

Wife of Jamaica's Premier

# She Crusades for Culture

INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

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By Elizabeth Ford

PART OF JAMAICA is winter tourists; most of it is mountains, 7600 feet high.

You can take the word of Mrs. Norman Manley, wife of the island's Premier. Their own get-away-from-it-all is a log cabin in the mountains, reachable only if you can stay aboard a mule. It's called "Nomd-mi," which, according to Manley shorthand, spells "No Admittance."

No tourist brochure can outboast tall, stately but twinkling-eyed Mrs. Manley when it comes to talking up her island home. "I was born in England," she says, "of Jamaican parents, but I got back as quickly as I could."

Premier and Mrs. Manley, who arrived in town on Sunday after two weeks' conferences in London, will be staying here at the Shoreham until Thursday.

On an earlier trip, they visited the place in America all good Jamaicans go to, first. "Maybe you've guessed it," she hints. "Jamaica—Long Island."

With the mountain cabin as a spare tire for a busy life, their regular run is the island's "No. 10 Downing Street" in Kingston.

"The Premier's house," Mrs. Manley explains, "has quite a history, all jammed into 20 years." It was the setting two decades back of Jamaica's opening struggles for self-government.

Though Mrs. Manley side-steps politics — "that's my husband's business" — she's proud of the fact that the Premier helped to launch the island's movement for home rule.

Culturally, she's had both hands in Jamaica's current renaissance.

AN ARTIST—one woman shows of her wood carvings, based on island life, have become a steady habit as far away as England—she was among a group of six who campaigned for an art school in which the folklore of the people could be encouraged and developed. Original funds—\$3000—were donated by an American. Today, the school has a student body of 100.

A similar organization, the Institute of Jamaica, was pioneered a century ago.

Young poets in Jamaica," Mrs. Manley said, "used to write about snow and daffodils, when they'd never seen either one."

Now they write of what they know.



By Dick Darcey, Staff Photographer

## MRS. NORMAN MANLEY

... helping hand

Music and dance, based on island custom and tradition, are probably the top branches of Jamaica's home-grown culture tree.

Fans for Harry Belafonte stretch from Kingston to Montego (where the tourists go) but Mrs. Manley makes it clear that Harry doesn't sing calypso. He vocalizes Jamaican "mentoes."

"Jamaicans," Mrs. Manley adds, "don't go 'crackers' over people." But, next to Harry, they like Marilyn Monroe, Noel Coward, who has a house at Porto Maria; and Agatha Christie, who

makes no mystery of her visits to the island.

In addition to the art school, the Jamaica Welfare Association, which operates in the mountain villages, encourages "cottage industries"—and island-made straw hats, straw bags and straw mats are woven for markets all over the world.

The people are equally proud of another export—

the Jamaica Choir, which traveled a couple of years ago to Wales for an international singing festival and tuned in on second prize.

The Manleys have two sons—Douglas, a doctor of psychology on the staff of the College of the West Indies, and Michael, who is island supervisor for the biggest trade union in the British Caribbean.

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The Washington Post  
Wed, Jan. 27, 1960