CARIBBEAN VOYAGE: THE 1962 RECORDINGS
Kenneth Bilby and Morton Marks, Series Editors

TOMBSTONE FEAST: FUNERARY MUSIC OF CARRIACOU
MUSIC RECORDED BY ALAN LOMAX
Donald R. Hill and Lorna McDaniel, editors

1 TIM BWAI-O (3:10) May Fortune and chorus
2 NU SA WEBE NU (1:00) Willie Joseph and chorus
3 OVID-O, PA GARDE (2:32) Mannie James and chorus
4 IGBO GINADE-O (2:17) Pashin Andrew and chorus
5 JIMMY LUNDAY (1:26) Unidentified singer and chorus
6 MADAME KISTAN (2:58) May Fortune and chorus
7 TBITE GOUNDE (2:23) Unidentified singer and chorus
8 AMWAY, BEKE, MWE BA CONNET (2:05) Jemima Joseph, May Fortune, and chorus
9 MWE RIVÉ, JOE TALMANA (2:08) Glassin John, Jemina Joseph, and chorus
10 IMA DIAMA IGBO-LÉ-LÉ (3:26) Unidentified lead singer and chorus
11 IGBO GINADE-O (1:07) Unidentified lead singer and chorus
12 AMBA, DABIA-E (1:46) May Fortune and chorus
13 ANANSI CUDJO (1:49) May Fortune and chorus
14 AI, SALLI HUNDE (2:48) May Fortune and chorus
15 BANDA CALL ME-O (3:03) Mannie James and chorus
16 LORA, YOU NO MARRIED (4:36) May Fortune and chorus
17 LAZAR, AI, LAZAR (2:41) Unidentified lead singer and chorus
18 SESÉ ANI-O (2:01) Tide Lazarus and chorus
19 DJERIKA-O (4:11) May Fortune and chorus
20 MARIA L'ABBE (2:40) May Fortune and chorus
21 C'EST MWE, NANI MOKO (3:39) Unidentified lead singer and chorus

Remastered to 24-bit digital from the original field recordings

ALAN LOMAX, AN APPRECIATION
By Winston Fleary, Director, Folklife Institute of Granada

When my book, *The Synchro-Spiritual Dynamics of Africa and Carriacou*, is published, Alan Lomax will receive the highest special mention in the acknowledgements section. And the thirteen-square-mile territory of the State of Grenada shall always bless that day in 1962 when their most meaningful drum-and-fiddle music was ably recorded for them and their posterity by that indomitable, vivacious, perceptive, dynamic, persistent, scholarly, and very responsible humanitarian, the worthy Alan Lomax. And quite conversely to the phonetics of his name ("Low Maks"), the good people of Carriacou have rated the work of Mr. Lomax with "High Marks."

Alan's work in 1962 meant nothing to me until 1975, when the Big Drum Nation Dance was introduced to the American Museum of Natural History and at the

Albemarle Theater by Donald R. Hill. Drummer Sugar Adams (then 85 years old), lead dancer Lucian Duncan, fiddle player Canute Caliste, Professor Annette McDonald (who also recorded Carriacouan music) – as well as Pete Seeger – were all in attendance. This exercise, ably supported by Lomax, inaugurated the staging of authentic Afro-Caribbean folklife in the United States. Before I knew it, Alan was all over me, changing my perception of cultural heritage and influencing my decision to abandon medical school in favor of setting up a folklife program in the West Indies for the Big Drum Nation Dance and the music of the people of Carriacou.

Our program was widely and popularly received, not only by Caribbean communities but also by Black and Anglo-Saxon America. Presentations were made at St. Patrick's Cathedral; Avery Fisher Hall and Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center; the Smithsonian Institution's Folklife Festival and Renwick Gallery; the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; Lewisham Town Hall, the Commonwealth Institute, and the Dominion Theatre in London; the Birmingham Odeon; the Weymouth Festival; the Edinburgh Festival; as well as numerous college campuses, churches, parks, and schools.

Alan was instrumental in helping me obtain funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Geographic Society, the New York State Council for the Arts, and the Bilalian Businessmen's Association. Live broadcasts of Big Drum music were played over the Voice of America, WLIB, the BBC, and local radio and television stations. Lomax even went further in encouraging me to write a folk drama, *A Year in the Life of Say Baba*, which was successfully staged at Symphony Space in New York, Mahalia Jackson High School, Medgar Evers College, the Brooklyn Borough President's Art Gallery, the Renwick Gallery, and Oneonta State College.

As a result of this exposure, the Big Drum Nation Dance figures prominently in the discourse of significant African retentions in the Western Hemisphere. Thanks and praise are indeed owed to the die-hard Alan Lomax. His Cantometrics / Choreometrics project and his encouragement of my work pushed the Drum culture into the right channels so that blacks the world over could be justly proud. I and my Folklife Institute of the Big Drum Nation wholeheartedly salute Alan Lomax. Long live his contributions to Carriacouans everywhere! ***_August 22, 1997, Carriacou, Grenada***

TOMBSTONE FEAST: BIG DRUM MUSIC FOR THE ANCESTORS
By Lorna McDaniel and Donald R. Hill, with Big Drum texts, figures, and comments by Lorna McDaniel

Carriacou is a little place, a bead in a string of islands called the Grenadines, just north of the bigger island of Grenada, the seat of government. It's a big place for music though, especially the Big Drum dance, the linchpin of Carriacou's African heritage. In 1962 Alan Lomax spent a week on Carriacou recording nearly eight hours of music, folktales, and conversation, much of it associated with customs

honoring the Dead, customs that in Carriacou, as in many other countries, are of paramount importance in maintaining and strengthening cultural continuity between the generations. Both this compilation and its companion, *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou*, document music and stories associated with these extended funerary rites. (See also *Carriacou Calaloo*, for an overview).

Carriacouan funeral music and ritual are part of a complex belief system centering on reverence for the "Old Parents," the eighteenth-century African founders of Carriacouan society, and on obtaining guidance for the living from the more recent Dead. The funerary rites are meant to move the deceased from this world to the next, where the recent Dead and the Old Parents ("Long Time People") influence the day-to-day activities of the living. The Dead appear in dreams and request special food, *Saraca* ("a Table" or feast), entertainment, the Big Drum dance, Nancy stories (folktales), hymns, and other types of music and dance and give instructions on how to effect a cure or carry out a plan.

Carriacouans' beliefs enfold them in an enduring and caring social order that has withstood the traumas of capture, enslavement and colonialism and has sustained them through the trials and vicissitudes associated with the wage-labor migration on which they have depended since 1838. Big Drum songs, hymns, and Nancy stories bind people to their beliefs about the Old Parents. They provide a sense of family, belonging, and identity at home and in the turbulent outside world, which at some point during their lifetime nearly all Carriacouan men and many of its women enter to seek employment.

Up until the 1970s most Carriacouans could trace their ancestry to specific African regions and ethnic groups: Cromanti, Manding, Igbo, and others. Their performances of special Big Drum music, whose rhythms and dances identified each ethnic group or "nation," were arguably the most important way the living entertained the Dead. Mythic identification with an African nation tied groups together in a common ancestry, and this sense of a continuous African identity served as the glue that held the society together. Elders communicated with the Old Parents through messages received in dreams from the Dead. The living then acted on their ancestors' wishes in carrying out rituals centering on the life cycle (birth and baptism, marriage, and death), seasonal events, crises, and new ventures. Funerary rites included the wake, the burial, prayer meetings (held after three, nine, or forty days after the death), annual prayer meetings, and the Tombstone Feast, in which the spirit of the Dead is finally laid to rest when a marble stone is set on the grave. The whole process lasted from one to ten years or more. During these rituals, participants sang hymns or played drums, depending on the wealth of the believers and on what the Dead requested in their dream messages. This compilation of music associated with funerary rites (some of which can be heard on its companion, *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou*) vividly conveys the essence of the Carriacouans' respect for their ancestors, expressed through music, folktales, and talk. Our thanks to Alan Lomax, who was able to help us – Carriacouans and foreigners alike – to preserve traditions that make life worth living and death worth dying.

A Tombstone Feast

The Tombstone (or Stone) Feast obliged Carriacouans to maintain respect for their dead parents, grandparents, or loved ones, and through them, for the Old Parents in general, over a lengthy period. It connects and unites geographically dispersed generations – for emigrants may return to Carriacou when they have saved enough money to entomb a parent or grandparent, only to return to their jobs abroad after a few weeks. It is no wonder that the word "unity" is so popular in Carriacou and may be seen stitched onto flags people sometimes fly from the front of their houses.

This collection of music recorded at a Tombstone Feast in 1962 features historic first recordings by Alan Lomax of Big Drum Nation dances, perhaps the oldest and most fascinating repertoire in the Caribbean. When Donald R. Hill witnessed a Tombstone Feast in 1971, the rite had become somewhat less elaborate and prayer meetings had largely replaced Big Drum dances on these occasions. Generally speaking, however, the Carriacouan funerary rituals documented nine years earlier by Alan Lomax were largely still in force. The following account of a Tombstone Feast, from Don R. Hill's unpublished 1970–71 field notes is meant to provide background and context for the recordings. For a detailed description of a prayer meeting see notes to *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou.*

When a person died on Carriacou, relatives held a wake and one or more prayer meetings at the home of the deceased. At the time of burial, the grave would be marked with a simple wooden marker (see the description of a burial in the notes to *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou*). The Tombstone Feast, held sometimes years later, formally celebrated the erection of a permanent headstone on the grave. During the years between the initial prayer meeting and the Tombstone Feast, the spirit of the deceased would communicate with the living, particularly with relatives, by troubling their sleep and making frequent demands for prayer meetings and ritual Big Drum dances, and if these weren't carried out, Beg Pardons (forgiveness rituals). But once given a tombstone to sleep under, the spirit would reside comfortably in the grave and generally cease to bother its relatives.

When there was enough money, relatives imported a marble tombstone from Trinidad. Otherwise the local mason simply marked a cement tomb with the vital statistics of the deceased, Usually the mason and his assistants began laying the foundation on the day before the fête. Formerly this work was done voluntarily in a community "helping." But by 1971 the mason's was a paid job, as were his assistants', although teenagers from the community still assisted without pay and were served food and drink at the grave site. The work continued at the grave the morning of the fête, becoming more intensive in the early afternoon as the masons got ready to set up the tombstone.

On the day of the fête, food was prepared at the house and animals were sacrificed. Some of the sacrifice was placed on a "table" or "plate" in the bedroom of the deceased. By the time the meal was sent to the workers at the gravesite as many as

15 men and boys might already be there, helping the mason. When the girls and women of the funeral party arrived, the men stopped work, and all, including the mason, sat under shade trees and ate. The teenage boys tended to sit together as did the elders. There was a great deal of good-natured laughter and talking, the elders in particular reminiscing about the deceased just as the gravediggers had done years before at the funeral. Some flirting went on between girls and boys, but they generally remained in separate groups.

The ritual aspects of the Tombstone Feast were similar to those of a funeral and wake: the tombstone is treated in the same fashion that the coffin had been some years earlier. In once case Don Hill witnessed, the tombstone was taken into the yard in a white bed sheet and wetted with rum and water before being carried to the bed of the deceased, where it was placed as if it contained the body of the departed.

When Alan Lomax made these recordings in 1962, Tombstone Feasts may have customarily lasted two days. At that time, the men used to carry the stone all the way from the house to the grave on poles, which they rested from time to time on chairs that they also carried. By 1971, the stone was usually placed unceremoniously in the trunk of a taxi and driven to a location near the gravesite, whence it was carried to the grave on poles in the traditional manner.

When the mason placed the tombstone at the head of the grave, he would pour jack rum and water over it and break an egg, to signify prosperity, and say a prayer asking for help and happiness in the future. As they worked on the finishing touches, the mason and assistants placed the glass, the rum, and the water pitcher on the cement foundation directly above the coffin (previously buried years ago). During these final operations at the gravesite, the family gathered around the mason and his helpers, watching the work and singing hymns the day after the fête, when the cement was set, the mason returned to give the finishing touches to the tomb.

At the time of Alan Lomax's visit, the drumming typically started about 4 P.M. in the yard of the dead person's home, after the morning sacrifices and setting of the table and the preparation of the tombstone. Drummers and singers formed the ring in which the dancers performed, while a crowd gathered around them. The ring was "wet" with Scotch, water, and rice, and a hoe blade (*oldoe*) struck to call the ancestors to the fête. At midnight, the ring was wet again for the spirits. Then more drum songs were played until dawn, when the table was "broken" and the participants each ate a bit of food in turn.

After the Tombstone Feast obligation was met, relative would continue to set annual Parents' Plates and observe prayer meetings. These were ritual both for the individuals who had died and for all the Old Parents. At the time of the Tombstone Feast, the deceased spirit was thought to join the collective Old Parents. Its resting place, the home of the spirit, had been duly "marked," and so the spirit could join the Old Parents in peace.

The Big Drum Songs

The Big Drum, the most prestigious and remarkable music in Carriacou is a historical treasure trove whose musical structure has African Traits and whose song texts speak of the experience of enslaved people in the "New World." At first hearing the dances and songs appear light hearted, but on close inspection we find suggestions of deep mournful sentiments submerged in the fragmented Patois phrases. Because of changing meanings in the language and shifting compositional goals in performance, and because the singers themselves admit that "I do not know the meaning," our conjectured translations can only hint at the deep personal expressions embedded there. We find in the oldest songs suggestions of anguish at enslavement, the desire to return to Africa and traces of an integrated ancestral pantheon, including Cromanti, Igbo, and Manding deities.

Big Drum songs may be classified into the following groups:

Figure 1. The Big Drum Dances

Nation	*Creole*	*Frivolous*
Cromanti	Old People's Bongo	Chattam
Arada	Hallecord	Lora
Chamba	Bèlé Kawé	Cariso
Manding	Gwa Bélé	Chirrup
Kongo	Juba	Piké
Banda	Old Kalenda	Chiffoné
Ibo, Jib-Ibo & Scotch Ibo	Quilbe	Man Bongo
Temne		Trinidad Kalinda
Moko Yégéyégé & Moko Bangé		

Nation dances are thought to have originated with specific West African ethnic groups, with the exception of Scotch Ibo, which, as May Fortune told Alan Lomax, is "The Scotch onto the Ibo." The other dances have African components but were created in the Caribbean.

The drum ensemble of the Big Drum consists of a *cut* (solo) drum (also called a *cutter* or cot) and two *boulas*. All are open bottomed barrel drums, approximately 18 inches high, but the cut is constructed slightly shorter than the boulas and emits a higher-pitched sound. A snare (a string knotted with pins) is strung over the drumhead, giving its voice a distinctive rasp. The boulas play continuing cycles of the nation code before the entrance of the cut.

Big Drum songs commence with a vocal introduction by the *chantwell* (lead singer), followed by the entrance of the chorus, the introduction of the reiterative nation beat, and finally the entry of the cut drum with improvised statements. The *chac-chac* (maraca) may enter at any point in this progression of entrances. An instrument called the *old hoe* (or *bottle and spoon*, sometimes also called the *bell*

gong) is heard only in the deeply spiritual *Beg Pardon* songs, which call or dismiss the ancestors. With all musical lines in motion, the dancer enters the ring to dance directly in front of the cut drummer, conducting his drum statements with her danced rhythms. It is she who dictates the end of the song by touching the cutter drumhead with the hem of her wide skirt. This additive entrance suggests the staggered exposition in fugal form, as illustrated in Figure 2.

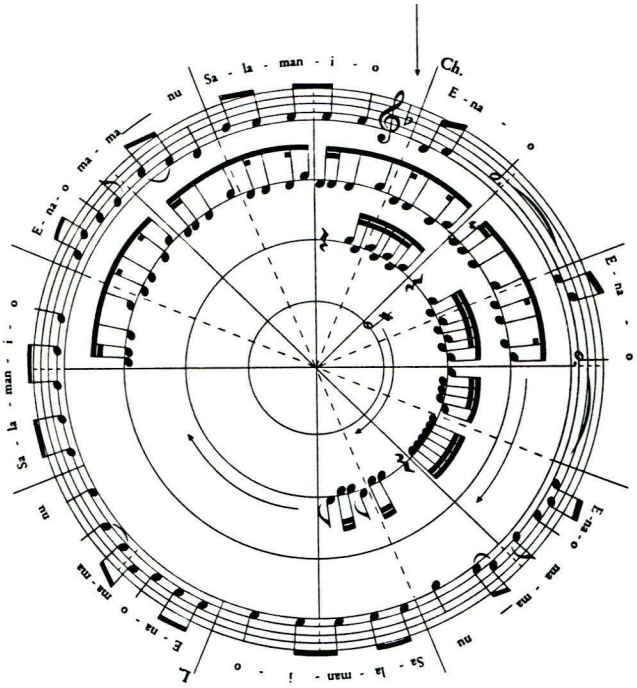

Figure 2. Fugal Form of The Big Drum Song

The musical structure of the Big Drum songs grew naturally out of the inevitable musical compromises between the nine founding national styles. Although not yet musically traceable to any distinct musical tradition of the founding nations of Carriacou (Cromanti, Ibo, Manding, Kongo, Chamba, Arada, Temne, Moko, and Banda), the corpus of nation songs transmits a broad African musical ideal. In contrast to the European-type harmonies in other genres on Carriacou (wake songs, *cantiques*, spiritual hymns, Sankeys, anthems, trumpets, and calypsos), the Big Drum sons preserve a strict monophony, and Carriacouans define the Nation songs by their rhythmic drum cycles. Distinct rhythms accompany each dance and song genre in the Big Drum tradition and form a musical code in the dance. It is the rhythmic nation codes that classified the people of the old society and kept the memory of African origins strong. This coding and song classification creates an extraordinary scholarly interest in this music. (For more on Big Drum music, see the *Saraca* and *Carriacou* collections in this series.)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PERFORMERS

Ferguson "Sugar Tamarind" Adams (known as Sugar Adams) and **May Fortune** were Carriacou premier musical couple. Their recordings date from the early 1950s, and both have shared their deep repository of knowledge about Big Drum songs with many scholars. Adams was born in Carriacou in about 1890. "My race is Igbo race," he told Donald Hall in 1971. When he was twelve years old he began to learn how to play drums under legendary master drummer Elisha George, who, according to Sugar, had a "goatskin hand, born for the purpose." Since then, Sugar "beat the drum" Petit Martinique, in Union, and in Grenada. During Carnival in 1970 Sugar Adams suffered a stroke that made his hand "heavy," after which he rarely beat drum. Winston Fleary notes that Sugar Adams's style on the cut drum is a distinctive: "rolling Spanish style." Adams's voice can be clearly heard in this collection commenting on a performance or even mumbling in the fashion of the late American jazz pianist Erroll Garner.

As a drummer and gravedigger, Sugar Adams had special status in Carriacouan society. As a gravedigger he took care of all the corporeal remains of the dead and as a drummer he contacted those same Old Parents through his music. These things were outside the understanding of ordinary people, who stood in awe of and sometimes feared the supernatural power of musicians and gravediggers. Yet, because they were the first among the living to contact the Dead, musicians were greatly admired.

In 1975, Sugar Adams, Caddy John, Lucien Duncan, Canute Caliste, and several others received a proclamation of achievement and a cash award from the Big Drum Nation Dance Company of New York and the American Museum of Natural History for their contribution to Caribbean culture. Sugar Adams died in October 1983.

Sugar Adams had great affection for his common-law wife, **Mary "May" Fortune.** Actually, he referred to her as his "keeper," since they were never formally married. "I could marry to May now," he told Don Hill in 1971:

But I don't want to marry, I could marry to May, now many years gone, because she husband die before me wife. But I wouldn't marry twice, and she wouldn't twice . . . . She's stubborn . . . but she is very nice 'oman, you know, a very nice 'oman. She is my keeper, going on thirty years. She husband wasn't a drummer; he used to work in Trinidad in the cane field. She lay mark [bought a grave stone for him]. *And they burn cane the whole day. Burn fire in the cane straw after they cut – and the heat of the fire, and they wet them plenty. And he catch a cold, and he die with something now.*

May Fortune was one of the most accomplished singers of her generation and the primary instructor of the next generation of Big Drum vocalists. On some of the Big Drum recordings you can hear her, always the teacher, directing the chorus and the drummers to take up their parts. May Fortune died in 1973.

Daniel Aikens was another premiers Carriacouan drummer, as well as a fine singer. According to Winston Fleary, himself a master drummer, Aikens had no peer in

playing kalindas and bongos on the cut drum. Fleary described Aikens's cut drum style as the "hottest" in Carriacou, more "cutting than Sugar Adams's.

Accomplished drummer, **Cady Lazarus John**, now also deceased, continued to delight both Carriacouans and foreigners for many years after he was recorded in 1962. His son now carries on the tradition.

One of the singers in the Big Drum choruses is **Lucien Duncan** of Top Hill. A young woman when these recordings were made, Duncan became Carriacou's best Big Drum dancer and singer after the death of May Fortune. Like Sugar Adams, Canute Caliste, and May Fortune, Lucien Duncan has worked over the years with many scholars, including Annette MacDonald, Lorna McDaniel, Donald Hill, and Winston Fleary. She continues to teach the next generation of girls in both Carriacou and Brooklyn, N.Y., the ways of the Big Drum.

Glassin John, the Old Head whose wake was described in the notes to *Saraca* is heard in the chorus on some of these recordings. He was one of the most prominent people in Carriacou.

A NOTE ON THE SONG TEXTS

The texts of the following songs express the sensibilities of nineteenth-century Carriacouans: their reverence for their ancestors, respect for the past, and concern for building a livable social environment. The structure of the rituals suggests that early slave society was to some extent "democratic" within the enslaved population. The rituals reflect the hierarchy in the religious organization of the nine nations.

All selections on this CD were recorded on August 1–2, 1962, in L'Esterre, Carriacou, and are previously unreleased.

1. TIM BWAI-O (Kalenda)

Performed by May Fortune (lead vocal and chac-chac) and a chorus of unidentified women; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums; and an unidentified oldoe player.

In this old kalenda, the petitioner requests to be married right away. The context of this urgent plea and the reason for Tim's reluctance can only be surmised.

Tim Bwai, o, ai-ah
Mwe vle maye you fwa
Mwe vie maye yo fwa
Ava La Mawi Kule
Mwe bai Tim Bwai laja
Tim Bwai ba vle maye
Mwe vle bag-la yo fwa
Ava mama mwe mo

Translation:
Tim Boy, oh,
I want to marry at once,
Before La Marie *sinks.*
I gave Tim Boy money.
Tim Boy does not want to marry.
I want the ring at once,
Before my mother dies.

2. NU SA WEBE NU (Cromanti)
Sung by Willie Joseph (lead singer) and chorus, with chac-chac and oldoe accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); and Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

With the striking of the oldoe (old hoe) in the outline of the Beg Pardon Cromanti rhythm, the ancestors are called or dismissed. The oldoe is the bell gong that signals spiritual forces and sounds the essential nation code of the Cromanti rhythm.

Nu sa webe nu

Translation:
My Nation, come!

3. OVID-O PA GARDE (Scotch Igbo)
Sung by Mannie James and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This song reassured Ovid, a farmer mentally distressed and in fear of his neighbors, who believes his crop to be under a hex called *maljo* (the evil eye – caused by the gaze of evil people) that has transformed it into useless bush bearing nothing at all. The voice of the songs changes as his friends console him and tell him not to be fearful.

Ovid-o ba garde
Ba garde, ba garde, oh-ho
Ovid ba garde
Mwe plante shu mwe
I turne malgengen (balager, jubaren)

Translation:
Ovid-o, have no fear.
I plant Tania.
It turned to eggplant [nothing, bush]
Don't worry, have no fear.

4. IGBO GINADE-O (Scotch Igbo)
Sung by Pashin Andrew (lead singer) and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This very old lament contains an intriguing and ubiquitous line "*Ba t'ni mama; ba t'ni papa"* ("I have no mother; I have no father"), which is heard widely within the Francophone song literature of enslaved people. It is a song of migration, loneliness, and hopelessness, but it is danced with fervor and exuberance in the modern ritual. *"Igbo ginade-o"* means Granadian Igbo.

Igbo ginade-o
Tewé mwe kuma mwe
Igbo ginade-o
Tewé mwe kuma mwe
Igbo ginade-o
Tewé mwe kuma mwe
Ba t'ni mama
Tewé mwe kuma mwe
Ba t'ni papa
Tewé mwe kuma mwe

Translation:
Grenadian Igbo-o,
Bury me as I am.
Grenadian Igbo-o,
Bury me as I am.
Grenadian Igbo-o,
Bury me as I am.
I have no mother.
Bury me as I am.
I have no father.
Bury me as I am.

5. JIMMY LUNDAY (Temne)
Sung by an unidentified lead singer and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Daniel Aikens (cut drum); Sugar Adams and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This is a garbled Big Drum song that nevertheless is included as part of the Tombstone Feast music. The performance shows that the drummers and singers sometimes go their own ways, for though one singer is heard saying, "Jimmy Lunday, Zabette Lundi," as if singing the Temne song documented by Pearse in 1956, the others don't seem to be following. Meanwhile, Daniel Aikens takes over on the cut drum, and the piece becomes a demonstration of his hot drumming style. For more on this song, see: Lorna McDaniel, *The Big Drum Ritual of Carriacou: Praisesongs for Rememory of Flight* (Gainsville: University of Florida Press), p. 65.

Ah, ha, ha,
Couma u fé, u fé
Jimmy Lundy
Ah, ha, ha
Zabette Lundy

Translation:
Ah, ha, ha
How are you, how are you,
Jimmy Lundy?
Ah, ha, ha,
Zabette Lundy.

6. MADAME KISTAN (Cheer-up)
Sung by May Fortune and chorus (including Beatrice Lazarus), with chac-chac accompaniment. Daniel Aikens (cut drum); Sugar Adams and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

In this example of a cheer-up, classified by Andrew Pearse as a "frivolous" creole dance style, Daniel Aikens dazzles us again with his hot drumming, as does May Fortune with her singing. They lyrics are hard to catch, but in the interview below, May Fortune explains to Alan that they refer to an old lady, Madame Kistan, to whom someone is singing a declaration of love. Toward the end of the selection Aikens yells, "Way ha!"

[. . .]

May Fortune (spoken): *When the old lady was speaking to the young girl, the young girl raised her head, looking at the old lady. Then the old lady turn and say, the little girl must call she Madame Kistan – and she didn't look at the old lady above.*

7. TIBIT GOUNDE (Cheer-up)
Sung by an unidentified lead singer and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Daniel Aikens (cut drum); Sugar Adams and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This is another cheer-up, a creole dance style created in this hemisphere and added to the Carriacouan repertoire of nation dances that form the core of Big Drum performances. Daniel Aikens tells Alan Lomax that he doesn't know the meaning of "Tibite gounde."

[. . .]

Daniel Aikens (spoken): *It is so funny you can't pronounce it in the right way, you see. It's many in the Patois, you can't make it bring come in English!*

8. AMWAY, BKE, MWE BA CONNET (Old People's Kalenda)

Sung by Jemina Joseph and May Fortune (lead singers) and chorus; with May Fortune (chac-chac); Daniel Aikens (cut drum); Sugar Adams and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This is a song of travel, whose meaning is not fully grasped, belonging to the Old Kalenda style. *Beke* refers to white man or foreigner

Mwe ba connet
Eti neg la sorti
Ba connet
Amway! Beke!

Translation:
I don't know the man –
Where the man comes from.
Don't know –
Help! A foreigner!

9. MWE RIVÉ, JOE TALMANA (Man Kalinda for stick fighting)
Sung by Glassin John and Jemima Joseph (lead singers) and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Daniel Aikens (cut drum); Sugar Adams and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This song is a kalenda borrowed into the Carriacouan repertoire from Trinidad, a principal work site for Carriacouans, and it testifies to their years of migration to that island. It alludes to the Carnival riots of 1881 and probably dates from that time. Joe Talmana was a powerful stick fighter and popular hero who led the people in resisting an attempt by the British colonial police to suppress the street Carnival. Other versions of the song relate that when a certain captain Baker, the police chief, sought out the ringleader, Joe Talmana answered defiantly, " I am here!"

Glassin John was an important community leader in Brunswick village. He had become rich working for the Lago oil company in Aruba and was known for hosting *bouquet* (quadrilles) dances. When he died in the early 1970s, his forty-night prayer meeting was one of the largest in memory (see the accompanying *Saraca* compilation for a description of that prayer meeting).

Mwe rivé, Joe Talmana!
Mwe rivé, mwe rivé.

Translation:
I am here, Joe Talmana!
I am here, I am here.

10. IAMA DIAMA IGBO LÉ-LÉ (Ibo)

Performed by unidentified lead singer and chorus, accompanied by chac-chac; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

As in most songs of the Ibo group, the text invokes the name of the god Ibo Lélé, here called by his full title, Iama (or Iaman Dianma) Igbo Lélé. The proud phrase, "*Ayen ba ka fé Igbo*" ("*Nothing can harm the Igbo*") also occurs in most Ibo songs. The word *polin* is still obscure.

Chorus: *Iama Diama Igbo Lélé, Iama.*
Leader: *C'est mwe negess Igbo.*
Chorus *Iama Diama Igbo Lélé, Iama.*
Leader: *C'est mwe polin Igbo.*
Chorus: *Iama Diama Igbo Lélé, Iama.*
Leader: *Ayen ba ka fé Igbo!*

Translation:
Chorus: *Iama Diama Igbo Lélé, Iama.*
Leader: *I am an Ibo woman.*
Chorus: *Iama Diama Igbo Lélé, Iama.*
Leader: *I am a polin Ibo.*
Chorus: *Iama Diama Igbo Lélé, Iama.*
Leader: *Nothing can hurt the Ibo!*

Lomax (spoken): *Tell me the words. Say the words.*
Unidentified woman: *"Ayen ba ka fé Igbo."*
Unidentified man: *[In] English.*
Unidentified woman: *No, say – give him the same way. They say, "Ayen ba ka fé Igbo // C'est mwe negess Igbo / C'est mwe polin Igb. / Ayen ba ka fé Igbo, // Igbo Igbo Lélé, Iama. / C'est mwe polin Igbo / Iama Iiama Igbo Igbo Lélé, Iama. / Oh, yo Igbo, Iama Iama Igbo Igbo Lélé, Iama."*

Lomax: *Is that in Patoi, or in –*
Unidentified woman: *In Patois, that is Patois.*
Lomax: *What does it mean? What does that mean?*
Unidentified woman: *Patois.*
Lomax: *What does that mean, dear!*
Jemina Joseph: *I don't know – is Igbo!*

11. IGBO GINADE-O (Scotch Igbo)
Performed by an unidentified lead singer and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aiken and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

During the course of the night, tunes might be played more than once. This is a version of the song # 4 above.

12. AMBA, DABIA-E (Cromanti Beg Pardon)
Performed by May Fortune (lead singer and chac-chac) and chorus, with an unidentified oldoe player; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This song, with its obscure meanings and untranslatable words, belongs to the most sacred group – the Beg Pardon songs. "Amba Dabia-e" is connected to the stick-fighting mime ritual danced at midnight at the Big Drum celebrations. Now moribund, this *coup cou* ("cut throat") play represented the mortal battle between good and evil. Amba dabia is an Akan goddess (often referred to as Amma, Abadino, or Ambala). *"La me gunde"* means "the sea growls."

Amba Dabia-e Amba Dabia-e
Amba Dabia-e
Wea gunde
La me gunde
Wea dende, wai-o
Amba Dabia-o

13. ANANSI CUDJO (Cromanti)
Performed by May Fortune (lead singer and chac-chac) and chorus, with an unidentified oldoe player; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

Anansi Cudjo
C'est malade nu sa webe nu
C'est nation mwe wa webe nu
Oh ya drummer mwe
C'est nation mwe sa webe nu

Translation:
Anansi Cudjo –
There is sickness, come.
That is my nation, come.
Oh, my drummer.
That is my nation, come.

14, AI, SALLI HUNDE (Juba / Bélé Kawé)
Performed by May Fortune (lead singer and chac-chac) and chorus; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This bélè Kawé is a creole song, probably composed after the British took over the island from the French. Hence its English lyrics.

Leader: *Oh, Salli Hunde!*
Chorus: *Ah, Salli Hunde!*

Leader: *What you take and do me, that is what I take and do you.*
Chorus: *Ai, Sally Hunde!*
Leader: *Oi, oi, Salli Hunde!*
Chorus: *Ai, Salli Hunde!*
Leader: *What the Old Parents tell me –*
Chorus: *Ai, Salli Hunde!*
Leader: *The Old Parents tell me I don't know me nation.*
Chorus: *Ai, Salli Hunde!*
Leader: *The old man tell me, the old man tell me –*

15. BANDA CALL ME-O (Banda)
Mannie James (lead singer) and chorus of women and men, accompanied by chac-chac; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

"Banda Call Me-o" in Creole English, shares textual lines with another Banda song, "Quashi No De." Information on the origin of the Banda people of Carriacou is inconclusive. They may be descended from the Banda nation (from the interior of the African Gold Coast) which was raided by the Asante in early invasions from the north, or from the Banda people taken later from Central Africa. The fact that the text is in English suggests the latter.

Ronald Kephart notes that the archaic *yeri* (hear) in the line *"Oyo, me no yeri-o"* is still found in the Jamaican Maroon Spirit Language and the Surinam Creole.

Chorus:
Banda call me-o,
Banda call me-o,
Banda call me-o,
Oyo, me no yeri-o ["I can't hear"]

Leader:
Me no yeri-e,
Me no yeri-e,
Quashi-Banda call me-o.
Oyo, me no yeri-e.

16. LORA, YOU NO MARRIED (Bélè Kawé)
Performed by May Fortune (lead singer and chac-chac) and chorus; Daniel Aikens (cut drum); Sugar Adams and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums)

This great, exuberant drumming with the insistent boula pattern is a fine example of power stimulated in the dance. The exclamations "Ai dancer," "Ai, Lora, ai, Lora ai, Lora," and the excited hissing enhance the dancers' efforts and become a part of the orchestration. The derisive picong lyrics tease Lora for being unmarried.

Ai, Lora,
Ai Lora,
Ai Lora,
Moonlight gone, you no married?

May come, you no married,
June come, you no married,
July come, you no married.

[. . .]

Oh, Auntie Lora,
Ai Mama, Auntie Lora,
Wo-yo, Auntie Lora.

[. . .]

17. LAZAR, AI LAZAR (Hallecord)
Sung by an unidentified lead singer and chorus, with chic-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

The tale behind his song concerns the drummer Lazar, who was expected to play at a dance. He never showed up – he died while this song was sung about him.

According to the Andrew Pearse Archive, the date of his death is 1888. This improvisation grows out of an early *hallecord* (song of mourning), so called from its repeated cry, *"Hélé, hélé"* ("alas, alas"), onto which new names are substituted.

Hélé, ai, hélé, Laza, oh, Lazar.
U ba oué Lazar-o.
Ju' 'vre ba oué Lazar-o.
Soleil couché ba oué Lazar-o.

Translation:
Alas, alas, Lazar, oh, Lazar.
You don't see Lazar.
Day dawns and no Lazar.
Sun sets and we do not see Lazar.

18. SESÉ, ANI-O (Hallecord)
Sung by Tida Lazarus (lead singer) and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

This is one of the original group of hallecord songs dating from around 1900, which share a common melodic contour and a textual reference to lament (as in "Lazar, Ai,

Lazar" above). The leader's call is not heard in this recording, but the words of the call are, "Sesé Ani, your name is ringing (*wulé)*, for your mother has died."

Chorus:
Sesé Ani-o, leve-o,
Sesé Ani-o, leve-o,
Sesé Ani-o, leve-o.
No u ka wulé.

Translation:
Sister Annie, wake up.
Your name is ringing.

19. DJERIKA-O (Arada)
Sung by May Fortune (lead singer) and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums). This text appears very old and its words are obscure. *"Djerika mwe tuvé"* means "I find Djerika." Some versions of this song also include the evocative *gwa bois* (the woods). T

Djerika
Djerika-o
Djerika wa ko (oyo) Dahomey

Djerika ai, bon bon (Djerika me mwe)
Djerika ai, mama (C'est Djerika mwe tuvé)
Djerika-o
Djerika wa ko Dahomey

20. MARIA L'ABBE (MANDING)
Sung by May Fortune (lead singer) and chorus, with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

Most Big Drum song lyrics intone a name, whether of an ancestor, a place, a mourner, or of the composer. In this song of migration, the reiterated name Maria is connected both to L'Abbe (today's Grenville) and to Barcolet in Grenada.

Maria-o, Maria-o, Maria-e
Eh, L'Abbe,
Maria-o Maria-o, Maria-o
Maria Bacolet
Maria-o, Maria-e, Maria-o

21. C'EST MWE, NANI MOKO (Moko)

Sung by an unidentified lead singer (Jemima Joseph?) and chorus with chac-chac accompaniment; Sugar Adams (cut drum); Daniel Aikens and Caddy Lazarus John (boula drums).

The Mokos were the Ibibios of West Africa. In Carriacou, according to Andrew Pearse, the Moko split into two groups, the Moko Bangé, who became sophisticated townspeople, and the Moko Yégéyéyé, who were country folk. This Big Drum song is Moko Yégéyéyé. *"C'est mwe Moko"* means "I am Nani Moko."

Hey-yah, c'est mwe, Nani Moko, ho-yah.
Ai-hay, c'est mwe, Nani Moko,
Ai-yah, c'est mwe, Nani Moko,
Ai, yah, c'est mwe, Nani Moko, Yégéyéyé.

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Original field recordings produced and recorded in 1962 by Alan Lomax, assisted by Anna Lomax Wood
Collection producers: Anna Lomax Wood, Jeffrey Greenberg
Caribbean Voyage series editors: Kenneth Bilby and Morton Marks
Tombstone Feast: Funerary Music of Carriacou: Compiled, researched, and edited by Lorna McDaniel and Donald Hill
Text transcriptions and translation consultants: Ronald Kephart and Willy Kephart
Sound restoration/ mastering producer: Steve Rosenthal
Mastering: Phil Klum at the Master Cutting Room, NYC
Production coordinator: Matthew Barton
Associate editor: Ellen Harold
Editorial consultant: Carole McCurdy
Collection consultants: Bess Lomax Hawes, Gideon D'Arcangelo

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Every effort has been made to make these historic recordings sound as good as they did when Alan Lomax made them in the field. All transfers were made whenever possible from the original source material, using the Prism 24-Bit A to D converters and the Prism 24-Bit Noise Shaping System.

The Carriacou recordings, a special subset of the *Caribbean Voyage* series, include *Carriacou Calaloo*, a sampler; *Saraca: Funerary Music of Carriacou* and *Tombstone Feast: Funerary Music of Carriacou*, 2 CDs dedicated to a deep exploration of Afro-Caribbean spiritual music and ritual; and *Music for Work and Play.*