

Interview with ~~XXXX~~ Amy Rochester.

D.H.

24.6.48

When I arrived A Amy was in the kitchen, with her mother and her grandfather.

Household.

James Sinclair	Aged.	86	
Josephine Sinclair	Head.	dan	of James 46
<del>Amy-Sinclair</del>			
Amy Rochester	daughter	AGE	22 years
George Edwards	son.	age	19 years
Bing Crosby Powell	grandson	age	4 years.
Nadine Angela Powell	grandduag.	age	2 months.

~~James~~  
 p. 6  
 Under 1 acre  
 (houses etc)

Parentage. Amy is the daughter of Josephine Sinclair, and Eglon Powell.

Rochester  
 (see F.R 215)

Her brother George Edwards is the son of Josephine, but the father is Richard Edwards

The father of her two children, Bing, and Nadine, is Eustace Powell.

I had already seen Amy at the yard of Clement Holness, (See File 26. Children No 1.) but as I had not received much personal information, it was necessary to see her again. She seemed to be a little nervous. She is an extremely shy girl, and seems to have a very retiring disposition.

Career. She went to Bull Savannah School, but she was not always able to go quite regularly. Nevertheless she stayed at school until she was the full fifteen years of age. She loved school, and got on very well there. When she and her brother ~~xxxxxxx~~ were small, her mother was helped by their two fathers. Her father helped Josephine for many years. When Amy left school she was sent to learn dressmaking from Eunice Dyer. Her father paid for her to be taught. She stayed there six months only, because he then said that he could not ~~xxxxxx~~ afford to keep up the payments.

She had been taught to help in the house from about the age of ten years. She now returned to help her mother in any little thing she could, in the cleaning, sweeping, washing and cooking. "Everyt'ing in de house"

Courtship.

She met Eustace Powell when she was sixteen. He was 26 years old at that time. He wanted to love her but her mother did not approve. For a whole year they were friends only, and she did not sleep with him until

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she was seventeen. She could not remember much about the first occasion, (by her face probably quite untrue) It was not long after that the first baby started. She did not sleep with him at her own house, (She had emphatically said it was at her house at the beginning of our talk) She ~~xxxxxxxixix~~ shares a bedroom with her mother, so it was not possible there. She used to go to his room, where he lived on his own. She has never set up house with him, and she has no intention of ever doing so. He was the first man that she ever had any sex relations with, and she denies that she now goes with any man.

Eustace left her before the second baby was born. He just walked out of the district and had never come back, she does not know if he went with a woman. When there was only the one baby Eustace used to help her a little with money, but since he went away she has never received a penny. He has written to her more than once. She admitted that when he went away, "Me sore and sorry".

Since he has gone she has continued living with her mother, and her father still helps her a little.

She says that she now has no desire to go with another man. She is quite happy living with her mother, and her grandfather

Menstruation. She was 16 years old before her menstrual periods began. Her mother had never told her anything about it, and she was frightened when she first saw it. "Mi runstraight for mi mother, I thought mi's dead."

Her children.

She had Cella Simpson for both her confinements. She had a very hard time with the first baby, although they did not get a doctor. She was in labour for over a whole day. She had oil rubbed on her stomach, and warm water applied to it. She had the baby on the bed she did not have it on the floor. She was very ill with it. The second baby came a lot more easily.

Weaning She had to wean the first child at 4 months, because she suffered from nerves, that is she said nervous trouble. She had to go to the doctor and he gave her some medicine that cured her. The second baby is only two months old, and so far there is no re-occurrence of this trouble.

The boy plays all day with his small cousins, the Sinclairs, whose house adjoining hers. He is very fond of the baby sister, and does not seem to be jealous of the attention it gets. He is a good child, and seldom has to be corrected.

Saturday.  
19. 6. 48.  
D. . .

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Family Record. 129 131.

Interviewed James Sinclair .

Going to the yard I saw James trying to walk from the kitchen to his house a few yards from the kitchen, in quite a round about fashion. He was helping himself ~~the~~ along with a stick, that is supposed to be a yard - stick as it is marked off in inches. He could scarcely make the steps, as he is very feeble, with hair as white as milk. Seeing that he was not progressing well in his effort to ~~the~~ walk I told him to sit on a box that ~~close~~ close by. He did so and we started to talk. We were crowded with a number of children from the neighbouring yards and some of his own great grand children.

The children were told to remove, but they refused to obey though they were told by ~~the~~ grand father, by Joseph, uncle for some of them, and by their cousin Amy Rochester. They were most disobedient, at least they are the most disobedient set I have met since I'm in Bull Savannah. When they are spoken to they just sit and stare as if "they are wood or stone", and cannot understand what is being said to them. They follow one around like a shadow. They are ill-mannered and rude. One little girl from out the number, supposed to be Amy's sister, was sent on an errand by Amy and she refused to go, telling Amy she will go later on. She wanted to hear what I was going to talk ~~the~~ about. Amy in very great need it appears for what she sent the child for begged and begged her, yet she would not obey. Amy had to ask me to tell her to go. I did so and after much persuasion she went reluctantly. As she was about to go her grand father loosed from out a handkerchief a 4- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d, he handed it to her and told her to give it to his daughter Addy who is living at Shaddock Hill. Addy was to put either a 1d or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d ~~ea~~ with it to buy a bun and send for him.

The child took the money unwillingly and as she reached around the kitchen she sent it back by one of the other little girls, saying that the grand father "mustnt annoy her" any more, she is not taking it. Amy took it and sent it by one of the little girls to her and ~~the~~ the child ran away as fast as she could. James told me he had not eaten any thing since morning, at that time it was about 11 o'clock or 11.30, but a little coffee without "anything to eat with it". He got that from Joseph's yard. He was very hungry he told me. He ~~tries~~ tries to teach them good manners, but they will not "take it and them no obedient to them parents, like me. He used to obey me parents that is why me dey ya today. Wha' the Commandment say? Honour you parents that you days may be long. If them no honour fe them parents how them expect fe live ~~the~~ long. We teach them how fe act themself to God and to me, and no fe use sinful ~~we~~ words. If them no honour them parents wey bring them

old and /

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of/

in this world, how will God honour them? He teach them manners, but if them won't take it what me can do. Some/ James' grand children are most unkind to him, chiefly Euphemia's children. One moment they are in peace and the other they act as if they could "eat me". They do not want to hear the truth from their grand father. When they do wrong things, use their tongues and "walk 'bout and have bastard, me tell them i' no right and them dont want to hear that". They abuse him when he talks to him, "and me have fe put up with wha' them do me, for me caan help meself now". Euphemia's children will make tea, sweeten theirs and give him his without any ~~sugar~~ sugar. Sometimes they refused even to take a little fire and give him. Joseph's children are more kind to him.

James' parents were James Sinclair from Comma Pen and his mother Maria Sinclair (nee Simpson) from Shaddock Hill. James can remember three of his grand parents. They are his mother's father "old Tommy Simpson, and his father's mother and father were Gracie Sinclair, and Joseph Butler Sinclair. His parents had nine children, seven are dead and two are alive, he and his brother Isaac Sinclair who is married and living at Ridge. James said his parents died 150 years ago, which I'm not quite sure is correct. He told me he wants two years to be a hundred, but Amy his grand daughter said he is only 90 years old. His old grandfather was a slave, and his slave master was one "Stoner". He was told that they chiefly stayed in Top Bull Savannah in those days. Their chief work then was to make stone wall up and down to keep out animals.

men/

As a boy he grew with his brother-in-law Alick Rochester who married his ~~sister~~ sister Caroline Sinclair. He was ten years old when he went to stay with them. Alick, who did not have any children at the time asked ~~James~~ James' father to allow him to come and stay with ~~them~~ them so as to keep his wife's company, especially when he was not at home. Alick was a fisherman and had to leave very early for the sea. James' parents consented and he went. He stayed with them until he became a big man. As a little boy he helped Alick with his cultivations, and when he grew to be a young ~~man~~ man he started to cultivate for himself, and still help Alick with his cultivations. He worked for other/such as, Tommy Rochester, Simeon Rochester, and Charles Elliott, planting in their fields at 1/- per day with feeding. He planted cassava and tobacco chiefly on other people's land. He did that on partnership with the owner of the land. He used to do fishing with "Ratio" Powell and Simeon Rochester. They had their boat and he worked as a hand. He did not have any pods for himself. He was paid according to the catch that was made

to/

made. He did the fishing trade for ~~ten~~ years, and had to stop through fever started to trouble him. He had feed and clothe himself after he became a young man at his sister's home. Elick died and he was able to help with the funeral. Unfortunately his sister died after and he was able to bury her too. After the death of his siter he left the home, for at that time his sister had her own children. Three had died and one was left living in the house. His nephew did not tell him to leave, but as he had made a home for himself he went to live there.

He had his first child by Ellen Sinclair, who later on became his wife. Seeing Ellen and gettingg to like her he asked ~~her~~ her parents if he could visit her at the home. They gave consent and so they became friends. He told the parents that he would marry her ~~by~~ but before they were married, "she fall fe me". "Before her parents fe ~~me~~ quarrel with her me take her home to ~~me~~ fe me yard, and she have the first child a my yard! James and Ellen were married after their second child was born. They had nine children in all, three are dead and six are alive. Those alive are :- Joseph who is married and is ~~living~~ living near the father. Rebecca at Long Hill staying with her son Cyril Sinclair, Euphemia lives in her own house in the father's yard. Aldwina is in Manchester working, Ada in Kingston working, and Addy is married and living in Shaddock Hill.

There is a story telling that ~~the~~ James loved his girl friend "till him jump off a house top and take him hand broke dry coconut fe her". This story was told by Amy Rochester his grand daughter, but James did not agree with it. He said he was helping to thatch a house one day when he and another man had "a hard talking over rum", and so as to avoid a quarrel he jumped off the house, and not because he saw the girl he loved. The breaking of the coconut took place in the woods where he took up a bet with another man that he could break a dry coconut with his hand. He won the man and that again was not for the sake of the girl.

His wife died about 14 years ago. He lives alone in h his house now. The house that his daughter Euphemia is living in was built by James for his children, when the little girls were growing up. Euphemia and her children live in the house now. James' house was blown in the storm. He is now living in a little room of which one side is broken down. Euphemia does not care him very well, now and then she offers him "any little thing". Addy offers him too now and then, his daily meals are prepared at Joseph's ~~home~~ home. His washing is done ~~by~~ by Addy, his only source of living

pick the fruit

is made from the fruits that he gets off his place . His son or grand children and what ever fruits are picked are divided between he and the picker . When the fruits are ripe he sells them and gets a little money to clothe himself and help to feed himself . The amount at one selling may be small , so he has to save so as to be able to secure the clothes.

James on father's side  
James on son's side  
F.R. 129

The land that he lives on is his , he bought it from Government for over £40. . It is five acres of land. His parents died and left seven acres of land , but his brother Hermon Sinclair , "take it and share give his niece and one of his children . James has shared his land among the children that are at home , and Addy's husband works 1 1/2 acres of his land . Whatever the crop is it is divided between the father and the children . James told me that he cannot pay the taxes any longer for the land , "them have fe take out fe me name and put in fe Joseph . He caan feed meself much more fe pay taxes . The little money that me get off a the fruit me have fe take it buy , fish , flour , oil and matches Some times fe the week me have fe send go a shop three times when them caan get nothing out a the field".

His old parents left a few things for him such as , chairs and tables , and glass wares , He has nothing left now , every thing was destroyed in the storm . He loves his grand children , but they do not love him . "Is illmanners make them dont love me . Sometime me want little water , and a stranger have fe take it give me . Me daughter wont do it and the pickney them worse . Them no love me because me no have land fe them and all them pickney , and me no know wey fe get it fa me caan make it". He has over 60 grand children , "some living and some dead . Some me no see with me eye , me only hear them name " .

James has been sick for over 50 years now . "Me no know wha' rightly do me , every thing do me . God to tell wha' wrong . Me use to get plenty fall off a tree when me was young " . He used to cut wood for making lime kilm , and in climbing the trees he got many falls. He had to carry "plenty load" too . All those things have taken impression of him now , and being advanced in age he can scarcely walk . He cannot even walk to hisson 's yard.

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NB. xxxix 6 x 48 x x x 0 x

Old James Sinclair, father of Joseph Sinclair, was included into the household of Joseph Sinclair. He lives in a separate room in the house, but gets his meals from Joseph. His daughter is living in the same yard as James, but her help is only casual.

5.XII.1947.  
T.O.

12/26/39

Fam. Rec. # 131

					St. El.	Color.	Angl.	Fam. Rec.	Occupation
Sinclair James	head	M.W.	82		"	"	"	X	retired laborer
"	Rebecca	dau	F.S.	48 3.3.	"	"	"	W.1.	family helper
"	Josephine	dau	F.S.	42 6.5.	"	"	"	noX	higgler fruit
"	Ceril	Gr/son	M.S.	25	"	"	"	X	none
Powell Vivian	"	M.S.	24	"	"	"	"	W.1.	none
Rochester Amy	gr/dau	F.S.	16	"	"	"	"		
Sinclair Anette	"	F.S.	4	"	"	"	"		
"	Lauren	"	F.S.	9/12	"	"	"		

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Under one acre. 3 swine, 1 goat, value vegetable £ 12,  
1 ackee, 1 avocado, 1 bread fruit, 1 coconut, 5 mang. 2 nasb.

Mr. James Sinclair is deaf, ill, cant walk, stays in his bed or sit on the treshold. Very pleasant old man but not very helpful as informant.

Family origin and ramifications.

He was born here. He did not get any land from his father. His two sons live near by in separate houses. His land is cultivated "for him" by his sons and daughter who lives with him. He says Ribbid Town got its name from a man named Ribbid who "killed ram-goats". Mr. James's house is still in ~~Tonxx~~ Bull Savannah, Ribbid Town starts some 50 yards farther behind the three mages.

The remainder of the household - two women and 4 children were busy in yard with cassava. One woman was peeling it and little Lauren was scraping it.

The house and their clothes indicated that it is a poorer family in the district. They were all rather apathetic