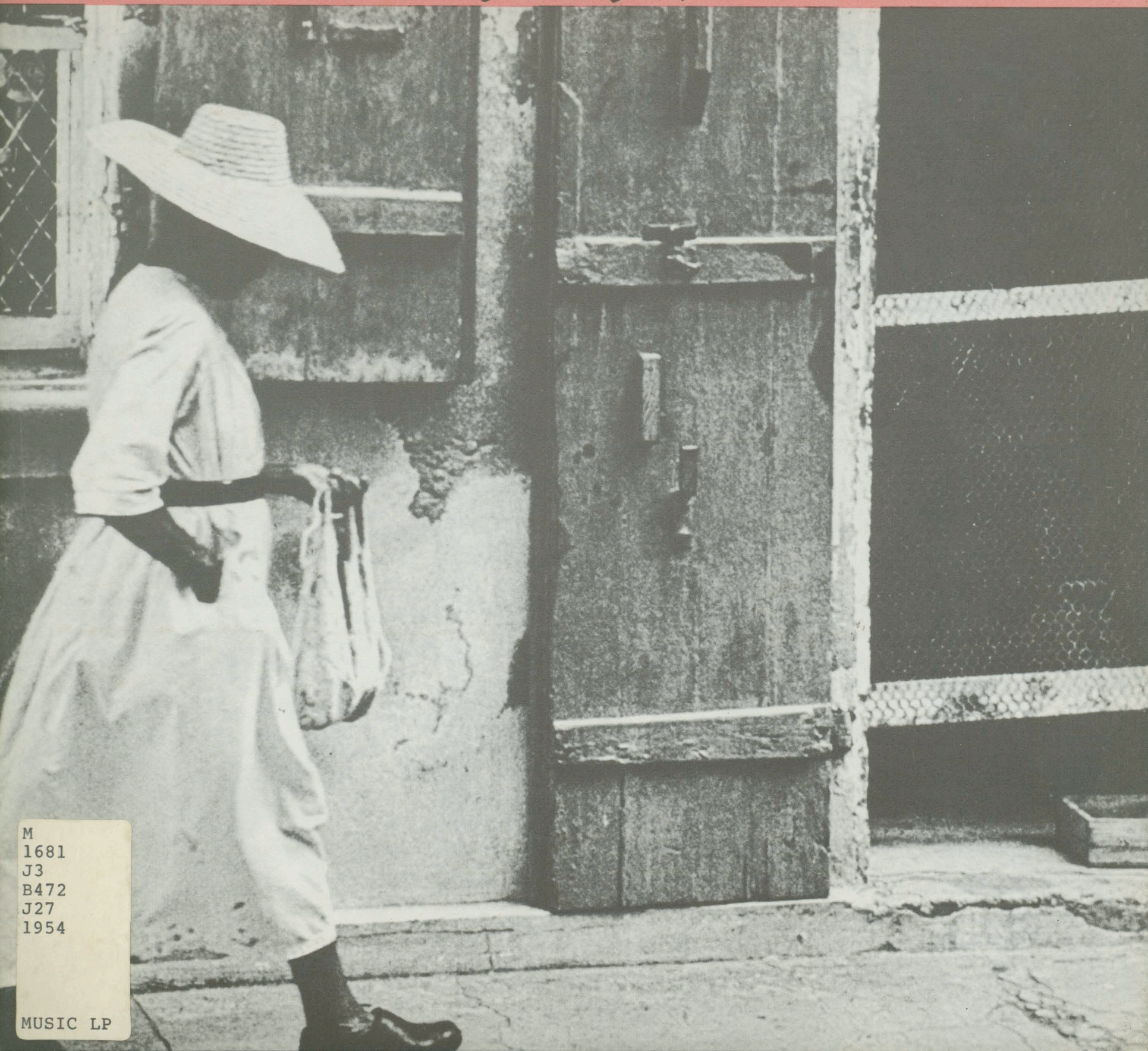


Jamaican Folk Songs sung by Louise Bennett



M
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MUSIC LP

JAMAICAN FOLK SONGS / FOLKWAYS FP 6846

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

Jamaican Folk Songs

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. R 55-49
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CHI-CHI BUD
HOSSANA
HOL' HIM JOE
HOW YOU COME OVER
ME WANT ME DAUGHTER

UNDER THE COCOANUT TREE
DRY WEATHER HOUSES
DIP DEM
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NAMES OF THE ISLAND

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sung by
Louise Bennett



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Louise Bennett is well qualified to interpret the songs of her people. A 'natural' artist, she has devoted her life to the study of Jamaican folk-songs and folklore which she has written about and performed for youth and adult groups in Jamaica, England and the United States in schools, colleges, clubs, camps, night-clubs, concerts. She broadcast weekly on the B.B.C. as a resident artist for nine months and for five years on Station ZQI in Kingston, Jamaica. Her five books are: Humorous Verses in Jamaican Dialect (1942), Dialect Verses (1943), Anancy Stories (1944), Collected Poems (1945), Jamaican Folksongs (1949). She was one of the organizers of the Jamaican Federation of Women, wrote weekly columns and special features for the Kingston "Daily Gleaner" and taught at Excelsior College, Kingston.

LINSTEAD MARKET

About a woman who took ackee (a West Indian vegetable) to this famous market place but did not sell even a quatty (three half-pennies) worth.

Carry me ackee, go to Linstead Market,
Not a quatty wut sell. (repeat)

Chorus: Lawd, not a mite, not a bite,
What a Saturday nite! (repeat)

Everybody come fill up, fill up,
Not a quatty wut sell. (repeat)

Chorus

Meck me call it louder - ackee, ackee,
Red an' pretty, dem tan. (look.)
Lady, buy yuh Sunday morning breakfast,
Rice and ackee nyam gran'. (grand to eat.)

Chorus

All the pickney come linga-ling'
Fe wat dem mumma no bring. (repeat)

Chorus

CHI-CHI BUD (A FLOCK OF BIRDS)

This is a work song. When men are digging on the roads, a singer-man is hired to "raise" or lead the tunes. The singer-man calls out the names of local birds while the diggers, to the rhythm of pick-axes sing "Some a dem a holla some a bawl" which means "Some are hollering and some are bawling!"

Refrain: Chi-chi bud ah!
Some a dem a holla some a bawl!

Some a come 'long -
Some a dem a holla some a bawl!
Some a blue-foot
Some a ting-ting
Some a lagerhead
Some a chick-man-chick
Some a grung dov'
Some a black bud
hawk
lark picheri!
Some a clap clap
Some a bruk bruk
etc.

HOSSANA

A parable of the man who built his house on the sand and on the rock.

Hossana, me buil' me house, oh, ha ha.
Me buil' 'pon sandy grung, ha, ha.
The rain come fall 'pon i', ha, ha.
The sun come bunin' up, ha, ha.
The river wash i' away, ha, ha.
The storm come blowin' down, ha, ha.
Me house i' week you see, ha, ha.
Me house i' week, kean done, ha, ha.
Me buil' 'pon sandy grung, ha, ha.

Hossana, me buil' 'nother house, oh, ha ha.
Me buil' 'pon rocky grung, ha, ha.
The rain come fall 'pon i', ha, ha.
The sun come shine 'pon i', ha, ha.
Me house i' strong, you see, ha, ha.
Me buil' 'pon rocky grung, ha, ha.
Hossana! Ho! Ho! Ha! Ha!

CUDELIA BROWN

A red-headed Negro girl is told why her hair is red and is warned about losing her boy-friend who does not like the color of her hair. This is a dance tune.

Oh Cudelia Brown, wha' meck your head so red?
(repeat)
You sid ung ina de sunshine
Wid nutten 'pon your head,
Oh, Cudelia Brown, that's why your head so red.
Your head so red, etc.

On a moonshine night, on a moonshine night,
I meet missa Ivan
An' missa Ivan told me,
Say dat him give Neita the drop, Jamaica flop,
And the moonshine drop,
Ehe, aha, etc.

.....(repeat above)
And the reason why, because
Her head so red, etc.

DAY DAH LIGHT

A banana-loading song. About three o'clock in the morning, the men and women who have been loading the banana boats all night see the first light of dawn and they sing: "Day dah light an me wan' go home" ("Day is dawning and I want to go home."). A "bunch" of bananas has nine or more bands; it is heavier than six or seven bands, but the loaders are not paid anything extra for carrying bunches, hence the stress on "bunch".

Day oh day oh day dah light an me wan' go home.

Come missa tally-man, come tally me banana.

Day dah light an me wan' go home.

Come fix your cotta,' Matty, fe he come tek
bunch banana.

'cotta: leaf binding bananas on the head

Day dah light etc.

Six-hun', seven-hun', eight-hun' bunch!

Day dah light etc.

Me come yah fe work, me no come yah fe idle.

Day dah light etc.

No' gimme so so bunch, me no horse wid bridle.

Day dah light etc.

Six-hun', seven-hun', eight-hun' bunch!

Day dah light etc.

The checka man a check but him check with
caution.

Day dah light etc.

Me back jus a bruk wid bare exhaustion.

Day dah light etc.

Day oh day oh, day dah light an' me wan' go home.

DIP DEM

"Bedwud" was a religious maniac who used to baptise his followers every Sunday morning in the Mona River. One day he decided to fly to heaven and take his followers with him. He climbed a tree and raised his hands, but instead of flying up he flew down and broke his legs. He was taken to the lunatic asylum and died there in the 1920's.

Chorus: Dip dem, Bedwud, dip dem,
Dip dem in a healin' stream.
Dip dem sweet, but not too deep,
Dip dem to cure bad feelin'.

Me Always go up a' the August Town,
But me never go up a' Mona.
One day me was invited by
One old man dem call Jonah.

When me go up a'Mona,
Me see brother Bedwud stan' up.
Him take sister Mary full in han',
And dip her in a healin' stream.

Chorus

Some bring dem i'john, dem no got no han',
Fe go dip dem ina de healin' stream.
Some ride jackass, but dem can get no past
Fe go dip dem ina de healin' stream.

Some come from the west like a perfect pest,
Fe go dip dem ina de healin' stream.
Some come from the east like a leggo beast,
Fe go dip dem ina de healin' stream.

Chorus

Some come from the north wid dem face full
of warts,
Fe do dip dem ina de healin' stream.
Some come from the south wid dem big
yabbamouth,
Fe go dip dem ina de healin' stream.

Chorus

ME WANT ME DAUGHTER

Like "Chi-Chi Bud" this is a work song sung
by men digging the roads.

Mamma wants her daughter back. She cites
numerous wrongs the son-in-law is liable to
inflict on his wife (her daughter). The
answer-back refrain is "no mah".

Me want me darter, no' man
Me want me darter.

You've a ill treat me darter, sir! No mah!
You've a beat up me darter, sir! " "
On account of a herring head. " "
On account of a mackeral jaw. " "
On account of a piece of bread. " "
On account of a fowl foot. " "
etc.

Me want me darter, no' man
Me want me darter.

Give me back me darter, sir! " "
You've a ill treat me darter, sir! " "
On account of another gal, " "
On account of a pretty gal. " "
etc.

UNDER THE COCOANUT TREE

This is the only Jamaican folksong in waltz
time.

It was under the cocoanut tree, dahlin'
Under the cocoanut tree, dahlin'
You promised to married to me dahlin'
It was under the cocoanut tree.

It was under the cocoanut tree, dahlin'
It was there that you gave it to me, dahlin'
It was there that you gave me your heart, dahlin'
It was under the cocoanut tree.

It was under the cocoanut tree, dahlin'
It was there you took my heart from me, dahlin'
And promised to married to me dahlin'
It was under the cocoanut tree.

SIDE II

DRY WEATHER HOUSES

Houses you can't live in when it rains. This is a "mento" dance tune.

Chorus: Dry Weather houses
Are not worth a cent
And yet we have to pay
So much for rent.

One Monday morning a landlord went
To a tenant to get his rent.
But the tenant say, "Massa me no fool,
Me na pay no rent fe no swimmin' pool."

Chorus

Look at the room you rent me to live,
The whole of the roof is just like a sieve.
When rain come if I sleep too sound,
So help me king, I shure wud a'drowned.

Chorus

Some of the rooms they rent out, you know,
Is just like a big scorpion depot.
If you go to bed and you don't take a oath,
Middle of the night cockroach cut your throat.

Chorus

Some of the rooms, the way them so small,
You can't even turn inside them at all.
When you want to turn you have to go outside,
Turn you turn and go back inside.

Chorus

HOW YOU COME OVER

This is a work song used for pulling heavy loads. It tells about a woman who crossed a flooded river over into the village. The surprised villagers kept asking how she got over and she kept them in suspense by describing every thing she did to get across.

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

The river bank come down
Me couldn't come over. Ahhhhh...

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

Me step in, fe walk in
Me 'fraid me go drowned
Me never come over. Ahhhhh....

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

Me take piece a bamboo
Me trow 'pon the water. Ahhhhh.....

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

Me step on the bamboo
Me lookin' at the water, the broad dirty water.

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

Me take piece of grang-grang (palm tree bark)
Me trow 'pon the water.

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

Me lookin' at the water, the broad dirty water
Me step on the bamboo
Me step on the grang-grang
Me see grangi-grangi. (little fish)

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

Me step on the bamboo
Me step on the grang-grang
Me rock a' me rock a'
Me jump on the bankin. Ahhhhh.....

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh
Den a how you come over.

A so me come over
De broad, dirty water.

Whaioh, whaioh, whaioh,
I'm a glad me come over.

HOL' 'M JOE

This starts out as a "digging" song and ends up as a free-for-all dance tune. It starts to tell the story of a girl on her way to a doctor who is really an obeah-man (witch doctor). Other verses tell of the rhythm or body-sway of Jamaican women.

Chorus: Hol' 'm Joe, hol' 'm Joe
Hol' 'm Joe, but don't let 'm go.
My donkey wants water
He wants sugar water
He wants rum and water.
Hol' 'm Joe, hol' 'm Joe,
Hol' 'm Joe, but don't let 'm go.

One Monday morning	(hol' 'm Joe)
I was going down to Chappletown	"
An' I meetup Keziah	"
An' I ask her where she going to	"
She was going to the doctor	"
Then a who is the doctor	"
Then a cockroach a doctor	"
And a gingerroot a medicine	"
And a lizard a bugler	an' a espadeamenta!

Chorus

From Ackee Walk up to Constapt Spring
All you hear is the same old thing.
The donkey want water, etc.

Rhythm is a thing, just a certain thing,
It cause the young girls to walk and fling.
The donkey want water, etc.

Jamaica rhythm it is so strong,
Once it cramp up a obeah man.
The donkey want water, etc.

TOWNS OF JAMAICA

In this little Island,
There are lots of little towns,
And lots of little districts
And villages around.

The funniest thing about them
Are the names they call them by;
I'd like to give an idea of a few,
So listen while I try.

You have Hunta-battam, Misseton-battam,
Friton-battam and Mimba-hole.
Teck-time, Maka-piece, Mocho-tung, Vera,
Dry-Harbor-piece and Anancy-catacoo.

Guava-ridge, Sista-bridge, Granny-nidge,
Put-together and Tumble-down.
Cotton-tree and Maka-tree, Walla-Walla,
And Jackass Town.

You have Pussgully, Ratgully, Flytoxally,
Time and Patience, Salt-gut and Bear.
Duppy-hill, Puppy-hill, Granny-witta-pill,
The Devil Race Course and Jackass Parade.

Duna-dunk, Constitution Hill, Mashall,
Kin-hole, Bungrung.
There is even a place in West Moreland
Dem call Madarajas Saucepan.

Now the parishes are Clarendon, St. Andrew
St. Mary,
St. Thomas, Portland, West Moreland,
St. Andrew too, you see.
St. Anna, St. James, St. Elizabeth, Manchester, Trawlawnny.

There is Hanover and Kingston,
And now listen to me.

(repeat towns)