

Commissioner's Report for 1921
Grand Bahama

BAHAMAS.

VOTES
OF THE
HONOURABLE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF THE
BAHAMA ISLANDS.

SESSION COMMENCING ON
THE 23RD DAY OF MARCH, 1922
AND ENDING ON
THE 23RD DAY OF MAY, 1922.



NASSAU, NEW PROVIDENCE.
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1922.

Appropriation Act 1921 the Boards have by means of grants under The Out Island Improvement Act, completed $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of permanent road 8 ft. wide and have $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile laid down but not beaten and covered yet, and there are thousands of barrels of cracked stone piled along the roads ready to be sold whenever the road-making begins again. A considerable portion of the unhealthy swamp in George Town has been filled and arrangements are being made to erect an office and lock-up at Steventon and a hut at the Ferry.

Road-making was suspended to allow the people to clear fields for planting if rain falls in March.

JOHN A. BOWE,
Commissioner.

The Honourable
The Colonial Secretary,
Nassau, N. P.

GRAND BAHAMA.

REVENUE.

Remittances from Collector of Revenue,	
West End	£572 2 0
King's Fines	39 9 0
Fees of Court	19 0
Liquor Licenses	47 18 4
Post Office	10 5 5
Other Revenue	2 13 0
Miscellaneous	3 17 6
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	£677 4 3
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EXPENDITURE.

Public Works	£ 754 17 9
Registration Births and Deaths	4 0 0
District Constables	5 6 3
Local Constable	13 8 0
Police Salary	14 14 0
Miscellaneous	140 5 5
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	£ 932 11 5
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TRADE.

The bulk of trade was with Nassau, where the usual exports, sisal, sponge, livestock, peas and grapefruit, were sold. Imports came chiefly from Nassau and consisted of foodstuffs, dry goods, liquor, etc.

AGRICULTURE.

One can hardly say much about agriculture. Since my arrival in the District I have taken every chance in trying to urge the people to turn their attention to the soil, but their one cry is they are tired of planting because the land is no good. They have tried it over and over again and always proved a failure. The only thing I am told the land is good for is the raising of peas and onions.

The hurricane in the month of November played havoc with the fields through the entire district.

Quantities of Sweet Potatoes, Cassava and Corn suffered terribly by the hurricane and much was lost entirely.

Sisal. The greatest quantity of sisal can be seen in all parts of the District, but all encouragement on the Commissioner's part for the cleaning of this sisal has been entirely fruitless.

Many have told me that before they go and cut the sisal, clean it and carry it to Nassau and sell it for 1½ cents per lb. they would rather let it stay and go and look up some other work.

Onions. A few have planted onion seed and results remain to be seen.

Grapefruit. Rather a small crop this year owing to lack of rain. Most of it sold at Nassau but the price realized was very discouraging to the seller.

EDUCATION.

The Board School was open 132 days during the year with an average daily attendance of 118. The monthly average attendance was as follows: January 120, February 122, March 123, April 114, May 112, June 119, July 122.

There is also a Grant-in-Aid at Water Cay and High Rocks.

The teacher of the Board School was away during the months of September, October, November and December and as a consequence no school was kept during these months.

FISHERIES.

The sponge fisheries have received a great deal of attention during the year, as this seems to be the only means of a livelihood throughout the entire district.

The prices realized for sponge during the year have, I have been informed by the spongers, been very good.

CRIME.

The District has been very quiet, 25 cases before the Court. They were dealt with as follows: 7 discharged for want of evidence, 5 Dismissed, 11 Fined, 1 Whipped, 1 Bound over.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The usual road weeding and repairs and upkeep of Public Wells and Burial Grounds have gone on during the year under the Appropriation Act.

Also improvements under the Out Island Improvement Act Fund.

The work done under the Out Island Improvement Act Fund was as follows:—

Building of a Breakwater, Hawksbill Creek £100;
Public Toilet near Commissioners Office £26;
Bridge at Hawks Bill Creek (repair) £39 5s. 0d. and
general improvements of Roads in the District
£134 15s. 0d.

The amount for building Breakwater was altogether too small and only about a quarter of the work has been done.

MAIL SERVICE.

The mail service, monthly between here and Nassau has been regularly and satisfactorily performed by the schooner "Empress".

SHIPPING.

FOREIGN.

	<i>Entered.</i>	
474 vessels.	3931 tons	1447 men.
	<i>Cleared.</i>	
474 vessels.	4646 tons	1435 men.

COASTWISE.

	<i>Entered.</i>	
205 vessels.	3844 tons.	1362 men.

Cleared.

221 vessels. 3975 tons. 1496 men.

Of the above figures for Foreign Shipping West End is responsible for 472 arrivals and 473 departures.

Only 2 entered and 1 cleared at Headquarters.

METEOROLOGICAL.

	Barometer		Temp.		Rain. No. of fall days.	
	Highest	Lowest	Hgst.	Lowest		
January	30.38	29.90	92	54	.38	5
February	30.20	29.85	92	51	.43	3
March	30.28	30.00	88	56	1.89	7
April	30.10	29.86	90	65	.95	4
May	30.10	29.70	88	66	.83	9
June	30.04	29.70	92	70	1.24	4
July	30.00	29.90	92	78	.07	2
August	30.12	29.80	92	72	2.36	5
September	30.04	29.80	90	76	1.36	7
October	29.94	29.50	90	72	3.96	10
November	30.00	29.76	84	62	1.06	3
December	30.04	29.72	82	60	10	1
			Total		14.63	60

GENERAL REMARKS.

The general health conditions of the District throughout the year have, with the exception of a few cases of Diarrhœa, been very good.

The year has been a hard one for the District. In November a hurricane struck us and ruined the fields, drowning the cassava and potatoes and beating the corn.

With 110 crops in the fields and the supplies in the local stores running out every now and then

the people were on several occasions reduced almost to starvation and to save life were obliged to hunt the Bay Rush. Day by day one can see crowds going in the bush to dig for the Bay Rush.

The Commissioner has made two tours of the District during the year and it has been the great aim to get in touch with the people as much as possible to urge and encourage them on agriculture.

I am also glad to say that some have taken my advice while others have given it a deaf ear.

I have noticed a great change in agriculture during the latter part of the year, especially at Headquarters. The people seem to have just realized the great need of farming and day by day I can see clouds of smoke in all directions, some one cutting a field.

C. W. O. PRUDDEN,
Commissioner.

HARBOUR ISLAND.

FINANCIAL.

Revenue. The revenue derived from Customs, King's Fines, Liquor Licences, Real Property Taxes and Reimbursements in Aid amounted to £160 3s. 9d. and remittances from the Treasury to £2,609 1s.

Expenditure. Local expenditure on account of Public Works amounted to £1,656 11s. 4d. and salaries of police, pensions, travelling allowances, administration of justice, etc., amounted to £615-16s. 6d., a total of £2,272 7s. 10d. as against £1,285-8s. 6d. in 1920.