

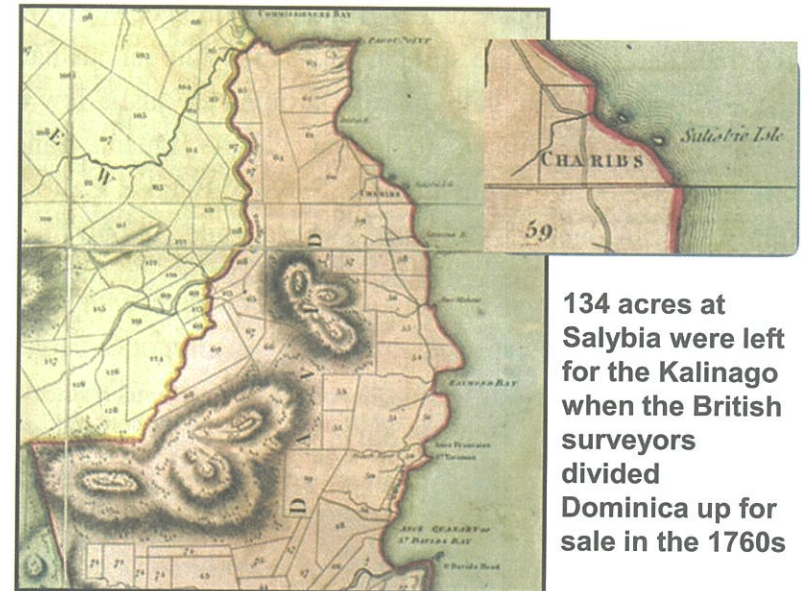
historic building was not a necessity, but it is a congenial choice for scientific work related to the past. It was also believed that it puts a part of the restored facilities of Fort Shirley to good use. The former lock-up room has the floor dimensions of 3m47 x 3m68 (=12,77m<sup>2</sup>) or roughly 12 feet x 12 feet. The other room in the same building is the administration office for the restored Fort Shirley complex so the storage facility is in an excellent location with regard to the future administration of the site.

## 15. The Aftermath of colonisation among the Kalinago of Wai'tukubuli

On the north-east coast of our island is a settlement unique to the Caribbean region. Known today as the Kalinago Territory, it was established by the British in 1903 as the Carib Reserve. It was one place in the region where the descendants of the original islanders could maintain a portion of land after everything else, from Trinidad to Puerto Rico, had been taken from them. Their ancestors had roamed from the river valleys and ocean shores of the Guianas and Venezuela in lowland South America up along the chain of the Lesser Antilles to as far as the eastern islands of the Greater Antilles. Some sixty archaeological sites have been located all around the island revealing stone axes, decorated clay pieces and carved religious objects dating to before the time of Christ. Here lived the people who gave their name (or rather the name that the Europeans

gave them) to the sea and entire region in which we live today: The Caribbean.

But the Kalinago Territory is not the only home of the descendants of these indigenous Dominicans. East coast villages such as Good Hope, San Sauveur, Petite Soufriere, Petite Savanne and Bagatelle are also areas with indigenous ancestry and at the beginning



of the twentieth century 'Caribs' were recorded living at Penville and Vieille Case as well. Then there are many more Dominicans who may have Kalinago ancestry but who do not look like or regard themselves as Kalinago people today. The point is the Kalinago ethnic influence among the Dominican population as a whole is much stronger than we would at first believe.

## 16. Plants, animals and place names

We are also often unaware that as a group, Dominicans are the largest surviving community to use the Carib/Kalinago language in their everyday speech. Whether they came from Africa or Europe, or a combination of the two, our ancestors adopted many words, particularly nouns and place names from the Kalinago. Many of our native trees and animals are still called by their indigenous names: coubari, acajou, acouma, galba, zicak, larouma are just a few trees and plants. Agouti, manicou, touloulou, cirique, iguana, zandoli, calalli and sisserou are some animals. Salybia, Bataka, Calibishie, Coulibistrie, Macoucheri, Colihaut, Sari-Sari and Sibouli are just eight of the sixty or so place names still in use.



Carib/Kalinago group, Dominica, early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Only on the mountainous islands of Dominica and St. Vincent did the Kalinago hang on in isolated areas.



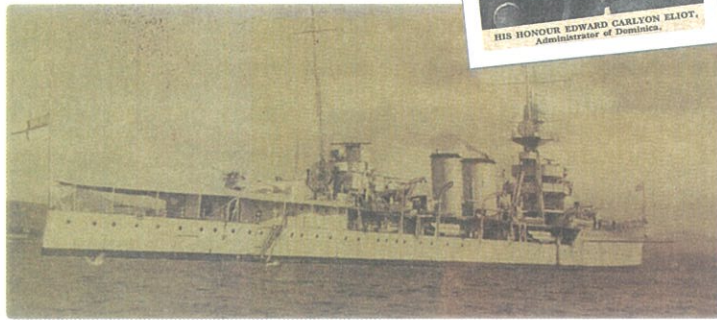
Carib/Kalinago women and hut, Dominica, early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Then we should consider the lessons that the Kalinago gave our ancestors about the uses of the natural resources of the land around them for survival. Their amazing knowledge was accumulated over hundreds of years about the wealth of the forest, the rivers and the seashore. These included the use of herbs for medicine, knowledge about which forest woods were best for what purpose and what was edible and what was poisonous. There were skills such as how to trap fish and shoot them through the water with bows and arrows, how to prepare and eat the river snail vio, the lambi or conch and chatou or octopus, and where to find the sea mollusc bwigo. They knew where the best clays were located for making pots and how to process this clay by preparing it to be modelled and heated in open kilns. From childhood they learned which plant materials were best for making baskets, mats, hats and cassava sifters. Their gommier canoes have sustained Dominica's fishing industry for centuries. They showed others how to process manioc by grating the root tubers, squeezing out the toxic juice and heating the fibrous kassav on a griddle placed on three stones. Very important was their knowledge of the changes in the tropical seasons and the signs of an approaching hurricane. Because they had lived so close to the land for innumerable generations the Kalinago instinctively knew the pulse of nature and how to live in harmony with its cycles.

The Earth was feminine and so was the island on which they lived. She was called Wai'tukubuli, tall is her body. The Kalinago had no concept of the ownership of land, just as it is difficult for us to conceive owning bits of the sky or the sea. How could you pos-



**Edward C. Eliot, the British administrator in 1930 who called for the Royal Navy frigate HMS Delhi (*below*) to give a show of force along the coast of the Carib Reserve**



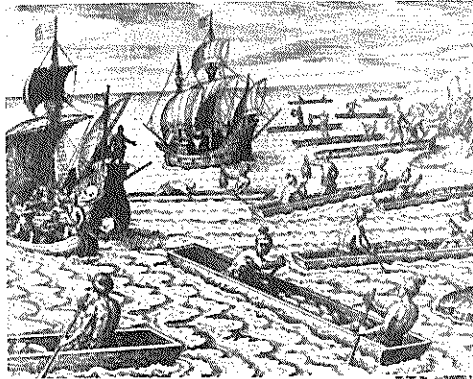
sess that which you could not carry with you or take after death? They knew no boundaries. There was no concept of colony or nation state. As late as 1930, Kalinagos were arrested for smuggling from the neighbouring islands of Mariegalante and Martinique. Four Kalinagos were killed by police and the British Administrator ordered a warship, HMS Delhi, to fire star shells over the 'reserve' to restore order. They rose up in revolt because as far as they were concerned they were simply continuing to trade without borders as they had done for thousands of years. They had roamed the islands as they pleased from Kairi (Trinidad) to Borinquen (Puerto Rico) moving from Wai'tukubuli to neighbouring Aichi (Mariegalante) and Karukera (Guadeloupe) on to Wadadli (Antigua) and Liamuiga (St.

Kitts). Caribbean integrationists are trying to achieve today what the Kalinago took for granted five centuries ago.

But perhaps the greatest achievement of the Kalinago is that they preserved the island itself for so long so that all Dominicans of whatever ethnic group can, over five centuries later, enjoy the benefits of the natural gifts which the land has provided for us. The defiant terrain of the island allied with Kalinago resistance allowed this to happen. Because of this, Dominica was the last island in the Caribbean to be colonised by European powers and even then only the coastal areas were effectively controlled.

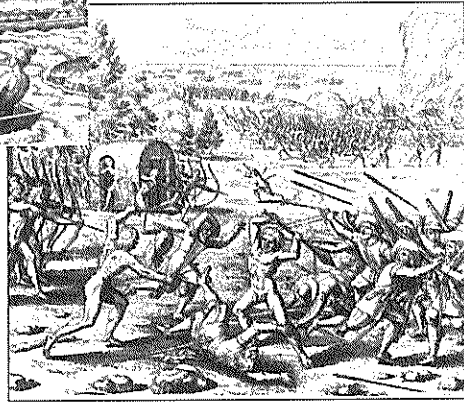
## 17. Fighting for their island

By the 17th century Dominica had become the refuge for Caribs retreating from the other islands where the surge of French, English and Dutch colonisation was sweeping them off of their ancestral lands. The rugged mountains, thick forests and iron coastline provided a natural citadel for the final retreat. From this base they made defensive attacks on the fledgling European colonies that were being set up ever closer around them in Antigua, Montserrat, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St Lucia, pitting their arrows and clubs against guns and steel weapons. Fighting a rearguard action they were attempting to forestall the conquest of this their last island. Further south in St. Vincent, their cousins were trying to do the same. For their pains, printed propaganda in Europe painted them as warlike cannibals who deserved to be swept from the face of the earth, or as



*From the time of Columbus' second voyage in 1493, European adventurers stopped to refresh their ships at Dominica after crossing the Atlantic Ocean. They traded with the Kalinago for wood, water, cassava, fruit and tobacco in exchange for iron tools, cloth and glass beads before sailing on.*

*As the French and English competed for possession of the islands of the Lesser Antilles during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Kalinago fought to hold on to their last strongholds such as Wai'tukubuli and Hiourouna (Dominica and St. Vincent), but their clubs, spears, bows and arrows were no match for the 'guns, germs and steel' of the colonisers.*

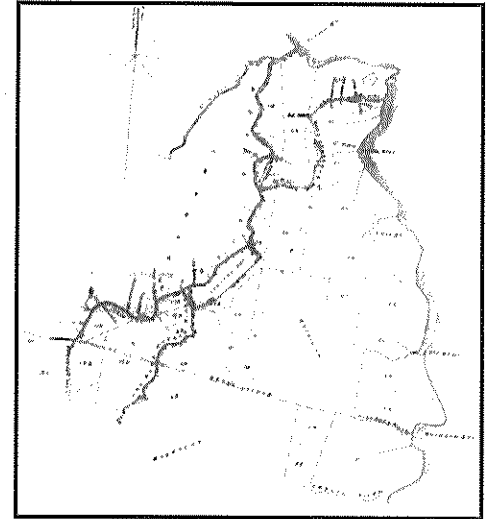


Sir William Stapleton, governor of the Leeward Islands put it, "the necessity of destroying those Caribie Indians ... to make them flee to the Main [land], if I cannot compass their total destruction". Here on Wai'tukubuli they suffered at least two massacres in retaliation: one at Anse Du Mai in 1635 and another one in 1674 at the village that is still called Massacre today.

The latter event was one of the most significant in our island's history. Thomas Warner, better known as Carib or Indian Warner was the son of the English pioneer colonist of St.Kitts, Sir Thomas Warner, and a Kalinago woman from Dominica who was living in St.Kitts. He was brought up in his father's household and grew to



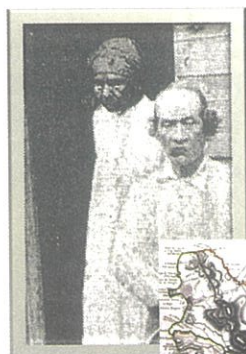
**Henry Hesketh Bell  
and his plan of the  
Carib Reserve**



know the ways and the language of both the English and the French. When his father died he was about 15 years old and his English step-mother ordered him out of the house. He ran away to Dominica and eventually rose to be the main chief of the west coast.

Carib Warner was determined to keep Dominica for the Kalinago people for ever. Because of his background among the French and English in St.Kitts he knew better than any person of Kalinago descent how to beat the Europeans at their own game. But it was a diplomatic minefield. The English in Antigua, led by his own half-brother, Phillip, saw it crucial for their plans of colonial expansion that they should get rid of him. On the other hand, the governor of Barbados, Lord Willoughby, thought that Carib Warner was more valuable to the English as an ally and made him Lieutenant Governor of Dominica. As it turned out Phillip Warner paid no heed to the





**The Carib Reserve was created by the British in 1903 and a chief was officially recognised**



**Carib Reserve  
now  
Kalinago Territory**

*The first two 'Reserve' chiefs:  
Auguste Francis 1903 (centre)  
And Jules Corriette 1916 (above)*

Barbadians and set out for Dominica, where he murdered his sibling and massacred his village in 1674. The other chiefs on Dominica tried to hold out and continued the resistance for a while, but really, from that time, the die was cast. Despite treaties of 1660, 1667 and 1748 declaring that Dominica was a neutral island to be left to the Kalinago for ever, the greed to establish yet another sugar rich island was just too much. It drove the French and English to establish plantations and fight over the island until the beginning of the 19th century.

As the forests were destroyed and plantations were established



**Homes,  
18<sup>th</sup> to early  
20<sup>th</sup> centuries.**

and thousand of enslaved Africans were imported, the Kalinago people drifted to the most isolated parts of the island to try to continue their life as they knew it. The British had long since given up any idea of making them slaves and they were allowed to do as they wished, or as the 18th century historian Thomas Atwood wrote, "they are permitted to roam wherever their fancies lead them, as much unnoticed as if no such people were in existence". They sold their baskets, canoes and game and fish such as ramier, pedrix, iguanas, mullet and crayfish to the plantations. With the money they bought hoes, cutlasses, cloth and rum, but otherwise they were self sufficient and stayed away from the colonial plantation society.





**Opportunities for craft sales and cultural reinvention for self identity and tourism is the trend today**



## 18. The tide of change

Gradually however the effects of the new Creole culture that was taking shape on Dominica began to affect them. Their language changed and so did their religion and their personal names. When they were baptised by missionaries into the Christian faith they were given the surnames of their mainly French godparents be they Valmond, Darroux, Auguiste or Frederick. One British Administrator, Hesketh Bell was concerned at the threat that neighbouring squatters of African descent posed to the Carib lands and he established the Carib Reserve in July 1903 to protect them. But times were changing fast. As primary schools were established and roads connected

the Carib Territory to the rest of the island in the 20th century, bringing telephones, radios and consumer goods, the tide of change became a flood. Easier interaction with the rest of Dominica meant that ethnic mixing increased and the physical nature of people calling themselves Carib or Kalinago changed also. On a political level universal adult suffrage was granted in 1951 and it gave the right for every adult to vote in general elections without the qualifications of land and/or income which was previously required. For the first time many Kalinago people voted to determine the affairs of their island. In 1974 the Carib Territory, along with its adjacent village of Atkinson, was given its own parliamentary representative.



**The Kalinago Barana Autê, 'The Kalinago Village by the Sea', an open museum and cultural village in the Kalinago Territory.**

By the 1970s there was a core of younger Kalinago people who had benefited from secondary education and who were following the indigenous empowerment taking place among native groups elsewhere in the Americas. They inspired others in the community to investigate their traditional culture and represent it in dance and song alongside the Creole Culture that was being highlighted as part of Dominican nationalism. They began to adopt the original name that their people had called themselves before Columbus called them Caribs. Written as Callinago by the early missionaries it is now spelt Kalinago. This awareness movement gave birth to Kalinago cultural groups such as Karifuna and Carinia. Before independence, Kalinago leaders demanded that special legislation be made to ensure the future of their community and this resulted in the Carib Reserve Act of 1978.

For many years the Territory had become part of the tourist industry of Dominica as a place to visit to meet its people and buy their handcraft. In 2006 an open air museum and cultural village was established around the Crayfish River Falls called the Kalinago Barana Autê (The Kalinago Village by the Sea). Here the visitor can walk along a trail overlooking the roaring Atlantic Ocean that is part of the old Kalinago trace through the coastal woodland. Displays and panels tell of the culture of the people and a special herb garden guides one through the variety of plants used for herbal medicines and culinary delights. Here on this rugged corner of Wai'tukubuli we learn about the Kalinago survival through over 500 turbulent years since the European colonisation of the region. The Kalinago heritage comes down to us together with archaeological remains,

place names, language and ancient knowledge of the nature of this island which the Kalinagos have bequeathed to us all.

## Kalinago map of Wai'tukubuli

Kalinago place names collected from early maps of the island.

