

7.1.1948.
T.O.

Fam. Rec. 29

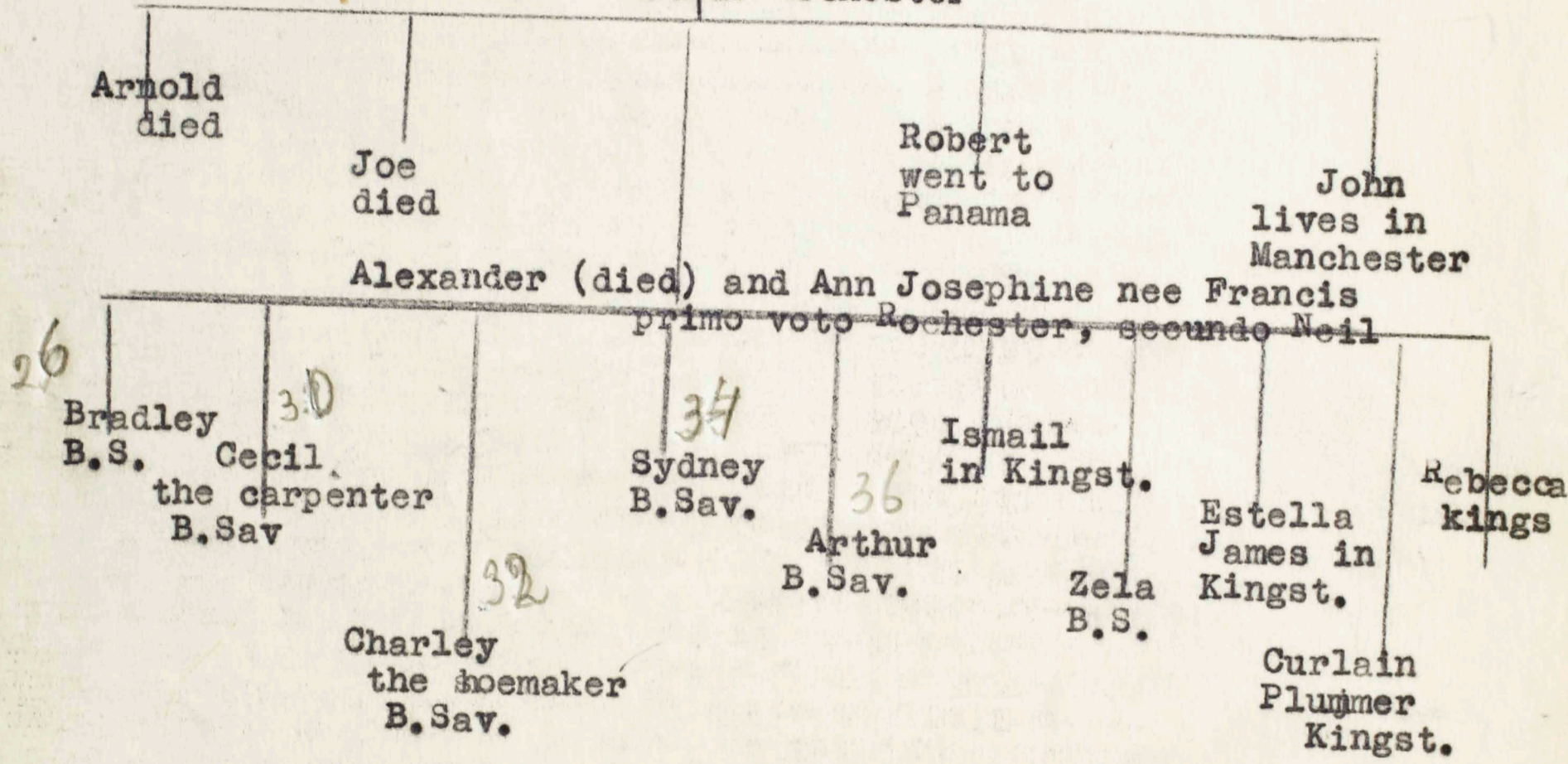
22/8/16

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|---------|-----------|----------------|
| Rochester Cecil | head M.Cl. | 27 St. Eliz. | Colour. | No relig. | W.3. carpenter |
| " Arthur | broth. M.S. | 32 | " | " | X farmer |
| " Sydney | broth M.M. | 30 | " | " | W.3. farmer |
| " Bradley | broth M.S. | 22 | " | " | W.3. farmer |
| " Urserlin | wife F.Cl. | 23 0 | " | " | W.3. Homemak. |

16 1/2
p. 28

Cecil owns 6 3/4 acres in 2 parcels. 3 in cultivation, 1 not in use, 2 pasture, 3/4 "other"
 1/2 ac. tomatoes = 2700 lbs, 1 avocado, 1 breadfruit, 2 coconuts
 1 lime, 7 mangoes, 1 naseberry
 3/4 peas, 1 1/4 cassava, 1/4 sweet pot. 1/4 yams, 5 pigs, 1 hen.

Arthur Rochester



Infomant : Sydney Rochester.

Sydney Rochester is the descendant of Arthur Rochester who - according to the "bigger Rochesters" was "some distant family of Thomas and Simian" and to "smaller" Rochesters an uncle of Thomas & Simian. Alexander had a number of children of whom 10 are still alive: 4 daughters and 6 sons.

1. Rebecca didnt marry is in Kingston
2. Estella married James married and lives in Kingston
3. Zela lives in Bull Savannah,
4. Curlain married Mr. Plummer who is the cook in Myrtle Bank hotel. He is a very big man as he weighs 200lbs. She is also very fat and weighed at one time 205 lbs, which facts Mr. Sydney told me with pride.

At present 5 brothers are in B.Sav. living in two almost adjoining "yards" with the old mother & wife & children of Cecil and perhaps some other people.

Charley the shoemaker has been away for 13 years. He traveled all over Jamaica, from one Parish to another, has been to St. James, Westmoreland etc. He came back home only a fortnight ago - on Christmas Eve. When he way away however he bought some land in New Forest.

Ismail is in Kingston. He works in Myrtle Bank Hotel, where his brother in law is cook.

Sydney Sydney has been in USA on contract twice: the first time he went in 1944 and came back in 1945 in december and the second time in 1946 and returned in 1947. Both times he stayed in various places in northen states, except a fornicht in camp in Florida waiting for transport home.

First he went to Conneticut where he worked on tobacco. "Leave there and went to Colorado" where he worked in a factory. "Leave there and went to Nebraska" stayed there for 7 months. "Leave there and went to Illinois, near Belvedere" he stayed there for 3 months, and finally went to Idaho where he worked on sugar beet. It was very cold there and he went to Florida to wait for the boat home. In 1946 he went" right back to Connecticut, I transfer from one place to another, but didnt leave the state".

Nationality & colour. xThe Jamaican.

In America he worked together with Jamaicans but also with other nationalities: Americans, Poles, Italians, "with all different nations". Which nation he thinks he could get along best except his own Jamaicans? People on contract didnt have so much opportunity to mix with all other people, but "In every nationality you find two class of people: the good and the bad".

In every nationality two class of people:

If he saw some ~~xxxx~~ men in the street - in America - could he tell they are Jamaicans?

"Yes, sometimes you ~~xxxx~~ may say at a glimpse - some times you make mistake. Chief thing is when you hear them talk and how they walk. They walk much different from Americans, more upright and straight. There are of course some exceptions, but they wak different. And they have different accent - I would say slang."

How the whites in America treated Jamaicans?

"There is a lot od discrimination. When I went to Nebraska in 1944 we were the first Jamacans there. They have coloured people from the South there. They didnt start to treat us good. Till smething clashed; Some of the coloured american soldiers invited all the Jamaicans to U.S.O. It is their recreation place. To enjoy. They give cards. A woman asked a Jamaican fellow his name. Her husband - he was a coloured too- he come with a knife, he cut his coat. He was jealous.

They go and call the police. The police came and say: "Fellows take it easy". Only a fortnight ago they had a riot in that place with the coloured soldiers. They put us in jail - I really dont resent it. We stayed in jail half an hour - it was for our protection. They boy who run with the knife got 10 days in jail. We were taken to our camp. After they find how we carry and behave ~~xxx~~ they know we are not niggers. The manager come and give us a very good satisfaction."

Are the whites in the north different than in the south?(in America)

"They are far better people (in the north) more enlightened. But dont forget: dont care how nice they might be to you, if one is white and one coloured there is always something between you."

He explained that in the south the coloured people were treated like slaves. "Crokus - that is the white ~~xxx~~ people they come (in Florida) and say: you nigger." "The Jamaicans - they wouldnt stand it and they rebel. Florida is better now. Even there they say: 'Jamaicans is a peculiar set of people'. They are looking for their right. They (the whites) are much better treating them (the coloured) now. I could be in Florida. They asked me, but I didnt like it so I come home."

Are the relations between whites and coloured better in Jamaica than in America?

"~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ The Jamaican white are better than American - well its what I know of it. If in Jamaica you are coloured you may be as black as this typewriter and while you have principles you may own a business - not in America. They (the coloured) dont have big farms or big business. Nothing to compare with the white ~~xxxxxxxx~~ folks. And in Jamaica a coloured man may marry a white woman - as you may know - but not in America." Mr. Sydney explained that in America if a family has a daughter ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and even her parents like you, their friends would like you to go there and visit.

Does he think that Jamaicans who settled in America are happier than they would have been in Jamaica?

"They are happier. In New York is better. If I could go there I would live in New York. I would go this moment. It is (New York) a swell place. It is only the cold weather. But one is much happier there. America - it is not a country for old people. After a person get old in America there is nobody to take care of them. They live differently, they dont take care of parents. After they marry, they live the home, dont think to take care of the parents. Now I marry and have children,

...there is always something between you...

a peculiar set

Fam. Rec. 29.

but I look after my mother. In Nebraska there were some old people working. 70 years old or more. They can barely walk. Oh, I was sorry for them. I help them, I was only sorry I couldn't do more work for them. Nobody take care of them. America is different from here. You have got to be working in America. You can't rest yourself. If you are not sick you have to be working - different from Jamaica."

Why people there don't economise for old age?

"It is so: the moment you wake up ~~in the morning~~ everyday and earn some money, you don't remember the moment you will be sick or old. And there are some reckless people. They lead a reckless life. The bums they are called. They get \$10 - 15 - they forget the future. They are coloured and white - reckless people."

Why would he like to live in America?

"Lots of enjoyment. No - not more than in Kingston. But there is good movies to go to, races - if you like races, basket ball, Cricket - that's the game I went to see in New York. Americans don't know anything about it. It is only West Indies - some white Canadian team. Jamaicans - they are good at it. Jamaicans are always victorious. Americans have also their game: that's baseball - you are tired to hear it over the radio - Red Sock Team. I still don't understand it. You have life in America - it is an expensive country, very expensive - but you earn plenty of money."

If he went to live in America what kind of work would he like best?

"In America I would like - if I had the equipment - to do some farming. Perhaps it's because I have no other trade but cultivation, but I love that."

What did he do

~~with the~~ with the "american" money?

Mr. Sydney bought land: in 1945 - when he came from the first trip to America - he bought 5 acres in New Forest for £ 48. He bought it from an ex-soldier Egbert Saunders. This man made a living by selling medicine. He was living in Bull Savannah but doesn't live now. He had the right to sell it and Sydney got the papers in order. In 1946 - when he was in America his uncle Francis bought for him 5 acres more. It was also in New Forest and these 5 acres were adjoining the place he bought first. It is a more hilly land and for these 5 acres he paid £40. Mr. Sydney bought also recently 2 acres in Comma Pen - adjoining Luther Nembhard field. He intends to build in New Forest his house. He has a tank there already. He is looking now for ~~the~~ lumber. "I am about to start a home there". If he had more money he would buy still more land.

Is he married?

Mr. Sydney is married and has two children. But they don't get along very well with the wife. When he went to America she had a child for another man. She really always lived in St. James "this split up"

X When Sydney came back he went to see his wife and ask her to give him the children. "She wont give me the children - not even one" He thinks she "lives on it" as he has to support the children. I asked whether when he marries another woman he would still want these children? Yes he would take them any time. He would like to have them with him. But if he marries the first wife is sure to refuse them "That moment is worse, she will think no mother-inlaw (step mother) would care well enough for her children." Mr. Sydney thinks of getting a divorce. His wife told him she will give him a divorce. If people dont live together - in one place- they drift apart. Mr. Sydney has trouble with his wife, but he is not very much upset by it, he is more interested in his tomato field in New Forest and the new home he plans to build there soon.

(top part of the page ~~is~~ sent to Kingston)

Husband-wife
relations
(broken)

4.2.48. T.O.

Tomato industry
and reemigration.

Husband and wife
personal affair.

The new home.

Mr. Sydney came to pay a neighbourly visit. He was disappointed to-day. He intended to go to St. James "to see my children". But Mr. Johnson went with his pick-up earlier ~~and Sydney was xxxxxxxx~~ to Montego Bay than it was planned and Sydney missed the opportunity. With the wife it was like that: he married and lived five years and five months in St. James at his wife's place at Orange River. He rented land there. But he saw ~~he~~ "I couldn't make any good" Once he came to Bull Savannah "to visit the old lady" (his mother). "They start to-mato" He saw that it will be easier to make a living here and decided to come back to Bull Savannah. His wife and children followed him. But his wife's parents were against the scheme. They persuaded the daughter to go back to her native village. Sydney thinks parents in law should interfere between husband and wife. "Husband and wife it is personal affair - private". "she is sorry now". He doesn't care much for the wife but he wants to see his children. "How will he live in the new home with? "I don't know yet - but it must be somebody." He is full of plans concerning the new home. He has some land in New Forest and in Comma Pen. "I move this end". He has some land also in ~~the~~ River Hill. He will give it to one of the brothers to cultivate it. It ~~is~~ would be too far for him to go over there. He will concentrate on New Forest and Comma Pen. In Comma Pen "I was lucky to get this field - and a good soil too". He ~~was~~ planted tomatoes there and goes every day. He rides his donkey. It is much better to have a donkey than a bicycle. Bicycle is no good up-hill. And a donkey can bring a load of firewood sticks and "any little thing". He bought the donkey last summer. Paid for it £12. Some donkeys cost as much as £50 or £60. "You call them mare-jackass - for breeding purposes". He started his new home in New Forest by building a tank. "First I need water". For the moment he gets the water necessary to build the tank from the tank which is attached to the great house. New Forest is a property which was taken for land settlement. And the ~~big~~ tank is

"for the settlers". The water is free "you dont pay for it". He bought already some lumber for the house. He thinks the house will be ready by next year, not yet in summer. The walls will be of cement. He bought lime for the tank but for the house ~~ixx~~ he is going to make his own lime.

His brother Sydney the carpenter is working now with his step-father in Rose Corner. James Neil's son is building a house and Cecil is helping him. They also help Cecil so "he help them when they need". His brother Charley who came back to Bull Savannah after having lived for 13 years in many parishes in the island didnt plant tomatoes this year. "It was too late - he keeps to his trade". Yes ~~maxxx~~ Sydney himself, his brother and "many other fellows" left B. Savannah "when things werent so bright" and came back after the tomato industry was started. His brothers dont have land apart from "family claim". The family has 3 acres in River Hill but his brothers say it is too far to go there. Sydney will settle in New Forest but he doesnt think his brothers ~~wixxxx~~-or one of them - will go and live in River Hill. But "you must work the land where you find it".

~~maxxxx~~
another reemigrant

paternal duties.

His brother Cecil couldnt come with him. He has to stay with the children as his wife is working at the factory. There was his ~~watxxxx~~ wife's little brother to look after the children but the father had to stay too. So Sydney even didnt tell him he was coming to see us - as he knew Cecil couldnt leave the children alone.

Sydney hasnt been to the factory for along time. He concentrates exclusively on his tomato field and new home. "People tell me it is very busy there". He will go one day to see how it looks like.

6.2.48. T.S.

The re-emigrant.

Work on an estate.

Charlie ~~sydney~~ came to join the company of guitarists who paid us a visit yesterday evening. Charlie knew a lot of songs and at once became the leading person in the company. He learned these songs during his travels in Jamaica. "e says he has been 14 years away from Bull Savannah - the last 8 years he spent in Westmoreland working on the Frume Estate. He worked in cane field and rice fields, also as a side man in a truck.

There were many East Indians there. Those "who came from India speak Industani - you ~~xxxxxx~~ cant understand them - when they speak among themselves, the East Indians born in Jamaica speak English". Charlie learned a few Industani words. ~~xxxxxx~~ He doesnt know the number of workers employed on the Estate. There were many employed all the year round - the "season lasted for 5 months: "It begins on January 6th - right through till the end of May". They workers can live on the estate. They are given "two apartments for man and wife and family" ~~xxxxxx~~ Some prefer to live "private" Charlie lived in a village in the vicinity. He rented a room. The rents there are 2/- or 3/- per room per week. "Them count weekly - not monthly"

Wages, on
the estate.
&
strikes

He earned 6/- a day and when he had piece work he could earn 8/- a day.

Were there many strikes?

"Yes - the crop starts January 6th, people decide they want more wages and strike - nobody will cut cane if you do - they (the strikers) will kill you." Who organised the strikes? "It is union - the Bustamente union, they have leaders they tell you to strike."

Accident and
hospital expenses

Why Charlie left Westmoreland? "Fever there" He has fever himself (malaria). Once he had an accident. The truck crushed into a bridge and Charlie was caught by his neck by boards. He was in hospital in Spalding. He has three terrific scars on his neck. "The doctor operated, very good doctor, but he robbed me - plenty of money".

Charlie roamed also through other parishes. He learned a song in Spanish "from a fellow from Cuba". He knows a few words in Spanish but doesn't understand the text of the song in Spanish he sings.

Interview with Charlie Rochester.
21.2.48.
E.F. + J.O.

Interview on
~~magic~~ "science"
and akin subjects.

The interview was concerned chiefly with magic, burial customs, supernatural beliefs. It contains also some bits of Charlie Rochester's personal history. For the particulars see: File 7, Fasc. 15/.

Interview with Charlie Rochester.
J.O. + T.O. + E.F.
24.2.48.

Charlie's visit.

Charlie came ~~xxxx~~ on a visit. Just dropped in. Was greeted by us cordially, invited to share our dinner. He refused food - his "stomac filled with food" - but agreed to accompany us with drinks.

He was natural, no trace of fear or embarassement because of the former conversation. Very free and very outspoken. Rather boasting. We did not try however to dwell upon the subject of magic.

His movements ~~at~~
last days.
His trade.

He sent shoes by his brother, but is not going to charge anything for his work. We thanked him. Could not come, because on Sunday he left for Kingston and spent all the Monday in the city. He went to buy some leather for his shoe-making. Does not buy here - the leather which he buys in Kingston is much stronger and this he uses when making new shoes. He makes a lot of new shoes - people order from him and he ~~would~~ would like us to see some time his work.

Advertisement.

We asked him about the advertisement exposed in Margaret Roach's yard? Is it his? Yes - he laughed. He put it in a jocular way - just for fun, to make people laugh. Margaret Roach is his auntie - that's why he put his advertisement there.

/For the advertisement - see ~~the~~ next page/.

Supposed quarrell
at his house Sun-
day night.

We inquired about the noisy Sunday night in his house. Did they quarrell? Oh, no. ~~xxxxxxx~~ It was one of his brothers - he came drunk and made all this noise. Got drunken and cursed. Whom? Nobody in particular. Or rather everybody - ~~xxxxxxx~~ all the world.

Shadow or duppy?

I asked for an explanation what is the name used here for the spirit of the dead - the haunting spirit. Fallen angel. This is how the spirit of the dead is called in Hindustani. But what is the local, ordinary name? Did he not use the other time the name "shadow". Oh, yes, shadow is all right. It is the proper name. But the creole name for the spirit of the dead is duppy. This is the way people here in Bull Savannah call the spirit of the dead.

The following is a reproduction of what appears on a signboard standing by the footpath leading into Margaret Roach' ~~XXXX~~ yard:

THIS IS THE SHOES. HOSPITAL AND ~~XXXX~~ HEAR IS THE DOCTOR,
WHERE YOU GET, TOELESS, ANKLEPOSE, CORNCURE,.. GREATEST
ATTENTION; ESPECIALLY LADIES SHOES

PROF. ~~of~~ C.D. ROCHESTER

GUN POT



A drawing representing a human head, and appearing somewhat like the sketch to the right adorned the signboard. The drawing was in the same position in relation to the words gun pot, as shown in the sketch.

Planned cricket trip.

This week Charlie plans another excursion - to Westmoreland. Their cricket team goes to play a game there. He will go too - he is the memembr of the team. It will cost them 6/- per head. They hire a truck - "Manie's" truck, i.e. the truck which previously was owned by Emanuel Powell and now is ~~XXXX~~ owned by Ernest Powell /in partnership with Leon Powell/ and run by Miller. He is very glad to visit Westmoreland - he likes the place. Much more than Bull Savannah. Calbert Elliott is the captain of the team and he will head the ~~XXXXXX~~ excursion.

Since he likes so much the place, is it possible that he will not come back from this excursion? ~~and~~ will stay again in Westmoreland? He laughed - quite possible.

His marital plans.

We passed to the subject of marriage? Is'nt it time for him to settle down for ever? to marry a girl and to start a regular, settled life? ~~Ex~~ Me? Oh, no, sir, not me. He is not longing for a settled life. Is not going to marry as yet. May be some time in future.

His love affairs.

We passed to inquire about his love affairs. Charlie was delighted with the subject. He laughed heartily and it was evident that he enjoyed being considered by us as a Don Juan.

His girl-friends.

Oh, yes, he has many girl-friends. Here in Bull Savannah? His answer was rather evasive. He has them outside - in other places - all over Jamaica - anywhere he went. He has also some girl-friends here. But he hesitated to call their names and we did not try to press him.

Is his bracelet ~~gift~~ gift from a girl friend? Yes. It is an Indian bracelet - and it was given to him by his East Indian girl-friend in Westmoreland. The ring? The ring was not given to him. He took it par force. ~~He~~ ~~it~~ Pulled it from the girl's finger and put on his own. The girl is from Bull Savannah. He wont give it back. Will keep it.

He has many girl friends, but only one whom he regards as a permanent one. He gets letters from her and ~~writes~~ sends her letters too. She is East Indian - the girl in Westmoreland from who he ~~got~~ got the bracelet. Will he see her now when going to Westmoreland for the cricket match? Oh, yes, certainly, he will ~~visit~~ visit her. Since he is longing so much for Westmoreland, may be he wont back at all and will stay with the girl for ever? He laughed - "may be". But is he ~~certain~~ certain that the girl is still faithful to him? may be she found somebody else? He laughed again - but rather in embarassement. No, he thinks she is faithful to him. Anyhow, he will go and find it out.

His children.

Has he many children? Oh, yes, he has a lot of them - "plenty", but not in Bull Savannah. None of them in Bull Savannah. He admired his prudence and in reward he gave us more detailed story of his children.

He has six of them. One in St. James. How old is the child? Is it a boy or a girl? He tried to calculate ~~its~~ its age, but soon dropped it. As a matter of fact, the child died. Out of his children, "3 die, only 3 alive." Another child, which is alive, is in Lucea. Where in Lucea? In Johnson Town /this is a slummy suburb inhabited ~~by~~ chiefly by labourers working in Kew Estate/. A boy. How old? Big boy - 12 years old now. As a matter of fact, he was not so certain of his son's age. Neither of his life. He never visited the child. Never wrote to the mother. Never went there. Once the friendship is over he never tries to keep in contact with the girl. This is his way.

Another child is a girl. She is 9 yearsold. Her mother is this East Indian girl, his girl friend, of whom he spoke already. The same girl.

He indulged into a ~~description~~ description of the East Indian marital customs. They marry early - still as children. They are married by their parents. When they reach ~~adult~~ age, ~~they~~ a house is built for them and they start their life as husband and wife.

His prospective wives:

His East-Indian girl friend - was she married like that? Oh, no, she was free. He was her first boy-friend. He started to praise East-Indian girls for their looks. They are all so beautiful. He does not like the ~~gt~~ creole girls as much - especially in Bull Savannah. They are so "harsh". Give harsh answers to you. He prefers East Indian girls.

East Indian

Will he marry his East-Indian girl friend? May be even now, when he will go to Westmoreland. Well, he is not so sure of this. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Will she not refuse to marry him, ~~xxxxx~~ since he is not an East Indian? Oh, no, not at all. In fact, the girl wanted to marry him, but he declined the matter. He knows he looks very much like ~~xxxxxxx~~ an East Indian. His girl ~~xxxxx~~ thinks it even. He was asked by her about his ancestry, and he explained that on the father's side he traces his ~~xxxxxxx~~ ancestry to a Scotchman, and on the mother's side - he did not deny possibilities of ~~xxxxxxx~~ having East Indian blood in him. Of course, he has ~~no~~ no Indian blood in him, not a drop. But his girl friend believes that he is of a mixed parentage: Scotch and East Indian.

Creole.

He dose not know what he will decide, because he has still another girl-friend; the mother of his ~~thrt~~ third child. A boy or a girl? He does not know - the child is not born as yet. But the girl is having this baby for him. He expects her to confine ~~in~~ some time in May. Does he know it from her? Oh, yes, ~~xxxxx~~ this is about that time that she expects to be in bed.

Is this girl also an East Indian? Oh, no - she is - Creole. She lives in Spalding.

What a coincidence! We are going to Spalding next Friday - would not he like to send a letter to her? Charlie thought we were joking. But ~~we~~ no, we can really carry a letter ~~or~~ and even see the girl. He gave us her adress: Myrtelle Lindsay, Spalding, Santa Hill district. We can easily find her - everybody will show the way. People know her and her family.

She is very nice girl. Very nice. "Not a racketeer". He would like to send her even some money by us. Or perhaps a basket. What about a basket of tomatoes? No, tomatoes wont do. A basket of fish - that's what they send from here. Fish. He will think it over. He will prepare a basket of fish and food for the girl.

He met Myrtelle Lyndsay when he stayed in Spalding. He worked there as a shoemaker. Had his own shop. We can see easily the place. "My shop right near the hospital." And it was a good business too. Much better than in Bull Savannah. "Good business - but I felt homesick for Bull Savannah." So he left the place and the girl.

But still keeps in touch with her. What about marrying her? Well, that's something different. As a matter of fact, the girl wanted him to marry her. She said once

dropped.

to time

once when they were on a walk
~~that~~ - she opened the conversation herself - that she
is "not satisfied with her ~~life~~ line of life". What's
the matter - he answered - but I am. So the subject was
~~not~~. "It's the man who makes the marriage."

We took again a more jocular line. What he probably
wants, it is to stay with one of his girls permanently
and to visit from time another one - ~~that~~ is 'nt it so?
He laughed heartily, evidently very much pleased with the
idea. Oh, yes, this would be the best.

What about the baby? Will he own it or will he leave
it with mother? ~~He does~~ He does 'nt know. It depends.
"After she has ~~the~~ the baby, I will see the baby and
see whether it is mine. If it is mine, I will own it."

How will he recognise ~~it~~ this? "If it is mine,
I will find it after the hair. And after the mark." Here
he showed us a mark - a dark spot on his arm. These are
the marks by which he will recognise his paternity. And
if no marks will be found? Does it mean necessarily that
the baby is not his own? No, it may happen that the marks
will not appear on the baby. Then he must wait. For some
years. ~~He~~ When the baby is older, he can recognise his
paternity ~~by~~ "by likeness". If the ~~child~~ child will
~~resemble~~ resemble him, it will be ~~his~~ certainly his.

He started again to praise his girl. He trusts her
- does not think she is or was unfaithful to him. "She
is not a racketeer. Not bad girl. According to what I
experience in the world - she is not a racketeer. If I
dnt see the mark, I postpone to the future."

After he will own the child, "I will take it away."
He is not sure how~~ever~~ whether the mother will give him
the child. "If she refuse, she keep it." He expects this
may happen easily. "She has already one for a Chinaman.
She keep it. The Chinaman wanted it, but she keep it."
The same may happen with his child.

nd of the inter-
view.

Dudley Simpson came to take to the Harvest Festival
at the Bible Church of God and this put end to our talk.

Friday,
Feb. 5, 1948.

Ed. F.

- 13 -

Family Record 29

Francis, Ivoto Rochester

Interview with Mrs. Ann Rochester *Ivoto Neil*

Present household consistsof:

Herself

Elsa Lee her grand dau.

Mr. Arthur Rochester, her son.

" Sydney Rochester her son.

" Bradley Rochester " "

Faye Gordon 8 year old grand dau.

Interview with Mrs. Ann Neil

Mrs. Neil came out of her kitchen with her eyes streaming from the irritation caused from the smoke. I followed her back into the kitchen where I sat ~~me~~ down on some cedar boards laid on the earth. There were other boards placed diagonally from the base of the roof. The boards belong to one of her son who proposes to build a house. He will use the boards to make the doors and window facing; the walls of the building will be made of earth ma~~ll~~ and lime.

The kitchen measured at least 20 feet square. It was not floored. The firewall took up one corner. There was ~~ix~~ a fire going. ~~xxxxx~~ an iron pot on the fire.

If she was resentful about the invasion of her kitchen she did not show it, although the way she gave her information gave the impression she thought it a kind of duty to do which she was unresentfully resigning herself.

It is possible she was enjoying the interview, particularly when she told the story of the long illness of one of her sons, the one she says, who suffers from a deformity. She had spent a great deal of money on him, taking him to various doctors. The trouble the doctors had told her was due to the fact this son had been born after she had ~~an~~ miscarriage.

Mrs. Neil was born in Green Olive, Bull Savannah. Her mother Mrs. Jane Francis died many years ago. Her father Nathaniel Francis died before her mother. Mrs. Neil her brothers and sisters used to live with their parents ~~used-to-live-with-their-pa~~ in the house now ~~ownadied~~ owned by Mr. Will~~ie~~ Rochester and ~~their~~ his family. Mr. Will~~ie~~ Rochester lives on the house and premises north of Mr. Laban Rochester F.R. 1. She does not know whether her parents had bought or inherited the land. It was owned by her father.

Mr. and Mrs Francis had 8 children. -6 girls and 2 boys. The brothers are:
1. Charlie Francis who lives in Top Bull Savannah
2. Stanley Francis wishmarwife and ~~elshihaseh~~ children with his wife.

There are now 3 girls alive to her parents. They are:

1. Mrs. Neil (herself)
2. Mrs. Margaret Roach who has married Joe ~~Raahyx~~ Roach now dead. Mrs Roach lives in her own house in Bottom Bull Savannah.
3. Mrs. Caroline Powell who has married Bingham Powell. They live in Chocolate Hole.

CAREER

Mrs. Neil (Miss Ann) grew up with her parents ~~xxxxxx~~ brothers and sisters in the home now occupied and owned by Mr. Willie Rochester.

School

She attended the Bull Savannah school for about 5 years. Her brothers and sisters attended school also.

In ~~xxx~~ Mrs Neil's school ~~girls~~ days little girls and she in particular used to help their parents tidy house sweep yard and tidy kitchens. She also used to go to market at Alligator Pond. She used to buy there for her mother fish, coffee, cocoes and oranges which were not grown in Bull Savannah. She also used to go to "runnit lands," i.e. lands on rocky hill-side far away from home. From these lands she pulled up cassava she carried home in a basket. At home the ~~xxxxxx~~ sweet cassava would be ~~xxxxxx~~ peeled and cooked, while the bitter cassava would be grated and put under a ~~xx~~ press after it would be used for making bammies. (Bammies are a flat type of cassava bread).

Asked what is the press like, Miss Ann asked Elsa to take me outside to see the one under the mango tree. (I was in the kitchen then.) Elsa led me to the mango tree where in a thatch bag there was some cassava grated about mid-day and left under the press. The press consisted of posts about 3 inches in ~~xxxx~~ diameter and about 6 or 7 feet long. These were nailed together at one end. The other ends the posts were separated about 1 foot apart, and joined ~~xxxxxxx~~ a piece of board nailed to the extreme end.

A box with the cassava in the bag across it stood about 2 feet away from the tree. The tree had a hole in it to receive the end of the posts nailed together. From the hole the posts then passed over the thatch bag with the cassava. To press the unwnated ~~xxxxxxx~~ juice out of the grated tubers large stones are put on the end opposite the end in the hole in the tree. By this means considerable ~~xx~~ constant pressure is exerted on the bag. ~~xxxxxxx~~

Elsa removed three large stones from her press and then took up the tatch bag which she carried back to the kitchen. There she removed the hard packed cassava from the thatch bag into a box, ~~She then~~

Green Olive Bull Savannah about 2 years ago, because she could keep no health there in Rose Hall.

At Rose Hall she shared ~~her~~ a four apartment house with Joshua and 5 of his children by his first wife. Two of these children ~~xxxxxxx~~ are girls ~~three~~ boys. Mrs. Neil cooked for everybody. The youngest child ~~xxx~~ is a girl than 18 years old. Joshua used to support all five of his children then. The three sons used to help him in his cultivations of cassava, cungo peas yams, tomatoes, corn, tobacco and oil-nut. (Oil-nut is ~~xxx~~ castor oil beans). Some of the cultivations were around the house ~~x~~ but the larger portion was ~~xx~~ on Duff House lands. Cassava and cungo peas were the ~~kk~~ things planted most.

He sold some of the cassava and the cungo peas, and all the oil-nuts. He never made the oil-nut ~~xxx~~ from the beans himself. The price of the oil-nut ~~xxxx~~ beans varied from 2^d - 4^d per quart. The selling price depending on the demand. Castor oil beans were last being sold in January for 4^d per quart. He usually sold a considerable portion of his cassava and ~~xxxx~~ cungo peas crops. He ~~xxxxxx~~ kept as much as needed for home use, but always had more than he could use.

Both Mr. Neil's daughters are dress-makers, and earn much money at dress making. They keep the money ~~xx~~ for themselves. He supports them entirely - buys their clothes with his own money. He used to do the same for his sons. He is not now doing that for his sons because they have got "big" and he has "got old."

Mrs Neil. is fond of Neil's children. She got along well with them. They are nice children. She left off living at Rose Town only because she ~~xxx~~ could not keep well there. Neil come to her present home to see her quite often.

While Mrs. Neil was away from her Green Olive home it used to be occupied by her sons. The house (a room) was built by her first husband Allick ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Rochester. She left her parents house to share house with Allick when she married him. She was a big woman then. The land on which ~~xxx~~ Allick built the house was inherited from his ~~xxxxxx~~ parents, Mr. Arthur Rochester and His wife Mrs Sarah Rochester. She does not know whether Allick's father or mother ~~xxxxxxxx~~ inherited or bought the land. The piece on which she now lives, is really, only a small portion of the original holding which has now been divided among Mr. Arthur's children. He had 6 children. He died before his wife. His children used to care him well before he

Family Record

died. After he died his wife continued to live in their home. She died some time after. The family land was then shared between his children as follows:

died. His wife occupied the home after his death. She died a few years after he died. The land was then shared up among his children. His children are:

1. Arnold Rochester.
2. Joseph "
3. Robert "
4. John "
5. Allick "
6. Francella "

The land was divided between the above as follows:

Arnold Rochester got the piece of land neighbouring Moses Elliott's also England Rochester's. Arnold died recently. He left his land to his children. He did not marry. Miss Ann volunteered - "Not every woman like married; some woman say them would not marry for any money, but mi wouldn't say (say) that, though."

Joseph Rochester died a long time ago. He left his land to his wife Martha Rochester and his five daughters by her. The land adjoins Mr. Laban Rochesters and her own - Miss Ann's.

Robert Rochester got the piece of land on which the home of his parents was. Robert is now in British Honduras. He sold his land with the house to Claston Rochester. Claston has since improved on the house.

Robert does not write to her; he has bad manners. He has a daughter living in Bull Savannah but does not write to her even. The daughter is resentful about that.

John Rochester lives in Spaldings. He inherited the piece of land adjoining Claston's and Josephs, but he is "alright" i.e. he is of fair means and there does not have to depend on his inherited holding. He does not bother with the land here, but Miss Ann's sons with Allick cultivate grass and cunco peas on it. John does not write to any of his relatives in Bull Savannah, but comes every now and then on a visit. He does not really want the land he has inherited, because he does not need it. He never enquires about it. The taxes for it is paid by herself and her sons, along with that for their own premises. Said she "This year a dem one have to pay it, i.e. her sons would have to pay the taxes without her help."

Allick Rochester her husband got the portion of the property on which she now lives.

Francella Rochester has married to a Mr. Phillip Sinclair of Ribbit Town. She lives there with her husband. The land she inherited she sold to her brother Robert, who in turn sold to Claston Rochester. This land is included in that bought.

7.4.48.

T.O.

Informant Sydney Rochester.

His father and
grandfather.

"My father - he was a fisherman all his life. In Alligator Pond. He died when I was 18. I was past school age when he died. His father Arthur Rochester was a fisherman too in Little Pedro. He was shopping /kept shop/ once there. This I don't remember its just what I heard. But I can remember my grandfather. My eldest brother Arthur was named after him."

Brothers.

"Cecil and Bradley - they work to-day at this house over there. It is for Holness - Mr. Charles Dyer son in law. Cecil - he is very good at his trade. Mr. Neil my father in law /Sydney's step father/ teach him. At this house /Laban's Rochester/ he worked too. Cecil helps Mr. Neil. When Mr. Neil has work he calls Cecil. When Cecil has work in Bull Savannah he calls Mr. Neil. They live good together."

"Bradley will build a house for himself. Next to the old home. He will get the old home - he is the youngest. Here the youngest gets the old home."

Family expenses.

Bradley and Sydney live with their mother. "We two are responsible for the expenses. We take care of the expenses. I can't say we are the only two who care for the old lady. Its accordingly what you can afford. The sister from Kingston Mrs. Plummer she always sends presents."

Sisters.

Curlain who married the chief at the Myrtle Bank hotel keeps boarders. They dont live in her place. She cooks meals for them "Just mess them". She wanted to come for a visit to Bull Savannah last summer but couldnt get anybody to take care of the boarders, so she didnt come. The two other sisters work at the Machado factory. /tobacco/.

~~Handwritten scribble~~

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Estella is married. Her husband - Mr. James - is "a police". Rebecca is not married. She works also in the factory. When they have a holiday they spend it in Bull Savannah.

Cash crops.

The tomato season is over. Sydney is satisfied with his tomato crop. "It could be better but it could be worse." Tomatoes are not the only cash crops. Especially in New Forest where Sydney is building his house and where he has the most of his land many vegetables are grown.

"Cabbages is money. Nothe capital thing is scallion. 5d., 6 d. for the pound right now. Sell it /escallion/ right at the garden. In Comma Pen. Everybody come and ask: scallion, scallion, scallion. I got sick of them. /Of the people who want to buy escallion/. Garlic - Mr Hanson /from New Forest/ sell for 4/- a pound. But you can get right now 5/- a pound. And garden egg. Sell them for 1 and 1/2 a pound. They are heavy - you know."

Water.

"But you need water. If we have water we loose no crop. Everything we plant we would be able to water. We had a meeting in New Forest to send a petition to Government. To sign a petition to allow us have pipes to our homes. He /the Govern- ment/ was promising to us to put a main pipe for 1/2 mile. We still worrying him about it. He dig 400 feet in Spring Grounds and still 50 feet more to get clear water - and nothing of it. He treat us very mean. Because you have pay taxes and he dont give you no comfort. When the poor people ~~xtarxexvar~~ ~~watery~~ are starving for water."

and the Government

There are two big tanks in New Forest which were built still by the "big property". Now all the settlers get water there. When the new school in New Forest was completed this year the tank was small as "the authorities" said the children will have water from the pipes which will be installed shortly. But now the tanks are repaired and the settlers in New Forest suspect that it means no water will be lead through the pipes from Green Grounds where the well was dug but is covered and no use of it is made.

Cost of a tank

Sydney completed the tank in New Forest where his house will be built. The tank with the bar becue /catchment/ costs him £ 55. He does not count small expenses and his own work. He estimates that if he had not worked at it it would easily cost him £ 70. For the tank alone he used 20 sacks of cement 90 lbs each. And he still needs some more to make two steps to the tank. He paid for one sack of cement 11/3. This he bought at the Bull Savannah Bromfield shop. After he has bought this cement he learned that in Kingston he could have had it for 7/3 a sack.

~~XXLII/XXX~~ "£11:5/- just for cement. And I got to use maule /?/ You dig it out from the stone."

~~Handwritten scribbles~~

And have a big sieve and sieve the fine one. And lime and dirt to mix it. Thats just for the tank. For the barbecue - the catchment I use white lime and stone to fill it. £55 for the tank and barbecue. To buy cement, to pay the mason and to pay people to work there. I dont count everything. I see for what I spend so I dont mind. All the water carrying /for the building of the tank/ I do it myself. And it help the work. If you are they - the people work quick. If I say I dont work at all it would cost me £70."

The masons who built Sydney's tank were Leopold Dyer and Samuel Powell. They also measured the capacity of the tank which they estimate to hold 9124 gallons.

How much water is needed?

"For a day for using in the home to cleanse dirty plates and such things but without washing clothes - you use a lot of water for that - may be about 40 gallons. For a family a day. O.K. 40 gallons for a family. I include that with cattle. Suppose your family is about 6 ~~persons~~ persons in the house and 2 cows, 1 donkey, 2 sheep and pigs. When it rains small stock - goats and sheep dont drink much. Get it from grass. All the grass is green."

Cost of new house.

"To make a little house now will cost you about over £300. A house - room and hall. The house and tank and barbecue. And a kitchen and buttery and toilet. Plenty money."

Sydney has timber for his house. He expects "somebody" who promised him shingles. "I expect him every day". His brothers Cecil and Bradley will build the house. May be his step father Mr. Neil will help with this. His brother Cecil does not build tanks "He is carpenter not mason". When Cecil built his house Samuel Powell helped him with mason work and Cecil helped Powell at his house with the carpenter work.

Sydney spends often two and three days at a time in New Forest. When he is there he stays at Mr. Crafton Hanson's house. Mr. Hanson is from Rose Hall and was the first settler in the New Forest land Settlement. Hanson's house was the first there. "He was the first to settle at New Forest. Everybody stop at his house. His house the very first one in New Forest."

Mr. Hanson has a lot of cattle "He has a lot to worry - he has plenty cattle."

Mr. Hanson offered hospitality to all people who came to settle in New Forest. Many people seek also his advice as he is "a very intelligent man".

~~Handwritten~~ *Handwritten*

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Sydney is planning to make the roof of his new house of shingles. Zinc is more durable but it is more expensive. Also it is very hot. He is not in favour of a ceiling. Its true a ceiling looks pretty but "whats use of pretty and you have not enough ventilation."

His mother went the other day to New Forest to see his place, the new tank and the site for the house. She was pleased with it.

American earnings
and tomato income.

Sydney plans to go again to America. If he goes he will leave his land and his house in care of his brother Cecil. Sydney is not quite sure whether he will earn in America more than here. He thinks tomatoes bring quite a lot. But one the other hand the tomatoes bring only during the season.

"There is nothing you get easy - you have to work for it. Everybody say about America, but you have to slave for it." /For the wages in America/.

" I wont stay long in America - if I go. May be one year or two."

19.1.1948.T .O.

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(outside our census data)

Neil Joshua M.M. '74

farmer & carpenter.

Mr. Joshua Neil was brought Sunday evening by his wife's son Sydaey Rochester. Mrs. Ann Josephine after Alexander Rochester's death married Joshua Neil. She lived with him at his place in Rose Corner, but the climate didnt suit her. So she come back to live in her previous home with her grownup sons. Mr. Neil comes to visit her from time to time from Rose Corner which is about 5 miles from here. He came this morning and will be returning home to-morrow early morning. He has had many children in his previous marriage, but they are all grown up and gone. Only one daughter stays with him to take care of him.

Ancestors.

Mr. Joshua Neil is tall and lean. Abundant white straight hair and white bushy eyebrows. Blue lively ~~xxxx~~ eyes, white skin, aquiline nose, dolicocephalic - it would be hardly possible to find a better example of a "nordic" type.

Asked - he told with pleasure and gusto his family origins. He started and referred often to his maternal ancestors, leaving the paternal line somewhat in shade. ~~His father's~~ (starting with father)

"There was nobody living near here and she was a slaveowner."

Living father's grandfather was Palmer a white man. He married Miss Shorman - she was practically a white woman - from Ballards Valley. Palmer came from England. Miss Shorman was a very rich woman, almost the whole of Ballards Valley belonged to her. She was a slaveholder and owner.

The grandfather of his father lived in Dunder Hill. He came straight from Scotland. His name was Joseph Neil. He was a teacher. "He live with a woman up that side - Simpson". "His old home still remain in Dunder Hill. My uncle Joseph Neil live there. He die last year and his daughter and son live there."

He lived in Dunder Hill. About 20 years ago he bought land at Rose Corner from the owner of New Forest. "He sell me cheap". Rose Corner is between Alligator Pond and New Forest.

"My profession is carpenter, but I work in the land like a man who has no profession. I built that house and that table (in our room) and Perkins house. I learn my trade in all parishes and in Panama Colon and Cuba, but chiefly in ~~Malvern~~ Malvern." He recounted

how he came ~~xxx~~ in Malvern to a Mr. Gulpin " A little Canadian man - ~~xxxxxx~~ real white you know - and he was a good teacher too". Mr. Gulpin asked him whether he was a carpenter, and Mr. Neil said he was one but not a very good one. Mr. Gulpin was an architect, he drew the plans. He was very patient and never was angry even if somebody made mistakes. He only came and told to do the work again. His wife was also gentle and never was angry. There Neil learned all the intricacies of his trade.

He travelled in Panama and in Cuba and in many parishes in Jamaica. Finally he settled in Rose Corner.

He boasts of his good health. "I am exceptionally blessed. Born and live in Dunder Hill. I leave 13 September 1913 and was never sick - never knew a doctor, till I catch malaria at Alligator Pond. It was a place where people die of malaria. I get over that and since it took me again after 13 days. Only two times in my life that I shake, from that day I never feel a chill. I went to zinc shop to Dr. Myers. 'You want a medicine?' he said. Yes sir. - A dollar worth or 6/-? - Give me 6/- . I take it twice and put it aside - I never need it.

Mr. Neil told that lately he felt a little pain in his side. He went to see the doctor. The doctor examined him carefully and said that he never saw such a strong hearth and liyer - and such a strong man altogether in his life. He asked Mr. Neil how old he was, and hearing he was 74 he congratulated him on his health and strenght. Mr. Neil was very pleased with it. He laughed all the time telling this story. The little pain - the doctor said - was nothing to be alarmed of. Just a little rhumatism.

He told a lot about old times - changes in agriculture, prices and ways of life (see Agr.economics) There were also snakes at the time of his youth. Black snakes and yellow snake called nanka. "The yellow snake grow to tremendous size - 6 feet." "Black snake didnt grow big but they were poisonous. When I was a boy - in November you hear snake whistle ~~xxxxx~~ the same as man."

Typed T.O. 17.6.48.

Annie Niel 5.
Interv. Annie Niel
~~14.6.48.~~
Information from Leo Johnson.

Present household.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|--------|------|-----|-----|----|----|-------------|---------|------------|-----------|
| Niel | Annie | Head. | F.M. | 61. | 13. | 10 | L. | B.S.P. | Advent. | Ill. | Housewife |
| Rochester | Sydney | son | M.M. | 31 | 2 | L. | " | No rel. | W5. | cultivator | " |
| " | Arthur | son | M.S. | 33 | -- | | " | " | W2 | " | " |
| " | Bradley | son | M.S. | 24 | -- | | " | Att.various | W5 | " | " |
| " | Busa | gr.dau | F.S. | 5 | | | " | Instr. | Advent. | | " |

(Busa is daughter of Sydney)

5 persons

Family History.

Annie Niel Legitimate daughter of Nathaniel Francis and his wife Jane Francis nee Sinclair. Annie was brought up at her parents' home.

Her half brothers by the same father: George, John and Leonard Francis. Half-sisters by the same father: Phama. Only George and Phama are alive. They were brought up by their step-mother (Father's wife). Annie Niel does not maintain family relation with them. Full siblings: Stanley and Charlie Francis Caroline, Margaret (those alive) and dead: Hilda, Dorothy. Elsie, Florence. Annie maintains relations mostly with her sisters Caroline and Margaret.

Annie was married twice: for the first time to Alexander Rochester with whom she had the following children: Zelah (39) married to Gordon lives in B.Sav. Rebecca (37) lives in Kingston; Curdel married Mr. Plummer lives in Kingston; Elline married Louis Jackes and lives in Kingston, she is (29); Ishmed lives in Kingston; Estella married lives in Kingston; her sons ~~xxxx~~, Bradley, ~~xxxx~~ and Sydney and Arthur live with her, Cecil with his wife next door, and Charlie partly with her and partly with her sister Margaret Roach. (His aunt).

Her second marriage: after the first husband's death Annie married Joshua Niel. His ~~xxxx~~ first wife Margaret died. Joshua Niel lives in Rose Corner where Annie lived with him for some years after she married him in 1942. She left him to live in her old home because the climate did not suit her. Friendly relations are maintained with the second husband who visits A and often works as a carpenter in partnership with her sons Cecil and Bradley.

Busa Rochester is the daughter of Sydney and his wife Ina lives in St. James. Busa is adopted by the grandmother.

Sydney Rochester son of Annie and Alexander Rochester. B up in parents home. Brothers and sister see above. No half siblings. Relations maintained with all. He married Ina (name not remembered by Annie). They lived together for some time in St. James with Ina's parents. Separated at present. They had two children: Busa living in this home and Ellen living with the mother in St. James.

Charlie
→

Bradley Rochester parents and siblings see above. Brought up in parents home. He used to have a girl friend the daughter of Lucas Byer, Ann. Now she is married. He has no children.
Arthur Rochester parents & siblings see above. Brought up in parents home. Single.

Emigration & travels.

Sydney went to U.S.A. twice in 1944/45 and 1946/47. Brought savings for which he bought land and build tank at the place he intends to build his own house.

Housing One building - two rooms. 3 beds, 2 tables, 3 chairs. In the first room live: Annie, Bradley, Sydney and Busa, in the second Arthur. Water supplied by neighbour.

Land. 6½ acres of which 3 acres at home and the rest in the woodlands. Owned by Annie. All bought from father. price paid not known, Sydney owns 12 acres: 10 ac. in New Forest and 2 acres in Comma Pen. He bought 2 ac. from Eric Spencer in New forest; 5 from Saunders and 5 from David Nembhard. All this land cost £ 105.

Ec. Trees. 6 mangoes, 3 coconuts, 1 naseberry, 1 breadfruit, some bananas.

Cultivations. tomatoes 580 trees - £3:17:0 ; Bradley -£64; Sydeny £ 46; Arthur £ 30. Cassava: Bradley ½ ac; Arthur ¼ ac. Sydney 2 ac. Congo peas: Arhur ¼ ac; Bradley 1½ ac. Red peas Sydney 2 ac. Everything used for home consumption.

Animals: ydney 1 donkey, 1 cow, 1 pig, 1 goat, 1 sheep.

Bradley: 1 pig, 1 fowl. Arthur: 1 pig.

Nobody fishes. No other occupations.

Expenditure: weekly on food and cleaning app. 15/-Yearly expenditure on clothes: Sydney £50; Bradley £10; Arthur £ 5; Annie and the child £ 5. Entert. on Christmass £ 5;

Savings: Sydney £ 150 invested in building material.

Religion: Annie 7 Day Advent. Visitis various denominations.