

STATEMENT

OF

MERVIN DENNY RICHARDSON

DOB: 13TH OCTOBER 1940

11 Railway Terrace, Pembroke East PG 15

I am the above-named person and am a retired businessman. I live at the address given with my wife Constance Richardson.

My ancestors are the Smiths and Talbots from Tuckers Town. BD Talbot was my great great grandmother's brother. My fathers' great great great great Aunts were sister. Lydia Smith and Julia Talbot. Their brother BD Talbot, BD being short for Benjamin Darrell Talbot's remains are buried at Holy Trinity Church in Baileys Bay.

Lydia Smith and Julia Talbot owned land in Tuckers Town. They owned 35 acres each. BD Talbot owned 70 acres. All told between then they owned 140 acres of land. When the expropriations began BD Talbot wanted 25,000 pounds for his land but this was refused by the tribunal and was reduced to 8000 pounds working out to be a third of what he wanted.

The sisters Lydia Smith and Julia Talbot received a nominal sum for their property less than half each of what BD Talbot got.

The two sisters used the proceeds of their land and bought land on Knapton Hill where many of their descendants, members of my family still live today.

BD Talbot was a businessman because he had the only general supply store in Tuckers Town. He had horse drawn vehicles, carts and carriages and supplied people in the Tuckers Town community and in Hamilton Parish. Hamilton Parish is a part of the Tuckers Town as well.

Lydia Smith and Julia Talbot farmed their land and raised crops. Tuckers Town at that time was not a place where people went to be nosy and they were able to conceal runaway slaves. Everyone who had lots of land like them had places where they could conceal someone, feed them and provide them with work and a place to sleep.

After losing his land BD Talbot purchased the land in Devils Hole and erected a building and had his grocery store and residence in that building. His residence was upstairs and the grocery store downstairs. The building still stands today. It is located right on the roadside in Devils Hole. There is a lane on one side and beyond the lane is Devils Hole Club, Harrington Workmen's Club.

Lydia and Julia, after losing their land and growing too old to farm, divided the property they purchased in Knapton Hill among their grandsons and that is how my father got property in Knapton Hill.

My mother lived and worked in Tuckers Town and she grew up there and went to school there. The school building still stands today. It is the residence or dormitory for employees working in that area. The church is still there and it's also a dormitory. The buildings were appropriated to interested parties, either Mid Ocean or Castle Harbour.

Before you reach these buildings, there is the entrance on the left called the Stables where BD Talbot kept his horses. Today there are workshops where the stables once were kept. This was all a part of BD Talbot's land and today they repair golf carts there.

Dinah Smith was the niece of BD Talbot and she owned property in Tuckers Town. Her property was taken by a tribunal even though she resisted and did not leave her house. The negotiators Seaward Toddings, Goodwin Gosling and one other whose name I forgot went to her and asked why she was being stubborn not wanting to move out of her house. Dinah poured a pot of hot soup on one of these men. The Police were sent for from St. George's and they removed her kicking and screaming. She was highly emotional about it.

As a result, she was placed in another house. All of her belongings were out and rotting. She would not go into the house and stayed outside until she died of exposure from the elements not long after she had been removed from her land.

I had three great uncles all of whom served in the first World War. One had lost his leg while overseas and they replaced it with a cork prothesis, and he was sent back to Bermuda. He was alive when I was a little boy. When they returned to Bermuda they could not return to Tuckers Town where they had lived before going overseas.

The travesty is that they had served the British Government in time of war.

I am familiar with the Marsden graveyard. It was at back of the Marsden Church. All that remains of it today is the small area surrounded by a stone wall that serves as a token marking of what appears to be an official graveyard. The graveyard was much larger than what can be seen today, that which I have just described. The Savage map will indicate

the extent of the original graveyard removed to make way for a fairway as part of the Castle Harbour Golf Course.

That graveyard being the Marsden Methodist graveyard were some of my ancestors were buried as well as other residents of Tuckers Town was not given the degree of respect deserving of the dead.

As a descendant of the Tuckers Town residents, I have always been interested in the history of that community and the events leading up to the removal of those families. During my adult life I was a member of the Tuckers Town Historical Society. One of the things we did was question a statement made by lawyer Peter Smith. It has been reported in the Royal Gazette that Peter Smith had defended his fathers' decision to what had been paid to the residents of Tuckers Town when their lands were taken away from them. Peter Smith claimed that his father had said that the people of Tuckers Town were treated fairly. This would have been sometime after 1998.

I, and a number of the descendants of Tuckers Town, were infuriated by Peters remarks with which we completely disagreed with. This is how the Tuckers Town Historical Society came into being. We had continuous meetings about how to deal with the results of the compulsory acquisition of Tuckers Town land.

We became involved with the big conversation and we took two bus loads of people, the descendants of former residents and other interested parties down and spent the day touring the area and pointing out residences occupied by previous Tuckers Town people and old landmarks. Uncle Ben's house, BD Talbot House, which still stands. BD Talbot is

Uncle Ben, that's what children called him. Adults called him BD. Today that house is lived in by Dr. Ian Campbell.

Our group has also done research using various sources some outside Bermuda. We researched Furness Withy's role in the acquisition of the land. They are the ones that introduced Castle Harbour and Mid Ocean Club. Blacks could not go to those clubs.

At this juncture, we can draw in other participants who were members of the Tuckers Town Historical Society. This would be icing on the cake. I would like to turn the cake into something meaningful, repossession or fair prices to be paid to the descendants of the Tuckers Town residents for what was unfairly taken.

Signed by: Mervin Richardson

The foregoing statement was recorded by the undersigned at 11 Railway Terrace, Pembroke on the 2nd and 3rd of September 2020. Read over to and signed by the maker as correct.

Carlton E. Adams