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Dark Puritan

The Life and Work of Norman Paul

M. G. Smith

INTRODUCTION: THE PLACE AND THE THEME

The scene of this story is Grenada, an island of about 120 square miles, just a day’s sail north-east of Trinidad at the south of the long curving Caribbean archipelago. Originally colonised by the French, it passed into British hands shortly before the American Revolution, at a period when Caribbean slavery and Caribbean sugar were beginning to lose the affection of the British Government and public. After the abolition of slavery, sugar went into a long decline, and as estates changed hands in Grenada, it gradually gave way to the cultivation of cocoa and nutmegs. But contemporary West Indian society and culture provide an enduring monument of those early days.

In this story of Norman Paul the issues and forms of cultural cleavage and opposing pulls are instanced with an almost fictional clarity and completeness. The main field of conflict properly belongs to the sphere of rationale and value, ritual and belief; but economic and political action also reflects this cleavage, as do mating and kinship. Yet this story, except for its accidental dramatic intensity and form, is not in any sense unusual or unrepresentative of the people from whom Norman Paul is drawn. Its principal theme, that of personal adjustment within a context of cultural diversity and marked social differentiation, is true for the majority of British Caribbean populations. The natural locus of this struggle is in the realm of value and belief, and in this also Norman Paul’s conflict is rather typical than unique. In a sense therefore understanding of the account which he gives of his own life can contribute much to the understanding of Caribbean society, perhaps most clearly because no other record of comparable detail and scope has yet been published telling us directly about the life of its folk, their ways and conditions.

I think Norman would agree that the unique development of his life consists in the cult he has founded and the religious experience on which it is based. About both some words of explanation are necessary. The Roman Catholic Church, established locally during the days of French rule, remains the largest congregation in Grenada, as also in nearby Trinidad. The Anglican denomination which comes next in point of size, for a variety of reasons does not represent the Protestant alternative to Catholicism as starkly as do many small sects, such as the Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and the like. Occupying a position at one extreme of sectarian Protestantism are the Shouters, Shakars, or Spiritual Baptists, who combine spirit-possession, divination, the use of cabalistic signs and other ritual differentiae with a liturgy and ethic of “Protestant” character. At the other, Catholic extreme of this dimension of folk religion are Shango or the African Dance, and its forerunner the Big Drum or Nation Dance cult. In Grenada since 1926 both the Shouters and the followers of Shango have been forbidden under penalty of law to hold services, but have nevertheless continued to do so.
The uniqueness of Norman Paul's cult leadership lies in its blending of these diverse traditions, together with other elements, most notably Adventist and folk-lore. From his account of these developments we can also see the inevitability of such a process occurring sooner or later in some form, in view of the compelling sanctions which folk tradition accords to revelation by prophecy or dream. Thus the basis or cultural instability and change is exposed, and the way is clear for syncretism, invention, and the like, by virtue of the most basic tenet of the folk Weltanschaung itself. In Norman Paul's case, Puritanism, Shango, Shakerism, and belief in magic are all combined within a framework of Old Testament belief and Pauline morality. Doubtless the cultural persistence of Norman Paul's reorganisation of the traditional elements of folk religion will rest above all on its relative pragmatic utility; even more certainly, it cannot persist beyond his lifetime in the form given to it by him, since its major premise, the primacy of revelations, is itself a final charter of change. Even so, the experience behind these developments, the conversion, extraordinary recovery from a breakdown, call it what you will, the forces which produced this crisis, and the reorganisation which followed in its wake make a human story very much worth telling, especially to those whose interests are the relations of individual behaviour and social forms.

THE CHILDHOOD OF A PREACHER

AT MY MOTHER

My mother worked in the field at Hampstead estate, weeding sometimes, treading cocoa sometimes, drying cocoa sometimes. My father was a cocoa buyer, he had licence for buying cocoa. They were married and they were living together. He didn't work on the estate in those days, it was only later he started to work on the estate. We were living at Woodleigh near Hampstead then, and I was about six or seven years old.

My father used to go around buying cocoa from all the people who have little patches, one acre, half-acre; suppose he would buy cocoa at five pence a pound, and when he turn it over the price was ten pence a pound, he would get five pence commission. He never did anything else. He kept a place as a shop.

Before my father went on the estate, my mother had her own house there, and when things got very bad she used to work, ten pence per day. She couldn't get any boards for a house, so she asked the gentleman of the estate, Ted White, to give her a house, and fortunately this house of mine is the very house he gave her; she lived more than forty years in it. My father went with her to live in it. After old Mr. White died they sold the house to her for £8 not very long before the war. I took it off the estate just two years ago and brought it here, that she could live near me, and I repaired it with Trinidad woods, hardwood that they have there. After they get the house, my father was not buying cocoa any more because he got sick, he was suffering with a bad foot and he couldn't do any walking about.

My father resembled that old man Papa Lazarus in Carriacou, he wasn't so tall, every thing like him. My mother had ten children, but she used to work up till the time I came down here, she used to plant garden up till the year
I came back from Trinidad, she had big gardens when she was eighty. She
died at eighty-six, that is last year. That time she was still young and strong,
she wasn’t in bed, she took ill and passed away just like that.

But my father, at the time he came to Hampstead, he could do nothing;
then when the doctors got injections he went to Dr. Jones, he gave him
three injections, he got better, and he got a job as a stock-keeper at Hamp-
stead on the estate. He work until he stop and he died. He was about twelve
years on the estate before he died, and he died around 1936.

My mother had ten children, two died, both in Trinidad, a girl and a boy.
I was the sixth.

Once I was going to school and I went to pick some plums and I get it
good that day—my father set his heart and beat me, he felt hurt. Some ways
he was very strict, if there are children in the road playing there, we can’t
go and look at them, he didn’t want us to have anything to do with other
children because some of them were rude or so on, and he didn’t want us to
get together with them to adopt their principles. My mother agreed, the
children were rude. They would trouble people and abuse and curse at them
when they pass in the road, and my parents didn’t like that. Everybody used
to say that my mother have the best children for respect or so. Our home
training was good and I was obedient. My mother and father never allow us
to go about to play like other children does, they say when it is night we must
stay at home. Sometimes they tell us of things that passed before; they told
us of the cholera, and they told us of the darkness that took place—my mother
said she was outside one morning sweeping the yard, and it got dark, the
fowls went back to roost again and everybody went back inside, they light
lamps, they lay down and prayed. She couldn’t tell how long it lasted, but
afterwards it got clear again, she knew that.

My father would be there too at night, sometimes. He related us a story
about the Munich Africans.¹ There was a lady by the name of Ma Fam; she
used to go in the lake, and when she goes there they would have dance for
three weeks, and she would tell them as long as she didn’t come back not to
stop beating the drum, and she would tell them she going to get messages, to
come back. She would walk in the water and sit down, until they didn’t see her,
and they would be beating that drum night and day until, the same hour she
leave today, the same hour she would make a circle in the water and come out
and tell them of the messages she get: when they would have bad season, when
they would get plenty rain, whether it would not have crop for the year, and
so on. And he said, during each time she remain there the sun was very slight,
she would pray and rain would come, and when the rain was reaching them
again, she would pray and the rain would pass, it would not fall near where
they were.

He lived at Munich, and the Munich people are Africans; according to
what my father told me, some of the African people from Africa settled around
that area. There was an old man by the name of Mr. Robert, he was the
head of the Africans. I met a fellow at Trinidad who were living near to him
once, and he told me concerning Mr. Robert. He said he knew Mr. Robert very
well, and he used to control the spirit with the coconut broom, he said that
spirit, when it remain this side of the house, it grow till it reach over there.
They call that spirit Egungun. And he said when it have to go, Mr. Robert would whisper it, and when it coming it would whisper, and Mr. Robert know the whisper, and when it come it take the broom and it would stand up. If it touch anybody, in three days they dead. That is the reason why the Africans were wicked in those days; everybody ‘fraid Egungun, if anybody saying something evil about them, they call them in the yard, he just touch them, and in three days they dead. He told me one night when it came, the old man wasn’t expecting it, and it came, it reach inside the house, every man have to hide under the bed, let it pass, because it can hurt anybody. That was the Papa Robert who was the head of Munich African Dance. I never met him.

My mother never allow us children to have quarrels with one another. Even after I was married, I never live two or three days we didn’t meet together, and whenever we met we talk of different things, we made jokes, we never have any quarrels or anything like that.

There was an Indian woman who kept a shop near my mother’s house, and we used to go at her sometimes to give us something, and we would eat that during the day until sometimes seven o’clock at night mother come home, sometimes she bring something and cook for us, sometimes up till ten o’clock, we don’t get meal till then. If she is coming with the peas we have to shell them, sometimes seven, half-past seven we put that on the fire; sometimes ten, half-past ten we get our supper. And she wake in the morning and goes to work again, and she used to work for only twenty cents per day at that time. She worked five days a week, she had regular five days. She had a garden of her own on the estate, scarcely anything to talk of, a small piece about a quarter of an acre for planting corn and peas. No rent. But the estate used to sell the bluggoes6 to them, and the breadfruit they get free. Sometimes a bunch of bluggoes the estate give them for fourpence, sometimes sixpence, according to the size. Pears they used to get free, mangoes and breadfruit were free. Nothing else, but water coconuts they used to give them, and they could have pick up a dry coconut, yes. Things like wood for building a house they would give you. Anywhere you pass in those days and you wish any wood, you could just take it, for house concern or kitchen concern, building a house or burning. You could cut down a tree, you wouldn’t have to speak to anybody. But afterwards you have to ask for that or they don’t allow.

From after 1914, when everything turn up and change taking place, you had to ask for everything. Everybody on the estate, when I was young, had a garden, some have more than a quarter of an acre, some have three piece of garden. My mother had a quarter of an acre on the estate, but she had no other land nor my father.

After a baby was born my mother would spend eight days inside, on the ninth day the lady would come and bathe her and put her out, and then she would go out; and when she have a month and a half, she would go back to her work.

My father never lift up his hand against our mother. Sometimes he would attempt, but he never did. Sometimes he want to go to a dance (they used to dance quadrille), and she want to go too, he don’t want her to go, and they quarrel about that. Just for so, he would find she must stay home, and she would find he must stay home so they both quarrel.
When he was buying cocoa the boys used to steal the cocoa, and when I get to have some understanding, I find that they have done him an injustice by doing that, because he got indebted to Mr. Joseph through that. And they put him before the courts for the money, he had to run away from Grenada to Trinidad. He stayed at Trinidad for about three months and then came back, and when he returned back home Mr. Joseph didn’t worry about the money again. Somebody must have told him, ‘‘Well, the man is old and he has a bad foot.’’ He used to go away for quite a long time to buy cocoa, he had a house rented outside by the road, and sometimes people used to bring cocoa for him—it was his shop, and he used to sleep there too. One night he had many bags of cocoa, and he was sleeping on them. A robber came in, opened the door, raised his head off one of the bag, take away two half bags, and leave him and gone. It is a ‘‘trick’’ that they use, just as the people use prayers and they open your door and take away things inside, and you wouldn’t know. That is a ‘‘trick’’ they have.

My father never used to pay much attention to the home, because he would be away; that is the reason why we were more attached to the mother than to him. I never get beating from my mother but once, I remember she was beating one of my elder brothers and I started to cry, and she gave me one or two belts for crying. Once she quarrelled with my father because he was beating Darkie, he took some cocoa and sell it, and my father missed it, and he went where Darkie sold it, and they told him. He bought two yards or rope and he came and beat him with it and he got a sore on his ears, and my mother told him he had to beat the boy, but not in that way.

I had a little schooling, at Mr. Date school, then when I was living at my grandmother and my aunt started to follow the Adventists and they had a day school, I went there. They teach Bible Class and other stories. When I went to school I wasn’t even eight years old. The school was at Heathfield, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Nurse kept it. They had over sixty children at the school, boys and girls, the oldest would be about fourteen to fifteen. After fourteen they stay home, some of the boys they go out to work, some of the girls they stay home. There wasn’t much beating, and I cannot remember that the children was unruly.

My mother used to deal in a shop, and I know sometimes, when life was pretty hard with her, she owed the shop fourteen shillings, and her wages is only eight-and-fourpence a week, and when she sent to the shop to get anything they would refuse giving her. It was very troublesome to maintain the nine children that was with her. Sometimes she would go to the estate to get provisions, and she would hardly get. Sometimes they said it haven’t got, sometimes the watchman is not there to get for her, and she would get a pound of sugar and make tea—chocolate—for the whole ten or eleven of us in the home, until she able to pay the shop. Sometimes even on Sundays we never used to drink tea, because on Sundays she was unable to get sugar to make tea for us. In days gone the people of Grenada, the whole week they wouldn’t get tea, but on Sunday they would prepare tea for everybody in the home. But sometimes she was even unable to prepare tea for us on Sunday.

And she only had a small bit of garden on the estate, she plant peas and cassava, sometimes corn, but it doesn’t do very well. To keep the children at
school, a private school she used to send us, she undertook to work about five or six acres or so for weeding, herself alone, on the teacher’s land. That was to get our school. She was unable to pay the teacher, because the money she earned on the estate was not sufficient to support the home and pay the schooling. She tried her very best with us to get some learning, until she was not able to do anything again.

My father, he was always careless with his home, never helped her in order that the children should get a schooling. She would have to buy the clothes, too.

Sometimes when my mother is at home with us, she would speak and reason with us about that, but she always said God is going to help us, and she would not tell the father anything. She would say “My child, your father not trying to help or do anything as even to help all you to get schooling. I have to do everything myself. God is going to help me, little as it is you all will get to know something from school.”

What father do with his money we never used to know, my mother never used to know, he never tell her anything. Not until when he couldn’t pay the parties that had advanced him money to buy the cocoa, she would hear. He would buy his own clothes, he would buy the cloth and my mother used to sew them for him, ordinary pants and shirts. There was one thing, she never had trouble to pay to sew for us until we grow big, up to twenty.

My mother, although she had ten of us she wasn’t weak, she was strong and healthy, because on the estate they say the way she was brave in dragging the cocoa, they had a mule on the estate that they call Gypsy, and they gave her that very name; in the midst of the young women she used to head in her cocoa before them, so they call her “Gypsy”. She was very brave. She never got sick, she suffer mostly with toothache. But she never lie in bed to call the doctor. I remember her suffering with a toothache, oftentimes. All of us would sit around her, sometimes the whole night, the whole day, sometimes she would have it for three days, her face swollen. But we never knew what was the meaning of toothache, and my father would not be at home.

If my mother and father have a quarrel at home, they would quarrel and keep quiet to themselves, but we were not allowed to say anything. I never quarrelled with him. They were married, and he never had any other women outside, not to an extent. We knew at one time he had a woman, but not in a long time that should publish out to an extent. That is, when my mother get to know, he leave it. The woman had no child for him. I liked him, because sometimes he too, when he is home, he would sit down and give us all sorts of stories, having little jokes of when he was young and what he knew about, he would sit down and tell us something and we would laugh and so on, so we never had anything against him to create a disliking. But we were more familiar with my mother than with my father and she was kind to us.

We always had our meals together, and according to the old people’s custom, if the food ready and he is not home, they would not dish out the food until he come in. And when he come in he would have his first, and then the elder one and then the next, until everyone serve. There was a custom like that with our family; I don’t know whether this was from the African people, but when I recognise her, that was her custom. She would eat inside the
house, but after everybody was satisfied. As she gave him his meal, everyone of us would get our meal, and we would sit down inside and eat. His on the table, and we would sit down on the floor and eat.

**AT MY GRANDMOTHER**

Almost my first experience is one morning when I woke up, we saw the leaves with white things like ashes, they said it was a volcano eruption from St. Vincent. I was about seven, I could remember that. Afterwards my grandmother took me to live with her. She was my mother’s mother, Mistress John Noel; I called her “Tante”. Her husband was dead, but she used to work in the field as a labourer. And at night she used to practise us for singing. All in the house were her grans, she had four grans besides me in the house. She used to practise us to sing Big Drum and dance, she used to practise us Ibo, and I could pick that up quick. She used to make all of us dance till we say we dead! I remember the songs, one she taught us was:

E-e, Ibo, Lele-lele,
Ba ya mama ka-ki-te
Bayo
Baya-mama se fa me
Ibo.

That’s it. That’s patois, it mean she is Ibo family and she won’t live for the other nation, she will trample them—that’s “Ba-kakite Ibo”. She couldn’t speak any African, but she was an African; whenever they have this Big Drum she would go and open it for them, start it for them. She used to sing Kromanti, she used to sing Bula, Quelbe, but I don’t remember those. I was trying to remember the other night, one when she is calling the spirit with an old hoe, but it slip my memory.

After Dorothy came, my grandmother and my aunt took me because I used to talk with a tied tongue, and they liked to hear me talk. I knew I was going to live with my grandmother, because she came one Sunday night and asked my mother to allow me to stay with her, and my mother said if I liked to go I can go.

I was satisfied to live at my grandmother, because she had some of the other children, and we could have play together, so I did not miss home. We all were grans through daughters, Wilfred and Kathleen’s mother was my mother’s sister, and the other two, their mother was another sister. She had no children of her own living in the house, the others were working out, they weren’t staying there; she used to care the grans for them.

I missed my mother, but I was glad to be with my grandmother because she promised me she would give me clothes and send me to school and so on, and my mother couldn’t afford to do that to all of us. I was the oldest of the children at my grandmother, when I went to live with her.

Sometimes on Sundays I would go down and see my mother and sleep, and return on Monday morning at my grandmother; then I was living on the estate and my mother always come to see me, she was working on the estate too, and sometimes when she come she have bread in her pocket, she bring a piece of bread and give me. After I left my grandmother I went back to
live with her, she was still working as a labourer on the estate then, and she
was not better off, because the children were plenty, and according to the work
they could not do anything as to better the position. I always have the thought
that some day I must better myself, and help her.

After a time Popeson and my other brother Solomon was living at my
grandmother, and my sister Melita too, because they used to suffer with a bad
foot, and my grandmother took them over to cure it. She knew what herbs to
put on the foot, she would get different fruits and boil it and bathe the sore
and apply that. One time a fellow brought something to my mother, telling
her to look under the window, she would see a little hole, and that was the
cause of the children’s feet can’t get better; so when she looked she saw the
hole, and a fellow by the name of Prince and she dug that hole. He found
seven powders of different colours, he practice there. But she never found out
who put it.

My grandmother used to sit up late at night, and she was a great fighter
of those things, such as lougarou. She had a box just at the door, and she had
a cutlass, and sometimes she would call me and sit down at the door, and she
would scratch the slate and she would be talking to the others, and one night
I hear her say, “Venez papa, mu ka bawo.” So I think, “I wonder what she
mean?” She said “Get up and go and sit down inside.” And she said, “Etez
musso cutlass-moin,” that is, “Come, where is my piece of cutlass?” And she
take up this piece of cutlass, she sat down in front of the door. Next minute I
heard a donkey gallop and come in the yard, but I did not see it. The others
saw it as it gallop in the yard, bright fire in the mouth and the eyes, and
she went outside and she followed it away, cursing, and she came back,
as she came back she close the door — it was back again. That was a lou-
garou, the donkey. A human transform himself into the animal, and he
knew she was determined, and he was determined, to see what he could do
to her, and as she closed the door it came back again. She went after it again,
it went farther this time, and my aunt told her not to go out the third time,
it will hurt her. It remain in the yard, it pranced up, it galloped, in the
morning it gone. In the morning she said, “Well the lougarou gone home.”

Another time, she said she was walking and she met a little donkey. The
donkey would not walk in front of her, and she take up three stones and
she lick it down and she say, “Your foot big as cattle foot, you think I ’fraid
of you? I not ’fraid of you at all!” In the morning she was passing by a home,
the man of the home was rubbing his foot, he say, “This foot, here, this foot,
they say it big as cattle-foot, but it can do its work!” So she knew exactly it
was he that transform himself into that donkey. But we never get frightened
about that, because my grandmother’s grandfather was an African, her father
was an African but born here. So she herself, she knew a lot of different things,
how to fight all these things, so we was not afraid of them. Just as the Africans
would know something through the Powers to fight out any evil, just so my
grandmother knew a little.

I knew a woman, when I was at my grandmother, that used to practise
witchcraft, and one day she was walking the road with a basket, and she had
pieces of bread, she had old dresses, she had combs, she had hair, and she
was confessing what she was doing, everybody’s name, what she had done to
them and how she had tied them. She didn’t belong to the estate, she came from another place, walking abroad. The people on Hampstead estate never used anything like that about one another, not to my knowing. You hear they say that people have done things to them, but I really don’t know the actual person. Sometimes they say they find a bottle buried in their yard, they find things, they find pieces of clothes buried about; but I don’t know who really has done that.

But they had lougarou there, I knew of two of them that they said was lougarou. My uncle met one one night, he said he was at a big dance and he saw a fire blazing and outing, blazing and outing. When he reached the spot he met that man sitting on that spot, and the next day that man brought a complaint to my grandmother, asking her to tell him to be careful when he was walking at night. That man’s name was Wellington, the uncle was my mother’s brother. He was on the estate. But my uncle not afraid of anything, he would fight anything at any time at night.

The lougarous would come in the house at night; the house closed, but they would get in the house, and sometimes you see a blue mark burning you. They interfere with you in that spot, they suck your blood. When they suck your blood and they reached outside they would cast up everything, they don’t go with it. And if you could take up that blood, put it into a bottle with other things and cast it into the sea, the lougarou would not be able to do another person that, he would dead.

At one time they used to make sugar and rum on Hampstead estate; but at that time I was not born. That was the time of my grandfather; they were Africans, and they used to work at the time of slavery. My grandmother told us of the time of slavery, and when Africans were in Grenada. She showed us a mango tree in the yard, big as the whole of this yard here, where some of them went and gone up. They went into the cloud and they never see them again, they understand they had gone back to Africa. My grandmother said they were dissatisfied, so they went up the tree and away. In the morning they couldn’t find the most important part of the mill, the mill could not start working. The Africans had performed some science and taken it away, and they demand to set them free and they would bring it back, so they set them free and they said, ‘Well, all right, in the morning you will find it ready to work’. And in the morning they found it ready to work. Well, it got repaired and then they were free to go, and they ascend up the tree and gone.

When I was young they used to have Nation Dances quite a lot, my grandmother used to have that. They don’t slaughter any hog with the offering, the Powers is not in favour of using any hog, but if you want to use them, you got outside the yard and you kill it, clean it and prepare it before you come back. Then you get an old hoe and walk right round the house and beat that and sing and call in the spirit, then they would throw rice, they would throw rum and sweet water in the four corners. And then they would beat the drum first before they do any feeding of the altar. And I see them wash the animals, the fowls or whatsoever they have, they wash them first before they kill them. They give them sweet water and they feed them. And then not everybody would be able to cook that food, you had to be very silent and particular in cooking that food; you cook without salt, they don’t
use garlic, no onion, no seasoning at all. And they would lay a large table and put out everything, and put everything that the dead family used to use there. You put the table inside, in the bedroom. They would have the bedroom properly cleaned and make the bed clean, and they would put that table in there. And that is just like they do in Carriacou up till today.

At first I was satisfied to live at my grandmother, but then when they started to beat me I was dissatisfied. When I was seven all the way, I used to wet my bed. And there was a boy by the name of Bertie, my grandmother told them to trouble me in the road because I am wetting my bed at night, and he started to trouble me and it hold on to fight. I used to sleep with the other children. My grandmother was persecuting me to stop wetting my bed, but she didn’t say whether she disliked me for that. I was about ten or eleven when I stopped, because up to the time when I went to Hampstead and worked, I used to wet my bed.

Then my grandmother used to beat me and sometimes take an advantage, because my two other aunts, their children were at my grandmother too, but my aunts, were working at Mr. White’s, they could afford to keep their children and also to keep her, to treat her better than my mother could. When the time for school came, she would bathe the other children, dress them and send them to school, and leave me behind to cook their lunch and bring it for them. Sometimes while they were going to school, I am getting water still. Sometimes on Sunday I have to take my grandmother’s clothes to wash it in the river, while the other children would not touch the water. I was a little older than them, but they could have done work. I have to find that is what get me to leave my grandmother. We never quarrel, but I had the understanding to know that all of us must go to school and I not going?

I never say anything to her, but I told my mother, and I told my mother one day, “I am coming home.” I take what I have and come home, and she did not tell me anything; I went home from school that evening, I gave the others my lunch-pan, I said, “Take it back home.” I don’t want anything that belong to them, they gave me a hat, I said, “Take it back.” At that time I was about ten to eleven years. At that time I said it should not be so, the others would be going to school, I would begin and cook their lunch and take it for them, and go to school whilst they are studying already. I was kept behind as a servant of them, carrying their breakfast to them. I said, “These children must carry their own breakfast for themselves. I am going at my mother.”

My grandmother came to see me at my mother’s house the very night. She asked me what is my reason, I told her. My grandmother asked me if I would not go back, I said “No.” She asked my mother and my mother said, “Well, he says he is not going back, so I don’t know what to say.” And she remain, she talk and talk she say “If you are not coming back I am through with you.” I still did not worry with her.

I liked reading, all different books, I liked singing; reading and singing, that was the only thing I favoured. A set of children playing hoop or so, spinning top, I didn’t worry with them. My cousin used to have marbles, he used to beg for marbles to play, but I would not touch it, I had no likings for that. I read the ABC book, when I were reading the ABC book I could have
read in the first Royal Reader, sometimes in the Second Standard book I could read something in it. If you are reading in a book, I would remain alongside of you and listen to everything, and when you put down the book I would take it and read the very place which you read. I read the Bible when I was at school in the Seventh Day Adventist, just a couple of days after Mr. Sweeney told me to buy a Bible. My brother bought a Bible for 6d. and from the time they started to read the first chapter of Genesis for me, I come home, I could have read the first chapter of Genesis—whatsoever they told me at school I could repeat the same things in the house.

My mother was not sick at all when I came back, she live strong and healthy until she pass away. She was very brave, up to the time she pass away she would go and come back so quick that you would think she get a lift by some vehicle in the road. She never take part in wakes, but in Saraca, Nation Dance. I don't remember who she made them for, because after I had left her home we was not so nearby to frequent each other. The last one I remember is a woman that was living near to us by the name of Vital, and she had this saraca, so we went there. She was not a real middle, but any of the neighbours around that is having a baby, before they go and call a nurse they come to get her first to stay in the house with the person, because she understand that work very well. My mother never make any saraca at her own home. I remember Miss Vital had a saraca, and my mother and a next woman did everything, but that is the last saraca I know she went to.

She used to dance the Nation Dance. She knows that very well, because she always with her mother, and my grandmother knew all the different singing for each and every nation. Sometimes the old people had a picnic, Christmas Day, on some hill or other; they does that First of August, too. Everybody make up a tray with chicken, sometimes stewed beef and other things, and cover it nice and dress it with flowers like the people at Carriacou, they walk up and down the road and then they go up the hill, and everyone would put down their tray and one would eat with the other, just as a saraca. Sometimes they dress up with blue bodice, white skirt, sometimes blue skirt, white bodice and blue apron. They did it as Queen Victoria do. No saraca, just everybody ate together, a rejoicing day. Sometimes if they have Cropover today, tomorrow please God they would do that. Sometimes they have the whole week to pleasure themselves. Sometimes Mr. White, the manager, rode his horse after them, and he come and eat with them too. He would eat at my grandmother at any time. Then they would have the Invitation Dance, in evening.

Every Saturday my mother would go to market to buy, but she never go and sell. Sometimes I go with her, she would put her tray down and go and buy anything she want and come and pop it in the tray, and I would watch it. The people today use hand-baskets with covers; they were making them then, but they preferred the tray and a cloth to cover it—every married woman, a tray she used to have, even the young girls had a tray.

During that time there was something like susu but they did not use to call it susu, they used to call it “Partner”. Three of them put five shillings each, they give it all to one this fortnight. Next fortnight they put five shillings each, they give it all to the other, and the following fortnight, five shillings each, the third one got it. Never more than three people, but in susu they sometimes have
twenty, sometimes thirty, sometimes fifty. When they have fifty, they collecting
such an amount of money, sometimes they divide it between three persons, they
way. ‘Well, we share it between three persons; next week between another
three.’ I used to run a susu on the estate, sometimes eight of us at four shillings
a fortnight. My mother never took much part in that, only in Partners. They
used to work Maroon in partners, sometimes for the week, eight of them,
everybody go in one garden this evening, tomorrow the next person’s, and the
following day the next, so they all get a help in their gardens. Then she always
in a Friendly Society, but she never get any good reward until she dead; always
paid money in a Friendly Society, sometimes it break up and she didn’t get
anything. First Friendly Society I knew she was in and my father, each of them
used to pay a shilling, and they paid five shillings to join. The gentleman name
they used to call Mr. Bequin, and they paid that money until he spent out
everything, they never get a cent. He wasn’t running a shop, but buy land.
He bought land with it at River Sallee, he live there and he used to ride a horse
and come home.

HOW I JOINED THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

I became an Adventist because I grew up with them, and that is where
I experience about this world and how you must live. I was living at my grand-
mother when my aunt, Mrs. Isaacs, had joined the Seventh Day Adventists,
and six of us, we were sent to school at the Adventist school. After she had
joined the Adventist we were taken from the other school and sent to school there.
Mrs. Isaacs had three children, my other aunt Jane had two, and myself, that was
six of us. From the time we went there, they had say about keeping the Sabbath,
and how we should live respectable and fear God. I grew up there. I was taken
away from school and went to work, but I still had my Bible, and I believed
that one must respect God and fear Him and obey Him.

Once when I was praying, as the heart and mind was bent solely upon God,
I got a shock just like that; at that time I have grown up, I was sitting for
baptism—about fourteen to fifteen years. I would get a shock, and my body
would shake, I thought it was ague fever, but it would die away, it leave a kind
of gladness in me. I would satisfy, I don’t want water to drink, I don’t want
food, but always singing, sometimes repeating some verses in the Scripture,
some psalms, and the hymn that appeal to me. My mother knew when I started
to make visions, and myself, my sister Millicent, my brother Popeson, my aunt
Jane, my cousin Mylon, we all baptise the same day. My mother never was
baptised, but she never against it, oftentimes she go to service. My father didn’t
come, he used to spree a lot when he buying cocoa, but once he stop buying
cocoa he never make it a habit, just sometimes he go to a quadrille dance.

After I took some schooling in the Seventh Day Adventist school I became
interested in the Adventists by the teaching of the Bible, of the Sabbath, and
the singing—the hymns appealed very much, they caused me to follow them
very closely, and I find the teaching of the Bible was true, but at that time
I could not have decided to be a member of the church, because I was young.
I was maybe eleven or twelve. They used to meet on Saturdays and Sundays
and Wednesday nights; on Saturdays from eight to twelve and from four to
six, they would sing hymns and prayer and reading the Bible and explain.
Mr. Sweeney was the Minister. They carry on a sermon as the Anglican church did, but they read the Scripture, comment on it, and explain what it means. Suppose they read, ‘Jesus say, ‘Behold, I come quickly and my reward is waiting to give every man according to his works . . .’’, then they comment, and say that that means one day Jesus will come, and those that serve Him in spirit and in truth or obey Him, they will receive a reward from Him, and that reward is everlasting life. They mean that He really would come and every eye would see Him. Now in the Anglican church they would read a chapter, and very little comment and they pass that on. Very little comment, and they pass on, they sing one or two hymns, and they take up collection. But the Adventist people don’t do that. They take collection, but they read the scripture and they explain it to you, that every child should know and understand what the Scripture means.

From the time I get to the understanding of the Scripture, I decided not to confirm in the Anglican, I decide there was one thing I would follow, the Seventh Day Adventists, and no other religion, because I knew there was no other truth. They believing in the Scriptures for a special purpose and a special purpose and a special reason—the Scripture teaches of the coming of Christ, and one must be prepared to meet Him. But the other religions, they don’t believe Christ will come—they tell you He would not come. He wants you to be made to love Him, but in what way they will not explain. Some people say He will not destroy His children, He will not make His children to destroy them with fire, as they say. But Seventh Day Adventists teaches that you would be destroyed with fire; the Bible clarifies that. And if we believe the things that are written in the Bible, we have to accept it as true.

When I became an Adventist, all the times when I was indulging in those life, as smoking and drinking or so, I had to leave the Adventists, because I knew it was not right. When I did wrong I would have a spirit, a weeping spirit, and sorrow, I know I did wrong, and as if I am ashamed to go to the temple to prayers. But I would never have the real idea of what it was until now, when reading a portion of the chapter in Romans: “Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and you ought to glorify God in your body.” And if your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, it is a house for the Holy Spirit to dwell in, it must be clean. To know how it must be clean, you read in First John, the second chapter, somewhere about the thirteenth verse: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.” So you see, you cannot indulge yourself in the things of this world while your body is the temple for the Holy Ghost. I tried to be honest, and when I done a thing wrong I don’t see why I should go and sit down and profess and praying those solemn prayers, and in my own heart to know that I am wrong—I never done that. I left several times, yes, several times, without any of them knowing why. When they tell me to come back I say can’t, until I get some dream to know that God is really depending on me for some purpose, and I must put away disobedience and go back to Him and promise Him. That is the reason why oftentimes when I leave, I go back.

Once I went to a Nation Dance. That was at Mount Navel with the old people, and it was on a Friday night, when the Sabbath starts, and when
I came back I thought I couldn’t go to church, knowing that I didn’t keep the Sabbath. I did not start with the beginning of the Sabbath, so it was untruthful to go. My conscience isn’t free towards it, it shows God is not pleased. I always knew that, and up to today if I have done anything and it is not right in the sight of God, I know to myself I must go and confess my fault, so that God should answer, because when your conscience beat you, you are well beaten by the spirit.

After the Nation Dance I must have stayed away about three months. I didn’t smoke then, just the Nation Dance I went to. I didn’t do anything else wrong then. The next morning after the Nation Dance, when I came home I lie down, I drop asleep, it was Saturday morning, and I saw three gentlemen walk into the house with their Bibles under their arm; they call me, they said, “Come here, where is your Bible?” I said “I left it at my grandmother.” They said, “When you get it, you must read First Timothy the sixth chapter beginning from the eleventh verse: ‘And thou, man of God, flee away these things, follow after righteousness, peace, godliness, temperance.’ I could not remember presently what was the other words. That was the first time I ever heard First Timothy. At the time I was about sixteen to seventeen years. I got up, I memorised it well, I said, “I want to see if it is the truth,” and when I went I get my Bible. I turn over,—it was the real thing that they quote to me, in the dream. I decided that I must go back, because it is like somebody speak to me, man to man. They had public confessions, and I went and I told them the dream in the church, I told them what caused me to come back to the church, and I confess what I did, and how the spirit speak to me, I have to obey.

Then I stayed with the church, about three years, until I had to go back to work at Hampstead estate again. That was one of the things caused me to leave, when I go back to Hampstead I would not get the Sabbath off. I felt bad about it, and then being a young man, I had to get clothes, shoes and so on, and not in a position to get them, and when I get offer of that work, I sorry, but I went.

(To be continued)

REFERENCES

1. A closed community of Yoruba immigrants from West Africa was established at Munich near Grenville in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Within Munich, Yoruba polytheism was practised, and this has since spread throughout Grenada as the African Dance or Shango. “Africans”, as distinguished from Creoles here are people of African birth, or descent, or ritual adherence. The Darkness refers to the Solar Eclipse of 1886. “The lake” is the craterlake at the Grand Etang in the middle of Grenada.


3. A variety of plantain.


5. Susu (Yoruba esusu)—savings group, described below.

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Dark Puritan

The Life and Work of Norman Paul

M. G. Smith

PART 2—TAKING UP MANSHIP

Hampstead Estate

My two aunts used to work for Mr. Edward White at Hampstead Estate, and my mother worked on the estate too; he saw me, and sometime when I was about nine years, he asked my aunt to allow me to come and work for him. She said she couldn’t do that, she would have to go and see my mother. My mother said she couldn’t allow me, I am going to school, he would have to compel her to send me to work. He told her if she don’t send me to work with him, he would not give her any more work on the estate, and she had to yield to him to send me. That must have been about 1909 I started to work with him; I worked sixteen years with him, but during that time off and on, I would leave and go back, according to the different visions I been having. That was about 1912 I start to see visions, not knowing the meaning of those.

The first one I can remember is one night I saw a cloud on that side, I heard a music was playing in the cloud, and when I looked in the cloud I saw an entrance, and something coming down. As much as I could, I watched carefully, I saw a picture of the Sacred Heart was coming down, and plenty of people that was around started to run, but I didn’t run, I called my sister and I told her, ‘That is a spirit’, and we started to pray. And I awoke after that vision. That is the first one, when I was living at Hampstead. I left Mr. White because during the time I was working, around 1912, I used to run away at night to go to the Adventists’ services. At that time the minister was one called Rashford, a Jamaican, a dark man, very young. He had been at Innswood about seven or eight years, and I decided to baptize in 1912, I baptized in 1914, 4th August, but I decided in 1912. I got baptized on the day of the outbreak of the world war.

When I first work for Mr. White, I worked outside, I used to clean up the the galleries (verandahs), water the plants and feed the ducks and work messenger boy. Afterwards I had to clean the bedrooms. When I started he used to pay me 5d. a day; he increased it after he take me from outside and I was placed inside, to do butler and to clean up the house, he used to pay me £1. 10s. 0d. a month. I started to work inside the house about 1911 to 1912, so I did two years of work inside. When he pay me I would bring the money to my mother, she never allow us to take our own money. She would ask me if I wanted a shilling, I told her sometimes yes, sometimes I didn’t want because sometimes when they had guests I would get more money than my wages.

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Sometimes I would keep that, sometimes I would give her a portion of it and keep a portion. She was always better off with me than with the others, because I was always luckier than the others, the white people liked me very much. Sometimes they would call me home and they would put me at their table to have meals with them, I was always lucky with these coloured people.

Once when I was between eleven and twelve they tried to put witchcraft on me, but I was protected then. I did not know who tried it, but all that I did, Mr. White was not pleased, and he would call my mother and tell her that I wasn't doing my work, I was very careless and stupid; and a woman told my mother there was somebody living by Mount Craven, to go there and see her, maybe they did not want me to work in the place, and they trying to tie me. When my mother went, that woman, by the name of Mistress Joseph, told her don't worry her mind about anything about me, because I am well protected by God, even though they try they would not be able to do me anything, I am well protected. She did not do anything for me, and afterwards myself and Mr. White, we get on well.

Hampstead is over a hundred acres, over a hundred and fifty labourers he had, men and women, all living on the estate—houses scattered all over the estate. They were free to hold their gardens and houses and everything on the estate. The estate built the house and used to repair it for them, and when he repaired any buildings on the estate, he leave the boards so that the people could build a kitchen or lavatory or anything they needed, with them. If they need boards he would give them from the store-room, too. Well, he was one of the best gentlemen in this parish. I would not say in the parish, but in Grenada; there wasn't another like him. But this came from his parents, his father was a Scotchman and his mother was a Grenadian, an African. Then the father died and the mother also, and then he was in charge.

And when the father died, there was a fellow at Grenville by the name of Sidney Brown who was in charge of old Mr. White's business and the estate, and I didn't know him at the time, but my aunt was cooking for White, and she related me the story, that when old Mr. White died, Mr. Brown was in the house sitting down saying to bring the debts, because he was for trying to manage the estate. He collected the debts, the man he sent to collect them took the books to him, and when he reach above the road, the labourers say he is not sufficient to rule the estate, and no other man should rule the estate but Mr. Ted, and the labourers drive that man away, they wanted to beat him—they get tough in the boucan with the man whom Sidney Brown sent to take charge of the estate. Mr. Ted White told them he would support them. From that time the estate was left to him to manage, and he was very successful. I don't know how old he was when his father died, he was quite young.

Every month they used to give a Sunday to every one of the servants as a day off. So when I have a day off, I used to visit my friends. I had some friends by the name of Pope. Then there was my brother, I can remember him one night, he was writing a letter, I was looking at him and got something into my mind that remain up till today. While he was writing this letter I never
knew anything about it and never knew what he said, but he kept on bawling out at me, and he tell me to go and sit down. I am only looking at him writing a letter, and he bawling at me. Afterwards I came to know there was something called love, that is why he bawl at me. Apart from that he was very careful, and he was generous towards my grandmother and ourselves.

We used to play cricket match, and dancing (but the music was clarinet, not Big Drum). And kites and tops, and on Christmas Day they have this play, they would dress and go about singing Christmas carols. And First of August* they have picnics, my mother and all the old people, they walk about with the drum and flag, they had the African flag, and those African people would hang these things round their neck, they call them goulad. They have a bouquet of flowers and they come to Mr. White. Sometimes he allow them to dance the whole day in the pasture, sometimes he allow them to dance in the boucan. They would beat that drum, and everybody bring a tray to give the offering they had at the hill up there. They beat the cymbal and they dance quadrille and all sorts of dances. At night they would go back and dance the Nation Dance, he would give them the boucan and they would dance there.

He would kill a cattle and many hogs, and he would give every home a barrel of flour and a bag of rice—every August and every Christmas, each home gets a barrel of flour and a bag of rice. It was a big barrel, 196 pounds. And he give them rum too. Sometimes he give them the music, sometimes he would come himself. The old people there dance first, and afterwards he take the Government band from St. George’s and give the young people theirs too. This is the Cropover, they all-times celebrate the Cropover First of August, because at that time the crop is over, and October or November, the crop will start again. Sometimes he hold it for two days, three days. He let them cook in the coppers. Sometimes he come and he enjoy with them, sometimes he dance with them—he was a real African. Wherever they have this Big Drum, he want them to wait until he reach first, and he would give them anything. At that time he wasn’t married.

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I never interested in any games as played, but I like to watch cricket. Some way, somehow, as if I had some purpose in spiritual affairs. I loved singing very much and that was all I did, it was only hymns I used to sing.

When I joined the Seventh Day Adventists they liked me quite a lot, because I had a powerful bass voice. Anywhere people go and I heard it have a programme, concert, I like to go. Presently I don’t think I could do very much singing, because I speak quite a lot, and I think my voice is failing. I used to practise with children and have concerts, it is something as the teaparty—a concert. I would practise some children to sing songs, dialogues and speeches, and I would challenge you that we should meet, and each of us have a chairman, and the one that did best would get a prize. We would put up a prize of twenty dollars each, and if your side is better than my side you get the whole thing, and if my side is better we get the whole thing. Some other person might put up a prize, sometimes.

*First of August—Emancipation Day.
We speak of Shakespeare, we speak of John Wesley, Bunyan and so on, what great men they were, they would speak of Booker T. Washington and how he became a man of high standard. We appeal to the crowd—"Ladies and gentlemen, we are here to tell you so much of John Wesley, and if at all we could culture ourselves, though small we are, we would feel like one of these", and so on—something elevating. We would begin with speeches and go on to songs, after a speech a song, after a song a dialogue, after a dialogue a recitation. A dialogue is two parties, one from each side. It is something like a joke. "The pig with a straight leg". We take that and we pick out different parts; you will say something concerning the pig and I will say something I think it better and so on, and the people would laugh and enjoy this. Then the one who had the better brain would win.

I made one myself one time, a singing dialogue:
All the men still wear one coat,
And I myself have two,
During the week I wear one coat,
And on Sunday I wear my blue,
(Don't look at my long-tailed blue!)
I will sing you a song,
But not for long,
It's about my long-tailed blue.

When it got here, a little boy came from behind.
"Good evening, sir."
"Good evening, boy."
"My father sent me for the coat". (I haven't got two coats, I am showing off).

"What do you mean? Go off!"
Then the boy come back, he say, "My father sent me for the coat."
"What do you mean? I haven't got no coat."
"Ha, ha, ha! Boy's father needing a coat!"
And they would laugh and think it very nice.

I started very young, because when I was working I used to run away all the time in the evening to practise, I was sleeping at Mr. White's, in the outer room. He would not let me go out, but sometimes I slip away, sometimes I would tell him I want to see my mother.

Mr. White, sometimes he used to rough me, but he spoke very well concerning me to other gentlemen, and the labourers heard, he wouldn't want me to know but they told me. I remember once one of the grooms told a lie and he sent me away, but it happened in this way. He told Mr. White that I would go and tell the people his business in the home, and Mr. White call me and he drive me out off the place. But I told Mr. White to ask him who it is I tell; he said "It is a fellow called John, and Popeson his brother". Well, luckily Mr. White knew my brother and John, and he told me to wait outside in the yard, and he called them. When they came they said "No, he never told us anything, that man tell a lie". Mr. White had done a lot of things with me, he don't allow the grooms to drive the horse; it was a pet of his. They don't like that, so they make a plot to make him get rid of me, and when he found out,
he call me back and he allow me to live in the house. At that time I was about seventeen to eighteen years. He gave me a bedroom inside the house, and he took me to the stores and give me everything, and still pay me a salary. I was getting at that time £2. 15s. 0d. per month. I used to work in the house, an aunt by my father called Ann—my father’s sister, she was married—was the maid; the cook was a woman by the name of Mistress Coster; the groom was Fred; a man David; and there was another fellow by the name of Dark. A woman by the name of Mary Transfer was the washer, she took the clothes home and go and do washing home. They had another fellow by the name of Lucky Hanson, under-groom, and I was the butler. Mr. White kept a lot of horses—one was Nosegay, a brown and another by the name of Electra, I remember. One night he went out, the groom went into the house to take a bottle of whisky; the other groom reported that to me, I told Mr. White, and I had to reach High Court. It went to Sessions, that is the High Court, on 15th February, 1913, when I was about seventeen years old. Friday was the groom in charge then, and John was a groom under him; it was John who went in the house to steal that whisky, and I was in charge. John had been there a long time.

Mr. White used to go out a lot, and he used to have a lot of people to dine with him, even the Governor. After supper, when they dance until two o’clock, they stop and he allow the servants to dance until four, and he give them the same supper and the same table, the whisky, the cocktails and everything for the servants. Everyone have to dress, I used to dance—I am the butler dressed in pure white; the groom in his black suit, his white shirt and his tie; the cook in her blue dress and her apron, the servant her blue dress and her white apron, her cap on her head—everyone in their uniform. Some of the field workers would come, they call them and put all on the table and give them just the same thing. Then whenever he had a dance he would call the people to come round the gallery and watch the dance while it was going on—the labourers and everybody, all dressed up. Some of the white people didn’t like that, but he said he did not agree, they are his people and they work to put money in his pocket, and they must come just the same.

If there was a wedding on the estate, sometimes he would take them to the church, or he would send them the carriage to go to the church. From the church they would come to him, they would take wine and cake, then they would go to their house, and he would give them all sorts of drinks. And if there is a concert or so, he would give them the boucan and he would get one or two of his friends and he would come and enjoy the concert just the same. At Christmas, well, from midnight he would be up, and the band would come with singing carols and the rum from Simone—they used to make rum there and he would get a cask of rum and form it into another liquor called shrub: you sweeten up plenty of rum with molasses, and put spice, clove and lime juice, and that becomes a liquor, shrub, and he would give the people that to drink.

The next thing, he love cricket match very much, he would give his labourers bats, gloves, half-a-dozen balls, he would give them that as present, and have the pasture every time well clean. He could not play much, he would
captain the team but he would not do much—he wasn’t good at it but he loved it, and as he was the master, well. He played Barbados here at his estate, he played Trinidad, he played St. Lucia. Over and over. He play all the islands. He was out for sport, and any time he would make a sport for the labourers.

And when there was a death, he would come to a wake. Whenever he have a death he bury them first-class, he give them all the equipment to bury and he would come, and sometimes he would follow the funeral.

The people who owned estates round about didn’t like all this, they feared he mingled himself too much with the labourers—that is what they said. But they used to go and see him, they liked him very much, they didn’t ignore him; but they did not like the way he moved with the workers.

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Every morning at seven o’clock he would meet the labourers by the boucan, the labourers would be there half-past six, and seven o’clock he would come down and despatch everything with the drivers. He would tell the drivers what work he wanted done, and each part of the estate have a particular name, such as Mount Zion, Adam (because one Adam worked that part), next place called Ashley, a fellow Ashley work that place; Maho, St. Pierre, any other part—he would say “go to Maho and do weeding”, and they would know exactly where to start. The driver would give out the work, and each driver had his particular gang, a regular set of people with him all the time.

The overseer go and he make up all the books for the estate, and he see that the work was done. A shilling a day for men and ten pence for women; if you didn’t come to work you can stay two and three weeks, and he would find out if you were sick; if you were sick he would support you home, he would send the doctor, and anything you want he would send for you. If you weren’t sick and you ask for one or two days leave he would grant that, and he wouldn’t worry until you had come out again.

The watchman’s job is to look over the estate to watch that there is no thief, and if he bring in a thief, if he steal a coconut or pick some peas or bluggo, Mr. White would charge them ten shillings or five shillings, sometimes he would send them to lock-up—and before they reach he telephone the police at Sauteurs and say “Let him go”, sometimes before they reach, he take a carriage and go down. He would not punish them a lot. He would give you a bit of land to work, if you didn’t work it properly he would quarrel with you all the time and say you were lazy, but he would not take it away. Oftentimes he give you a cattle to mind, or sometimes a hog, he had a very good breed of hogs.

Weeding was women’s work. And when picking cocoa, the men pick the cocoa, and when they crack the cocoa they give it to the women. During that time they also had a gang of ten picking up nutmeg. Sometimes they go in the morning, they pick up a basket of nutmeg, they go back in the afternoon and pick up two more. Sometimes they had 158 labourers working. I know that because sometimes, when I was working with Cockburn the overseer, he make up the pay-list in my presence at night; he would sit down and check up the pay-list, and sometimes I would do it together with him. And when I was working with Mr. White, when he goes to the Bank and draws money to pay
the labourers, sometimes at night I meet him at Sauteurs, he give me the bag, when he come back at night he lie down reading his newspaper, he would tell me how many hundred pounds he draw, I would check it up and put it on the dresser, and he would come and check over.

They used to pick more than a thousand bags of cocoa—1,500 bags from that one estate, nutmeg about 600 to 800 bags, mace 300 to 400 bags. Besides that he had bought land in St. George’s Parish, he had animals there, especially cattle and horses and mules. They work sometimes picking cocoa up to four o’clock, but when the cocoa was really ripe and he want to get through, sometimes they work up to six, seven, eight o’clock at night. He had many masamato (flares), he had some looking after the masamato, the rest of them would take off all the cocoa, and he would get rum and corn beef. They didn’t mind that, when they finish up at night it was a joke for them, he paid them extra, too. They would do anything for him and they never minded. There used to be plenty of cocoa to stamp out, and he would get men and women, and while they stamping he would give them rum. He would get women and put them to boil rice and make porridge and make bread for them. You stamp the cocoa when it is dry.

For planting cocoa he gave them a garden for their own use and he hold them to plant cocoa and they would get paid for it. They plant their bluggoes and so on among the cocoa, and they never minded if he didn’t pay them. For instance, where my mother was living on the estate at Top Hill, my father cultivated more than an acre in cocoa. They never worry about that, they did it as a gratitude. But when Ronald White took possession he never showed gratitude for that, he put my mother to pay a rent even although she wasn’t working, she was ill when he took charge. She was paying up to the time I took her away two years ago, she used to pay 5/- a year, 10/- a year for the use of the house-spot; she had to pay for the garden too, but I can’t remember how much. Afterwards, when she wasn’t paying for the garden, he told them to plant nutmeg and he would compensation them for that, but he never did that, even although presently he took the garden from them, he don’t pay; at Hampstead they planted coconuts, cocoa, and he promise that when they come to bear he would check them up and pay for them. Well, some of the nutmegs start to bear from three years, four years, and he was taking them up, but he would not pay for them. If you are planting nutmegs alone, you can plant more than a hundred for an acre, but generally you mix other things too; nutmeg, cocoa, bluggo, breadfruit; everything grows together and everything bear. When you plant the nutmeg and cocoa you plant them under the bluggo; if the bluggo trees are full the nutmeg will grow fast, because there is water in the bluggo root that keep it fresh, and it grows faster. You mix the cocoa with the bluggo, too. That is your garden, and you work it up and plant peas and so on, and those and the bluggoes would all belong to you. When the cocoa and nutmeg come to bear they belong to the estate, they agree to pay you so much for them when they take them over.

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There wasn’t so much stealing on the estate, the people did not use to do much of it, and even if they did, Mr. White never meet them. It was not
strangers who steal things, only the estate people; for instance, there was a watchman who opened the boucan and stole five bags of cocoa, and that is a watchman he had great confidence in. He was a black stout man, young, he was married and he had many children with the wife. He lived on the estate. He did that the first time and he get off; he was going to do it the second time, because Mr. White never found him the first time, nobody told him. The second time the watchman contact a friend, and the two of them was together, but the friend went and told Mr. White, Mr. White went and got two policemen and the night they went in the boucan, when he opened the door and went in, they held him. At that time they put him in gaol, because it was too much. But Mr. White didn’t like policemen on the estate, the watchman acted as the policeman. One of them always at work, night or day. The people never quarrel much with one another, and as for stealing one another’s provisions, they didn’t do that. They used to take the estate things sometimes. One time Mr. White remain home and he saw a fellow climbing a coconut tree, by the name of James. He take two people to go and hold that fellow, but when he was reaching, the fellow saw him coming and he say “I see you coming, I bring this water-nut for you”. He laughed and he let him off. A policeman once was walking, and he saw a woman was cutting a bluggo by the road, he tell the police. Mr. White rang them up and he ask the magistrate to dismiss the case and give the police a caution, they must never do this because that not their business, the woman belong to the estate and she work with his mother as caretaker of them—she was his nurse. He never met anybody and then bring them up in Court or make them pay.

**Girl-Friends and Old-time Marriage**

When I was about sixteen or seventeen, I was working as a boy at Mr. White, there was a girl called Gracie, she was the sister of my friends up at Sauteurs, and oftentimes we met in the evening-time, I meet her from Sauteurs, coming back home from school. We were about the same age, she was a little younger than I. Her father was a butcher named Pope. That was the first girl I loved; I was not certain I wanted to marry her, but I loved her and I wanted to form an engagement, that is, later on I would want to marry her. I spoke to her, and she have consent.

When I wrote to engage her, my mother and father went and speak to her mother and father, they were quite friendly, and before my mother knew that I was going to engage her, her mother told my mother how much she loved me, and she wanted me to married to her daughter. We met first at a gentleman called George Phillips, he was the driver on the estate; his daughter had an At Home one August holiday, and we met there. Another time at her aunt’s, the 24th May. She could have danced very well, I could have danced, and that pleased me. I never tried to make love to her, that was not in my mind at all. I moved with the old people, and hearing them talk about engagement, what an engagement is, I meant to be loyal to that. To have a happy home. Because the old people used to speak sometimes (I would sit down and listen to them well) what an engagement is and what is a happy home. They say that
when you are married to a girl and she is innocent when you are going to your home, how much the people would adore you and how they would visit you, in what a respectable way, and the respect they would have for you and your wife. That is when you marry a girl who is a virgin, and that is what I wanted to do. So when I engage to Gracie I used to go and see her on Saturday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and she used to be at the butcher’s stall with the father when I go to get meat for Mr. White, and we used to talk. When I engaged to her I was already friends with her brothers, we used to meet going to dance. Sometimes they would visit at our home, sometimes the brothers would sleep at our home, at my mother, but I never went to sleep at theirs.

It was not so long after I engaged to her when I was dissatisfied; it was after about one year and six months I got dissatisfied, because of training. I visit the home once or twice, and the training I was dissatisfied of, home training. That is, she did not speak to the mother well, and she did not live with the brothers well, and I did not like that. I used to be very observant when I approach a home, I look at the family, how they move with one another, how they talk with one another, and I got dissatisfied. I never worried with her, I told her aunt I was not satisfied and I would not worry with her any more, and I asked her to speak to the mother. The mother called me and she speak to me, she said she cares for me a lot, but if the daughter would not behave herself in the right way she cannot compel me to love her, to do anything good for her as to married to her. My mother, she always used to tell me, ‘‘If you make up your mind to love somebody to marry to, you must visit their home and always look at the person, how they move with their family, and if they move with their family well you will have a happy home, and if they do not move with their family well, you would not have a happy home, you would have some trouble when you are married.’’

She was not obedient to the mother, she going to do certain things and the mother tell her not to do it, and she would do it; and when the mother speak to her, her answers would not be pleasant. That was a thing which I detest—rudeness. Sometimes she want to go to a dance. She go to a dance and she would not tell me anything, and when I ask her she would not give me a reasonable answer. Sometimes on Sundays she would leave the mother home and visit some friends, even though the mother told her not to do it. That was a disobedient home. She didn’t have any children, not before I broke up with her.

When I broke up with her, that did not upset her brothers—not at all, they were satisfied; and her mother was still friendly with me. Both brothers say they were satisfied with me, because she was rude in the home, she would not take the mother’s advice and she would not listen to them. Myself and the brothers were always together.

*     *     *

Old-time marriage—to get married in Grenada, you have to go to the minister to give your name to publish the banns; and I undertook to do that for my brothers Popeson and Ralphie; and I help them in putting away the home furnitures and so on, whatsoever they need to put away in the home.
to prepare the house as the wife needs. Table, bed, chairs, wares, linen, pots for cooking—the house itself, but sometimes the estate give them a house. If the man was working it rested on the man to get up the house. He had to provide the house. Sometimes if the estate did not give them, they have to buy one from outside; anyone selling a house, they buy it and break it and bring it on the estate. My brother bought one outside and put it on the estate and live.

In Grenada, the man must put the first set of furnitures in the house, and when the wife come in, whatsoever is still needed, she get it after. She only come in with her clothes, that is all she bring; even if she brings some bed-linen, the husband supposed to put one set. His family such as the mother and father, or other family, give presents to the husband to help him do this. When a man is to be married they pass round and tell all the family that they are going to get married at such a time; the mother pass around, and she go to all the family, mother and father family; it is the mother’s duty to do that, and the girl’s family will be told too. The wife’s family give wares and so on to the girl—glassware, sometimes plates, silver and so. Sometimes they give money, sometimes they give linen, sometimes a spare table, and waiters (trays) they give. The mother and father help the man with the bed, they are supposed to, any of their children going to get married, they supposed to help. Sometimes the family don’t agree, then the man and girl go and marry between themselves.

Suppose I wanted to get married, I would tell my mother and father, both of them together; I want to get married to that girl. And they agree, yes, they agree that I should marry to that girl, so they ask you what time you would like to be married, and they start making things to help you to put away your place. Then you will tell them well, you are going to write to the girl’s family, and you want them to go with you at the family to fix up the matter with them, and agree between them for the marriage.

If they agree they say you can write, so you write to the girl’s father and ask them. And the father, after he get the letter, he will tell the mother, “Well, look, this young man have written to me concerning our daughter in the home. What do you say?” And she say, “Well, it leave to you, if you agree I agree just the same”. And they both decide, and they would send the answer to you, that they want to see your parents to know whether they agree that you should marry to the daughter. In your proposing letter, you would ask them for an engagement for the daughter, for two years, or one and six months, that you should marry her, and you would like to get a favourable answer from them. If they agree they would answer a letter and send and tell you they agree, but they want to see your parents to know whether your parents agree. And if the girl’s parents did not agree, my mother and father would tell me, so I won’t know what the answer is until they have spoken to my mother and father.

When you write for an engagement, you enclose an envelope with an address. But you don’t put a stamp on the letter, because if you enclose with a stamp and they disagree after a time, or you disagree to marry to the girl, you are liable for an action because when you put a stamp on it it shows that it is a legal matter. There was a case like that in St. Patrick’s about 1915, 1917,
a young man had engaged a girl in Gouyave to be married, and he married to another girl instead, and he had to pay a sum of money for breach of contract.

When your parents and the girl’s parents agreed, you could visit the girl any day, but you couldn’t see her alone, and you couldn’t stay the night with her. They are doing it today, but in days gone, you cannot stay at night with her, and there are certain times you could remain in the home to speak to her. After nine and ten o’clock you cannot, in days gone, but today the people don’t regard that so much. In Carriacou, even now, you can only go there when they call visiting days, it is Monday, Wednesday and Friday between four and six o’clock; and in days gone in Grenada, you were not allowed to talk in private way between yourself and the girl, because the mother sitting there, the father sitting there, the girl sitting there, you talking in public to her, and you must go home after nine o’clock. And you not to see her outside. And in days gone, if you had not written for the girl you can’t visit her; only the person who had written for the girl could come into the home, and supposing you saw a young man coming to your home in days gone by, you would ask what he is coming for; and if he could not tell you, you ask him not to come again; or if he coming for something, he must make it known.

* * *

Sunday is the favourite day for getting married, sometimes they marry in the week too, but Sunday is the favourite day. In the old days they used to have a saraca first at the woman’s house—the Big Drum, a Nation Dance. They give a sacrifice for that, on the Thursday night if the wedding is on Saturday, Friday night if it is on Sunday. The girl’s father would be in charge; my grandmother used to cook for a sacrifice like that. The girl’s father would be in charge, he issues orders to the people, and anything that is concerning the purpose is under his care to settle; himself, the mother, and the mother and the father of the young man that is to be married, they would arrange the saraca (sacrifice).

They sprinkle rum in their yard and they go about with an old hoe and a spoon, they would beat that old hoe with the spoon right round the ring, calling the spirits with them. They leave the ring open, they leave a road from the East leading to the West and one from the North to the South. The purpose of the road is to say the spirits would come in and dance first, the dead spirits, the old people; they would call spirits both in the father’s and mother’s family, and they beat three rounds before anybody could come in and dance. The girl’s father does not kill anything, but they would kill fowls, sometimes a sheep, sometimes a goat. If they kill a pig they must not do that in the yard, they kill that outside the yard.

All this time the girl would be inside, not locked up, but not being permitted to be outside. Sometimes from the time of the saraca she would be inside in a room by herself, sometimes with her girl friends. And sometimes some people that is married already is instructing her what she must do, and what she have to do and how she have to behave to take care of herself; and she couldn’t come out till the saraca was finished.
The nation they beat first on the drum for that Nation Dance, if her father is Kromanti they would beat Kromanti first, because the father is strongest of all; they look to the father more than the mother, because they hold the mother bear the child, but the child is from the father. He give the mother the child. The mother bear the baby for nine months, she brings forth the baby, but the baby is from the father. The drum is from the father to the mother, they beat the mother’s nation next, because the father is the strongest.

Sometimes they have a dance at the man’s home, a quadrille with bass and tambourine, sometimes if the wedding is Sunday, they have that Wednesday and the saraca Friday. The man’s family would come to the saraca, because they both agreed to the marriage. When they had the saraca on the Friday, the man would go and see the bride, but only to say ‘How do you do?’ in the presence of one or two friends, say one or two words. This is in days gone, not today. Today they are free to talk, to live as they like, but in days gone you couldn’t do that. If you see your wife on Friday you would not see her again, not before she reaches church on Sunday. While they are enjoying eating and drinking, you enjoying eating and drinking too, but you don’t see the girl you have to marry from Friday up till Sunday. And she can’t go out all that time, she have to stay inside her mother’s house. All the family would come and greet her, but the man can be abroad though the girl can’t. It is certain restrictions according to the rigidness that the people used to carry in days gone by, I really don’t know their reasons for that, but that is what they did if there is going to be a marriage.

They have a saraca for the marriage of a woman in her womanship just the same, but the difference between the marriage of a virgin and a woman in her womanship, a woman would not be private, she could go anywhere during the saraca, she can even dance if she likes; this was when a woman has already had a child. She is not a virgin again, she spoil her virginity. A young girl cannot take part in the dance, her parents will keep her like that if they are sure that she is a virgin, she is in a respectable way. And even though she don’t have a child, the old people used to know if she was a virgin, according to how they keep their children home they used to know. My grandmother used to know, I don’t know what sign they had. The day of the wedding you would know when a virgin is being married, because they used to ride a horse, the girl and everyone used to ride horse. The husband would go on his own horse, whether the girl was a virgin or not, but you would know whether the girl was a virgin because they would get a horseshoe and pin to the back of her dress, she would take that into the church and back home, and whenever you see that horseshoe you know that it is a virgin.

And when the wedding was coming back home, the old people, the family on either side, they met her way out with this bass drum and cymbals and so on, and they beat and they dance and taking her home. The husband’s family and her family, they both would go together, but the husband’s family would pay tribute to the wife’s family for delivering a fair daughter to the husband. They meet them under an arch in the yard coming in at her mother’s place, and they receive her with a sum of money, it might be ten, fifteen dollars, a dress and a ring and bracelets, earrings. The father and the mother of the man, they
would meet them just as they coming underneath the arch, they take the gift on a waiter and present them with that and throw rice and flowers and so. That would belong to the girl. The girl’s mother would give the girl a present, different things. But the fifteen dollars, the husband family would give to the girl. They never gave her family anything, they would just give her about fifteen dollars; and it was the husband’s mother and father would get it, not the husband, they would make up that gift and give to the girl in behalf of the girl’s mother for keeping her daughter. If she had already had a child it wouldn’t happen, and if the girl is a virgin and they don’t do that, it is because they don’t respect her or they don’t like her, and it wouldn’t be a proper marriage so much, people would look at it as something that was not considered. That would mean that the family of the man did not want this girl, they would be there only to please the man, but not that they satisfied.

When a marriage is to be considered, they trace the family. Sometimes if your family drink plenty, or you are a gambler, or it have anything against you and my daughter would like to marry to your son, they say, “I don’t like that, I don’t want you to marry him, because the father is a drunkard, he is a gambler, he is a thief, and what is in the father, that is in the son. I don’t want you to marry him”. And if you like to marry him, they say, “I wash my hands off you, if you like to marry him I will have nothing to do with you. Because you would not get any good from that young man”. But if you are of age, if you are twenty-one, they can’t stop it. Supposing two people were first cousins, some people would stop that too; if you are second cousins they don’t object it.

You write to the mother and the father just the same for a woman who has had a child already; and if a girl is living with the grandmother, then you write to the grandmother because she is in her home, you have to consult the family in the home. Then when you go to see the grandmother, she will say she does not know, and you have to see the mother. And you must be very respectful to her mother and her father, you show it in the way you approach their home, the way you approach them, how you walk in the road, how you talk to people. People must bear some good record concerning your behaviour, then the family would please to accept you for their daughter or their son.

In days gone, sometimes men would write to engage girls, not to marry them, but so they could visit them in the home. They couldn’t stay in the house, but they could visit the girl, they could go to church and come back on Sundays. Without any business of marriage, they have to write and give them an engagement ring; any young girl you see have an engagement ring on the marriage finger, a young man have no right to speak to her. And when you engaged her like that, you could visit the girl at her home, but you couldn’t stay the night with her. Presently they have that arrangement, that a man can visit the girl and stay the night with her and go home next day, but not in the old days, no. You either engage or don’t engage in the olden days. I know of a man engage a girl for eleven years and don’t sleep in the home, have nothing much to do with the home, on Sundays visit the home, sometimes on Wednesdays, and after a certain time at night leave the home. One of my sisters engage to a young man for thirteen years, and he never slept home.
But in the old days you would write one type of letter that you would engage a girl to marry her, but you could engage without marrying her, too, because if you did not put on the letter "merry at such and such a time" you simply write for an engagement, you could break it up at any time, because you never certify a date that you could marry. Her parents still have to call your parents, and they would agree. And if you are dissatisfied, or you see another girl you prefer before that one, some of the men just bring some wrong observation, say "Well, your daughter is no good, I not do anything for her", and they turn away.

Before I was married, I had a son born on the 8th July, 1921, at that time I was about twenty-three years, and I had a daughter born somewhere about the 14th August, 1923—different mothers. All this time I was an Adventist but in and out, I never stayed because I went in and get out, went in and get out, went in and get out again. During the time that I were an Adventist I was beloved by plenty people, and it was just easy that I could fall with one of the girls, because they used to follow me. And whenever I fell I would get a vision in the night that I should not do so and so, I must go back. I get in trouble with three of them, and had three children. Now when I saw that, and there was a problem before me that I must serve God by all means, I put myself to get married. That was the trouble. And the next thing, you would be always finding I was attractive, and whether I thought of another or not, I would get messages from a girl and I would come along and get in trouble, but it is not only that I really get in trouble, I was really willing.

But I always used to keep myself in a respectable way, that I could be any good, and I kept that up even though hard times had reached me one time, so that I get to the least degree—but even at Trinidad digging dust for a living, I never look down, I always look up. When I sit down to recall my experience, it is a great one.

(To be continued)
Dark Puritan

PART III—WORK AND WOMAN TROUBLE—Continued

M. G. Smith

GIRL FRIENDS

I might have been about nineteen or twenty years, the first time that I ever made love to a girl, because my brother Popeson was very strict, I couldn’t talk to any young lady. He wasn’t an Adventist yet, but in my mother’s home, the eldest children always control the younger ones. And he was my eldest brother, he controlled every one of us, even though the mother and father present, he could have chastised us; he could have said, he could have done, anything. And as I was a coward, afraid of licks, I was very obedient to them and my brother.

That girl was the same Gracie which I told you of; that was the first one, then Anita, then Hilda. I was engaged to Gracie before I made love to her, we used to talk, and I never made love until I got her to agree that she loved me. I had left the Adventists then to go to Hampstead, and not really having the right knowledge of the Bible, I think you could have had a chance and then go back and repent and so on; and while having youth in the body I knew it was a wrong thing. I thought I could have been forgiven, I knew I was doing wrong, but I did not feel miserable about it, not so much, because then the mind was not occupied so much spiritually. I did not have any vision then as a result of it, only after a time. I did that with Gracie quite a lot, then there was Hilda and Anita.

When I dissatisfied with Gracie, I left her, then there was another girl by the name of Anita. She was working at an estate near Sauteurs, she was a servant in the house and she used to live there. She was fair-looking enough, my complexion, she wasn’t tall, she was very short like my sister Dorothy. I met her in a dance which I gave at Hampstead, having the St. George’s band, and we got in love with each other that night. It was the first time I saw her, the first time I ever saw her. I invited her to the dance, through the cook at the estate house. Myself and the cook were friends, we were compère and macme—we was godparents for each other’s children, that is compère and macme. I invited the cook to the dance, and she told me there is another girl who want an invitation for the dance, so I told her the one could serve for the two of them, and they came the night and I saw her, and dancing with her, I get to love her. She was Anita Edwards, lived near Verdun. That is the first girl bring forth a baby for me. I didn’t have any time to write to her parents; the fact is, when I did get to know she was in pregnant for me, the parents didn’t know me, and the mother came one day to see me, she told me, “Well, I come to you, you’re Mr. Norman?” I told her yes.
She told me "I am Mrs. Edwards," she said, "you know my daughter Anita?" I said, "Yes." "She told me certain things concerning you, and I come to find out whether it is true." I told her, "Yes," I said, "I know her. Anita told you so. I claim it to be the truth." She said, "What would you do, would you responsible?" I said, "Yes, I would responsible." She said, "I am not asking you to marry to her, I only want to know you are responsible, and satisfy." I told her, "Yes, I responsible for it." She said, "Does your mother know anything about it?" I told her, "Yes, I told her." She said, "And what does she say?" I said, "She didn't tell me anything. I told her what it is, she didn't say anything." She said, "Well, I will be glad to see your mother." I told her, "My mother will come some time, I will ask her to come and see you."

And my mother did went to see her and they both agreed, they knew one another and there was no ill-feeling between both of them. They never feel any trouble, Anita used to visit home as often as she could before she had the baby. She would visit my mother when I wasn't home, I used to respect my mother, if anybody concerning me home, I would not visit the home. Anita would visit me at Hampstead, at my room, because according to how the room situated, anybody could come and visit me and they would not know in the house.

And when Anita was having the baby, my mother go to help; all our children, my mother helped in everything, from the day the mother take up in pain, the first thing, we go and get her, and she would come and she would remain with them until eight or nine or sixteen days. The baby was a boy. Anita left her job and it was born at her mother's. And after that she didn't bother to go back to work again, she deliver the baby to me at ten months, and she gone to Trinidad. He was Cecil. Now he is over at Trinidad, he worked at the U.B.O.T. for some time, and afterward he join the Army. She gave me the boy at ten months, but our mother used to wean her children at two years, all of them, they used to walk and talk and everything before she weaned them.

At that time I was giddy-headed according to the people, because I was in love with another girl, too. Before Anita had the baby I had met another girl, she was on Hampstead estate—Hilda. When I was young I was beloved by everybody, and the girls used to see me, and even if I hadn't talk to them, they would tell another boy, "I really love—", and the boys would come and tell me, and that's how I get in trouble with the girls. I never speak to them first, but I get messages from some other friend. Hilda's elder brother, a fellow by the name of James Phillips, brought the message; he was working on the estate, in the field. She was just about sixteen and he was about eighteen—she was younger than Anita, quite young. But Anita's child by me was her first child, her first child and my first child too.

I always used to see Hilda, but it was not in my mind; but when I get that message, it attract me. It was not very long before I actually fell in love with her, about two months after. There was a man from Trinidad by the name of Julian, and he used to play the bamboo-tamboo as a drum, they beat
two pieces of bamboo in a musical way, and singing. At night they used to play that in their own house, and everybody would meet up, and the children would meet up, and they used to sing. He was at Trinidad a long time, Julian, and he come to Grenada and he introduce it to his children. They played all sorts of songs, Quelbe, Callenda, Belair. After they close down at Mr. White’s house I used to leave and go and meet them, all the other children would go and play at night at Julian’s, they would walk from one place to another on the road, all about, playing and singing. That is the way I managed to meet Hilda, but then afterwards the mother got to know, and I used to visit the mother home just the same.

In the old days, if you hadn’t written a letter you couldn’t visit the mother, but during this time that was not as frequent as it used to. During the time I met Hilda it was dying out, because everybody would have their own say, the children would meet and love anybody they like, the parents could not do anything—the children would not listen. The people get fed up, they couldn’t do anything. They would say “I don’t care what happen, but I would only like to know if you like this person and agree. Tell it to me and don’t keep it a secret, that is all.”

When I got this message I hadn’t any idea of her, scarcely any idea—never notice her before. But the mother used to say she liked me and the family used to say they like me. I was meeting her at night where they used to play this bamboo, and she speak to me and I speak to her, and I found it out in her—the way she talk and the way she move with me and hold my hand, and if she have anything she would give it to me. I did not want to make love to her, but I did fall in with her and she had a baby for me, because the brother and other friends used to tell me if I didn’t make love with her after a time she would think very bad of me, that though she love me, I never care for her; so they would advise me to make love with her, even if I did not care, then she would think I loved her. The girls in Grenada, if they care for you, should you say you did not care, they would meet other people and say you are foolish, and all sorts of things against you. That was the real reason why I came to love her—not so much fond of her, because her training was not so pleasant, she did not respect my mother or my sister, she didn’t use to go to my mother home. She used to see my mother and my sister Melita.

At this time Anita was visiting me, sometimes she would spend a week, two weeks at my mother, she would come over to me in the night and go back home in the day. And Hilda knew that, and Hilda used to have quarrels with Anita. Just as Anita got to know even before I had said anything about Hilda, Hilda got to know that I was in love with Anita, and she used to provoke her on the road. She never mentioned me, but Anita got to know about it from other people. She never spoke to me about it, she was very quiet and she had some good trainings about her.

This was about six months before Anita’s baby was born, because when the baby was born, the first trouble I had with Hilda was at the christening. My sisters Melita and Eliza went with it to church, because they were godmothers for the baby; we hired a motor car, and Hilda came and saw we had
all sorts of drink for the christening, and she had that in her, but she did not say anything. At night when I returned, we had a fight. A terrible fight that night, at Hilda’s mother’s. When I came from the christening I met her at me, at Hampstead, and she told me she want to go home, so I accompany her home, and in the road—of course I was a bit high up, I had had a lot of rum—she started to beat me. She told me that I went and had good time, and I went and spent a lot of money for the child, and not to do that. I told her “Well, that is the first child I had, and I am supposed to spend that amount of money.” She said I would have to spend the same amount for her. I couldn’t remember what else I told her, and she started to box me up. And that night I run after the mother, the brother, the father, the grandfather, she herself, with a knife and the people had to hold me and take me away from them, and I did give her some blows—the doctor had to visit her. She started beating me in the road, the road was empty; she never took a stick, she started to box me up with her hand. But it was a set-up between herself and the mother, because when I went to the mother, telling the mother what happened, Hilda started and she took bottles, and the mother never say not to do it—when I call on her she never do anything. I run every one of them from the home. The grandfather was living next door, he started to come to me—I didn’t want to fight, I running with a knife too. A fellow called P’tit Joe held me, he was living just next door to them, he was her uncle. They held me and they took me back home.

Hilda was just about one month in having a baby; she told me so, and I knew, because whenever somebody was having a baby for me I always dream I fishing and holding crayfish, and when I had this dream it was so with Anita, and then with Hilda I had that dream and I told her so, and it was. That was about five months after I first pick up with her, and she used to come to my room. She never came when Anita came, but she always try to find out and pick a quarrel. She feel that I should not have had anything to do with Anita besides she. She was jealous at that, she never want me to speak to anybody.

There was a woman who had a son and a daughter, and it was her intention that I should engage that daughter of hers. She told many parties, and she used to be very kind and nice towards me, and she invited me home a Sunday and I told her yes, I would come. I was friendly with her son, a young man by the name of Victor, and he told Hilda that I was going to form an engagement with his sister, and Hilda waited when I got dressed—I was going in a cream suit and a white shoes—Hilda follow me in the road and she hold me by the back, when I turned she buried her feet in the mud and she muddy me up. And that day she got another beating, and the doctor had to visit her in the same place as she got that beating. It was a terrible thing, because I get partly undressed in the road. I never get vexed like that any more to this day; I beat her, I beat her and I kick her, I do a little of everything and she started to lose the baby right away on the spot. It was about three months, when they took her home she lost it. I was not going to engage the other girl, but she had such a passion in her that she could not understand. She was jealous of me that if she met me talking to you, a man,
she would fight me, unless she present to know what we are saying. If she met me in conversation about anything, she think well, I am telling you of a girl I love, and I wanting to be with her.

Hilda was not a virgin when I first knew her, she used to work with a gentleman at Pointfield and he used to be with her; he afterwards didn't want to have anything to do with her family, it was not a public thing, and the mother get to know and she against it; the mother satisfied that she should be with me than that she should be with that gentleman. He was a coloured man, a Grenadian. She was tall, tall and slim, very good-looking. Her relatives belonged to Beausejour, Carriacou, and the grandmother was a great fighter; Hilda was not a coward, she would fight anybody—before you say you ready, she meet you. She would bite and she would kick. She is in Trinidad now, and scarcely any body fight and beat her. She would fight and pay money in the court. Some women, you can't fight them, and you couldn't fight Hilda because she would not feel—the hardest blow she never bawl. All that you could do is to defeat her, and sometimes she on the ground as if she dying, she get up, and fight again. She did it with other women too, the biggest women in the field, she fight them. But after a time she had come like a savage.

When Hilda was making the first baby for me I speak to her mother, I did not write it. She told me if I love her daughter, she would be glad if I would marry to her. I told her yes. She went to the uncle, Walter Roecastle, and she told him. I told him yes, if she would behave herself I would marry to her, and he told me I must write to him if I meant it. I wrote him, but not a letter that could have stand, I knew what I was writing; I write and tell him I love his niece, and I am not promising him to marry to her right away, but if her behaviour meet my approval I would write him another letter and let him know if I married and what time I marry. So that was not a legal one—"if her behaviour was good." That was the letter I write, and when I found out that her behaviour was not pleasant or seemly, I went to him, and he knew her behaviour because sometimes she was rude to him also. So he told me he could not say anything.

At that time Hilda was coming to me at night, and sometimes I went to her mother's house to sleep, when it is late. It was a two-roomed house, but the mother hadn't many children, so we slept in one room and the mother and children in the other. This was after her uncle had written to me, I start to go and visit her in her mother house. She was fond of me very much, and I got to love her afterwards, because she was brave and helpful. I had gardens, and whatever I plant Hilda would go and work; she could work, she was brave, and even though I did not want to go by the garden, she would encourage me to go. I was with Mr. Cockburn then and I used to keep a cow on Hampstead estate, and she would cut five bundle of grass and give the cow every day. She would go and see to the cow, water it and everything, morning and evening as she was going to work. Sometimes I would give her dresses, sometimes I would give her shoes, sometimes when I get my wages I would give her six shillings, eight shillings, according. If she tell me she
want ten shillings to get some things, I would give it to her, because I find out that she had some good intentions towards me by helping, and I thought I should be generous towards her.

After Anita had the baby, Cecil, she never came back, when the baby had nine months she deliver him to me and she gone to Trinidad; she told me she have some family at Trinidad, they sent to tell her if she come to Trinidad she would get work, and she would be able to help her family. So she would leave the baby with me, if I would take it. So I told her yes, my sister would take the baby for me and care it. So we were on friendly terms when she left and go to Trinidad. She knew about Hilda, but she never worried to make a scandal or to ask me a question about that. I was supporting her baby for the nine months before she went, I was not obligated to pay an amount but sometimes I could give six shillings, sometimes eight shillings, sometimes ten shillings, according; and I used to send provisions from the garden. I used to go and visit her home, the mother was fond of me very much. Her father was dead, and she had brothers; everybody move with me on friendly terms.

After I and Hilda had quarrelled and her baby miscarried, we had fall out and the mother had fall out with me; but afterward Hilda came back herself to me again. It was not long, it was about three weeks before she sent a man by the name of Bacchus to tell me she want to see me. I didn’t go. She sent the mother; I didn’t go. She sent the brother and I did not. She came herself one night, she came and she spoke to me and she shed tears, and she kneel down and she beg my pardon, and she tell me she would not do those things again, and then my feelings got broken and I spoke to her, and we get together again. She said if I was to have anybody to speak to she would not interfere, she would not disturb me anymore. At that time I did not have any other girls, but just friendly with everybody, but as I come home she would see all the girls, they was so closely attached to me, and she did not like that. She had an imagination, and that caused her to get on in that way, but I was not with any girls at that time. And later that is what break up the living of myself and my wife, just thinking because I was seeing this person, I must have something to do with that person.

When Hilda came back the second time I was about twenty-three and still at Hampstead. She was coming for about seven to eight months before she started the second baby, she would come every night, sometimes every other night; sometimes she cook for me, sometimes she cook at the mother’s and she bring. She was almost keeping house for me, because she used to do up my clothes. Sometimes she work on the estate, and sometimes she would not work for today and she prepared my clothes for me, or sometimes one or two weeks she would not do anything, she worked in the garden and prepare my clothes and care the cow and such. Whether she want to make quarrel or not, I don’t worry with her. I don’t take her on, she would get on and keep quiet for herself, because the people start to talk and say, was I trying to be a Christian?—it is a scandal, that thing, to be with this girl on the road, and it is a rumour concerning me all the time, ruin and living this sort of
way; so whenever she threatened to make a quarrel I would not worry with her. But she still used to threaten quite a lot. I remember one morning she met me, I was talking to my mother, and when my mother was gone, well, that was the biggest fight we ever had. She said I was talking her evil to my mother, and it wasn’t any such thing. Another time my sister Eliza came to me, Hilda met us, we was talking, she did the same thing, and that caused a fight inside the yard, the labourers had to come because I gave her one blow and she fell, the labourers had to come and throw water on her and take her up, and at that my mother said if I didn’t finish with her, she through with me. But when she get up, the very night she came back and she beg my pardon and everything. I decided I am finished with her, I am going to Trinidad. She decide she was going too. Well, I decide the best thing, I allow her to come, and when I reached Trinidad I stayed three months, then I left her there, I left her and come back. She was impregnated then, I leave her, she was on Simplon estate, in care of nobody. I just leave and come back to Grenada.

The trouble with Hilda, she was very jealous of me, she would not want to hear somebody say ‘He is a nice man. He is a good-looking man and I like to see him, especially when he dressed’—she will feel well, you have a daughter, you will attract the daughter concerning me, and she would just make trouble over that. So I never get much rest with her, I would try to keep away from her, but she would come. Some women, you tell them you finish, they make a scandal, and when they reach home they come back again. Sometimes I say, ‘Don’t worry with me, don’t come where I am;’ and when I come in the house I meet her sit down on the step or inside the room. Sometimes she would tell the mother she really want to see me, then the mother will tell me, ‘She won’t eat, she not sleeping, she won’t take anything—just come and listen and then you can go home.’ When I come she would beg pardon, she would cry, she would shed tears and everything and my heart is broken. And I attach to her again. Couple of days, she will do the same thing again. The only rest I could have find is to take her to Trinidad, leave her, and come back home.

I GET MARRIED

When I came back from Trinidad I worked in Hampstead again with Mr. Cockburn on the estate, and lived at my mother in her house there. Cecil was with her too. The one that had my third child was a girl by the name of Maize, at Hampstead too. I met her at my brother Clarence, he was a watchman, living on the estate. She was about sixteen, she was not so tall, but she was stout—having a full body. She was not doing any work, she was living at her aunt’s and her aunt worked as a labourer.

I was working as a labourer in the field, picking cocoa, and the aunt used to gather cocoa after me; we were working task, and the aunt brought Maize as a helper, and while the aunt bringing in the cocoa, she used to take up the cocoa after me while I picking, and that is the way we get together. And she made my child almost immediately. I never let the aunt know before, but when she got into trouble I called the aunt and I told her about
it, I told her what had happened. She was dissatisfied, but anyway it had gone far already, she couldn’t help it. And I didn’t leave her in a careless way, I tried my best to help in all manner, to keep her up, take care of her. I used to give her some of my money, and she make the baby at her aunt’s, my mother went and help. And the christening, I had it in the Anglican church. It was a girl, Emelda, and when she was about one year and six months Maize gave her to my sister Eliza because she said she wanted to go and work and she hadn’t anybody to care the child for her when she is at work, but when the child grew she took her back. Eliza wanted her, and she was caring the child about two years when Maize took her back. And presently this child is a Seventh Day Adventist too. After Maize had the child she took up with another young man on Hampstead estate and they got married, they are both Seventh Day Adventists presently. And now she is living at Woodleigh in her own house, and the young man has his own property, but he works at Hampstead as a driver.

At this time Elder Ash was the minister of the Seventh Day Adventists, and I started to go to church; my aunt Eliza was the Deaconess of the church, and somebody told her that this girl Maize was having a baby for me. Elder Ash asked me whether it is so, I told him yes. He told me if I desired to be in the Adventists again I had to be baptized. (I baptized once in church). I told him yes. He told me if I mean it, he must go and see the girl with me to find out whether I would not have anything to do with her again, and she would not have anything to do with me again. So he took my aunt Eliza, Mrs. Isaccs, as the Deaconess of the church, and I myself, and we went and speak to her. The aunt agreed, as she did not want me to have anything to do with Maize, but just mind the baby. And it happened in that way. I was baptized again, then I saw my wife.

I left Mr. Cockburn some time about 1922, before I married, because the labourers would tell him things against me and he would believe them, and all through jealousy and ill-feeling. Some of them would find that I should not be working there; I remember one night when I came back from Demarrara (I didn’t remain, I was three weeks there, I went to work but it was my first experience of travelling and I did not like it, it is a watery place, Georgetown) —so when I reached back to St. George’s, I ring up Cockburn and he tell me well, not to go home, to come straight back, because since I left he had not had a good time, because whoever was working had not got the experience that I had. I went right back, I didn’t pass at my mother. The cocoa engine was working, they have an engine to dry cocoa, it blows a lot of hot air, and the husband of my aunt was working that engine, he is supposed to be in charge of the engine. My brother was the fireman, and the husband would get together cocoa, and the cocoa used to be short, because they knew the amount, when the barrel is full and when it is dry, what you are to get. So the husband used to take out of it and give another man to sell. My brother was the fireman, so when the husband was taking this cocoa to give this man to sell, he told me to tell Mr. Cockburn. I told Mr. Cockburn and he spoke to them about it, and he told them I told him the aunt’s husband has stolen the cocoa and given it to someone to sell.
When I came from Demarara I was working in the house; one morning when I was in the bedroom making up Mr. Cockburn's bed, I saw where the mattress had a little tear, and I feel it, I saw something as a lump, I open it. When I open it I get a little parcel tied up in the mattress with some sort of funny things in it, something like powder; it was grated with something like cheese, and some other things I don't know. I showed Mr. Cockburn and tell him, "This is what I found in your mattress;" and he pick it up and open the matter to the hearing of the labourers. Well, because that report had gone to him concerning the cocoa that was stolen, my aunt and other parties told him that the thing he found in the mattress is what I went to Demarara to get, and bring it to fool him—I want to have him as I want, I want to put some obeah² on him. He came and told me, and I ask him if he believe that? He say yes, he believe it, because it was my aunt who told him so. So I told him "Well, if you believe that I had better leave the work;" so I told him I would work away from him. So that is the way I start working at Flamstead.

I left Cockburn, I went back to my mother for one or two days, then I went to Flamstead estate. The Camerons owned Flamstead, it belonged to them from their father, and when Ted White was alive one of the Camerons was living at Flamstead, Walter. Charlie Dickson was the manager. When Walter married he went to live at Chamboise because a brother who was in charge there died. I did not know Charlie Dickson before, but I went to see him. He knew me well when I was working at Hampstead estate, because he used to send oranges and so on to Mr. Cockburn. So I went and asked him for work, he asked me why I leave, I told him, and he said, "Well yes, if you are an obeah-man I am glad, I like to have an obeah-man because I am one for myself!" And he gave me work. I worked with him, he was very kind and nice, until my brother came from Maracaibo in 1927 and he going to Aruba and he took me, I left Flamstead and I went to Aruba with him.

When I was working on Flamstead estate, sometimes I used to do three tasks in a day, forking, four by five,³ and after that I went in the garden and do as much work. Sometimes picking cocoa, they give seven baskets for a task, I used to pick twenty-one baskets for a day and still go in the garden. I used to work very very hard all the time, and I never had any help, as from wife and children, because the children was small. The only time, at the season for planting sweet potatoes, people will come to fork for me, to raise the bed for me, and when they are planting they want me to go and help them. That is the only time I get a help. Sometimes on Saturday I would ask six or seven of them to come and help me, at that time I was not in the Adventists again, so I would work Saturday, and I would cook food and feed them and they would work for the day for me. I would give them rum, too. We call that "Maroon".

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2. Obeah: magic, sorcery.
3. Four by five: four poles by five—the task measurements.
One Sunday evening, after my second baptism, I was going to the Seventh Day Adventists meeting. I had a friend by the name of Sese, who was living very near to my grandmother, and we used to go together, then I used to be at them reading the Bible with them, and she tell me that Maggie said she loved me. But I had no intention concerning that. On that Sunday evening, I leave from choir practice in the church, and I met Maggie coming up towards my way. As Maggie went, I suggested to Sese that I was not sure, I wanted to find out whether what Sese told me was the truth. Sese told me yes, Maggie loved me, and later Maggie told me too, but I never worry. But afterwards, she after me all the time to say what I would do, and I promised her yes, I would do it. She told my brother Popeson about it, she told my sister Melita about it, she would always tell my brother about it, and I agreed to marry to her. When I proposed to her, she told me to let her brother know.

I wrote to the brother; he said he would not agree, he don’t want that thing in the family at all. He said I am a Creole and they are East Indians and he doesn’t want Creole to be in his family. But she said she didn’t care, she would be glad that I should marry to her, because she loved me. She was Isaacs’ granddaughter, the old man was married to my aunt Eliza. My wife is an Indian, full Indian. I knew her long, before I went and join the Seventh Day Adventists I knew her, because her mother died and she grew up with my aunt. She was Maggie Richardson, she was motherless and fatherless, both had died. I was 27 when I married, in August, 1924, and she was about eighteen. She was Seventh Day Adventist, too.

When I told my aunt, Mrs. Isaacs, she told me ‘My son, I would not encourage you to do that, because I am in the family and suffering a lot, and if you put yourself in it you will suffer like me, your life would be a little hell.’ I did not tell her anything, but I said insomuch as she loved me, if two parties love they are able to make life all right. At that time I did love her. I did not sleep with her, she was a good Adventist person, and I loved her in one sense because she was quite sensible, she was better read than I am, and she had many things in her which I appreciated, such as home concern, she could have done plenty of drawn work and sewing, as to make table-cloth and so on; and she was well read. Not so pretty, but not ugly.

I wrote a letter for her, and Jacob Richardson, her brother, did not agree, but she herself agreed because she said she haven’t mother, she haven’t father, and he was the responsible one for her, and he was taking lots of advantage of her, so she was satisfied to get married. He had property, and she had to work for him as a labourer, she his sister; she had a little piece of garden for herself. And she used to cut sometimes ten bundles of grass to feed his cattle, to feed mule and donkey and so on, and it was terrible for her, and she told me that is why she would like to marry, to free from it. She had a little bit of land, quarter of an acre; he had about five acres then. He bought them after his parents died, the parents left some money for them. And whatsoever he had, when the first bit of land that was going to sell, he borrowed some more on interest to make up, and he bought the first, and after he work for that, and he open out a little business, and through that he was able to purchase the rest.
Jacob Richardson said he did not want to have anything to do with my family, but when we did not stop, he called my mother and he told my mother I wrote him a letter for his sister but he does not like it, I have not anything, I am a Creole, and he does not like me to marry to his sister. My mother said she doesn’t know, she can’t say anything because I did not tell her anything. She did not want to carry on any conversation with me, because I had told her from the beginning, and she told me that if it is in my mind she can’t say anything, because she have not to live in the house with my wife.

I was living with my grandmother then, and Maggie and I continue for sometime, until it get to the church, and they said we can’t continue, we had better married. I married to her honest, I didn’t make any love to her. We would come from church together at night, we walk and we talk like friends, but nothing else. There is one thing in me to believe the teaching of the Seventh Day Adventists, and I thought it was better to be honest in everything, and I was honest all the way; and when I suggested that we should get married, we arranged between the two of us.

The deacon, the second leader after the minister, he said ‘‘You cannot continue in this life, you both are young, the devil is busy and it might bring shame, and you better settle down in life, whether the family willing or not, you have your wife in the right, you settle down in life and things will go better’’. He say so to me alone, after church. And sometimes on Sundays we used to walk in the gardens together, myself and him, we would meet, we always discuss about that. And I told my sister Melita about it, and she got all the equipment, the dress and everything for the wedding, and she took my wife to the church and Wilfred took me to the church, best man. We went and lived by ourselves. I had no dance, no feast, my mother gave an evening dinner for us, and we went home. Because the Adventist people don’t believe in having a dance or a fete or so.

I had a house on the estate at that time, rent free, two rooms. It had a kitchen, it hadn’t any lavatory but it had a place prepared. And we didn’t remain there very long on the estate. Her uncle Jacob Isaacs had some money for her, and she made me write to him and ask him for the money, and as he got the letter he sent to call her and he gave her £11 and she brought it home. I enquired of a house, I got one at Dieppe for £7 and we bought it. The estate had given me a spot, but Adam, her brother, called me, he had just bought a piece of land at Belvidere, he told me instead of all going to live on the estate, put the house on his land and I could live there, I wouldn’t have any trouble. I didn’t want to go there because he did not care for me to marry to his sister, but my wife told me, ‘‘if he wants us to come we had better go, and perhaps later on he will do something good for us.’’

The land was in a very bad condition. I was working on the estate, coming back and working the land, fork it up, manure it, and where the cocoa had almost died it revived and get all pretty. When he saw that he start to accuse my wife and say she taking up his nutmeg to mind me—that she was stealing his nutmeg, and selling it to buy things to make me happy. When I heard so, that was in 1927 when I was at Flamstead, I left home.
my brother Ralphie came from Maracaibo, he was going to Aruba, and someone told him if he is able, to take me with him, because since I married my wife, Adam is saying a lot of ugly things concerning me, and if he takes me away I will be able to work and do things better. I went, and I remained in Aruba ten months.

During that time, 1926, 1927, my wife and I kept a shop. I went to Smith because I used to buy flour there, and we ask him if he would give the goods to sell, every time we sell and pay. And he did that. He always asked to give us, every time we sell, we pay. The shop was in the yard, Maggie was in charge of the shop and I used to work on the estate. We never sold only flour, rice, sugar, biscuits, salt-fish and so. For about two years we were doing very well, afterwards there was a falling away from the business by crediting the people and they could not pay; things went on bad on the estate with them, they were giving them only two days' work a fortnight, they could not pay and we run indebted. We were indebted about £5 and had to work to pay it off. When I was in Aruba my wife kept on the business, and I sent her some money, first £11, afterwards £8, and afterward I sent £5 and then I didn't send any more. According to the money that I sent to her, she was able to keep up the business.
Dark Puritan
PART III—WORK AND WOMAN TROUBLE
M. G. SMITH

MORE ABOUT HAMPSTEAD

I would like to feel, with all the experience that I had with Mr. White, that his family, if they get this book to read, can see and know how I have been with him, honest. And even up to this time, whatsoever I am doing, whenever he visit me in vision and something is wrong, he come and speak to me, he is always right. The two of us never had any quarrels, never.

He married about 1913, he was married in Princeton, a very big wedding. I had been learning tailor about six months then, I was not working with him. He called me one morning, and say, "You must come back, I want you and you must come." I said, "I am learning tailor now, I can't come." He said, "You are supposed to come, I want you and you must come; I want all my old servants back because I am going to marry." I feel that the work was too much, he said, "You must come, I want you, you must come." So I said, "if I must come, you must see my mother about that." He said, "I will see her today, and tomorrow please God I will see you." He went to the field and he saw my mother and he said, "I saw Norman this morning, and I want him back to work, to do his old work, butlering." She said, "He learning tailor now, sir, I would not want him to leave it." He said, "You must allow him to come." When I return she said, "Mister Ted say he want you to work, he want to have you; I don't know what you want to do."

When I went to see him he hand me a letter, when I opened it, it told me to get a set of white suit, white shirt, white shoes. He going to have a big dance and he want me to come. I said I would work for him a little time and then I get away, but I couldn't get away that time, until he passed away in my hands. He held me so close I couldn't get away till he passed away. It was about two years after I went back before he died.

He used to talk to me at night, late at night. If the wife did anything wrong he would call me and tell me, and sometimes he would sleep on the bed here and I would sleep on the carpet on the ground. Sometimes at night I would get Florida water and Cologne water and I would rub him down, I would rub his feet—he couldn't sleep at night. The real trouble was, he used to have dealings with the ordinary field women, and they gave him a spirit. An evil spirit he had, because sometimes he say, "Look at an amount of little children breaking their necks!" He would run and hide, sometimes he would stand up talking to somebody, he would talk and talk, and ask me if I didn't see the person. They gave him an evil spirit because he had money, and they ask him for money, and everybody wanting to get. The servant that used to work for him, when she died she left a good amount.
of money in the bank, and she left a house, she leave cattle, she leave horse and so on, and everybody talk about it; and that is the way she get that money—by handling this witchcraft to get him stupid, then she get this money to bank it up. She used to get the money from him. It was a disgraceful thing to see his condition, and all his friends feel that they couldn’t come to enjoy an afternoon with him, because he came as a little child. Yes, he became a little child.

He was like that for more than two years. When I left before, he was like that but it used to come and go. He was married, but it used to come and go, After he married I did not stay with him very long before I went away, then he called me back.

When he died it had over a hundred motor cars in his funeral, and people walking after the motor cars—you could have scarcely tell where the coffin was, and the church was so packed, and some people never get to see where he was buried until afterwards, days afterwards. It was in the Anglican Church at Verdun. They didn’t have anything for him, no wake, no third night, nine night—the people in the estate, nobody never had anything for him, and I don’t believe anybody ever offered anything for him; I didn’t, but when I got in this work and see him often, he visiting me, I went in two churches and gave a service for him, a Mass. That was in the Roman Catholic Church, where I was ordered to go.

He was a good age, he died in middle age and his wife was young when he died, she married pretty young. She was educated in England, and part of his education in England, too, but he was more for plantering, he was on the father’s side. He had three children on the estate, different women. The estate people didn’t mind that. They lived with their mothers, sometimes the children used to go to his house.

The people on the estate lived together quite well because Mr. White was a peacemaker, and if it comes to any quarrel he would settle that. As soon as it came to a quarrel they would leave and come to the yard and consult him, and when he listen he would stop them. They never quarrel about money or land or so, they quarrel about work; the women in the boucan, you know they always have little bickerings among themselves, sometimes one tell this of another, and doing this, and not supposed to put your hand there, and another one feel “I am the head, I must issue orders,” and so on. This one want to issue orders and that one want to issue orders, and that one wouldn’t want to carry out orders, and it bring confusion. Sometimes some of them quarrel and fight, and he laugh at their jokes, and they obliged to give up fighting.

About every three years he would go to England. When he returned he would bring shirts and dresses, presents for the labourers. Mr. Archibald at Innswood, whenever he went to England and he coming back, the people dress with their frocks and flowers and meet him coming in the buggy a mile off the house, and they would beat this drum and they would surround the carriage, a procession after him. I know he would bring many presents
for them, too. They would all give their people cropover, and sometimes they would allow them to have some pleasure and they would give them a lunch, just as how Mr. White would do.

Flamstead estate was next to Hampstead, the workers didn’t use to quarrel with the workers at Hampstead, because partly all the labourers are family. But at Carnival they had a fight coming back home, boasting against one another. Flamstead feel they can handle the whip better than Hampstead, so they went on until they could decide that Hampstead was better, after three Carnivals they fight each other, after that they stop and they get on friendly terms again. Each estate feel that its manager was better—Hampstead feel that they get better treated, and Flamstead feel the same. But to me that was not so, because Mr. Archibald did his best for his labourers just the same, it was only Mr. White would do more, because he feel that nobody mustn’t do anything better than him, but the labourers at Flamstead were well treated.

Mr. White’s mother used to live at Hampstead, and there was a woman among the labourers by the name of Mamie, a creole.* His mother was that woman’s aunt—she is living up there now. He treated her very well, he never treated labourers any different, whoever they were. Always respectful to anything they needed. They would ask him for money, sometimes on Saturdays he would go to Sauteurs market and see some of them, he would say “I see Mamie out there”, or “Cook’s son. Call him for me.” When they come he say “I see you, what you doing here?”, he would say “Come and see what the market is like.” He would say “How much you want?” They would say, “If you give me a two shillings, sir, I buy some fish.” He would say “Nonsense two shillings, give them ten shillings, five dollars;” he would say “If you want anything, go to the shop, say I sent you.”

The estates around was one family, scarcely any strangers in the group; the old people, when I was there, they were born on the estate; my grandmother born on the estate and she live there, and after she live a good old age, she was unable to work, her daughter married and took her to live at her home, and she died there. My mother born on the estate, and if I hadn’t taken her away she might have died on the estate too. My mother’s sisters were living there too. One big family. The men stayed on the estate, too, Keith, Darkie, myself—only Ralphie, of my mother’s sons didn’t work on the estate.

I stayed on in the house after Mr. White died, Mr. Cockburn became manager. They cut down my wages. I was only getting a shilling a day. The first time I worked with Mr. Cockburn, when he was still overseer, he knew well I was his cousin but he didn’t say so.

After Mr. White died I stayed on for six months because of the wife, but I was afterwards in possession of the house for a period of about three or four years more for Cockburn, because after Mr. White died, he became manager of the estate, and I had known most of the business of the house.

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* Creole—In this context, a Grenadian of African descent.
so I was kept there to take up telephone messages, care the house and care the flowers-garden and everything. The wife went away six months after he died and she came back to England. When he was dead a few months she married and she gave up the house.

After the wife went away Cockburn he never married, but he had children; he had a woman, but she wasn't in the house with him, and the children didn't stay with him. He was living there along with me. He was very strict and all for himself, he was not a kind of person at all. Everything what Mr. White used to do was stopped, he never kind to the people; he quarrel with them plenty. If the people want anything as a help, he think it hard to help them— he never help them. Of course he was only a coloured man, but he hadn't the right principles that Mr. White had; he always have things to himself. He is working, if is anything he could have it to himself, the labourers have no facilities with him. Even though there was an attorney for the estate, if you want anything you would go and ask Mr. Ronald White, Mr. Ronald send you to him, Cockburn would tell the attorney he haven't. He always try to tell the attorney "Well, he mustn't do so and so for the labourers, because they take a great advantage of Mr. Ted White." And that is how it is, sometimes the white people would like to treat the poorer class of people good. But according to those that have a little privilege over the poorer class, they are sowing bad in the white people. Such as you have an overseer. You would like to give the labourers a little facilities, sell some coconut give them, sell some provision to them. "No sir, don't do that, because if they people get anything and you want them to do anything, they won't do it. Better sell it to strangers." Sometimes a man will come and say, "Boss, my house is bad; lend me a little money and I will make manure from a cattle for you to pay back." He will suggest it to the overseer, and the overseer will say "No, don't do that, sir, because when you do it they feel they won't work again, and you going to lost your money."

And that is the way most of the people suffer in the hands of the white people, because of having a man of your colour in the work, who tells them things against the poor class of people. And that's the way the whole of Grenada upset. By the overseer, the drivers on the estate, and the watchman. They goes and tell the owner—suppose the owner would say "Give this man a cattle-pole on the estate, let him make as much manure as he could". "Boss, you better not give this man a cattle-pole because having the privilege to walk on the estate, he will cut the provisions, he will see where the coconut is, he will see where the nutmeg is, you will have more trouble with that man. Better not give him." He rent a piece of garden to the labourers, but he have two coconut trees in the garden: "You better make an arrangement not to let him take the coconuts, you didn't rent the coconut, you only rent the land to him, and if he take two coconuts in the garden he will take a hundred outside, and say he getting them in his garden. If he not getting any, whenever we see him with a coconut we know he steal it." It is just like that since a few years ago. In Grenada they used to give the labourers things—sometimes you ask for a coconut, Mr. White send the watchman
with you to go and pick, he tell the watchman to give you a dozen coconuts, the watchman give you three dozen, four dozen. They never sell to the labourers. Afterwards they start selling, they would weigh and count. But now they are all spite: “Leave the coconut on the ground let it rotten, don’t sell no bluggo to them, sir, because is too much they will get.” “They calling strike, they don’t want to work, sir; only when they work you pay them, sir.” That is how Grenada start to suffer. But in the old days there wasn’t that at all. Like the De Gales, whether you working or not working with them, you have any grievance, you go to them and ask them for a favour of any kind, they would gladly do that and sorry for you. But because in the strike our colour has done bad things, these white people, they talk about it, and when one meet up with the other they say they have something as a council among themselves, and everyone does the same thing.

Cockburn was a brown skin, very little different than me. We are relatives, his mother and my father are two sister’s children. He knew that, but they never acknowledge us as a family. He have sisters, they don’t want to know that we are poor people to be connected with the family. But he knows that, and sometimes we tell him, but his sisters would say “Don’t tell them anything about that, they knows no family but their mother and their father.” They were prejudice against us, they say we so low down to be connected with the family, they don’t want people to know.

Oftentimes he get into a quarrel with the labourers; sometimes he give the people overwork on the estate, and they would quarrel and call up the attorney, and he would have to judge them, and the labourers would say how wicked and cruel he was to them, and of course the attorney wouldn’t say anything to him in presence of the labourers to give them the right, but he would listen and he would say, “All right, you go to work, I will see to that.” I know one of the men beat Cockburn for giving them overwork, and they had a quarrel between them for a whole two days; Cockburn sometimes used to ride late at night going at his mother, and the man wait for him in the road, Cockburn was riding a mule, and the man take his belt and beat him. When he came home he call me, the man was still coming to him, and I went to put the mule in the stable; and while I was putting the mule in the stable, he leaning on the gallery and he talking to him. While he talking to him, the man come and get him and give him one or two belts again, and Cockburn fired a revolver. But not that he wanted to shoot the man, he fire it to get him scared.

It was then they stop cropover. Long ago Grenada was all very friendly, and more helpful to the poorer class of people—the people having children, they would ask the estate owner for clothes for the children, they would give them some old clothes for the children, for themselves, anybody. But now they would rather bury it than give it away. No charity. The change began gradually from 1911, and Mr, MacLarence had predicted that. He was a person used to go all over Grenada preaching and prophesying things to come, and he predicted that a certain change would take place from 1911 onwards, and the people would be seeing trouble, and he advised the poor
people to check up and try to save up as much as they can. 1912 he
tell them even the old cutlass and the old hoe they are throwing away,
to try and save it, because a little later they would not be able to get
it. And 1914 when the First World War broke out, the men used to look
for the old barrel-hoop to make knife, and any piece of old steel to make
cutlass, they couldn’t get cutlass to buy. Some people had to take bags
to make pants to work in, because they couldn’t get clothes for the War.
He predicted that in 1911, 1912. And during the first war, that was the time
when the change started, and they started to sell everything on the estates
to the labourers—bluggoes and everything. Before, they used to sell you
a bunch of bluggoes, didn’t matter how big it is, for six pence, but during
the war they say five pounds they would sell for a penny. After, they would
sell five pounds for a fourpence, until presently they sell in the same way,
and sometimes they don’t sell at all. And the money that they paid you,
instead of drawing the money, they would give you work, they would sell
you provisions and charge that to you, and when they call you for your
wages on Saturday you scarcely draw anything. That is how they does now.
Yes, if your cattle does some damage they would charge you ten shillings,
and if you work ten shillings they take the whole thing on Saturday. They
just call your name and they scratch it out—and they don’t give you any
more work, sometimes. That is how the poorer class of people suffer the most,
because they take an advantage of them. Sometimes they give you a task,
ten rod, twelve rod, and they would look at it when you finished, if they
find a little bush standing in the task that was measured for you, sometimes
the overseer would claim the whole day’s pay for that. When the driver find
a little bush he report to the overseer, the overseer report to the manager,
and they claim a whole day’s pay for that—they don’t go and see it them-
selves. Sometimes they give you a month holiday. Sometimes it is carelessly
done, but sometimes it is only a mistake, whereas you could rectify it. That
happen to me at Hampstead, when I used to work as labourer on the estate,
before I went away to Trinidad.

I worked with Cockburn for a time after Mr. White died, but afterward
I feel that I should not work in the house any more, because I am getting
to be a man that could manage on my own. So I left the house and I went
working in the fields—picking cocoa, pruning cocoa, digging drains, all sorts
of work. The size of a task was according, and they were paying a shilling
still, but you got the tools, everything, for yourself. When Mr. Ted White
was alive he used to get the forks; as soon as the season come in, he would
order for an amount and he would tell you you work and pay for it;
sometimes he would take two shillings, and sometimes he won’t worry.
He would give the women each their hoe and their cutlass, the men their
fork and their cutlass. Sometimes you want an axe, you ask him and he
give it to you.

When I stop working for Mr. Cockburn in the house, I had my own
house; I used to get up six o’clock in the morning to go to work. They used
to ring three bells, one at six, one half-past six and one seven o’clock,
George Phillips was the driver, I got on very well with him because I always obedient. Sometimes in measuring the tasks, he would call me to assist him. I used to get on very well with him, until the people start to get jealous and say things of me that wasn’t true. They say sometimes I don’t measure tasks properly; sometimes they find I am not the person to do that, because if anything happen I would be in possession of the driver work. So they would tell Mr. Cockburn “Don’t allow him to do that work.”

I had a garden and I used to plant bluggoes, and plenty of corn, peas and (sweet) potatoes; sometimes I could make about eight barrels of corn. Three-quarters of an acre, the garden at Hampstead. Then I had one on the Bourgogne estate, one on the Tempe estate, and one where I used to plant corn and peas at Dieppe above Levera. That was about a quarter of an acre. I never had to pay rent, but at Dieppe Mr. Grey said we must give him a share out of the corn whenever we plant, but I never give him. I planted cane at Bourgogne, sometimes I get six kerosene tins of sugar, sometimes eight. We would cut it and pull it to the mill, and the estate would make it and give half and take half.

I had hernia at that time, it start when I was a young boy. Dr. Markland gave me something called a truss to wear, and I wore that a long time before I got operated on. I got operated on in 1937 when I went to Trinidad, then it stop for a while, but it still come back sometimes. I had quite a lot of trouble with it before, sometimes I couldn’t do anything, when they come and find me I cannot even talk. And then one night I was thinking of going to get operated on again, and I saw as if a woman came and she told me, “Don’t go and I will settle you all right;” and she put me lie down on the back and she settle her hands in my waist and stomach, and she telling me “You all right now, don’t worry your mind about anything.” And I don’t understand how it don’t trouble me now. It is a painful thing in truth, I first remember having it about 1916 when I was young, and I didn’t know what it was. Then I went to Dr. Markland and he told me it was hernia and gave me the truss to wear, and I got relief with it for some time, I could do any hard work.

When I was working at Cockburn, my brother had a dog by the name of Early, and sometimes it would leave him home and go and bark at a manicou while he is far away, and I would take the other boys with me, and we go and drag that manicou, and by the time we get that one, he would go again and perhaps we catch five for the night. Sometimes if I wanted to go and hunt, I would pass by the house and whistle. And later I find there was a better dog, I bought him; from the time I bought him, he start to hunt. And one day my brother Clarence take him, he went in
the mountain, and he hear the dog barking and when he go and see, it was a tattoo—an animal big like hog, but having a shell on the back like tortoise. And we used to hunt with this dog. I went to Trinidad, the first dog I bought, we started to hunt tattoo again, goopie, the same thing. But when I started to do this work, you cannot go and hunt, you cannot eat any of these animals, so I stop as the work was beginning. You take a cutlass and dagger for hunting; sometimes I would leave at night and get up in the forest, and coming back five o'clock in the morning, sometimes seven o'clock in the morning. We used to take a masanto to go hunting in the forest at night, myself and a young man called Logi. He was living near me at Trinidad. But in Grenada I used to go and hunt with my brothers Darkie and Clarence, and sometimes we would go with a masanto in the river, walking with the cutlass, and all the fish would come to the top and we would catch that.