

I/4

Interview with Hilda Dyer.

D.H.

23.6.48

Household.

Annas Dyer.	Head	about 48 yrs.
Hilda Dyer	Wife	about 44 yrs
Lovell Dyer	Son	17 years
Ruby Simpson	Ad. daughter	12 years.

*9 ans  
niece*

/scrupulously

Hilda Dyer invited me into her house, and we sat in a bedroom, which also had a two tables, a wooden rocking chair, and another chair. There were a whole collection of photographs, mostly of relatives, here or in America, standing on one of the chairs. All was ~~xxxxxxx~~/clean, and the little room rather pleasant. Hilda is light coloured, and was dressed quite neatly. She had a scarf tied around her head and something wrapped inside it, against her head. She complained that she had got a bad headache, and that she had it all day. She seemed to be suffering with it. She said it was really due to high blood pressure, as she was under treatment at the doctor for it. The pain never really left her, it only got less sometimes. She laughed when I suggested that a bit of rest each day might help. She said that the food that one has to eat around here is not good either. She knows that she could try and keep off a lot of meat and eggs, and eat a lot of salads and fruits.

She agreed to answer a few questions after I had explained in some detail the object of the Survey. She commented that she had heard, and she looked at me rather hesitantly, a certain rumour. She was just telling me this, she continued, to find out if it was true. There had been a lot of talk around among all the neighbours that people were going around all the homes in Bull Savannah trying to estimate and value all the things that everybody owns, even down to the little personal things in the house. The reason they suspected was that there were a lot of poor people in ~~the~~ England that the government wanted to emigrate to to the colonies. They planned to send them here, and either were trying to find suitable homes to put people or were planning to share out everybody's little personal things among the newcomers. I spent several minutes denying this, and she was eventually persuaded.

Parentage. Her Father was Richard Simpson.  
Her Mother was Sarah Simpson.

Brothers and Sisters.

Martha Simpson.  
Isabel Hewitt (nee Simpson) now living in  
St Mary, St E  
Estelle Hall (nee Simpson) living in Kings

D.H.

- 4) James Simpson
- 5) Wilbert Simpson
- 6) Crofton Simpson
- 7) Hilda

Her father died when she was very small, so small that she cannot remember him at all. There were two children still younger than her. Her mother was thus left with the upbringing of the whole family. Some of the older boys were big enough to help her by working, and all through her childhood, she had to work everything she could to try and help them all. From an early age she learn to help in the house, she had to help with the cultivating and the weeding, no work was too rough for them. She said I also do "little speculating" (Higgling) Owing to this generally poverty struck atmosphere, none of them were able to go to school much, she was most irregular. Nevertheless when she left she had reached the Fourth Standard.

#### Her first "Sweetheart"

When she left school she returned to her mother's yard and went on with the work of the home. She began to be friends with Clinton Powell, who lived not far away. She had a sister who was going with one of Clinton's brothers, and so he often came around her home. She made "sweetheart" friends with him for two years. She added that he was now dead, and I gathered that was the only reason that she was willing to talk to me about him. She did not really break away from him. "He took up with another woman, and him leave the ~~district~~ district. She was not really very upset when he did go. Her mother had disapproved of him all the time, because "Him no like hard work" Besides being a cultivator, he was violinist, and Hilda added, a very good one.

When asked about the next man she had loved, she laughed and said that really she couldn't remember it was so long ago.

She got married in December 1931, when she was about thirty. She could not be sure of this because her birth certificate had been lost when she was small, owing to the complete destruction of her mother's house by fire. "Dem say, I'se round thirty" She could not remember the date of her marriage and was amazed when I told her that she had been married 17 years. Annas wen to her mother and asked to marry her. She did not live with him before she married. Annas parents were old, and they lived in the yard just above her present one. They had nobody to help them and they were too old to look after themselves properly, so she got married to Annas, the wedding taking place from her mother's home, and moved into their yard. She lived there for six months until her present house was completed and then they moved down and have lived here ever since. She showed me the date of the building of the house we were sitting inside, by taking me to the back step and showing me the date engraved into the red doorstep.

D.H.

She never had any children, and this was a great sorrow to her. She had adopted her step-son Lovell, the son of Annas, and "Coolie" Holness, from about the age of two years, and she regarded him as her own son. The little girl she had adopted because she needed ~~at~~ some help around the house. Her name was Ruby Simpson.

Her Mother was Martha Simpson

Her Father was Isana Simpson.

Ruby had been with her now for about six years.

As we talked about both of these adopted children she called them in and introduced them to me. She did not seem anxious to let them go, whereas I wished to be alone with her.

They had only one acre of land, where the house actually stood, and they had all to work very hard to live at all. "I don't speak of luxuries, or anything fancy, just to live at all, we have to work all our days."

She stated again that "She had worked hard from a child and it looked as if she would until she died.

She had always done a little speculation, from childhood, so there was no telling her anything about it. For a long time, she used to do a little higgling with the fruit and eggs that grew here, such as mangoes and naseberries. She would go up to Kingston and sell them at the market. She said that she really made very little on it, after the expense of the journey. As she had got older she had found the journey too much.

She had done some local speculating as well, but very little of it.

During the last crop she had started to cook dinners for the people working at the factory. They had cheated her more often than not, and she doubted if she would do the same thing again next year. She was now cooking dinners for the men working on the new road out of Bull Savannah. She did not know if they would treat her as badly as the factory people, - who, she said were mostly foreigners - their Friday was the first pay-day, so she was due some money. Her charge was 6d. or 1/- "Dems poor they couldn't pay more." Some days she would serve Tomato and codfish, or perhaps, Gunzo peas, Bamis and dumplings, or another day some beef soup. The price of things was so dear that it was hardly worth the while. Bitter cassava was now 10/- per hundred, Corn is dear, everything is dear.

#### Her Health.

She has got blood pressure, see above.

She also had an accident about 12 years ago, and the effect of it is only just cleared up. She was going in a truck to Kingston, do to her usual higgling, when the whole truck overturned and several people got hurt.

D.H.

She had two ribs broken and also her ~~axx~~ ankle. She was carried to Spanish Town Hospital, where she stayed a fortnight, then came home. She was bitter about the fact that she never got any compensation from any body and that the whole thing has cost her endless money, and pain. The ribs mended, but the ankle was always bad. Last year the whole ankle swelled up like a ball. She had to go to Kingston Hospital. She lived with her sister for three months, and went for outpatient treatment to the hospital for that period. She never had to pay the hospital anything, nevertheless the living in ~~the town~~ being so much more expensive than the country, she was at a loss. The accident actually happened twelve years ago.

C.D. 22. Sbd. 13. Household 20.

Dyer Annas	Head	M.M.43.	St.El.	Col.	Angl.	W.3.	Farmer
,, Elda	Wife	F.M.37.0.0.	,,	,,	,,	W.3.	Homemaker
,, Lovel	Son	M.S.12.	,,	,,	,,	W.2.OE.	
Francis Louis	Cous	M.S.18.	,,	,,	,,	Ill.	Labour.TomInd

4

His farm in 1942.

Operates this farm land as owner or part owner for 13 years.  
 Owns 9 acres in 6 parcels: 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, & 3 acres resp.  
 Main income from tomatoes.  
 Employs during the year 3 labourers for 7 weeks.  
 Works 46 weeks, 5 days per week, 9 hours per day.

3 acres under cultivation, 2 acres cultivable but not used, 2 ac. in guinea grass. 1 ac. woodlands, 1 ac other.

Total value of farm £ 80, of buildings £ 40

1 catchment  
 0.1 ac. escallion = 200 bundles.  
 1 ac. tomatoes = 3000 lbs. 4 doz. water melons.  
 1 ackee = 8 heaps.  
 2 avocados = 16 pears. 1 grape = 15 lbs.  
 1 lime = 48 doz. 5 mangoes (4 fruiting)=16 doz.  
 4 naseberries = 36 doz.  
~~1/2~~ 1/4 bushel beans. 0.1 ac. congo peas = 1/2 bushel. 2 acr. cassava = 8000 lbs.  
 1/2 ac. swe et cass.=1500 lbs. ~~sykvmv~~  
 0.1 ac. white yams = 112 lbs. 0.2 ac mosella yams = 500 lbs. 1/4 ac. tobacco= 140 lbs.  
 1 donkey  
 6 sheep, 5 goats, 2 swine, 5 hens=  
 8 doz. eggs. 3 hives = 112 lbs honey and 3 lbs wax. 6 rabbits.

Inform. Dudley Simpson  
13.3.48.  
J.O.

Algonan and Annas  
Dyer. Two bro-  
thers.

Algonan and Annas Dyer are two brothers. They ~~it~~ live in two separate houses ~~xxx~~ in close vicinity to each other. These are two last houses in the ~~six~~ Census sbd. "Overroad". The place is ~~xx~~ called Ridge and is usually described so if ~~xxxx~~ Algonan's or Annas' homes are located.

Their land.

"Algonan and Annas got their land from their ~~xxxx~~ father."

Their ancestry.

"Their father was George Dyer, the same who was father of Charles Dyer and Lindon Dyer and one James Dyer - he is a corporal now in Highgate." "This George Dyer was again son of old George Dyer."

George Dyer, junior, had also some daughters. "Sister of Charles Dyer /Gorge Dyer, junior's, son/, Annie Rochester married to James Rochester. And Alicia Dyer she did marry to James Powell over Bottom first. She die and James Powell now marry to Caroline Powell - she was Caroline ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ Francis before she marry. One of the sisters of Charles Dyer is knowne under the nickname "Cece" /or "Sis"/ - but I ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ dont know which one of them.

There are /or were/ also ~~other~~ daughters of George Dyer junior. "Him - George Dyer - have one daughter in Cuba right now. Advira Dyer. She marry in Cuba. And him have another daughter - Limpa Dyer. She marry in Content pne Mr. Krammer. She die."

Inform.: Ezra Linton, Dudley Simpson, Laban Rochester.  
18.4.48.  
T.O. & J.O.

His parents were: George Dyer and Mary Dyer nee Sinclair. Mary Sinclair's father was "old Tom Sinclair" from Green Olive, Her mother was Dorothy Sinclair "after she marry Tom" Her maiden name not known to the informants.

His wife.

"Hilda Simpson first. Sarah Simpson down at Bottom her mother, her father - call him Dicky Simpson - died years ago."

"Anna Dyer and Hilda Simpson have no children. "Hilda cant bear children". Two children of Annas with other women are living in the house. The older boy is Lovel. "His mother Coolie Holness, that woman living in Content. She is from Ribbit, Margaret Holness sister, and mother of Lucille and Esmay Perkins and Clarice Roy."

"Another boy must be around 12 years. He is from Comma Pen".

People living in this house now are:

Annas, Hilda and two Annas' outside sons. Francis Louis left the place. He married and is living now with his wife, see Fam. Rec. 122.

Annas is a cultivator. Has no other trade or occupation. "He used to be a baker, to bake a buns." Now he cultivates largely tomatoes.

Information from Lillian Powell.  
 Interv. Annas Dyer. 19.6.48.  
 J.O. 25.8.48.

Present household.

Dyer Annas, 48.  
 Dyer Hilda, wife, 40.  
 Dyer Lovel, Annas' son, 19.  
 Simpson Ruby, Hilda's niece, 12. 4

Annas Dyer: parents George and Mary Dyer, both dead.  
 Brothers: James Dyer, ~~now a constable~~ police constable,  
 Prattville; Algonan Dyer, Ridge; Charles Dyer, Green  
 Olive. 1 half brother: Henry Dyer, Lowwood. 5 sisters:  
 Annie Rochester, B.Sav., Ethline Dickson, Plowden;  
 Rachel Simpson, Coleyville; Advira Burlie, Cuba, Susan  
 Whitely, Content.

Hilda Dyer nee Simpson. Parents Dickie /d/ and Sarah  
 Simpson in Bottom. 3 full brothers living in Bottom:  
 Crafton, Wilbert and James. 3 full sisters: Estelle  
 Hall, Kingston; Martha Simpson, Shaddock Hill; Belle  
 Hewitt, St. Mary.

Hilda has no children. Annas had 2 children /outside/,  
 one alive, living with him:

Lovel Dyer - his mother: Coolie Holness, living now in  
 Content. His half siblings: Vernon /brother/, Esmine and  
 Lucille Perkins and Clarice Roy, all in B.S. /see F.R.10/.  
Ruby Simpson - parents: Isan and Martha Simpson in Shaddock  
 Hill. Her 2 brothers and 6 sisters live all in Shaddock  
 Hill. 2 of her sisters are married: Elda Holness and  
 Olga Lewis.

Annas went to Cuba 1925-1929. Built house from his savings  
House, land, farming.

House: 2 rooms, 1 buttery, 1 laterine, 1 oven house, 1  
 kitchen. 1 tank.

Furniture: 2 beds, 3 tables, 1 cabinet, 2 chairs, 1 sew-  
 ing machine.

Land: owned by Annas 8.5 acres in 4 lots. 3 acres in Duff  
 House, bought from J. Settl. in 1940. 3 acres in Ruinate,  
 bought from Hubert Dyer in 1945. 2 acres woodland, bought  
 from Hubert Powell in 1931. 1/2 acre homeland, inherited  
 from parents.

Tomatoes: 3000 holes. L14. 40 yam hills. 1/2 acre  
 cassava 1 acre congo. corn few holes.

2 donkeys, 2 goats, 1 cat, 1 dog, 2 pigs.

Spending weekly: 30/-. L25 last year on clothes. L21  
 spent to a dentist on teeth for Annas and Hilda.

No savings. No religion.

In school: Ruby, 3rd stnad.