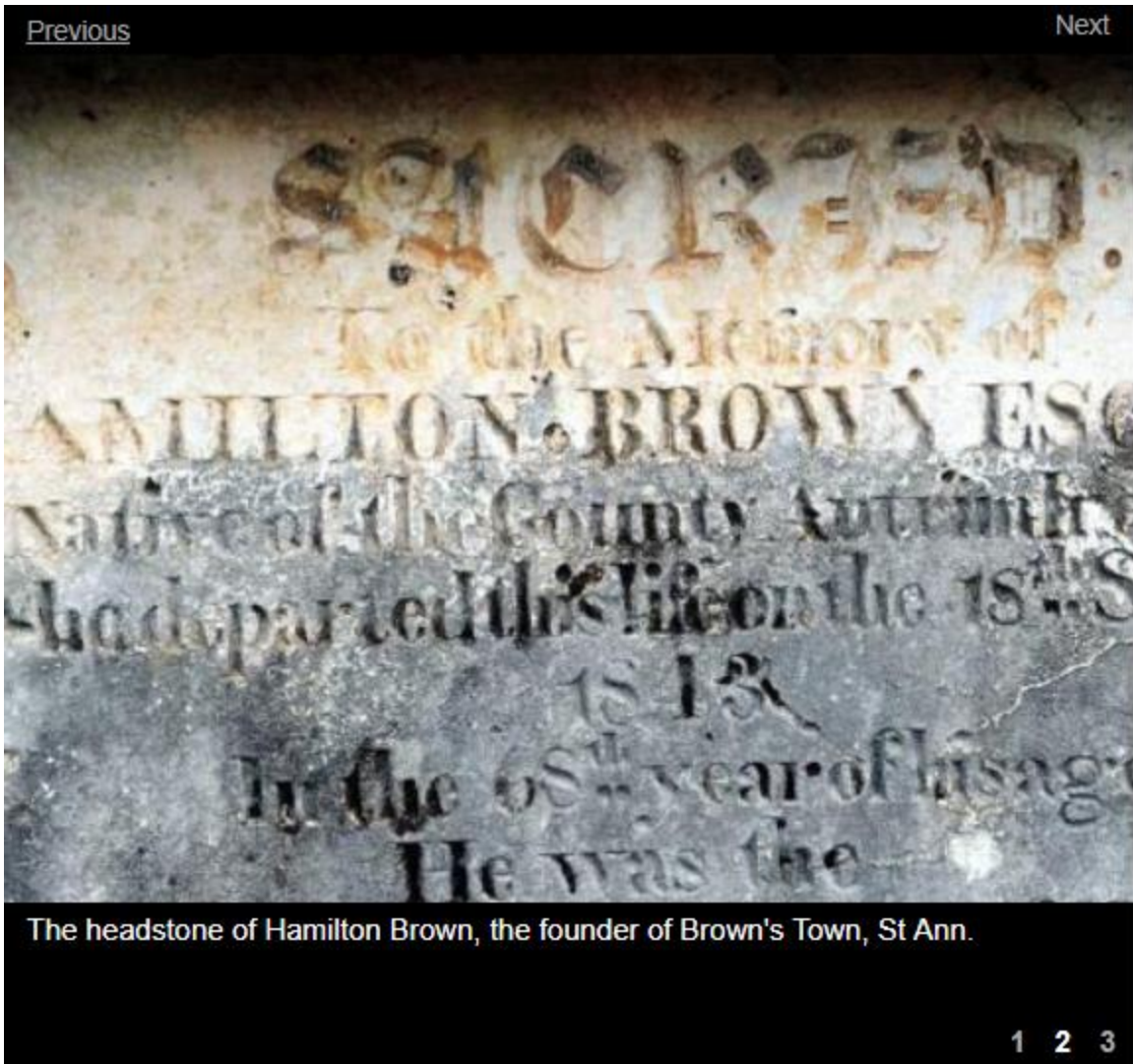# Uncovering Secrets In Brown's Town

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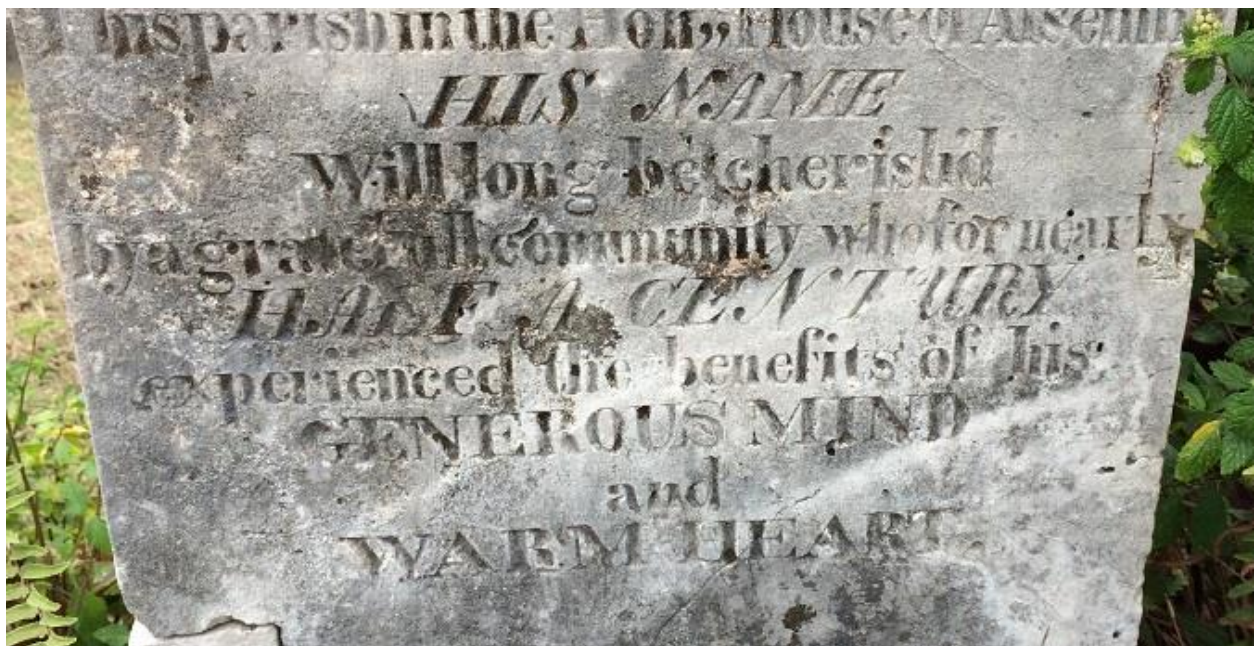Hamilton Brown (b. 1775, d. Sep. 18, 1843)
Great great grandfather of Kamala D. Harris via Chistiana Brown and Joseph A. Harris, Kamala's great grandparents.

The headstone of Hamilton Brown, founder of Brown's Town.

Previous   Next

The headstone of Hamilton Brown, the founder of Brown's Town, St Ann.

1 **2** 3

The headstone of Hamilton Brown, the founder of Brown's Town, St. Ann.

[Inscription:

SACRED.
To the Memory of
HAMILTON BROWN ESQ'RE
A Native of the County Antrim Ireland
who departed this life on the 18th Sept.
1843
In the 68th year of his age
He was the
FOUNDER OF THIS TOWN
Was 22 years one of the Representatives for
This parish in the Hon'ble House of Assembly
HIS NAME
Will long be cherish'd
by a gratefull community who for nearly
HALF A CENTURY
experienced the benefits of his
GENEROUS MIND
and
WARM HEART]

[Source: Hamilton Brown. (Sep. 18, 1843). Grave, b. 1775, d. Sep. 18, 1843, Saint Mark's Anglican Church, Brown's Town, Saint Ann, Jamaica, Memorial ID 134630249. Find A Grave Memorial.]

The graveyard at the Anglican Church in Brown's Town, St. Ann. – photos by Norman Grindley/Chief Photographer

THERE WAS a peppery smell in the air and it seemed the rain that only moments earlier had subsided, made the scent even stronger. People were walking about with energy as photographer Norman Grindley and I passed the market in Brown's Town, St Ann.

It was early afternoon on a Friday, and the town was getting more crowded with every passing hour.

A tall fellow with thick black hair was preparing a bunch of callaloo for a waiting customer, while a woman in a long skirt sat holding a small bag containing a yellow powder.

Beep! Beep! A grey stationwagon drove by.

As we struggled to stay on the narrow sidewalk, we noticed an elderly man coming our way. He had an unruly grey beard and wore spectacles with thick frames and cloudy lenses.

"Hallo! Hallo!" he said. We stopped and returned the greeting. The man gave his name as Ferly and he told us a bit about Brown's Town.

"A good amount of Brown live here, you know," he said. "People what name Brown pack up the place. It all coming from Hamilton Brown who the town name after. Yes man, dem teach it in school," said Ferly, nodding.

He told us that Hamilton Brown was buried in the graveyard at the nearby Anglican Church. "But a lot of people don't even know that. Is only long-time people like me know dem tings," he said.

It started raining again, so we had to say a quick goodbye before making a hasty retreat.

We sought shelter under a covered bus stop next to a short, stocky man who smelled like onions. Across the road, a policeman holding a baton kept a close eye on passers-by, even as they moved quickly to get out of the rain. He had a pointy moustache and appeared suspicious of everyone. "Pull up yuh pants!" he bellowed at a passing teenager who quickly complied with the order.

Onion Man next to me snickered.

Thankfully, the rain eased up before long and we headed up the road.

The Anglican Church sits on a hill overlooking the town centre. It's a beautiful old building with a well-manicured lawn. A middle-aged woman was standing near the back door. She wore a blue blouse and a skirt that stopped at her ankles.

"Welcome," she said. We mentioned to her that Ferly had told us that the founder of Brown's Town was buried in the graveyard. "Well, I not really sure about that you know. Even though I am here 27 years now," she said. "Maybe some other people might know about it, but I never really hear about that."

We told her we would look around in the graveyard anyway. She nodded and headed inside the church.

Now it seems most, if not all, of the graves in the yard are quite old. A lot of the tombstones are cracked and faded making it difficult to read anything written on them.

There was one, though, that stood out. It was close to the church and a little higher than the rest. I walked over to it and brushed it off with my hands. I could make out some of the words.

It read, in part:

Hamilton Brown
Died 1843
Founder of this town

From what else I could see, Hamilton Brown represented St Ann in the House of Assembly for 22 years. There was something at the end about always being remembered, but I couldn't see exactly what it was.

[SACRED.
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[From *Hamilton Brown. (Sep. 18, 1843). Grave, b. 1775, d. Sep. 18, 1843, Saint Mark's Anglican Church, Brown's Town, Saint Ann, Jamaica, Memorial ID 134630249. Find A Grave.*]

So it turns out Ferly was right after all. With his help, we managed to uncover a small secret sitting almost in the middle of the town. Not bad for a day's work, I say.

Where should Robert go next? Let him know at robert.lalah@gleanerjm.com.