



Story of the Song

Cockney and Yardie combines languages

July 17, 2017 - Mel Cooke

The Sunday Gleaner recently spent a few hours with deejay **Peter Metro**, talking about his life in music. The songs have been many and the experiences varied, including making *Cockney and Yardie*. Officially, Jamaica and England share the same language. In reality, variations of the 'Queen's English' hold sway in both countries, putting the speakers even further apart in verbal communication than the difficulties often posed by accent and enunciation.

In 1987, Jamaican deejay **Peter Metro** and Englishman **Dominick**, combined foreign speech, **Dominick** deejaying in 'cockney' and **Metro** in 'yardie' to good effect, going into the single digits on the charts. **Peter Metro** told The Sunday Gleaner, that *Cockney and Yardie* was done for producer **Donovan Germain**, the song recorded at **Tuff Gong**, Marcus Garvey Drive, St Andrew.

"We just went down there and heard the rhythm - Germain play it. Me and Dominick kick back for about half-hour and record the song," he said. It was a matter of working out the lyrics on the rhythm, as they had been performing it on **Metromedia** sound system. *"Dominick used to work with Metromedia. At the time me and Dominick did a spar. Remember a me bring him come Jamaica,"* **Peter Metro** said.

So *Cockney and Yardie* had a strong impact even before it was recorded, **Metro** saying that *"place mash up every time. Remember is a black man and a white man. Murder! Murder!"*

The combination of races is emphasised in the chorus: *"Listen the yardie, listen the cockney / Listen the blackie, listen the whitey / Listen the yardie, listen the cockney / Listen Dominick and Metro Peter"*

The 'every time' was often in 1987, **Metro** saying *"sometimes we work four nights a week, sometimes five"*. With **Metromedia** being very popular, the sound system would play every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, plus there was the weekly Wednesday night sessions at the 1 Moore Street, Woodford Park, headquarters.

Cockney and Yardie, is a straight-out translation song, explaining the meaning of particular words to the listener. **Metro's** favourite lines come at the start, when he deejays *"Patois is a language from a Jamaican / But inna Englan' them talk in a different fashion / listen Dominick as the true white man"*.

And his least favourite, which he wished were not on the recording, is when he remarks on **Dominick's** appearance with, *"Lawd massa, a which part a farrin yu come from sah ? A mus up inna Englan' or some part inna America! Him yeye dem blue eh? Look pon de white man!"*

"Me a tell the engineer take it out, but them say it sound good so it mus' stay," **Metro** lamented. Then he deejays some of **Dominick's** lines, without the accent, to which the translation is provided : *"Mickey Mouse, that a house ... Baked beans, that a jeans ... Dog and bone, that a wha, telephone"*

"Him is the first white man deejay that start deejay out of Jamaica. Him was the first white man (deejay) leave farrin come live inna Jamaica" **Metro** said.

It was not their only popular record together, as they also did *Ol' Lady*, dedicated to their mothers.