

GRAND BAHAMA  
Commissioner's Report for 1923

**BAHAMAS.**  

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**VOTES**  
OF THE  
HONOURABLE  
**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**  
OF THE  
**BAHAMA ISLANDS.**

—  
SESSION COMMENCING ON  
THE 19TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1924  
AND ENDING ON  
THE 15TH DAY OF MAY, 1924.



NASSAU, NEW PROVIDENCE.  
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1924.

At Forbes' Hill a very convenient Landing has been hewn out of the rocks, and at William's Town, Scott road has been almost completed. A very necessary drain has brought the ocean tide into very unsanitary swamps and made malaria less possible. In all there is nothing to complain about.

#### EMIGRATION.

The people continue to go and very few come. I do not think this will end well, for no place can progress without workers. In the steady stream of emigrants, women and children mingle with the men and this constant ebbing of the Colony's life blood, is no auger for good.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

In September there was a slight hurricane but no damage was done. Exuma enjoys ideal facilities for the sportsman, who wants to get a real touch of Nature. The loveliest sea gardens in the Bahamas are here, and the prettiest chain of Cays, which shelter craft from the ocean are dotted along the coast for a distance of ever 100 miles. Fishing and duck shooting are plentiful, and the tourist or excursionist who comes along, whatever his tastes may be, cannot but be charmed with what Nature has done.

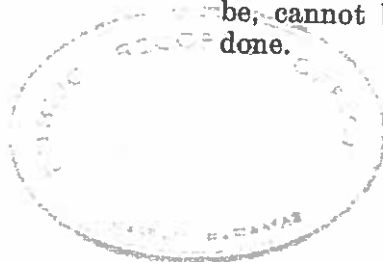
GEO. H. CLARKE,  
Commissioner.

GRAND BAHAMA.

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,  
Grand Bahama,  
28th February, 1924.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit herewith my Annual Report for the District of Grand Bahama for the year ending 31st December, 1923.





## FINANCIAL.

Remittances from Treasury	£ 442 10 2
Remittance from Collector of Revenue, West End	18494 16 10
King's Fines	6 13 0
Fees of Court	2 0
Liquor Licences	49 11 8
Post Office	15 17 0
Miscellaneous	2 0 10
Other Revenue	1 2 6
	<hr/>
	£19012 13 10

## EXPENDITURE.

Board of Public Works	£417 10 0
Police Salaries	722 6 3
District Constables	1 16 0
Local Constables	29 3 4
Births and Deaths	3 8 6
Temporary Tidewaiters	6 0 0
Refund of duty	1048 6 0
Miscellaneous	133 13 1
	<hr/>
	£2361 17 2

## TRADE.

*Imports.* All came from Nassau and consist of foodstuffs, clothing, liquor, etc., except in the case of the arrival of s. s. *New Town* with 14,000 cases of liquor direct from Scotland and landing same at West End.

*Exports.* Chiefly sponge.

## AGRICULTURE.

The district is never reckoned as an agricultural one, but there are a few who still cling to the soil and try their best to supply the district with native products.

*Sisal.* This industry was very little sought after during the first part of the year owing to the very low price offered in the market, but the latter part of the year the price began to raise, so as to satisfy the cleaners, and quite a lot of hand-cleaned sisal was shipped to the Nassau market.

*Onions.* The onion crops failed, owing to a very long drought, although more people went in for onion raising this year than the previous one.

*Cassava.* Large quantities of this is grown and is looked upon as a hard time food, which can stand a very long drought, and is much appreciated by the inhabitants.

*Sweet Potato.* The sweet potato did not do as well this year as the previous one. The vines look well, but need rain.

*Grapefruit.* The crop of grapefruit this year is small, by reason of leaving the fruit of the previous year on the tree too long.

*Bananas.* Are grown almost everywhere. Occasionally some splendid bunches were seen and brought excellent prices.

*Pineapples.* Just enough grown for local consumption.

#### EDUCATION.

The Board school was open 199 days during the year with an average daily attendance of 101. The monthly average attendance was as follows: January 110, February 104, March 97, April 120, May 117, June 109, July 103, August—September 103, October 116, November 115, December 114.

There are Grant-in-Aid schools at Water Cay, High Rocks and Moore's Island, which are better than 110 schools at all.

## FISHERIES.

Sponging is the chief industry of this district, and the only means of a livelihood of the male population. Everything is neglected to go sponging. Some of the catches during the year were large and the prices given for them were extraordinary. Unfortunately some cargoes sold for low prices and the stores were very small and in some cases nil.

## MAIL SERVICE.

The usual monthly service between here and Nassau has been regularly and satisfactorily performed during the year by the schooner *Emerald*.

## CRIME.

7 cases were reported during the year and 7 persons summoned. They were disposed of as follows: 2 fined, 5 orders made.

## SOCIETIES.

There are several Societies in the district, whose objects are to aid the sick members and bury the dead. These do very good work and provide for the burial of many who would otherwise have to be buried by the Commissioner as paupers. No definite account as regards membership can be obtained from any of them. None of these are registered.

## PUBLIC WORKS.

The usual weeding and cleaning of the streets of the township and country roads are being carried out, also the weeding of burial grounds and cleaning of public wells.

## METEOROLOGICAL.

Barometer usual range 30.20: highest 30.10; lowest 29.72.

Temperature. Highest 92; lowest 58. Rainfall was 15.36. It rained on 51 days during the year.

GENERAL.

The general health of the district throughout the year was good.

Sponging, which, as I pointed out, occupies about 75% of the adult males of the district, has not been very remunerative. The average spongers of today are no better off than they were 10 years ago. Good catches or extra prices do not make them one bit better off. Quite a number of young men have left their homes to earn a livelihood in Florida. It was not because they were eager to leave home, it is simply a matter of trying to better their condition.

These same men are all spongers, but finding trip after trip, instead of going ahead, they find themselves going backwards, and finally decide to emigrate to Florida, where they spend from six to eight months and then return home with a few hundred dollars in their pockets.

No storms of a destructive nature occurred during the year.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. W. O. PRUDDEN,  
Commissioner.

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