

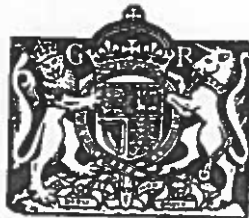
GRAND BAHAMA  
Commissioner's Report for 1924

**BAHAMAS.**  

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

SESSION COMMENCING ON  
THE 17TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1925  
AND ENDING ON  
THE 14TH DAY OF MAY, 1925.



NASSAU, NEW PROVIDENCE.  
PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE NASSAU GUARDIAN  
BY THE PRINTER TO THE LEGISLATURE.

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1925.

## GRAND BAHAMA.

## EIGHT MILE ROCK.

Commissioner's Office,  
Eight Mile Rock,  
5th January, 1925.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit for the information of His Excellency the Governor and the Honourable House of Assembly my annual report for the year ended 31st December, 1924.

## REVENUE.

2. The amount of revenue collected from various sources and remittances from the Treasury was £2,187 19s. as follows:

Balance from last year	£	9	4	3
Customs Duties		28	13	10
Tonnage Dues		1	3	0
Bills of Health		155	10	0
Remittances from Collector of Revenue		282	7	5
King's Fines		47	11	0
Justice's Fees			8	6
Liquor Licences		57	10	0
Remittances from Treasury		113	0	0
Appropriations		1188	10	0
Stamps		106	3	2
Postage			1	2
Parcel Post Duty		10	8	3
Commission on Money Orders			5	2
Radio Receipts		187	3	3
		£2187	19	0

## EXPENDITURE.

3. The local expenditure together with remittances to the Treasury and the Post Office amounted to £2,147 9s. 10d., viz.:

Tidewaiters' Fees	£	12	0
Rents West End		42	0 0
Refund of Duty		5	2 0
Conveying Messages		1	6 0
Salaries Constables		383	4 10
Fees Constables		1	19 0
Travelling Allowances		107	14 2
Information of Births and Deaths		3	6 0
Salary Acting Commissioner		18	16 4
Transfer charges		16	4 11
Remittances to Treasury		260	16 10
Remittances to Post Office		116	17 9
Appropriations		1188	10 0
Wireless repairs		1	0 0
		<hr/>	
		£2147	9 10
Balance in chest		40	9 2
		<hr/>	
		£2187	19 0
		<hr/>	

## POSTAL STATISTICS.

4. There are two Post Offices in the District, one at Headquarters and one at West End. The amount of stamps sold, postage, parcel post duty and commission on money orders aggregated £116 17s.-9d. as per statement in par. 2.

5. There were 2,006 packets received, including 150 registered letters while 1,120 were despatched, including 150 registered letters. There were 52 mails received and despatched per schr. *Emerald*.

6. Money Orders to the amount of £12 5s. were issued on the United Kingdom.

7. During the year the sum of £20 was deposited in the Post Office Savings Bank and remitted to Nassau.

#### MAIL SERVICE.

8. The service of the mail schooner *Emerald* would be far more satisfactory if there was a fortnightly call at this port instead of the present system. The practice of arriving from Nassau on the Sunday and leaving 17 days later should be abandoned for a service of 14 days, so as to enable the out-going mails to arrive in Nassau in time to be despatched by the outward bound Out Islands mail boats leaving on the Friday, thus causing a more prompt despatch of mails to the Out Islands.

#### TRADE.

9. The chief imports consists of foodstuffs, clothing and liquors, occasionally a few articles come by motor boats from West Palm Beach and other parts of Florida, but as there is no direct line the various supplies come via Nassau and the duty collected there, under such circumstances it is impossible to give an accurate value.

#### EXPORTS.

10. The exports were chiefly sisal and sponge, the value of which I am at a loss to ascertain.

#### SHIPPING.

11. There were 481 vessels entered inwards from foreign ports aggregating 5,556 tons and 1,545 men. 197 entered inwards coastwise, aggregating 4,460 tons and 1,134 men.

12. There were 481 vessels cleared outward to foreign ports aggregating 4,460 tons and 1,134 men. 225 vessels cleared coastwise aggregating 4,751 tons and 1,273 men.

#### AGRICULTURE.

13. There are a few who till the soil but most of the produce is grown on the Abaco Cays by Grand Bahamians to whom I leased the cays while in charge of my last District. The produce grown here, together with the little grown on Grand Bahama, finds its way to the market at West End where exorbitant prices are asked and obtained.

14. Vegetables of any description cannot be purchased at the Residency owing to the prohibitive price.

15. At the eastern section of this District the hurricane during the month of August resulted in disastrous effects to the farms. The storm on the 21st October not only made a repetition here, but caused the entire Island to suffer loss on account of the low-lying lands being inundated with water for days, such produce as cassava, potatoes, beans and peas all shared the same fate.

16. There has not been much sisal cleaned during the time I have been in charge of the District, in fact everywhere at the Northern Islands the people do not extract the fibre until they hear of good prices on the Nassau market.

#### MANUFACTURES.

17. There are no factories, machines or mills in the District.

#### EDUCATION.

18. There are at present one Board School at Headquarters, and four Grant-in-Aid schools, one

each at West End, High Rocks, Water Cay and Moore's Island.

19. The school at Headquarters has been attended regularly. Number on register 165. Number of days school opened 196. Yearly average attendance 110. Highest average in January 132, lowest in December 90. During the year Mr. J. G. Poitier was in charge eight months and the present teacher, Mr. E. C. Gibson, four months.

20. The Grant-in-Aid schools are doing well; very little complaint is made at the various sections.

21. The Inspector visited the District and examined the schools from 18th December to the end of the year.

22. There were three cases for irregular attendance brought before the Commissioner's Court and disposed of as follows: two cautioned, one dismissed.

#### HEALTH.

23. The public health and sanitary condition of the District are good with the exception of whooping cough which came into evidence during the end of November.

#### CRIME.

24. There were 60 cases brought before the Court and disposed of, consisting of Police Regulation Act 40, Assault and Battery 11, Larceny 3, Damage to property 3, Breach of Comp. Education Act 3. They were disposed of as follows: 45 fined; 2 imprisoned; 7 dismissed; 3 bound over; 3 cautioned.

25. The peace and good order of the District have been good, the worst feature is at West End where anyone can get their fill of liquor from treats, etc.

#### VITAL STATISTICS.

26. There were 67 births and 37 deaths during the year.

## METEOROLOGICAL RECORD.

27. Barometer normal 30.25: highest 30.32, lowest 29.70. Temperature highest 92, lowest 63. The rainfall could not be ascertained as the rain gauge is out of commission.

## FISHERIES.

28. During the autumn months the prices for the various grades of sponge were so low that the captains and crews refused to sell; later they were placed on the market and the prices were again low. There being no alternative, they were sold, the returns for which could not pay provision bills in many cases.

29. The high winds during the months of October and November held up the sponging fleet, but fortunately in December there were two weeks sponging weather which was embraced, the financial result of which have been satisfactory to the owners and crew.

## PUBLIC WORKS.

30. The recurrent and non-recurrent items have been expended in the various sections, as there has been no chance of making a tour through the District since taking over duties as Commissioner, I am unable to make any further comment.

31. The funds provided for by Out Islands Improvement Acts 1923 and 1924 are intact, as no plans and specifications were submitted for the approval of His Excellency the Governor in Council until August, since then expenditure has been made under Appropriation Act 1924.

## GENERAL REMARKS.

32. If Eight-Mile-Rock is to be regarded as Headquarters of the District, it is essential first of all to provide a suitable residency for the Commissioner, provided he is expected to live up to the dignity of



his office. It may be surprising, yet nevertheless true, that when a prisoner receives a sentence of imprisonment he feels that he will be better housed than the Commissioner. I unhesitatingly state that the Residency is beyond repair and only fit for abandonment, to-day comfort is what the world is aspiring to, because it is generally felt that no man is in a position to work satisfactorily to himself or others as long as he is uncomfortably situated. At first sight I realized the truthfulness of Commissioner Prudden's statement when he attributed his wife's illness, as the result of occupying the apology for the Residency at Eight-Mile-Rock. This is the first time I have officially commented on my very narrow, limited and uncomfortable situation and I do so with a view that the next Commissioner may be better provided with comfortable quarters.

33. During the latter part of August a hurricane passed over the eastern end of the Island resulting in much damage to provision fields. The storm on the 21st of October was felt very severely over the entire Island and the continued downpours of rain completely destroyed all vegetation on low-lying lands, edibles of all description rotted, and in many cases fields had to be replanted.

34. In consequence of this much hardship and suffering have been felt and expressed but with the aid of Out Islands Improvement funds the people were enabled to keep the wolf from their doors.

35. It is to be hoped that the Legislature will grant during the coming Session an amount to perform certain Public Works in the District, which is not only of utmost importance, but an absolute necessity to the communities generally.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOSEPH S. CULMER,  
Commissioner.