has no cow and no goat, so other children are fed simply on ~~xxxx~~ "ground feed". She knows that Willy is ~~xxx~~ really too young for this ~~xxxx~~ feed, but what else can she do? The usual course of meals which children get are: morning tea, made of a bush ~~xxxx~~ which is boiled and the drink is sweetened with sugar. Usually children must be satisfied only with such a drink on the morning, they do not get anything to eat. ~~xxxx~~ Or they get some bananas to it, if there are any. Their first solid meal is breakfast, for which "feed" is cooked. ~~xxx~~ She tries to season this dish with some coco-nut oil, some butter or some fish, if she has some spare money to buy it. But frequently children ~~xxx~~ - even the youngest ones - must be satisfied just with the "bare feed" in "bare water". If she has any money, she buys flour to mix it with the "feed" and make it more nourishing. Usually two pounds of flour make amount sufficient to be used for breakfast and for dinner and if she has money to buy something in the shop she buys most frequently flour. ~~it~~ If it were for her only, she might prefer milk or fish instead of ~~xxxx~~. But elder children, those who go to the school and work in the fields or around the house, prefer something ~~xxxx~~ solid. Food mixed with flour is what they like the best and what satisfies their hunger. If she has to spend one shilling ~~xxx~~ in the shop, ~~it~~ the best calculation is to buy flour - two pounds or a little less - and the remainder can be spent on butter or oil. If she spent ~~xxxx~~ 9d. on a tin of milk, little would be left to add to the meal something solid to make it satisfactory. She ~~xxxx~~ must spend usually one shilling daily on what she buys in the shop, but only 3 shillings would be enough to buy everything ~~xxxx~~ really need.

The farm.

They have no buy-land and live from what they rent. Their rent-land consists altogether of 2 and 1/2 acres in 3 parcels. Half an acre around the house and two parcels, one acre each, in ~~xxxx~~ two different places in Allsides. This land they rented for years, but previously it was ~~xxxx~~ estimated only as two acres. But Sir Archibald ordered land survey some 4 years ~~/?~~ ago and it was found that ~~xxxx~~ they utilised for 4 years an area of 2 and 1/2 acres paying all the time only for 2 acres.

is**

In 1944, after the hurricane, people went to Sir Archibald to ask him to cancel their debts. But Sir Archibald refuse and warned them that every penny of what they owe for the hidden arrearage must be paid.

They were ordered to pay now for 2 and 1/2 acre, to pay off 4 years rent for half an acre for which they did not pay, and the rent was raised from 24/. to 32/. So now they must pay L.4 yearly for the land they rent. It wouldnt be so bad if ~~thats~~ they could get some an employment on the property to be able to earn a little money and pay their rent from these earnings. Unfortunately ~~thats~~ no work is carried on the estate and no employment is offered to people. They /the estate peop~~a~~ only press their rent and send all the money to the bank, but dont ~~xx~~ use it on the spot. That is why it is so difficult for the people who live ~~an~~ Allsides.

In olden times, when she settled down with her mether in Allsides, it was much easier to live here. People used to keep as much as 4, 10, 16 and more acres and pay only for the half of what they actually utilised. There were ~~many~~ people at Allsides at that time, when she came in, and many people lived in Allsides previu~~s~~ly. But many of them dide, many left the place when they acquired their buy-land, and in this way new-comers could take some land left by them and grown with grass or bushes. The ~~land~~ spot, where they built their house, was one of such places. Before they took it, it was rented by somebody who died, and the place was left resting until they took it. People at these times never worked the same land year after year. They moved from one place to another after one year or so, and paid for what they actually cultivated. To-day they must pay for all the land they utilise - not for what they actually cultivate. And they must always keep one field resting when other is under yams and ground provisions. The soil is very tired and they can net use it year after year. After one year they must take another plot. They manure the land spreading the grass over the ground and ~~xx~~ tying up the stock in the field which is resting. Still it does net help much. And a part of the land they rent is so stony that they have no use of it at all. But they must pay the rent for all the area.

They plant on their farmland cane & about an acre, some bananas, but only little yam and ~~potatoes~~ potatoes and other groundprovisions. She could net tell how much land is under separate cultivations. They have some bananas, but only few were fruiting. Panama disease. This year her husband planted some mere bananas, but they dont know whether they will be spared by disease.

Work.

All the work in the field is done chiefly by her husband. She helps him with catch-crops - peatees, peas and so on. She does also weeding. Besides she has a lot of work at the heuse - with the children and with cooking for all the family. When she goes to do some work in the field, still the evening meal must be coked by her. Children are helping her in work. Cnythia for inatance is cee-king their breakfast te-day. Reginald is also helpful. But other children are still te small. And besides, the bigger ones go still te the school.

Her husband employs from time te time some workers - especially at planting yams. This work hardly can be ~~done~~ done by single man. The soil is very heavy - clay - and sometimes no more than 10 yam holes can be dug in a day. Then the ~~up~~ holes must be left open for some time ~~xxxx~~ ~~xx~~ and the soil burned by the sun. Te de all this in cer-rect time fer planting all the yams in one time, more than one man's work is needed. That's why they must emp-loy people if even they havent get land enough te feed themselves.

Daughter in Kingston.

Her eldest daughter does not stay with them. She left about twe year ago, when she went te work as ~~domestic~~ servant te Ulster Spring te a relative. But the ~~man~~ man went te work in America and then her daughter went te Kingston. She stayed there at a place where she earned 7 shillings per week. Then she left this job, found anothe and changed againg thas job for a next one. Miss Icilda does not know how much does she ~~earn~~ earns now. She wrote her recently; she feels bad and probably will leave her work for some weeks te get rest.

Cynthias ca-
reer.

Cynthia ~~is~~ will leave the school this year. She will stay at home for a year er twe and then Miss Icilda will send her te learn domestics. ~~Probably~~ Here in Allsides, te Mrs. Webb.