

C.D. 222 Sbd. 12. Household 36.

Holness Cecil	Head.	M.Cl.	30	St. Eliz.	Black	Angl.	X	Farmer
Campbell Amy	wife	F.Cl.	23 3.3.	Panama	"	"		W. 3. Homemaker
Holness Dorothy	dau	F.S.	5	St. Eliz.	"	"	X	
" Owin	son	M.S.	3	"	"	"		
" Callin	son	M.S.	5/12	"	"	"		

owns 5 acres
see pg.

Inform. Dudley Simpson
13.3.48.
48.

Holness Cecil -
his ancestry and
relatives.

"Holness Cecil - he is the son of Louis Holness. Louis Holness - he is some relative to Theodore Holness, but they were two brothers. Lewis Holness more relation to Winston Holness, Cydrick Holness, Ambrose Holness and Jane Holness. Jane Holness marry to Louis Holness brother, Uriah Holness."

Inf. Dudley Simpson.
9.4.48.
T.O. & J.O.

"Holness Cecil is son of Louis Holness and Blackie Holness. She was Blackie Wellington at first. She get the name of Holness."

Children of
Louis Holness.

"Louis had: Cecil, Bell (Izabelle) Margaret - ~~xxxxxx~~ Gussy, ~~xxxxxx~~ Coolie - a girl, one boy Guss, another girl Goossy; all by Blackie."

"Blackie and Louis died years ago. About 1943 - 1944, died Blackie. Louis years earlier."

"Cecil Holness settle on father land. Have a woodland same father land, too. He lives in separate house - own house - he built it. Since he married

His outside children
with Amy Campbell

"He was along with another girl before he married, but that girl died. The girl was by name of Amy. She come here as maid with Miss Royal a schoolteacher at Bull Savannah. She (Amy) and Cecil fall in love with each other and they both go together. Got about 5 children. Some of the children live with him and some with the girl's family in Manchester - Ploughden. The girl took sick at Cecil's home and was carried to Black River hospital. When she took sick she had a baby 3 - 4 weeks old. That was in 1943. She die and leave the baby. Family (her family) took it. Cared. Feed it with blottle with nipple. "

His wife.

"Cecil Holness is married now to Myrtle. She come from "ose Corner. Good looking girl. Don't know her name. She is now Holness. They have two children."

There are 5 children at present in Cecil's home: 3 by Amy and 2 by his present wife.

D.H.
7.48

Interview with Myrtle Holness.

Household.

Cecil Holness	Head.	
Myrtle Holness	Wife	21 years
Fersdan Holness	Son	14 months
Dorothy Holness	Daughter	9 years
Owen Holness	Son	8 years.

While I was talking to Elsie Holness Myrtle came up, and was willing to be interviewed. She was wearing a rather torn yellow dress, but looked rather attractive, with a calm face and manner. We sat down under the mango tree.

Parentage.

Eric Gibson Father.

Elfreda Cousin Mother. Since dead.

Her father's other children by a different mothers.

1. Victor Gibson
2. Millicent Gibson.

Both are by the same mother, (name not remembered) and they live at Montego Bay. They are both younger than Myrtle.

3. Ena Gibson. Again a different mother but name not remembered.

She is the only child of her father and her mother together.

Early Life.

She comes from Kingston. She was born there and lived there until she was 15 years old. She at first lived at Allman Town and later moved to Woodford Park. Her mother died when she was 8 years old. Up to that she had been living with her mother, with her father just helping to support her. However with her mother's death she moved over to her father. He had married a woman called Laura Gibson, and she has regarded her step-mother as her step real mother, and calls her mother in all her letters. She was treated very well by her, and brought up properly.

D.H.

She taught her to do everything about the house., and "knocked" her when she did anything wrong such as stealing the sugar or the milk.

School.

She went to Alpha Convent in South Camp Road, until thirteen when she went to St George's school.

She remembers her school days very well. They had a strict discipline there, especially for things like talking at the forbidden times, and for being disobedient. Lashings were given for talking. Myrtle used to get into a lot of trouble over this as she talked a lot. The lashing was usually done a Sister Fidelius, who was a "real cross one". She had only one foot, and had to use a stick to get around. In spite of her crossness she was very popular with the girls. Girls would also get a lashing for not taking care over their Arithmetic work, and their letter writing. Another punishment was to be kept in school after time, or perhaps be given extra work, such as another composition, to write.

It was a co-educational school, but there was strict segregation in practice. The boys all sat on one side of the room, and the girls on the other. The boys were very naughty at times, and inclined to be fasty. They got far more lashings than the girls. They were never given as much latitude as the girls. For small offences a Sister would give them a "licking" but in most cases they were beaten by men, the teachers who taught the handicrafts and things like carpentry etc. were called in to do the caning, by the Headteacher. It was arranged that they never played games together in the playing fields. Even their play hours were regulated so that they never coincided.

Games. She learnt to play Baseball and Basketball.

St George's. This was a continuation school from Alpha. She liked it more than Alpha because it was such a nice big airy building. It was big, and had two stories. It was for girls only, the boys went to St Aloysius.

Lessons. She loved Scripture lessons, it was her favourite subject. Next she liked Geography, Arithmetic and drawing. She never liked Science, as she could not do Chemistry and Physics well. Mental Arithmetic she also disliked.

She is not a Catholic but while she was at school she always went to all the services.

Career.

When she was fifteen, and had left school she left

D.H.

Kingston, and came to live in New Forest with a Mrs Gwendolyn Dowell, who was a niece of her mother's. She was a bit frightened of the country as she had never been there before, and when she first came she was lonely. She missed all her school friends. She then explained that it was not as bad for her as for some others in the same position as she did not come from a large family. She was the only child living with her father, and her step-mother had no children of her own. She was therefore used to being alone.

Her Father

She learnt to dressmake in New Forest. She learnt "up and down" for about three months. Her father paid for her lessons. He is a barman by trade, and has worked in most of the big hotels in Kingston including the Myrtle Bank Hotel, where he was for several years. He is now the barman at the "Glass Bucket" club in Kingston. Myrtle described him to me as being very fair coloured with nice smooth black hair. (I know him, and he is certainly a little lighter in colouring than Myrtle) She is very proud of him.

Career continued.

After these lessons she went to Alligator Pond and worked in a shop for Mr Adam Lonsden. She got paid 30/- a month and full board. Mr Lonsden employed her to help in the shop, and also to look after him, as he lived alone. She therefore cooked and washed for him as well anything else that needed doing. She was quite well treated there. The trouble with Alligator Pond is the malaria there. She got it quite badly. She was a year and three months down there, and she had malaria intermittently all that time. She used to go and see Dr Fitter, who "does" that district, as Dr Waize does Bull Savannah. He used to charge her 4/- a time, and give her some medicine, which helped the fever, but did nothing for the actual malaria. "Him do me no good at all" The way she finally got rid of it was to come to Bull Savannah, and being up in the hills seems finally to have finished the illness. She has never had it here.

While she was working in the shop she met Cecil McKie Holness. He is a mason by trade. Mr Lonsden was building a new stall for his shop, and Cecil was one of the masons employed for the job. He fell in love with her, and they were friends for six months. Myrtle added that they really were only friends, she did not live with him until after she was married, she would not have that.

She got married at Bull Savannah Church. She had returned to New Forest ~~xxx~~ / before the wedding to stay with her aunt. Her father was very pleased with her marriage, but he was not able to get down to see it. The wedding party was held in Cecil's yard, and they

/ two months

D.H.

had a lot of friends. They were married in April 1946, when Myrtle was nineteen, and the baby Fersdan was born a year later, in April 1947. The house was already built by Cecil, so they were able to just move in.

Pregnancies and Birth.

She had very little trouble during her pregnancy, and she ate everything as usual.

The Birth She had Miss Cella Simpson for the confinement. Miss Cella stayed right through the actual birth and labour, and during the next nine days, she come and go, as she could.

Myrtle did not have too hard a confinement. Labour was not too long. She couldn't say how many hours but it lasted from "Just dusk to middle night"

Miss Cella had rubbed castor oil on her belly at the first. She then gave her some tea to strengthen her, and when the pains get very bad she gives her strong bitter coffee. If some woman have an unusually hard time she beats up an egg for them as well. Myrtle has only heard this, as she herself did not need this.

The Placenta was delivered ten minutes after the baby.

She took four months to heal after the birth, before she was again able to have intercourse with her husband.

She stayed inside for the full nine days, and did not come into the yard until the 10th day. Even then she only stayed out for a few hours.

Relationship with her husband

She had intercourse with him right up to the end, but could not start again for four months (see above)

She never felt any trouble over intercourse, but on the day after the baby was conceived she felt tired and nervy, and not at all herself. She felt drained out. She knew for certain that she had started a baby the night before. She couldn't say exactly how she knew, but she was positive, and then she felt ill. The only time that she felt ill until the baby was born.

Feeding and Weaning.

He is nearly 14 months old, but she still nurses him. She is actually in the process of weaning him now. She feeds him on cornmeal porridge, cassava bread, and milk. She does not believe in shop milk for babies. Fersdan has only fresh goat or cow milk. It is usually goat's milk, because she owns a goat. She feeds him about three times a day, when he is hungry. She does not feed him at night.

Training. He learnt to use the chimney from 6 months old. He doesn't need pants or nappies now. Boys do not wear

of that nature after six months old.

D.H.

anything of that nature after six months old.

Menstruation. She started when she was 12 years old. She was in school, actually in the classroom. She didn't know what had happened to her. She got up and went to the sister, who realised what had happened and told her to go home for four days. She felt very sick this first time, but never had any trouble afterwards. When she got home, she was too frightened to tell her step-mother. She managed to keep the whole thing hidden from her. She continued to do this for months afterwards. It was not until she became a little older and began to read about these things that she learnt what it was all about. It was only then that she told her step-mother.

Her Attitude to her own family

She is proud and clearly fond of her father. She is always writing to him, and has just received a letter from him in Kingston. She has only been able to go and see him once since she left Kingston at the age of 15 year and she is very sorry about this. Her father is now saying that he must see her again/soon. It would not be possible for him to come down to the country. Besides she doesn't think he likes the country at all, to stay even for a short time. She is planning to go up and take the baby with her, next crop. It cannot be done before that. Fersdan is not the only grandson as her half sister Ena is married with two children. She is also fond of her step-mother and has nothing to say but praise for her.

Relationship with half brothers etc.

She does not know anything about the girl and boy who live in Montego Bay. She once saw the girl who came to Kingston when she was living at home. The boy she has never seen.

She is friendly with Ena, who runs a dressmaking business, but she stresses that she is an only child.

Her attitude to Children.

This was interesting. She had not got her baby with her, he was asleep she said. Unlike practically every other home I have visited in Bull Savannah she made not attempt to wake him up, or bring him out to see me. I asked to see him, and was brought into the bedroom. When asked jokingly if he was always a good baby she hesitated and thought for a minute before answering, "Yes" a little doubtfully.

She was most emphatic that she did not want any more children. This I also found most unusual here. Jamaica she said was no place to bring children into the world, it was too hard a struggle to live. I could not get out of her if she used birth-control, but I

D.H.

feel some method is probably used, owing to her certainty on the question.

Her own step-children.

She looks after two of Cecil's children by a previous union with a woman called Amy Campbell, who had died in Black River Hospital of Typhoid. She hardly mentioned them at all, and said they played with the other pickneys in the adjoining yard of Margaret Holness.

Cecil Holness.

He owns 5 acres of land. he grows tomatoes, but keeps one acre in grass, and grows cassava, both bitter and sweet. They have a breadfruit tree. As he is also a mason he works quite a lot of the time.

Observations.

Her house was small but neat, and the two beds in the room were spotlessly clean. There were plenty of ornaments around.

She appears to be content with her life. She said that she no longer minded the country life, she had got used to it.