

# Kitabu

The bi-monthly newsletter of the African School Mobile Library  
"African Studies by bicycle"

Issue 10: February 2021

Dear Reader, welcome to Kitabu. In the month that we celebrate Grenadian Independence, let's remember a gargantuan figure from the isle called spice.

## The Giant of Grenada

There was once a giant who went striding through the isle of his birth. But this wasn't a giant of ghoulish or gluttonous behaviour, that we associate with most folk tales: this one gave much more than he took.

We often think of giants with outstanding physical features, such as having one eye, or large feet: this giant had a gargantuan heart. He went throughout the island, encouraging people to read and to discuss. The humongous figure in the story of Jack had a magic harp; this one had a great voice, that he would use to tell stories or to sing with. Amongst his favourite renditions were the negro spirituals, like his friend and fellow giant, Paul Robeson. Where as other giants imprisoned, he freed the captive: the incarcerated minds of the colonised. His utterances did not scare the people, his approach did not have them scurrying to their homes, bolting their doors. They welcomed the one with the enchanted voice, with his clarion call of "Educate, Agitate, Federate."

He went island-hopping, gently stomping through other lands; because what he desired for the isle of his birth, he wanted for the other island nations also. Fitting then, that there is a library named after him and that his former home, is a venue of the University of the West Indies. For fifty years, he spoke of solidarity: becoming known as the "Father of West Indian Federation." Now, or in time to come dear reader, when you tell your children and grandchildren tales after supertime, remember the one called Theo Marryshow, the Giant of Grenada

Island-wide you went,  
Education for every community.  
Opening of new doors,  
Turning the knowledge key.

You dreamt in Grenada,  
But you dreamt across the sea.  
Of my parents in Jamaica,  
Your vision included me.

Patron Saint of Federation,  
From Grenada to Cuba.  
I'm a child of your dream:  
So I'll sing of my father.

Upstairs Marryshow had a fantastic and varied private library which included everything from volumes of popular American and European poets to books on political philosophy and contemporary Caribbean sociology. Many of the first volumes of journals put out by the very young University College of the West Indies had pride of place in Marryshow's academic collection. These included Volume 1 No.1 of both *Social and Economic Studies* and *Caribbean Quarterly*, journals of the new regional University. Marryshow had also a large collection of historic photographs, including a photograph of a bust of Paul Robeson by Jacob Epstein.

### **from Marryshow House: A Living Legacy - Beverley A.Steele, Caribbean Quarterly**

The T.A. Marryshow Community College Library is located within the Resource Centre of the college. It houses more than twelve thousand books classified according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System and a number of other resources. The main library is found on the Tanteen Campus but there are smaller libraries located at Six Roads Campus in Carriacou and at the St.Patrick's Multi-Prupose Centre respectively.

### **TAMCC**

Another important part in the process of the widening of the young Marryshow's horizons was played by the Grenada Literary and Debating Society, set up in 1908 under the auspices of the Methodist Church and of which he himself was a founder member. This organisation held debates on a wide variety of subjects, arranged lectures, sponsored concerts and the like.

Marryshow announces in the West Indian of 5<sup>th</sup> September 1915 the opening of a bookshop in St. George's which has Booker T Washington's *Up From Slavery* available, and which, he says should be read by every West Indian.

On his way to London Marryshow visited several West Indian islands, obtaining mandates to press for constitutional reform and also New York – a journey which has been described as a "one man pilgrimage"....

Full as these ten years must have been with his reading, his writing and his fighting for better conditions for his fellow Grenadians in particular and West Indians in general, with a, in short, the pursuit of his battle cry of "Educate, Agitate, Federate," T.A. Marryshow had nevertheless been pursuing a variety of other interests. With his charm, his singing, his story telling, he was much in demand at the Literary League....

### **from Marryshow of Grenada: An Introduction – Jill Sheppard**

The ASML has Marryshow of Grenada: An Introduction – Jill Sheppard

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