



**MUSIC
FOR WORK AND PLAY**

CARRIACOU, GRENADA, 1962

RECORDED BY ALAN LOMAX

Music for Work and Play: Carriacou, Grenada, 1962

Compiled and annotated by Rebecca S. Miller, Hampshire College

Track 1. “Meet Me On The Road” (pass play). Sung by Beatrice Dick (lead vocal) with chorus, La Resource, Carriacou, 2 August 1962.

On holidays such as All Saints’ and All Souls’ night (November 1st and 2nd), unmarried teenagers and sometimes children traditionally gathered at crossroads (intersections) throughout Carriacou to participate in social dance games called pass plays. The dancers form a ring, in some instances with boys on one side and girls on another. As the group sings, a boy or girl alternately dances in the ring; while singing and clapping, the person in the ring dances over to the edge and touches a person of the opposite sex who then takes the place of the dancer in the ring. In this manner, participants dance until everybody has had a turn. The songs feature call and response with a repeated chorus, often sung in two- or three-part harmony and sometimes accompanied by hand clapping. When Alan Lomax recorded this pass play, he was told by a male informant that the boy picks the next girl, “dances around ... then they wheel [swing] and then next one [another] ... He leaves and the next one coming.” By the mid-1990s, pass plays were only infrequently performed in Carriacou and were no longer limited to unmarried teenagers. Adults and teens might incorporate a pass play into the fun during Christmas-time serenading by adults and teenagers alike.

Track 2. “Wila-Wila Mena.” (Scotch/reel engage.) “Bodo,” triangle; Anderson Wells, double-headed drum; Conrad James, violin; Isaiah Augustin, tambourine. Recorded in Six Roads, Carriacou, 1 August 1962.



This tune is sometimes played prior to the beginning of a quadrille dance evening for a ritualistic “wetting of the ring” ceremony. The dancers offer libation for the ancestors, an African-derived practice common to many black diasporic cultures. The dancers then dance in a circle in front of the violinist, tambourine player, double-headed drum (“bass drum”), and triangle player. As they dance, they sprinkle the ground first with water, then with locally-made rum (“Jack Iron”), and followed by other beverages. As in the Big Drum ceremony, this libation serves as an invitation to the ancestral spirits

to join the ceremony (see McDaniel 1998; see also *“Tombstone Feast: Funerary Music of Carriacou,”* Rounder 3719). As the music ends, the eight quadrille dancers then take their places as opposing couples forming a square. Lomax’ recording begins with the entire ensemble playing the tune and, in turn, focuses first on the triangle, then the “bass” drum, and back to the triangle, underscoring the polyrhythms created between these instruments and the violin.

L’Esterre Quadrille Music

Performers: Canute Caliste, violin; Sonnel Allert, triangle; Gorine Joseph, double-headed “bass” drum; and William Alexander, tambourine. Recorded in L’Esterre, Carriacou, 30th July 1962.

Until the 1960s, monthly quadrille dances in Carriacou served as a basis for community social events. In his notes to his recordings of quadrille music from the village of L’Esterre, Lomax observed that “the people are dancing in a very conventional square dance style, but without callers.” Indeed, Carriacou quadrille dance choreography is quite reminiscent if not often identical at times to English country dance and American square- or contra dancing. The violinist (the term “fiddler” is not used in Carriacou) plays tunes that are suggestive of English and French instrumental dance music; in fact, the tune commonly played for the First Figure of the quadrille is almost identical to one found in the repertoires of English country dance musicians. That these links exist is not surprising, as North American square- or contra dancing and Caribbean quadrille dancing are legacies of a shared European colonial heritage. Yet quadrille music and dance simultaneously resonate with African movement and sound: the three percussion instruments provide a steady polyrhythmic underpinning to the European-derived violin melodies and the dancers infuse the choreography with a graceful inner body movement, adding a unique dimension of kinesthetic fluidity. The emphasis on musical syncopation and on this rhythmic and gentle hip sway are both commonly found in many Caribbean dances derived from West and Central Africa. In this manner, Carriacou quadrille both sonically and visually links Kayak (local term for Carriacouan) African ancestry with the historical legacy of European colonialism (for more on quadrille, see Miller 2005, 2007).

An entire quadrille dance is comprised of six figures, each of which has a specific choreography. The music is led by the violinist who is accompanied by a “bass” (a large, double-headed drum held on the player’s lap and played with a stick in one hand and a soft headed mallet in the other); a triangle (played by alternating pairs of notes in open and then in a dampened position when the player closes his

hand around the top of the triangle); and a tambourine with jingles. Like dance music from Western Europe, Carriacouan quadrille tunes are instrumental as opposed to vocal and are organized into two sections of eight-bar phrases that feature internal melodic repetition. The majority are in major keys, although violinist Canute Caliste's performance style (like other Carriacou string band violinists) renders specific notes microtonally sharper or flatter than what would be heard most often in North American or English fiddling. This tendency to use microtonal intervals is reminiscent of various West African tonalities, which greatly differ from the tempered pitches of European and North American musics.

With the actual melody of quadrille tunes largely in 6/8 meter as well as the occasional march (in 2/4), the music is strongly and inherently polyrhythmic, consisting of African-derived stratified rhythms, and more particularly, the juxtaposition of duple and triple time. Often, the polyrhythmic nature of quadrille music is created between the triplet feel (four groups of three per measure) of the violin's melody juxtaposed against the steady duple meter of the three percussion instruments. The "bass" (drum) reinforces the triangle's meter by playing a syncopated line in duple time, again, in contrast to the triplet feel of the violin. Like much of the music from Central and West Africa, the bass and the triangle (or "steel") are the "time-keeping" instruments, providing the timeline or the "heartbeat" of the music (Chernoff 1979:43). The next sonic layer, provided by the tambourine, is played largely in an improvisatory (and oftentimes explosive style) and serves on some level as the equivalent of the master drummer in an African percussion ensemble. Played by what is locally known as "beating" (hitting the tambourine head with the hand) or by "ringing" (running the hand over the jingles), the tambourine player serves an important function in the ensemble as he sonically delineates melodic phrases by ringing the jingles at the end of the eighth bar and into the first bar of the next phrase. Musically, this interaction between the violin and tambourine creates a hemiola effect, again reminiscent of the interplay of instruments in many African musics.

Track 3. Quadrille – Figure 1.

Here, violinist Canute Caliste plays in triple meter against the triangle's duple meter (quadruplets against the violinist's triplets). Listen for his variations and ornamentations/improvisations on the tune itself. The tambourine player's own improvisatory and often virtuosic lines invite comparison with the role of the West African master drummer.

Track 4. Quadrille – Figure 2.

Track 5. Quadrille – Figure 3.

Track 6. Quadrille – Figure 4.

This figure is typically danced to a polka. Listen for excellent tambourine playing towards the middle of the tune.

Track 7. Quadrille – Figure 5.

The music for this figure is a breakaway or a melody that, upon repetition, features improvisation and elaboration by the violinist. The choreography of this figure includes a grand chaine, "wheeling" (swinging), and the late quadrille dancer Mano Joseph's innovative head scratching sequence in which the woman "scratches" her partner's head while both dance in place.

Track 8. Quadrille – Figure 6 (Breakaway).

Chanteys

Because employment as seamen on cargo ships has been a staple occupation for Carriacou men since emancipation in 1838, it is no surprise that sea chanties have long been an integral part of Carriacouan expressive culture. Sung to coordinate physical work between the seamen and to alleviate boredom, chanteys typically feature call-and-response between a lead singer and a chorus and a steady, clearly delineated rhythm that guides work movements (hauling the mainsails, for example). Because this type of song is pragmatic, the meaning of chantey texts is less important than the rhythm and tempo. That said, sea chantey lyrics often offer portraits of an era, a history of work standards and expectations while on the sea, and record feelings of fatigue, loneliness, boredom, and other emotions among the sailors.

Track 9. "Shame, Shame, Shame, Unc' Riley." (Launching song.)

Charles Bristol (lead vocal) with chorus (Virginia Sylvester, Beatrice Dick, Derrick Lejen, Sheref Joseph, Faith Lawrence, Sweet Honey Duncan, Prince Lawrence, Martha Dick, Lucianne Duncan, Daniel Aikens, Edith Hector, Margaret Henry, Virginia Joseph, Millicent Duncan, Charles Bristol.) La Resource, Carriacou, 2 August 1962.

While the precise meaning of this chantey is unclear, it calls into question the capabilities of the captain, one "Unc/Uncle Riley."

Leader: Oh shame, shame, shame Uncle Riley,

Chorus: Shame Riley O

Leader: Oh bim bam, you ___?

Chorus: Shame, Riley-o.

Leader: Oh, shame, shame, shame, Shame Unc' Riley.

Chorus: Shame riley O

Leader: Oh you call yourself a captain but you cannot make a volley,
Shame Riley-o.

Refrain:

Shame, shame, shame Unc' Riley
Shame riley O
O, Shame, shame, shame, Unc Riley
Shame (on you?) Riley O.

Oh you call yourself a gunman, but you cannot make a volley,
Shame (on you) Riley O.
Shame, shame, shame, Unc Riley
Shame Riley O

(Refrain) Shame, shame, shame, Unc Riley.
Shame Riley O
Oh you call yourself a man sir, you cannot make a splash.
Shame Riley O

(Refrain)

Oh you call us the captain and you cannot make a volley,
Shame on you Riley O
Shame, shame, shame, Uncle Riley,
Shame on you, Riley-O.

Lomax: "Good."

Track 10. Interview about seafaring with Newton Joseph, interspersed with chanteys "Hi-Lo, Boys" and "Long Time Ago."
L'Esterre, Carriacou, 29 July 1962.

In an interesting example of the folklorist's approach to his informant, Alan Lomax learns about the singer Newton Joseph's life as a former sailor as well as how sea chanteys were used in the context of work. Lomax was an accomplished folksinger himself who performed a substantial repertoire of Anglo-American folk songs and chanties. Here, he seems to be jogging Mr. Joseph's memory about other chanties that he might know and ironically discovers that, in fact, Newton Joseph probably heard one of them sung by another folklorist, Andrew C. Pearse, who conducted earlier fieldwork in Carriacou and Trinidad in the mid-1950s.

During this interview, Mr. Joseph sings short versions of two well-known chanteys, "Hi-Lo, Boys" and "Long Time Ago." A commonly used word in West Indian chanteys, "hi-lo" entered the seafarers' lexicon in the early- to mid-19th century, possibly originating from a Peruvian port. "Long Time Ago" is a launching and a hauling chantey, one that was used to haul in an anchor, as Mr. Joseph himself notes. As they sang,

the seamen would pull on the line, hand over hand, one pull to every other sung syllable, e.g. "long (time) ago."

AL: Where have you been on your voyages, Mr. Newton?
NJ: I go all Dominique, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Barbados, Anguilla, Trinidad. All that way, I see it all.
AL: In the West Indies.
NJ: In the West Indies.
AL: Did you have your own boat or did you go with other people's boats?
NJ: I working with other people. I never owned mine.
AL: And all the time you were a chanteyman. You sang ...
NJ: Yes, yes. At that time I was good ...
AL: Did you sing on board when you were pulling up anchor?
NJ: Oh yes, something when we out at sea, and the weather fair, you hear, we sit down ... oh we that day, we sit down to sing chantey. Yes. Only to keep you awaking all the time. Sometime you see if din' now, you learn some, you sleep. You nap. But when you see ... all these friend, we moving good together. We say, let's have a little song. Chantey. ... sometime you hear now say.

Sings (with his wife, Jennifer Joseph, in background) "Hi-Lo, Boys."

NJ: Keep yourself lively.
AL: And, did you sing when you were pulling up anchor? When you were hauling anchor?
NJ: Yes.
AL: And when you were pulling up the main sheet?
NJ: Well ...
AL: Not so much?
NJ: Nah, sing so much. Is when you sailing, out in the night, you feel ... you keep yourself lively. You sing something on behalf of sailorman.
AL: Did you ever sing about Amsterdam? Amsterdam? "A roving, a roving, a roving's been my ruin?" Did you ever hear that?
NJ: No. I heard it. A Mister just like you. They call him Mr. Pear[c]e, remember?
AL: Yes. He sang it to you, huh? You never heard that before?
NJ: No, not before.
AL: What else did you know besides "Hi-Lo Boys?"
NJ: Well, "Hi-Lo boy, let's go. Now, we'll make jolly." ... Hmmm? Oh no! I know many! Beside that.
AL: Sing me another one.
NJ: Sing another one?
Sings "Long Time Ago."
AL: Good, good.

Track 11. “Rosibella.” (Launching song). Sidney Joseph (lead vocal), with chorus (Charles Bristol, Newton Joseph, Sonnel Allert, Gorine Joseph, William Alexander, Canute Caliste, Lenus George, Matteson Joseph, Avoide Sylvester, Conrad Joseph, Clyde Anjou, and Kingston Joseph). L’Esterre, 30 July, 1962.

“Rosibella” (or “Rosabella”) is a regional sea chantey traditionally heard in the southeastern United States as well as throughout the Caribbean. It was used for a variety of work activities, such as net hauling in the menhaden fisheries and general kinds of deck work on schooners and island traders. This version features many interjections by members of the chorus, not uncommon among Carriacou singers and musicians.

String Band Music from Windward, Carriacou

In Carriacou’s northern-most villages of Dover and Windward, the population is largely descended from generations of intermarriage between the Afro-Caribbean population and Scottish boat builders who settled there towards the end of the 18th century. Much of this population is lighter skinned than elsewhere in on the island. Vestiges of Scottish culture exist in the decorative carved wooden exterior trim (“fretwork”) that adorns local homes and in the reputation of Windward men as excellent boat builders, skills presumably handed down over the generations from their Scottish ancestors.

String band music has long provided an aural backdrop throughout Carriacou as accompaniment to social and life cycle events. Alan Lomax’s 1962 recordings document a range of string band styles throughout Carriacou, including a style specific to Windward and clearly distinct from that performed in southern villages such as L’Esterre. Lomax himself heard the Windward style as sounding more “European” rather than “African” (as he heard in the L’Esterre style). The Windward style was evidently not to his liking, as he recorded in his fieldnotes: “Poor stuff – interesting because of stiffness, a lack of rhythmic interest, out of tune-ness. A Scotch settlement, now blending with Negro population.” What Lomax might have heard of “out of tune-ness” could very well have been the tendency on the part of Kayak string band players to render intonation somewhat stylistically closer to that found in West African musical systems, that is, non-standardized, non-tempered-scale tuning, in contrast to a wholly Euro-American aesthetic. An ear not expecting this tonal orientation (given the familiarity of western instrumentation) thus might hear the music as “out of tune.” The “stiffness” that Lomax refers to could be the clearly delineated phrasing, a performance practice that is highly characteristic of Windward string band music.

Performers (Tracks 12 – 18): Elias Wilson (violin); Nicholas Compton (violin); Oliver St. Hilare (banjo); Joey McFarlane (guitar); Benedict Bethel (guitar); Sullivan McGilvry (chac-chac [shakers]). Recorded in Windward, Carriacou, 1 August 1962.

Track 12. “Suku Suku.”

Notable in this recording of a commonly played string band tune is that Lomax, at one point, clearly trained the microphone first on the guitarist and then on the tenor banjo player. In doing so, he neatly documented what local players refer to as “roll and chop,” that is, the propulsive, interlocking rhythmic relationship between the accompanying string instruments, typically the banjo with the guitar or cuatro.

Track 13. “Ba Moin un ‘ti Bo” (“Give Me A Little Piece”).

Track 14. (English) Quadrille 1.

This quadrille tune is in 6/8, a common Irish/Scottish/English jig rhythm. The very strong violinist featured here plays the melody and is “seconded” by the second violin, who accompanies with rhythmically bowed chords. A tenor banjo plays fills. Although most quadrille tunes feature two distinct parts, this one has only one, played over and over again.

Track 15. (English) Quadrille 2.

A variant of an Irish or English jig, again the second violin accompanies the first with rhythmic chordal bowing.

Track 16. “When I Go Tell Me Mama.”

Variously called “Heel and Toe Polka,” “When I Go Tell Me Mama,” or “Magica Polka,” this local polka is played throughout Carriacou and often is played for the 6th figure of the quadrille, as heard on Track 8. It is one of the few Kayak string band tunes that has lyrics commonly associated with it and its many variants.

Me Mooma send me in the pon’ for wahtah,
The Dominica man come feel me la la.

When I go, I go tell me mooma,
The Dominica [did/gone] feel me la la
(Lucy de Rochet, interview, 1995.)

The “Heel and Toe Polka” almost always inspires couple dancing and is played at virtually every public performance or “practice” session by string bands. Moreover, it is often replayed by audience request with great enthusiasm throughout the course of the evening.

Track 17. Interview.

An interview between Alan Lomax and two singers (one of whom is identified as Mr. Wilson) follows the performance of “When I Go Tell Me Mama.” This exchange underscores Lomax’ interest in gathering concrete (although, all too often, elusive) data regarding material that has been in public memory for so long that few remember much beyond its regular performance. With plenty of delight and good humor to spare, the singers and onlookers help Lomax understand the nature of the song’s lyrics.

AL: What’s the name of that tune?

Man #1: A polka, “Pond for water.” “My mother send me to pond for water.”

Man #2 (Mr. Wilson?): “Damn nigger man come to chuke (shook) up me la la.” (Laughter.)

“My mother send me pond for water,

Damn nigger man come to chuke up me la la.”

(Laughter.)

“When I go, I go tell me woman,

Damn nigger man come chuke up me la la.”

AL: That’s really a calypso.

Man #2: That’s the thing, but the name of it is a polka.

AL: Well, where was it composed?

Man #2: Right here.

AL: How old is it, Mr. Wilson?

Man #2: It’s about, over 80 years old, or around there.

AL: 80 years old. You know who composed it? Or why? You know the story of it?

Man #2: No I don’t know.

AL: You know the story of it?

Man #1: No I don’t know.

Man #2: “The mother send her daughter in the pond for water; and the nigger man meet him and they chuke up she la la.”

(Laughter)

AL: Uh-huh, I see.

Track 18. “Bullen Sent My Vera Back.” (Calypso)

Many string band pieces are calypsos reconfigured for string band instrumentation. Although performed here as an instrumental version, the lyrics of this song, according to anthropologist Donald Hill, who recorded a version of it in Carriacou in 1971 (see Hill 1977), refer to one of the island’s two main business owners, the Bullens, and their then-newly opened supermarket in the main village of Hillsborough. At the time, this enterprise was the only market in town in which one picked out items and then proceeded to the cashier to check out, in contrast to other stores where the proprietor picks out the goods behind the counter. According to Hill, the song accuses Bullens of shorting a



customer — a typical Carriacouan complaint. Hill remembers the lyrics as something like “You sent me barrel back, an empty demijohn, and I don’t see what you’ve done” (e.g., you haven’t filled it).

Pass Plays

These pass plays were recorded in La Resource on 2 August 1962. Pass plays are call-and-response vocal pieces and often feature vocal harmonies in the choral response. Many pass plays are in French patois, a language that has largely been replaced in Carriacou by the local English creole. Each of the following pass plays features a lead singer and a chorus variously including Sheraf Joseph, Virginia Sylvester, Beatrice Dick, Derrick Lejen, Faith Laurence, Sweet Honey Duncan, Prince Laurence, Martha Dick, Lucianne Duncan, Daniel Aikens, Edith Hector, Newton Joseph, Margaret Henry, Virginia Joseph, Millicent Duncan, Charles Bristol, Sugar Adams, and Lawrence Solon.

Track 19. “Bo-moin homme (?), Chère Dou-Dou.” (Pass play.) Sheraf Joseph (lead vocal) with chorus as above.

This pass play is sung in French patois. Chère means “dear” as does the local term, *dou dou* (or *dudu*), which can also refer to “sweetheart” (see Kephart 2000).

Track 20. “Waterloo, My Boy, Turn Me Round.” (Pass play.) Martha Dick (lead vocal) with chorus, as above.

“Wheeling” means swinging one’s partner with one’s arm encircling their waist. This move is found in both Big Drum and quadrille choreography. Alan Lomax recorded the following interview regarding this pass play song:

Man: Waterloo, well, I think Waterloo is a man name. And it mean "Turn me 'round," [it] mean "Wheel me 'round." But don't wheel me too hard to break me neck!

Woman: Me waist!

Man: Me waist!

The lyrics to this pass play include the following:

Lead: Waterloo, my boy, turn me round,
Chorus: Waterloo, my boy, turn me round.

Lead: Turn me 'round, do not break me waist,
Chorus: Waterloo, my boy, turn me round.

Turn me 'round, do not break me waist,
Waterloo my boy, turn me 'round.

Waterloo, my boy turn me round,
Waterloo my boy turn me round.

Wheel me round, do not break me waist,
Waterloo, my boy, turn me round.

Waterloo my boy turn me 'round
Waterloo, my boy turn me 'round.

Turn me 'round, do not break me waist,
Waterloo my boy turn me round. (Etc.)

Track 21. "Ele Missi-o." (Pass play.) Martha Dick (lead vocal) with chorus, as above.

Track 22. "A-Nana-O." (Pass play.) Beatrice Dick (lead vocal) with chorus (Virginia Sylvester, Derrick Lejen, Sheraf Joseph, Faith Laurence, Sweet Honey Duncan, Prince Laurence, Martha Dick, Lucianne Duncan, Daniel Aikens, Edith Hector, Newton Joseph, Margaret Henry, Virginia Joseph, Millicent Duncan, Charles Bristol, Sugar Adams, Lawrence Solon.) La Resource, Carriacou, 2 August, 1962.

Track 23. "Adolphus ("Dolphus") Coker." Sweet Honey Duncan (lead vocal) with chorus (Beatrice Dick, Virginia Sylvester, Derrick Lejen, Sheraf Joseph, Faith Laurence, Prince Laurence, Martha Dick, Lucianne Duncan, Daniel Aikens, Edith Hector, Newton Joseph, Margaret Henry, Virginia Joseph, Millicent Duncan, Charles Bristol, Sugar Adams, Lawrence Solon.) La Resource, Carriacou, 2 August 1962.

Track 24. "Score for Di Black Girl." Charles Bristol (lead vocal) with chorus (Beatrice Dick, Virginia Sylvester, Derrick Lejen, Sheraf Joseph, Faith Laurence, Sweet Honey Duncan, Prince Laurence, Martha Dick, Lucianne Duncan, Daniel Aikens, Edith Hector, Newton Joseph, Margaret Henry, Virginia Joseph, Millicent Duncan, Sugar Adams, Lawrence Solon), La Resource, Carriacou, 2 August, 1962.

Track 25. "Dite ahe-o." May Fortune (lead vocal) with chorus (Jemima Joseph, Mrs. Silvina, Manny James, Beatrice Lazarus, Matilda Noel, Larena Clement, Tilda Lazarus). Bellevue South, Carriacou, 30 July 1962.

Track 26. "Khaki-o!, Where you diamond?" May Fortune, lead vocals, with chorus (as above in Track 25), followed by Lomax interview with May Fortune and others:

AL: What's the words to that? What's the words?

MF: "Khaki," we say "khaki-o," where you diamond? ... And he's going away and then girl calling back to him and asking where is the diamond, which mean (s)he want money. Yes.

AL: (Laughs.) Khaki is his name, huh?

MF: Yes, Khaki is man name. ... Diamond is money. Yes.

AL: Because ... uh ... he ...

MF: Yes. You have to give me something to help meself. (Laughter from general assembly)

AL: She wants some favors from him.

MF: Yes, yes! That's right! Something for her!

(More laughter)





Breakaways and Other Dance Tunes

Track 27. “Scotch/Reel Engage.” Quadrille ensemble featuring “Bodo,” triangle; Anderson Wells, two-headed “bass” drum; Conrad James, violin; and Isaiah Augustin, tambourine. Six Roads, Carriacou, 1 August 1962.

This “Reel Engage” is often played for quadrille dancers in Carriacou, who, in this recording, can be heard in the background. Lomax recorded first the entire ensemble and then, in turn, trained his microphone on the tambourine player with all his improvisational virtuosity and then on the triangle player, who plays in duple time against the sometimes triple meter feel of the violin. The violinist adds an occasional syncopation and moves in and out of duple meter. This results in an implied polyrhythm between the instruments, derived from West African rhythms that are fundamental characteristics of quadrille music in Carriacou.

Track 28. “Charlotte-O” (Scotch). “Bodo,” triangle; Anderson Wells, two-headed “bass” drum; Conrad James, violin; and Isaiah Augustin, tambourine. Six Roads, Carriacou, 1 August 1962.

This recording of a quadrille ensemble again focuses on individual instruments, first the triangle and then the tambourine. Listen for the characteristic staggered ending between the instruments, a result of the dancers finishing the figure before the violinist has come to the end of the tune. The other instrumentalists end soon after.

Track 29. Lyrics to “Charlotte-O.” Sung by Conrad James. Six Roads, Carriacou, 1 August, 1962.

Track 30. Breakaway 1. (Quadrille instrumentation.) Canute Caliste, violin; Sonnel Allert, triangle; Gorine Joseph, two headed “bass” drum; William Alexander, tambourine. L’Esterre, Carriacou, 30 July 1962.

Forming the centerpiece of string band sessions, breakaways are named after street marches (or parades): to “break away” means to loosen up and dance. Instrumental breakaways are up-tempo, largely in 4/4 time, and consist of a statement of a melodic theme of eight or 16 bars. Upon return to the top of the tune, the violinist improvises both rhythmically and melodically over chord changes. In this spirit, breakaways are showpieces and a Kayak violinist’s ability to improvise and play inventively is highly admired. A well-executed solo is typically met with shouts of “brave” (local term for “smart”) and “good man.”



Track 31. Breakaway 2. (Quadrille instrumentation.) Canute Caliste, violin; Sonnel Allert, triangle; Gorine Joseph, two headed “bass” drum; William Alexander, tambourine. L’Esterre, Carriacou, 30 July 1962.

Track 32. “It Time for a Man to Go” (Chantey.) Charles Bristol (lead vocal) with chorus comprising all or personnel selected from: Virginia Sylvester, Beatrice Dick, Derrick Lejen, Sheraf Joseph, Faith Laurence, Sweet Honey Duncan, Prince Laurence, Martha Dick, Lucianne Duncan, Daniel Aikens, Edith Hector, Newton Joseph, Margaret Henry, Virginia Joseph, Millicent Duncan, Charles Bristol, Lawrence Solon. Recorded in La Resource, Carriacou, 2 August 1962.



This chantey expresses longing to return home or simply to rest after a tiring journey or workday. The mention of Irishman, Englishman, and American is possibly indicative of the diversity of nationalities of the seamen who worked onboard cargo vessels during the 19th and 20th centuries. During the verse of this call-and-response chantey, the melody at the end of the first line ends on the leading tone, leaving the resolution of the melody (and narrative) to the chorus, who responsively brings the melody both musically and lyrically “home.”

Leader: It time, it time, it time, it time.

Chorus: It for man to go.

Leader: It time, it time, it time, it time.

Chorus: It time for a man go.

Leader: You hear a monkey a’ bawl (to cry) *qua qua*,

Chorus: It time for man go.

Lead: You hear a monkey a bawl *qua qua*.

It time for a man go.

It time, it time, it time, it time.

It time for a man go.

Did you hear a monkey a’ bawl *qua qua*?

It time for man go.

It time, it time, it time, it time,

It time for a man go.

It time, it time, it time.

it time for man go.

Do you hear a monkey a laugh “*qua qua*?”

Time for a man go.

Oh but I heard the voice of American man.

It time for a man go

Oh I heard the voice of an Irishman,

It time for a man go.

It is time for a man and it time for bed.

It time for a man go.

Oh look what you do to me.

It time for a man go.

Tell you can’ go and you n’have that girl.

It time for a man go.

But it is time for a man and it time for bed,

It time for man go

It is time for a man and it time for bed,

It is time for a man go.

Oh I heard the voice of an Irishman,

It is time for a man go.

Oh I heard the voice of an Englishman,

But it is time for a man go.

Leader: Oh it is time for a man and it time for bed!

(All:) It time for man go home.

Track 33. Calypso. Two unidentified guitarists. Recorded in Six Roads, Carriacou, 1 August, 1962.

Here one guitarist provides characteristic calypso rhythm for the other, who improvises a calypso-like melody. Lomax describes this as a “Cuban tune fragment” and notes that these are “two roadside musicians, near Belmont, playing guitars. Strolling down the road, not singers, just having a good time, as they say.”



Quadrille ensemble. From left: (unidentified tambourine player); Canute Caliste (violin); Enel James (bass drum); Mano Joseph (cuatro). Harveyvale, Carriacou, February 1997.

Canute Caliste

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For years, the late musician/painter Canute Caliste was one of Carriacou's most famous residents. He was fairly easy to find: you took a short minibus ride to the "cross" (crossroads) in the village of L'Esterre and from there, it was a matter of asking anyone you saw to point you in the direction of his house. You were directed up a small hill and then down a series of narrow footpaths, past grazing goats and sheep, to a compound flanked by a large and neat family garden on one side and tall shade trees bearing *cerise* (cherries) on another. Two small houses share the yard — Mr. Caliste's single room art studio and his two room house where he slept. Usually Mr. Caliste could be found painting in his studio, as he was a renown and prolific folk artist whose images of Carriacou daily life, events, and mythology have graced the walls of collections and museums in the Caribbean, Europe, and United States for decades. Somewhat shy but radiating interest and warmth, Mr. Caliste was always welcoming. If you asked, he would happily take out his violin and play his distinctive style of quadrille violin music for – or – with you.

Such was my experience as a fiddler from the United States when I was conducting research on string band musical traditions in Carriacou beginning in 1995. Virtually everyone pointed me in the direction of "Mr. Canute" (or "CC" as he is called) as the person to talk to about Carriacou violin music. Mr. Caliste, who was then in his early 80s, was also the undisputed master of Carriacou quadrille violin music and the last practitioner of this style in Carriacou. Over time, he and I became great friends as he "learned" (taught) me the repertoire for quadrille dance figures as well as playing style. I also learned from him local Carriacou history, folklore, and customs, and much about Kayak (the local term for Carriacouan) spiritualism as well as the deep, ongoing connection that Kayaks have with their ancestors. In addition to bringing me up on the day- to-day news of his village, L'Esterre, Mr. Caliste taught me much about Carriacouan social and life cycle events where music, particularly string band or quadrille, is traditionally played. During my visits, I was introduced to members of Mr. Caliste's family (he had 21 children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren); they often joined him in recollections of Kayak life and of his life as a musician, artist, luthier, shipwright, farmer, and sailor.

Born on July 16, 1914, in Carriacou, Mr. Caliste derived much of his artistic and spiritual inspiration from an experience he had when he was nine years old. He remembers walking one day near a local oyster bed and seeing a mermaid holding a Bible close to her chest:

I meet she that come and she here. I been to school. It 12 o'clock and I see that thing. She come and she here. I can't see she face ... she hair go right down. So when I peep and I see that thing and I see the tail, she flap she tail like this one here [points to one of his paintings of the Mermaid]. I say, I tell her, I says, "A spirit!" And ... I start to run back. I ain' go to school again. When I tell me mother, she tell me is a mermaid. That mermaid that day. ... She splash she tail and she [go] down [into the oyster bed water] (Caliste, interview, 8/19/95).

According to Mr. Caliste, the mermaid gave young Canute her Bible, telling him that if he read it, he could do what he wanted with his life. Mr. Caliste left school shortly thereafter, helped his parents grow subsistence crops, and soon left Carriacou on board a small cargo vessel, first as a cook and then as a mate. From then until the end of World War II, Caliste sailed throughout the Caribbean, including Trinidad, Guadeloupe, Dominique, St. Barts, and beyond. He was 27 when he returned to Carriacou, where he settled, raised his family, and worked as a shipwright, carpenter, musician and a string-instrument builder (guitars and Venezuelan-style cuatros).

Mr. Caliste took up painting after he received the mermaid's message. Around 1960, he was encouraged by Sister Trudy of the Madonna House (a lay Catholic order) to sell his work to tourists. Painting on pressed board with acrylic paint, he sold paintings of the mermaid, of scenes depicting quadrille and Big Drum dance performances, and other cultural events in and scenes of Carriacou. After the 1983 Grenadian military coup (and subsequent invasion of Grenada by American troops), Mr. Caliste began painting stark images of the assassination of former Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and his cabinet members and other scenes from this traumatic era. Towards the end of his life, Mr. Caliste's work included images from outside of Carriacou – ideas that he found in publications or in his mind's eye; his painting style became increasingly impressionistic in approach. With the help of one of his daughters, Clemencia Alexander, who works at the Carriacou Museum, as well as an art agent in Grenada, Mr. Caliste sold many of his paintings locally, regionally, and internationally.

Master of the Quadrille Violin

Mr. Caliste learned to play the violin and guitar as a boy by listening to the music played by the "older heads:"

Quadrille is a great, great, t'ing ... Since I was nine year old, I played. Just everything I know in the world, never around with nobody, no train[ing] ... Just seen something, then I do it. I got in a lot of teaching [learning] where ... people teach me ... in dream[s] (Caliste, interview, 1995).

That Mr. Caliste learned the quadrille in dreams underscores a common Carriacou understanding of the power and importance of the unconscious. "Dream messages" instruct the dreamer to hold a *maroon* (sacrifice) and *saraca* (feast) for the community, oftentimes in conjunction with a ritualistic Big Drum ceremony. Featuring upwards of four hours of percussive music, song, and dance, Big Drum ceremonies are performed to appease the spirit of an ancestor who appears in a sleeper's dream (see McDaniel 1998; Hill 1977; for examples of Alan Lomax' 1962 recordings of Big Drum music and song, see *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou* and *Music of the Tombstone Feast* (Rounder Records 1161-1726-2 and 1161-1727-2)). That Mr. Caliste attributes learning quadrille music from dreams derives from this widespread subconscious experience and parallels a significant Kayak belief system.

Since the 1940s, Mr. Caliste honed his violin playing style and repertoire and became one of the leading players of dance tunes used to accompany Carriacou quadrille dancing. (In Carriacou, people refer to the "violin" rather than "fiddle.") By 1962, when Alan Lomax arrived in Carriacou, Mr. Caliste was one of the primary quadrille players on the island and not surprisingly figured largely into Lomax' collection of recordings. These early recordings reflect Mr. Caliste's own idiosyncratic style — both distinctive and virtuosic — as well as a style specific to the southern part of the island. Like other Kayak violinists, Mr. Caliste typically held his bow about two inches above the frog (base) and, rather than place his fingers perpendicular to the wood of the bow, he slanted them up towards the bow's tip, so that his palm covered the frog of the bow. This hand position, combined with the fact that he tightened the bow so that the horsehair tension was extremely taut, allowed him to exert greater pressure on the strings, thus increasing his sound production. Mr. Caliste also tended to slide into notes, using only his first three fingers (rather than four) of his left hand.

I was positively mesmerized the first time I heard Mr. Caliste play: on one hand, I heard the very familiar forms of polkas and waltzes and — what I would term — jigs (6/8 time), but played in a distinctly different tonal language. Like other Carriacou string band violinists, Mr. Caliste's performance style frequently rendered specific notes slightly sharper or flatter than would be heard in North American or Western European fiddle music. This integration of microtonal intervals is reminiscent of African tonalities that are distinct from the tempered pitches common

to many European and North American musics. This is not unlike the English spoken in Carriacou – recognizably English, but creolized into a distinctive language of its own.

Like other Kayak violinists, Mr. Caliste rarely played a tune through the same way upon repetition, a tendency captured in many of Lomax' recordings. Thirty-five years later, Mr. Caliste's style had become markedly more improvisatory, perhaps reflecting a change in his technique and expanding musical aesthetic. One of Mr. Caliste's trademarks in this regard is improvisation with rhythm and syncopation. Quadrille and string band musics are inherently polyrhythmic — a reflection in part of the West and Central African heritage that is Carriacou. Heard in the interplay between the rhythm instruments (string instruments and percussion), Mr. Caliste often improvised an additional layer of polyrhythms over this accompaniment, adding syncopation to the music or, most impressively, creating polyrhythms by moving from duple to triple meter and back to duple several times within the course of the tune while the other musicians remained largely in duple time. This type of variation created a propulsive interlocking polyrhythm with the other instrumentalists (hemiola effect, to be exact), particularly against the rhythm played by the bass drummer. (See Miller 2005, 2008 for more on Mr. Caliste's playing style).

Along with the three other members of a quadrille band (double headed bass drum, tambourine, and triangle), Mr. Caliste accompanied the L'Esterre Quadrille Group in performances locally, regionally, and internationally from the 1970s through the 1990s. They performed at major venues in Grenada and elsewhere in the Caribbean, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, for the Carriacouan immigrant communities in Brooklyn, and at London's Buckingham Palace.

Canute Caliste died on November 20, 2005, at the age of 92, some 43 years after Alan Lomax documented his playing in the early 1960s. Mr. Caliste's passing possibly marks the end of the tradition of quadrille violin music, an essential part of what was once a vital social dance tradition in Carriacou. Since then, however, a new group of young Carriacouans are learning and performing the quadrille sets, but to recordings of Mr. Caliste and others rather than to live music. That said, many in Carriacou hope that these recordings will one day serve to teach the next generation of Carriacou musicians the music that accompanies this dance genre. These recordings then, along with Mr. Caliste's legacy of exceptionally evocative paintings, magnificently record half a century of Carriacou visual and musical culture and history.



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Recordings

Canute Caliste's music can be heard on a number of recordings made over 60 years, including Alan Lomax' 1962 recordings in 1962, *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou* (Rounder Records 1161-1726-2) and *Music of the Tombstone Feast* (Rounder Records 1161-1727-2). Caliste can also be heard on Donald R. Hill's recordings in 1980 (see Hill 1980) and those that I recorded in 1997 and which are now housed at the Carriacou Museum in Hillsborough.



Many thanks to Donald R. Hill who made many of the initial musical selections and for help with background information. Thanks also go to Tom Randall for his help with lyrics and a special thanks to Craig Edwards for his encyclopedic knowledge of sea chanteys and related occupational folklore/folklife. —Rebecca Miller, May 2015.

Global Jukebox Records (GJ1016), 2015.

Recorded by Alan Lomax in Carriacou, Grenada, July-August, 1962.

Compiled by Rebecca Miller.

Edited and annotated by Rebecca Miller.

Production coordination by Nathan Salsburg.

Layout by Kiki Smith-Archiapatti.

Executive Producers of the Alan Lomax Collection: Anna Lomax Wood and Jeffery Greenberg.

