

**L** **LABAT, Jean-Baptiste** (1663–1738) was a French Dominican missionary and plantation owner who lived on Guadeloupe between 1693 and 1706, and travelled throughout the Eastern Caribbean, visiting Grenada in September 1700 for one week. The memoir of his travels is chronicled in the *Voyages aux Isles de l'Amérique, 1693–1705*. It contains one of the first accounts of the French settlement on Grenada and has been extensively quoted since its publication. Labat presents a brief description of the struggling colony, including his views on the FORTS in Grenada, especially the defences of St. George's which he concluded were inadequate. He criticises the 51-year-old colony, characterising it as severely underdeveloped,



Jean-Baptiste Labat

and adds that had it been in the hands of the British it would have progressed more quickly (see ÎLES DU VENT). His memoir has two important MAPS, one of the settlement of La Ville du FORT ROYAL showing the original settlement of PORT LOUIS, and a plan of Fort Royal (see FORT GEORGE) with an outline of the original 1667 Fort Royal.<sup>91, 197</sup>

**LABOUR MOVEMENT** By Caribbean standards, the Grenadian labour movement was slow to develop. The labour riots and protests throughout the Caribbean in the 1930s did not affect Grenada, though the rudiments of its trade union movement can be traced to the founding of the Grenada Workers' Union (GWU) in 1929 and the Grenada Workingman's Association (GWA) in 1930. Even further back, beginning in the late 1800s, a number of organisations like FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, the GRENADA UNION OF TEACHERS, and the Grenada Union of Returned Soldiers (f. 1919) characterised themselves as unions. But as Emmanuel observes, 'The year 1946 can be regarded as the year of the birth of trade unionism in Grenada because it was then that the first agreement on wages and conditions of work between employers and trade unions was made.' The unions of the 1940s and before have been criticised as weak because they sought a non-confrontational co-operative relationship with employers and failed to appeal to the mass of workers. They were, however, important building blocks leading to the emergence of the GMMIWU in 1950, which signalled a radical change. The 1950s also witnessed the establishment of no fewer than ten labour unions, among them the SEAMAN AND WATERFRONT WORKERS' UNION and the TECHNICAL AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION, which attracted the growing urban labour force.

This trend continued in the 1960s and 1970s, despite the GULP government's concerted efforts to restrict the unions' growth and activities. The coming to power of the PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT in 1979 ushered in a new era for trade unionism, as it attempted to align labour unions with the government and to gain the support of the labouring classes. Though the relationship was not always amicable, the PRG had succeeded in creating a more co-operative labour environment.

Post-PRG governments witnessed a return to the traditionally antagonistic government-labour relationship, especially under NEW NATIONAL PARTY governments. In 1983 the PRG established the National Insurance Scheme to provide retirement benefits for workers, and following layoffs due to HURRICANE

IVAN some workers were paid unemployment benefits. In 1999 the NNP government passed a Labour Code, stipulating basic wage rates and working conditions for all workers. There are presently about nine major unions on the islands, the most influential are SWWU, TAWU, GUT and the Grenada Public Workers' Union. Labour unions have a combined membership of 20–25 per cent (about 10,000) of the total labour force, and have had and continue to have a major role in the political process. The Grenada Trades Union Council (f. 1955) is the umbrella body for eight of the most important unions, with an appointed senator representing labour in PARLIAMENT. May Day or 1<sup>st</sup> May is celebrated annually in Grenada, as it is around the world, as Labour Day, with a parade and other celebrations recognising the role of workers.<sup>35, 98, 171</sup>

333, 344

**LAGOON, St. George's** A body of water that the French called Étang d'Eau Salée: 'Salt Water Pond' (LABAT referred to it as Étang du Vieux Bourg: 'Pond of the Old Town'). It had once been separated from the CARENAGE by a sandbar on which was situated the first successful European SETTLEMENT founded by the French in 1649 and later called PORT LOUIS. The sandbar gradually sank as a result of geological activity and possible fluctuating sea levels. The idea of opening the Lagoon to regular shipping dates to 1656, when J-B DU TERTRE suggested that it might be 'possible to cut through the neck of land separating the harbour from the

lagoon and open up additional anchoring space.'

Yet it was not until 1960 that a channel was cut through the reef to allow the entry of large yachts into the Lagoon. Additional dredging was completed in 1980 and again in 1998 to widen its entrance and allow the entry of larger boats, as well as extend berthing facilities for schooners. Between 1926 and 1933 the swamps surrounding the Lagoon were reclaimed, creating the Mang or Lagoon Road by 1947. It remained unpaved for many years, but once paved in the 1980s became the popular thoroughfare to Grande Anse and the southern region. The area surrounding the Lagoon, formerly the Mang (<Fr. *manglier* <Am.Sp. <Arawakan for the tree), has seen extensive development as part of the extension of St. George's Town. The Lagoon is home to the Grenada Yacht Club (f. 1954) and the Grenada Yacht Services, and the primary YACHTING centre in St. George's.

**LA GRENADA FAMILY** Louis La Grenade, Sr. (1733–1808) was the patriarch of one of Grenada's oldest families, which can trace its lineage back 250 years. He was a FREE COLOURED who during the British–French conflicts renounced his RC faith to become a British naturalised citizen. This entitled him to privileges that soon became exclusive to Protestants, even though he was still regarded as a third-class citizen because of his mixed heritage. In 1776 he unsuccessfully petitioned the Assembly to allow 'me and my Heirs male to enjoy every Privilege as a free

White Person.' He was a successful entrepreneur and planter, owning estates across Grenada, and by the 1790s was probably the most prominent free coloured. Unlike most free coloureds, he fought with the British during FÉDON'S REBELLION, captaining a militia company. His marble mausoleum at Morne Jaloux, St. George, is a historical monument.

Louis La Grenade, Jr. inherited much of his father's property and with it an established reputation. In 1833 he was appointed aide-de-camp to Gov. Smith, and in 1837 became one of the first free coloureds elected to the legislature. The La Grenades remain a prominent Grenadian family of which its most recent and notable



View of the Lagoon



Inscription on Louis La Grenade's tomb

member was Maurice BISHOP. The family tradition continues in the De La Grenade Industries, established in 1966 as a cottage industry. It expanded over the years and in 1992 opened a modern factory, producing a number of products including the renowned, prize-winning La Grenade Liqueur, Morne Délice Nutmeg Syrup, and La Grenade Rum Punch. (See [www.delagrenade.com](http://www.delagrenade.com)).

**LAJABLESS** The folk spirit of a woman who, many believe, strolls late at night and lures unsuspecting men to their deaths. Like most folk spirits, her characteristics vary depending on the teller of the tale, but she usually appears as a beautiful woman who attracts men with her sweet smelling perfume. Dressed in a long, black skirt, she walks on the grass or soil so as to muffle the clip-clop of a cloven hoof, while with a large floppy hat she covers the skeletal appearance of her face. Usually found along deserted roads in the dead of night, this enchantress leads her gullible victims to a mysterious death. It is said that men who were not able to escape from her spell have been found

dead, every bone in their bodies broken and no sign of violence having occurred. Some just go stark raving mad. The lajables (<Fr.Cr.<Fr. *la diablesse*: 'she-devil') is believed to be the spirit of a spinster who died a virgin, hence her desire to attract men and bring about their deaths. However, from our modern perspective, she seems more of a deterrent to wayward husbands. In the stories told of encounters with her, men claim to have been saved by lighting a cigarette since she is afraid of fire and smoke. A crucifix supposedly repels her, while salt will cause her to melt away.

**LAKE ANTOINE** An extinct volcanic crater situated on the NE coast in St. Andrew. A cone-shaped volcano, it collapsed in upon itself and filled in with water. It is larger and possibly older than Grand Étang Lake, occupying 16 acres (6.5 ha). Unlike Grand Étang Lake, it is no more than 20 ft (6 m) above sea level and abuts the seashore. A variety of waterfowls and other BIRDS can be seen in the immediate vicinity of the lake, making the area ideal for bird watching. The 84 acre (34 ha) area surrounding the lake is privately owned and the GOG hopes that a management plan, developed in tandem with its owner to include wildlife CONSERVATION and recreational uses, will protect the area. Lake Antoine probably derived its name from 'Captain' ANTOINE, an Island Carib 'chief' resident in the area in the 1650s. The Antoine River, just south of the lake, is part of the Tivoli watershed and not connected to the lake.



Lake Antoine

**LAMBIE/QUEEN CONCH** (*Strombus gigas*) is a popular seafood eaten for thousands of years and dating to the early AMERINDIANS. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, pulverised lambie shells, after heating in LIME KILNS, were used to make mortar for building purposes and as a purifying agent in the processing of SUGAR. It is collected by diving fishermen who specialise in its capture during open season from January to May. The lambie (<Fr. *lambi* <Is.Car. for the mollusc) is removed from the shell and tenderised by pounding before being stewed, soured or deep-fried. Its taste and texture are similar to that of squid or octopus.

Its beautiful shell is sold as an artefact either natural or polished. The blowing of the lambie shell, which sounds much like a fog horn, is still done by fishermen and fishmongers to signal to prospective customers that they have returned from the sea with a 'catch of fish'. This tradition possibly began with a 1766 law that required fishermen, before the sale of any fish, to blow the shell as a 'Five minutes previous Notice to the Inhabitants of the said Town'. Its standing as a delicacy has led to over-fishing, especially in shallow waters close to shore. The lambie is listed as 'endangered'. The blowing of the lambi shell has become a symbol of resistance because of its association with the MAROONS.

**L'ANCE AUX ÉPINES** 12 00N 61 45.7W is situated on a peninsula in the SE of Grenada. Its name is from the French, meaning 'thorny cove', possibly because of the historical abundance of acacia trees (*Acacia* spp.) in the area. In the 1700s and 1800s it was part of the Grande Anse estate, producing COTTON and SUGAR. In 1889 it was listed as a stock farm, and in 1957 was still rearing cattle and sheep on the flat dry scrubland when Gordon Brathwaite bought the estate. He later pioneered the area's development, making it one of Grenada's trendiest residential districts. Its characteristic flatness, low rainfall, privacy and superb small BEACHES have made L'Ance Aux Épines (pronounced lance-ah-peen) an exclusive residential community, with many grand and expensive residences occupied by local professionals, businesspersons and retirees from North America and Europe. Due to the area's status as a YACHTING centre, Prickly Bay is an official port of entry. It boasts a small marina located at Spice Island Shipyard and another at the Moorings, Secret Harbour. There are also a number of hotels and restaurants in the area catering to the TOURISM industry, including the Moorish-style Azzurra Castle, and the Calabash Hotel, one of the first in the area which dates to the 1960s.

**LAND SETTLEMENT/DEVELOPMENT** Peasant ownership of agricultural lands, especially in Grenada, steadily increased after the 1850s, yet land tenure remained acutely skewed. Carriacou exemplified the woeful state of land tenure, with many of its estates abandoned by absentee planters, and peasants with little access to arable land. The 1897 Royal Commission recommended the distribution of idle lands to aid rural development, and between 1903 and 1921 the Carriacou Land Settlement Scheme divided a number of estates, and sold holdings to people. By 1911 some 8,349 peasants across Grenada owned on average 10 acres (4 ha) or less, which they planted with cash crops, KITCHEN GARDENS and spices. In 1911 three estates in Grenada were allotted to farmers. By 1930 about 15,000 peasants owned less than 10 acres of land each, the majority owning less than five.

Political upheavals in the Caribbean in the 1930s led to a concerted effort by the colonial government to redistribute land, with the goal of alleviating the islands' social and economic inequalities. Between 1933 and 1968, the scheme distributed hundreds of acres to as many as one thousand farmers. Though some people gained access to land cheaply, the schemes may have failed in not providing greater access to more peasants. The Land for the Landless scheme, under the GULP government, was billed as a land reform and redistribution scheme and operated between 1969 and 1979. During that period the GULP had either purchased, or more commonly appropriated, about 24 ESTATES, comprising some 3,201 acres (1,295 ha) intended for redistribution. The Land Settlement Development Act, intended to make acquiring unproductive estates easier and more accessible to small farmers, ultimately gave Premier Gairy the power to acquire estates at will, and operate a well-intentioned policy on patronage. Though the scheme had sought to increase the availability of arable land to the rural poor, less than 20 percent was redistributed. It is believed that it contributed to decreases in production of the islands' export crops and became another tool by which the GULP government intimidated its opposition, continuing the exploitation of the peasantry, and hastening the economic ruin of the estate system which had been the backbone of the islands' agricultural economy. The PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT, though altering the approach to land acquisition through its controversial Land Development and Utilization Law (1980), continued acquiring 'idle' properties, which by October 1983 accounted for 20 per cent of the arable land in Grenada (a large percentage was inherited from the GULP government). The PRG did not redistribute land since its goal was collectivization into state farms that were

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administered by worker cooperatives. Following the US-led military INTERVENTION many of the contested estates were returned to their owners or purchased by the GOG.<sup>30, 35, 267, 324</sup>

**LANGUAGE** With the name of the country sounding Spanish and many PLACE NAMES French, it is no wonder that foreigners often ask, ‘What language do you speak in Grenada?’ Most people from Grenada and the Grenadines speak Grenadian Standard English (GSE) as well as a ‘Caribbean Atlantic Creole (English–lexicon).’ The latter is also called dialect, patwa (patois) or English pidgin, and is the primary form of communication in Grenada. It is, of course, the legacy of the islands’ last and longest-lived colonial rulers—the British.

Dialect is spoken predominantly by the majority of Afro-Grenadians, though most Grenadians can converse in it. One’s social status, educational level attained, and the person to whom one is speaking will determine the type of idiom used. The transition from dialect to GSE is an easy one for most people, though there are some—due mainly to a low level of formal education—for whom it is not. Grenadian dialect, like the many Caribbean Creoles, reflects the many stages of contact between Europeans and black Africans. The Portuguese, who were among the first to take part in the SLAVE TRADE, left their linguistic footprints. Words like pickney (<Portuguese *pequeno*: ‘little boy’) and caca (<Portuguese *caçar*: ‘to defecate’) are common to both West Africa and the Caribbean. The French, the first European colonisers of Grenada, would make an even more fundamental contribution to the islands’ linguistic form. In addition to the numerous words, phrases and place names, much of the underlying linguistic structure reveals a French or Latin influence (see FRENCH CREOLE).

Grenadian dialect is, of course, an English form, but even here the influence is quite eclectic: Scottish, Irish and lower-class British forms. Its lexicon includes archaic words from the English language (cutlass <Eng. ‘sword worn by sailors’), and English words with modified meanings (for example ‘foot’ which refers to the entire limb from the hip to the toes and not just the portion from the ankles down). The long duration of the Slave Trade also ensured a constant infusion of African words, phrases and speech patterns (see AFRICAN HERITAGE).

Dialect’s modification of Standard English is greater than that of its American and Australian siblings because it affects not only vowels but also consonants. Those peculiarities of the English tongue, the dental fricatives, th/ and th(, are replaced by ‘t’ or ‘d’ as in ‘dis’ for ‘this’ and ‘tanks’ for

‘thanks’. The ‘d’ in the double consonant ‘nd’ is dropped when it occurs at the end of words, as in ‘sen’ for ‘send’ and ‘len’ for ‘lend’. Similarly, the ‘t’ in the double consonant ‘st’ as in ‘las’ for ‘last’. The ‘r’ sound that follows a vowel is also not pronounced, the vowel simply stressed as in ‘hahd’ for ‘hard’. Words are often compounded and duplicated for emphasis. Many of these modifications may be seen in the dialect sentence: ‘De win blowin hahd hahd ova de fiel./ The wind is blowing very hard over the field.’

Many Grenadians, because of historical biases, hold dialect in low esteem. It was seen as humorous and ridiculed as ‘play talking’, hence some of the appeal of dialect poetry and plays. Grenadians speak at least three dialects that are comprehensible to every Grenadian, though the dialect of the urban elite is widely accepted for obvious reasons. Residents from the countryside are often called ‘country booky’ because of their strong accents and the absence of GSE pronunciation and grammar in their speech. The people of C&PM, due to their geographical, social and political isolation, speak a dialect slightly different from either of those of Grenada.

Under the colonial educational system the emphasis was on urging children to alter their speech pattern to speak ‘properly’ as opposed to ‘bad’ or ‘broken’ English. If EDUCATION was viewed as the key to open doors, speaking properly gained you welcome and acceptance. Some critics of the present system contend that dialect is the first language for many Grenadians and should be taught as such in schools, with Standard English being made the second language. Such nationalist-minded critics have begun to support measures that would put in place a Caribbean culture with its own ‘native’ or ‘nation’ languages. Others still have argued that dialect has become a part of the culture, and that our identity as Grenadians and Carriacouans hinges upon it. The status quo has not changed, but there is now accommodation within the system, especially with the accepted teaching of literary works by Caribbean dialect poets and novelists within the formal school curricula. Dialect may have become fashionable, but its place in the school curriculum is still debated.

There have been a number of individual attempts to study, record and collect the islands’ fast disappearing dialects by individuals like Claude Francis and Alister Hughes, but an extensive dictionary has yet to be published. Ronald Kephart has studied the dialect of Carriacou and is widely published on the topic. The dialect of Grenada is beautifully captured in the poetry of Paul Keens-Douglas. Merle Collins’ novel *Angel* also captures the melodious voice of the rural peasantry and illustrates the diverse influences on the Grenadian language.<sup>5, 164, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192</sup>

**LASAGESSE, St. David** has been included in the GOG plan for CONSERVATION because of the area's natural and cultural significance. Abutting the LaSagesse River is a unique natural area occupied by a mangrove estuary, salt pond, littoral woodland, dry thorn scrub cactus woodland, offshore CORAL REEFS, BEACHES, and a wildlife habitat for some of the island's migrating BIRDS. Its designation for protection can lead to the development of the area as a managed natural resource, providing nature trails, bird watching and hiking as opposed to the indiscriminate expansion of the growing TOURISM sector. Not far from the natural area are the remains of the old French settlement at Megrin, with the ruins of a church and other structures. The LaSagesse GREAT HOUSE, once owned by Lord Brownlow, equerry to the Duke of Windsor, is presently the LaSagesse Nature Centre. The former LaSagesse Rum Distillery, with its decaying water wheel and crumbling aqueduct system, further enhances the cultural history of the area. It was reopened as the LaSagesse Natural Works Establishment, providing a venue to sell local CRAFTS and spices and an entertainment centre for local artists.

**LAURENT, Sir Pierre-François** (d. 1784) A French Grenadian, who, because of his allegiance to the British between 1763 and 1779, was called a 'collaborator' by his French compatriots. Following the French ceding of the islands to the British in 1763 Laurent converted to Protestantism and in 1768 received '[t]he honour of knighthood which His Majesty has been graciously pleased to bestow on' him. In 1776, even after swearing allegiance to the British and anglicising his name to Peter Francis Laurent, Protestants objected to his appointment as assistant judge. When the French regained power in 1779 he 'reversed' his faith and was appointed an honorary member of the Supreme Court. His appointment was opposed by the president of the court, who felt that 'the laws and constitution of the colonies exclude him for more than one reason from any form of public office or duty.'

Laurent's inappropriateness may have stemmed more from the fact that he was married to 'a certain Miss St. Bernard, a woman who was known to be [free] coloured,' and Laurent himself was previously accused of being mixed race. Despite his association with the French during their brief occupation of the islands, he was appointed to the General Council in 1784, but Protestants again protested against his appointment. He was burned in effigy by a mob, forcing him to 'discontinue his attendance' in the legislature. He was a wealthy proprietor, owning COFFEE and SUGAR estates.

**LA VALETTE, Jean-Pierre** (?1775-1795) was one of the prominent leaders of FÉDON'S REBELLION. La Valette (or La Vallée) was a FREE COLOURED who, according to Dr John HAY, was 'a native of the island' and was employed as a tailor in the town of SAUTEURS, St. Patrick. In early 1795, together with Charles NOGUES, he travelled to Guadeloupe to meet with Victor Hugues, the French Republican leader. There he received a commission as captain in the French Republican Army and arms and ammunition to undertake the revolt in Grenada. At the start of the rebellion he commanded a detachment of rebels and slaves from Sauteurs and joined Julien FÉDON in the attack on GRENVILLE, St. Andrew, on the night of 2 March 1795. La Valette is said to have shot and killed the Catholic priest, Father Peissonier, without provocation. He had accused Peissonier of being an aristocrat because he offered a coat to a scantily clad British hostage of the rebels. Hay describes him as 'A young man of about twenty, dressed in nankeen [a buff-coloured, durable cotton cloth], with gold epaulets, of good appearance, but violent beyond description in his manner; threatening death to every Englishman.' Within a week of the revolt La Valette came to a brutal end when he was hacked to death with a cutlass by a 'coloured captain named Ragon while interceding to save another's life.'

**LEAPERS' HILL/CARIBS' LEAP** The events that led to the 'leap' off the hill at SAUTEURS are shrouded in a tale of war, colonisation, love, revenge, greed, deceit and genocide, and subject to centuries of mythology. The story begins with the Island Carib Thomas, who having been rejected by Chief DUQUESNE's daughter, killed her brother and ran away to Martinique. While in Martinique, Thomas informed Gov. DU PARQUET that he could 'deliver' the Island Caribs of Grenada because he knew of their secret meeting place. On 30 May 1650 a force of sixty men, under the cover of darkness, surprised the Island Caribs in their *cabet* or 'long house', situated on a hill overlooking the sea, and began a bloody slaughter. As many as forty Island Caribs may have plunged several hundred feet to their deaths. Rather than offer an inglorious surrender to the French, the Island Caribs committed an act that has left them a legacy remembered today as a symbol of resistance to European domination. The hill from which they leapt bore the French name Le Morne des Sauteurs: 'Hill of Leapers', and was later affixed to the town that developed around the small bay.

A number of writers seem to think that this bloody attack against the Island Caribs represented the annihilation of their population in Grenada, but they survived into the



Leapers' Hill/Caribs' Leap from Sauteurs Bay

mid-1700s in much reduced circumstances. Symbolically, though, the Leapers' Hill incident was the turning point in the Island Carib struggle against the French in the latter's favour. The site attracts visitors who are probably awed by this ultimate act of self-sacrifice, but the outcome nonetheless evokes sadness and anger. The only monument remains the solitary hill.<sup>8, 91, 95, 197</sup>

**LEBANESE/SYRIAN COMMUNITY** Grenada's Middle Eastern-derived community dates to the first half of the 1900s. They were the last major group in a stream of immigrants beginning after the abolition of SLAVERY. Mainly Christians, they fled economic hardships and religious persecution in Lebanon and Syria under the Muslim Turks. Like in many of the other islands, they constitute a small community, numbering less than one per cent of the Grenadian population, and are mainly involved in entrepreneurial activities. Many began as hucksters and small retailers, selling various kinds of wares like cloth, household items and food, and within a few years had become successful in retail businesses. The 1921 census recorded only six 'Syrians' in Grenada, but a dozen

or so may have permanently settled until the mid-1930s when their migration slowed.

The Grenadian community has grown over the years through additions from within the region. The 1991 census recorded only 43 individuals who defined themselves as 'Syrian/Lebanese'. Among the early families in Grenada were the Fakhres and Salhabs. George Joseph, who arrived in 1935, was typical of the community. An entrepreneur, he was instrumental in the formation of a number of commercial and industrial businesses in the 1940s and held managerial positions in many. Another notable member of the community was Moses Nahous, entrepreneur, political backer and appointed senator (1972-1976). Common Lebanese/Syrian family names include Aboud, Fakhre, Hadeed and Nahous. The community is known locally as 'Frenchi', the name of one of their businesses.

**LEMON GRASS** (*Cymbopogon citratus*) is a member of the grass family and possesses a pungent citrus smell, hence its name. It is commonly used in folk remedies as a tea to treat flu and colds, and as a 'cooling' agent in baths. Lemon grass is also used to season foods, adding its