

~~Interview with~~

Interv. with Vie Nembhard. Also inform from: Judith Ro
1.7.48. chester (sister) & Ida Linton (sist in law
T.O.

Vie Nembhard is the daughter of Emma and Arthur
~~Linton~~ Linton. (see F.R. 10) I passed her ~~new~~ new house
a week ago. It is in Shaddock Hill high up on the
border of Dunder Hill. The two-room house has been re-
cently built. There is a provisory kitchen as the buil-
ding for the kitchen is not yet finished. Into this
house moved presently:

| | | | | |
|----------|----------|---------|----|------|
| Nembhard | Violette | F. Sep. | 32 | head |
| Powell | Winston | M.S. | 5 | son |

Violette married 8 years ago Luther Nembhard,
but they couldn't get along. One of the causes of the
misunderstandings was the mother of Luther who stayed
in the same home. Luther lives now with his mother in
lower Ridge. Violette didn't have children with her
husband, whom she left and returned to live in her pa-
rents' home in Dunderhill.

She use to work in the factory during the sea-
son in the wrapping house. In December 1946 she moved
to her brother's home Ezra Linton to be nearer to the
factory. She stayed there for 18 months till now when
she moved to her own house.

Her child. She had a son with Emmanuel Powell who
died last year. Violette was very sick at her confi-
nement. "Three days I was in labour. From Sunday till
Wednesday." They doctor said her bones were too near
each other and it was dangerous for her to have any
more children. Violette had her child in the Mandew
ville nursing home. Everybody thought that the child
and herself will die. She had 42 injections "It saved
my life."

Preventive measures. As the doctor told her not to
have children again she didn't have relations for thre
e years afterwards. But "you can't fight the nature"
and "two years this December" she had an operation
which will prevent her to have more children. I asked
her whether women in Bull-Savannah - who complain so
often of having too many children - don't know of
preventive measures. "They know, but they are poor,
it is expensive all this apparatus - and carelessness".
She herself preferred to be sure and have the opera-
tion.

The independent single woman. Violette is the only single woman in Bull-Savannah who although without a man in her household seems to have and to feel a standing of her own. Her free and friendly manners mildly authoritative show she is the master of her life. It is true she has the backing of her well off family. Her father Arthur Linton gave her the piece of land to build the house, for which she paid from the tomato earnings in the factory. I do not know yet what are her regular means of subsistence, however morally she is independent. She spoke with great love of her son. He weighed only 2½ lbs when he was born. For two years he would throw up anything he ate. Wouldn't take anything with milk till he was 1½. But now he is growing nicely. And how intelligent he is. He has an excellent memory. He quarreled with his cousin one of the Ezra Linton's daughters, because she called me "Mrs. Biscuit". Violette says that her little son didn't like the name so distorted. He calls me Mrs. Obreski and wants the other children to do so. And he travelled a lot. Violette always takes him on little excursions she makes. ~~xxx~~

Pleasure trips. Violette went to other parishes just for pleasure. She would go with the cricket team "to visit other places." After this tomato crop she was so tired she decided to "take a little vacation". She went to friends to Balaclava and from there to Albert Town. She nows there a Mr. William who used to drive the truck to the market. She was also in Westmoreland with the cricketers.

She came to-day to her sister's house as she had some business to her brother in law Laban Rochester. Young Vivian Witter is working at her kitchen to-day. She left her son Winston at home with a little girl who usually stays in her parents' home. That girl is the daughter of her late sister adopted by another sister Etheline. Violette invited the little girl to stay with her for a few days. "And she likes it, they play with my boy." Violette invited me to come and see her new house. She was sorry she wasn't in when I passed it the other day.

The neighbourhood. Speaking of the young carpenter Vivian Witter I said I-knew his mother a very nice old-lady. "People are nice here - nice if they like you. You come plain - not fussy so they like you. But if they don't like you you won't hear a word from them."

Fam. Rec. 9.

Informants: Vincent and Mildward Elliott.
1.7.48.
T.O.

They told me that Violette got a piece of land from Emmanuel Powell "for the boy". It is below her house. They don't know how much it is; it hasn't been measured yet.

Her house is built on Arthur Lyndon's land. Violette cultivates working herself in the field, hires labour and "plenty people around help her." The two young men say she is an energetic woman. "there are some like that in the district". But when I asked them to tell me the name they only could think of Cinderella Simpson "A busy woman too."

2 acres

Visit at home. Interv. Violet Nembhard.
16.7.48.
T.O.

I met Violet on many occasions when I was walking in Haddock Hill. She always asked me when I will come and see her new house. I came there to-day at about noon. The little Bezrik Linton (the outside son of Ezra Linton) whom I met at the Holnesses led the way. ~~It~~

Violet was in her kitchen. I could see her as there are no walls yet. Only the structure and the window frames. There is no "fire table yet, and the fire is made on the floor. A pot was on a provisory shelf-table. She was taking pieces of meat out of it, put them into a bammie and ate them. Her little son Winston was sitting on a stone. His plate was on a wooden box. When we came Violet gave a bammie and some meat on a plate to Bezrik.

A young man was digging/earth behind the house. He was the outside son of Richard Edwards. The earth was dug to prepare for the masons who will come on Monday to make the kitchen wall. He was also asked to come for breakfast and got on a plate meat and bammie.

Violet apologised for the state of the kitchen. "I even don't sit to eat. When I am finished with all this work I will sit and eat nicely." After everybody finished the breakfast she asked me to come to her new house. It has a a shingle roof, which is rather rare here. (Thatch or zinc is used). Violet said she liked shingles they are cool and keep long. She paid £ 6 for them just to cover this house.

Her room.

There is one room with a red cement floor. A very big bed covered with a pleasant print. One big table on which was standing a hand sewing machine, and some glasses etc. and photographs. And this is my "bureau" she said laughing and pointing to the improvised structure next to the bed. There was a barrel on which a small trunk was ~~standing~~ put flat. This was covered with a white embroidered serviette. On it was a big mirror, a green enamelled brush and hand mirror (from America - a friend sent it) an alarm clock showing the right time a big Bible and a few other prayer books, also Jehovah Witness "Let God be true." Over it on the wall was hanging a calendar with to-days date marked. In a corner a broom (the first I saw in Bull-avannah. They always use a few branches to sweep the floor) Between the door and the window a very ingenious contraption for clothes: two boards - one on top the other on the bottom to which all round a printed material was fastened with a ~~slit~~ perpendicular slit to take the clothes out. Under it were a few suitcases.

~~Her trunk~~ In the corner there was a wash-stand with a basin. Above it two pairs of towels, each pair embroidered differently.

Her trunk

~~On~~ On her bed were some pieces of printed artificial silk and sewing. She said she put it there in a hurry, as she sent off just now a parcel to Balaclava. The parcel contained a pink nightie she made for a friend. He wanted to show me some other things she has sewn and embroidered.

On the top compartment there were Winston's pyjamamas, some good little suits etc. This Violet explained to me is ready in case he has to go to the hospital. He always keeps these things ready "in case". The things he wears every day are kept in a little suitcase which is under the "hanging wardrobe". We proceeded to examine the contents of the lower strata. Here Violet keeps her things which might be necessary in case she has to go to the hospital. A few nighties, a bed jacket, some towels, some sheets. "Some people they would borrow, I don't like that, I like to have everything ready and prepared." Here also she keeps the things she sews for herself or for other people. There were some nighties well cut in bias and carefully finished. Some material for future garments, a lovely leather ~~case~~ case with toilet equipment (also a present from America) Some cotton wool and bandages. Everything was neatly folded and things of one kind put together. She is very methodical in whatever she does. After we have seen her latest work she put everything back. Covered the trunk with a serviette and put another one on top. He explained that the good one is covered with another one "for the dust". Now while the house is being built there is a lot of dust coming into the room. Right at the door there is a heap of lime and she has to sweep many times a day the floor, and the dust covers the furniture etc.

Planning

Plans of the house.

In the building in which the kitchen is being made there will be another room. This will serve as a dining-room. "Then I will keep this room nice and clean." The house cost her a lot. But she is very pleased to have her own place. And it is for the child "His father died, so if I had to leave him now he would have a place of his own where to sleep."

The brother

If her brother "Doctor" (Linton) who is in America were here he would help her a lot with the building of the house. He always helps her. "But he can help me even better from America." "Doctor" is her favourite brother. "He is not much after the women, at least he doesn't care much now. Perhaps he will change the man-way. But not now." He is in America and intends to stay there as long as "they will keep him". When he comes back he will stay with the parents. He has his room

there. He is the one of her family with whom she lives the closest. When she gets the picture of herself and the little Winston she will send it to "Doctor". Of all the uncles she loves best uncle Moses (Elliott) "He is my darling uncle."

Her childhood.

Violet was brought up by her ^{parental} grandmother - ~~thaxx~~ in Kingston. The old lady was from Balaclava. She never lived here in Bull Savannah. Violet's father came here with his father. The grandmother lived for 13 years in Kingston and she took Violet there. Violet went to school. After the school she learned for 6 months sewing. But also in the school she was ~~xxx~~ she learned quite a lot of sewing. ~~thaxx~~ When the grandmother died she had to leave Kingston and came to Bull-Savannah.

Her occupations, clothes and day-table.

She prefers to stay in the country to staying in the town. "I am on my own here." And people ~~are~~ round are "Your people". On Monday the walling of her kitchen will be made. Well it is just Mr. Richard Edwards the neighbour, Ezra Linton and "Teacher" (Her brother from Junction) and Arthur Linton her father who will come. Four of them, and 11 family or neighbours. She is worried because to-day the cow was killed in Bull-Savannah and she didn't succeed in getting meat. And one can't get even salt-fish. How is she going to feed the four men who will come to work at her kitchen?

She works all the day. Yesterday she had a pain in the side. "It's from worry and I carry stones from the hill." She works also in the fields. She could eat at Ezra's but it isn't worth while to go there. She wouldn't be able to do all she has to do at home if she were to go there for tea breakfast and dinner.

In the evenings "after I put him to bed" I wash and put my house-coat - it is one room you never know who may knock at the door and I sew sometimes till 11 and 12." She showed me her new housecoat. It is a long robe with a floral pattern with a zip-fastener. She showed me also the old one. It was lovely when it was new, but now it is faded and torn in places so she made herself a new one. Now for the dirty work around the house she put an old dress. She doesn't dress when she goes to the shop "It would look funny". The good clothes she has when she travels, goes to see friends in Balaclava or for special occasions in Bull-Savannah. She showed me two pairs of stockings. she got them as a present, her brother brought it from America. But here you couldn't wear them, would be torn after one day wear.

She is sewing for the teachers here and for the lady at the factory. She sews for people in Balaclava and Kingston. "Here in Bull Savannah people don't appreciate your time. They ask you to sew for them, you have

leave your work and they don't understand it takes your time. It costs time."

Opinions on women.

"I am the only woman here that works in the field with machette. And look the other day I sold my 'scallim for 25/-. It helps me a lot. But here girls they won't do such work." Violet said that girls here ~~won't~~ consider it as a disgrace for a woman to "work with the machette in the field." And the girls: they make one child or two, and after that "They live with a man for the little they can get." "They can't find their place." (status) and still they would rather do that than to work in the field. Violet - she can do everything. During the season she works in the factory. She can sew and it brings her "a few useful shillings". She looks after her building, she works in the field. And she is good at nursing people. Here the girls start to have children early. "They develop early - it's the sun." Girls start to develop (have menstruation) at "11, 12, 13 ~~atx~~ that's late". I asked her whether there are some who have their first menstruation at 14. "Perhaps there are some, but it must be very anaemie." The chinese girls they develop even earlier. One or two years earlier than the Jamaican girls.

Opinions on marriage.

I asked her whether she intended to marry again. "A good husband - it is difficult to find." She married once. "And see I had to leave him and start all over again. They don't appreciate you." Unless it is a good husband she prefers to have none. "Nature" that's a different question. One can't do without "nature". (Sexual relations).

Her child

"I have that one and have nothing to regret." "Everybody tells me there isn't a child of his age in Bull-Savannah so developed." "He can help himself, can find his shirt and pants and put them on, and wash nicely. It is so nice to watch ~~xxx~~ a child to learn something every day." Violet is very particular about her son's diet. "I don't mind what I eat, but he must have his milk every day." "Without proper food the brain can't develop." She buys him medicines too. After we came to the room the little boy came and asked for his bottle of pills. Violet gives him calcium pills. The boy has bad teeth (the first ones) so she wants strengthen the ones which will come. She was very pleased to hear that my son had also very bad first teeth and now he has nice and good teeth. "I buy him all the medicine he needs. For this bottle I paid 3/6".

I told Violet I brought my camera to take the picture of the little boy and herself. She told Winston to undress and wash. The little boy shed his pants and shirt and was looking into his suitcase for a clean suit. She showed me a dark oval mark on his back. "A rabbit". This he got because she looked at rabbits when she was pregnant. And on his cheek he has a small red dot. "The pig". Her aunt had a sow that had 12 piggies and she died. Violet was looking at them and touched her cheek with her finger and "What mark him." I told her my son has a red dot on his neck. He asked me "What mark him?". I had to invent a little accident to provide the reason.

provide/

And how clever he is. When she had yesterday this pain in her side he came and told her to rest on the bed and said he will pray that the pain would pass. She started to brush his hair. "Lovely hair" she commented. (He has in fact lovely hair soft and wavy.) She sent him twice to Hammelin to have a hair cut but Hammelin was not at home. So she took him and cut the hair herself. She is pleased with the job. She doesn't like the child to have the hair too long. It makes the hair stronger when they are cut often. One shouldn't let grow them too long. The eyelashes. He was born with these long eyelashes. She showed me a picture of him as a baby. He really had nice eyelashes.

The boy was still looking into the suitcase for a clean suit. Suddenly he looked up at me got ashamed of his nakedness and hid behind the bed. Violet laughed: "Missis has a little boy like you - she knows all the tricks" she said. He has chosen a suit, but Violet said he had already one picture taken in this one and selected another one: a blue shirt and pants. There was a button missing at the pants. She fastened it with a safety pin and said to the boy "Remember to tell me in the evening to fix it."

She has no definite plans yet concerning his future. "He will pass this elementary school and then I will see." The main thing now is to feed him properly. He doesn't like meat and doesn't eat the sweet pepper. He likes fruit. But he should eat everything - a little of everything to build his body and brain properly. His father was a clever man. She hopes the child will inherit it. But even by such a small child one can say he will be intelligent.

We proceeded to take the picture. Violet wanted it taken in front of the house, but the sun was at the wrong side. We took some in the garden in front of the house with the hills and sea behind. She showed me a bush, which is Winston's "garden" He put stones round it and was very upset the other day when the wind bent some branches.

She wanted one of the child alone. And then she wanted the child to sit on her back, and one when he was kissing her. We then went behind the house to take the kitchen "in making". She called the boy who was digging the earth and told him to stand with her with his spade on his shoulder.

She accompanied me with Winston a part of the way towards Ezra Linton's house. We met on the path Mrs. Kinton. They started to discuss the problem how to get meat. Violet was afraid it is too late now, she will see me before we leave Bull-Savannah. ~~but~~ I must let her know and she will come to say good-bye.

Additions. When she left me in the room for a while I looked through the book. On one small prayer book was written: "Violet Linton, 47, Charles street Kingston."

The Bible is bound in soft marocain leather, with colour illustrations. This was a present from the brother who brought it at her request from Amercia. In the middle of the Bible there were a few pages to note the important events. The deaths of Charles Elliott, & Emanuel Powell were registered there. Also the birth day of Winston and the date when he had his tonsils out.

While we were in the kitchen I noticed that on the box on which Winston's plate was there were a few dozens of little stones. I asked whether he played with them. Violet explained that this was connected with the preparing for the walling of the kitchen. The lime has to be mixed with the red earth and water in a certain proportion. And for each box of the "ingredients" a stone is taken so that there will be no mistake in the amount taken. "Five four - twenty" She said, but I forgot what is the number of each to be mixed.

In the kitchen were ready two big wooden shutters. These will be fixed inside the house in the windows. When Violet goes out, she will fasten the shutters, so nobody will break in. When it is only a glass window it is easy to break it and get into the house. This is a lonely place, - there are no houses in the vicinity. When she leaves the place for the whole day or goes away for a few days she will feel more secure having these shutters. Before we left she explained to young Edwards from which side of the heap he has to take the lime. The heap is next to the entrance door of the house and she wants it to be removed as soon as possible.