

Grand Bahama
Commissioner's Report for 1913

VOTES
OF THE
HONOURABLE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF THE
BAHAMA ISLANDS.

SESSION COMMENCING ON
THE 2ND DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1914
AND ENDING ON
THE 22ND DAY OF JUNE, 1914.



NASSAU, NEW PROVIDENCE :
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1914.

GRAND BAHAMA.

FINANCIAL.

RECEIPTS.

Balance from 1912.....	£ 1 9 6
Received in 1913.....	359 7 0
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	£360 16 6

EXPENDITURE.

Expended in 1913.....	£360 7 0
Balance to 1914.....	9 6
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	£360 16 6

£343 19s. 7d. and £316 10s. 0d. on account of appropriations for Public Works and £22 6s. 9d. (remittances to the Receiver General) are included in above receipts and expenditure respectively; deducting these sums from the gross totals we have a nett Government Revenue and Expenditure in the district of £15 7s. 5d. and £21 10s. 3d., the figures for the previous year being £14 14s. 9d. and £24 11s. 11d.

The Revenue in detail and compared with the previous year is given hereunder:—

REVENUE.

Heads of Revenue.	1912.	1913.
King's Fines &c.....	£ 4 14 6	£ 3 10 6
Fees of Court and Office	2 2 3	2 9 3
Liquor Licences	5 0 0	5 0 0
Customs Duties.....	2 8 0	3 7 8
Miscellaneous.....	10 0	1 0 0
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	£14 14 9	£15 7 5

Similarly the Expenditure:—

Hheads of Expenditure.	1912.	1913.
Information of Births and Deaths	£ 2 6 6	£ 2 12 0
Judicial	5 19 6	3 5 6
Travelling	14 10 11	12 14 9
Temporary Tidewaiter....		3 0
Miscellaneous.....	1 15 0	2 15 0
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	£24 11 11	£21 10 3

The following expenditure formed a part of the remittances to the Receiver General:—

£4 13s. 6d. on behalf of the Prisons Committee;
£6 1s. 10d. on account of the Grand Bahamas Light,
and £4 8s. 3d. on behalf of the Bahamas General Hospital.

POSTAL STATISTICS.

Letters despatched.....	980
Letters received.....	1245
Stamps sold.....	£ 6 15 2
Customs Duty on parcels.....	14 3 6
Money Orders	£69 3 11

There is only one postal station although the district is nearly 70 miles long. I believe there would be a decided increase in the postal revenue if stations were established at West End and Golden Grove.

The mail boat *Hazel Dell* is only 28 tons, which size is too small for the service. She does not call with sufficient regularity at most of the settlements named in the contract. I think the people of these settlements should have the opportunity of making use of the mail boat and that she should always stop weather permitting, even though at times she may have no definite object beyond affording such privilege.

TRADE, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES.

IMPORTS (*via* Nassau).

Groceries, Alcoholics, Medicines, Drygoods, Hardware, Crockery, Lumber.

EXPORTS (*via* Nassau)

Sponge, Conch-shells, (over 100,000) grape-fruit (over 60,000), onions (over 3000 lbs.), sisal, cane-syrup, Indian corn, butter, straw goods, cocoanuts, cattle, &c.

Very fair sponge voyages were made in the first half of the year, but the last voyage or two before the closure of the beds on 1st October were rather poor, owing probably to a glut in the market.

The conchs at West End seem inexhaustible, but the market quickly gets replete; the fish is killed for the sake of the shell, thrown away and wasted.

Excellent straw baskets are made by Miss Letsy Cox of Smith's Point, which find a ready sale both locally and in Nassau.

I have pointed out to the chief cattle breeders the advisability of importing good bulls periodically to prevent the great deterioration in the stock which has been noticed to be going on for many years. The pastures do not receive sufficient attention.

SHIPPING.

VESSELS CLEARED.

	No.	Tonnage.	Men.
Foreign	4	7	13
Interinsular	105	1409	822

VESSELS ENTERED.

	No.	Tonnage.	Men.
Foreign	4	7	13
Interinsular	131	1879	1076

EDUCATION.

The district is badly off for schools of which there are only three; one Board at Eight Mile Rock and two Church of England at Smith's Point and West End. The former has an average of attendance 160 and the latter have an average of 30 each and are kept rather irregularly. The Grant-in-Aid at Water Cay was closed practically from the beginning of the year due to the indisposition of the teacher, Mr. Thaddeus Russell.

CRIMINAL.

There were thirteen criminal cases tried, of which four were assaults, one theft and the others school cases.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population in 1911, according to the Census Report, was 1824, an increase of 44 since 1901; there were 84 births and 54 deaths during the year under review.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Fever has been very prevalent over the entire district since June; at Water Cay a most malignant type, diagnosed by Dr. Knight as typhoid, carried off several victims in one week.

Whooping cough has been very troublesome also.

The existence of large swamps and the insanitary condition of private wells have, no doubt, a great deal to do with diseases above mentioned.

CLIMATE.

RAINFALL.

Lowest 1.13 in April. Highest 10.28 in October
Total 54.65.

A severe hailstorm took place in May at Hunters and a flood over the whole of Eight Mile Rock on the 31st October, nearly six inches of rain falling, both doing considerable damage to crops.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The roads at Eight Mile Rock and West End have been improved. An office has been built and supplies what must have been a long-felt want. It is divided into an office proper and a Court room and is well ventilated, spacious and comfortable.

GENERAL.

While the usual return of wanderers took place about the middle of the year, the emigration during the latter half was excessive on account of the closure of the sponge beds, many Grand Bahamians being averse to sponging on the Mud.

The majority of the people are, no doubt, in very poor circumstances, and the pauper list of 20 is high, but there is a lamentable disposition among a section to regard themselves as wards of the Government. A fine spirit of independence has been engendered and is fostered (both by precept and example) among his neighbours, by Mr. Frederick Cooper of Golden Grove, whose father was Assistant Resident Justice of the district.

F. A. C. DUNCOMBE,
Commissioner.