

# Grand Bahama Commissioner's Report 1925

Commissioner's Office  
Eight Mile Rock  
Grand Bahama

19/3/26

Sir

I have the honour to submit for the information of His Excellency the Governour and the Honorable House of Assembly my annual report for the year ended 31st December 1925.

## REVENUE

2. The amount of revenue collected from the various sources and remittances from the Treasury was £1616-13-9d, as follows:—

	40- 9 -2
Balance from last year.	140- 0 -0
Remittances from Treasury.	1031- 8 -2
∅ Remittances from Collector of Revenue, West End.	74[?]- 8 -0
Customs Duties.	[blot]- 2 -0
Tonnage Dues.	1- 0 -0
Bills of Health.	60- 0 -0
Liquor Licenses.	6 -0
Marriage Licenses.	27-10 -0
King's Fines.	3- 4 -0
Justice's Fines.	6
Unexpended Balance of Appropriations Act, 1924.	208- 5-11
Income from Postage, Sale of Stamps, Duties on Parcels.	
	£1616-13-9
∅ Includes Customs Duties, Wireless Fees, Bills of Health and King's Fines. /	

## EXPENDITURES

3. The total expenditures including remittances to the Treasury and the Post Office was £1482-19-6d, as follows:—

	303-11 -6
Police Salaries, Allowances of Travelling Expenses.	65- 5 -0
Constables' Fees and Travelling Expenses.	10- 4 -6
Inquests and Funerals.	
Expenditures resulting from the Transfer & Leave of Commissioners.	19-18- 1
Commissioner's Tours.	41-18- 8
Commissioner's Tours.	1- 3 -0
Expenses in Connection with collecting Customs Duties.	2- 3 -1
Refund Customs Duty.	9- 5 -4
Conveying Messages.	2-13-0
Registration of Births & Deaths.	2- 2 -0
Revising Fee.	3- 7 -6
Upkeep Wireless Station.	6- 0 -3
Upkeep Police Station.	1- 4 -0
Painting Lighthouse.	2- 2 -0

Rent of Collector of Revenue's House, West End.	42- 0 -0
Public Works.	278- 9 -2
Remittances to Treasury.	460- 8 -6
Remittances to Post Office	208- 5-11
	1482-19 -6
	133-14- 3
Balances in Chest. 1st Jan: 1926	
	£1616-13-9

### POSTAL STATISTICS

4. There are two Post Offices in the District one at Headquarters and one at West End. Joint financial / statistics of these offices already stated. There were 2407 postal packets received by the Headquarters Office, including 103 Registered Letters. 1651 postal packets were dispatched, including 53 Registered Letters.

### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK

5. It is a regrettable fact that this institution has not been made use of through this office during the year.

### MAIL SERVICE

6. The Mail Schooner "Emerald" made 12 return trips to Nassau, the 13th being made by the M.V. "Cruiser." An additional Mail was dispatched by the Sloop "Sydney" and an additional mail was received by the M.V. "Christina." The "Emerald" has rendered extremely poor service: she has been irregular in her sailings when there was no excuse of weather: she has frequently failed to stop at all the stations on the route: she refuses freight constantly in Nassau, due to being already laden with liquor for West End. Furthermore, the Captain and crew are very unreliable and discourteous.

If it is impossible for this District to have fortnightly mail service, the existing contract for a monthly service might at least be rigidly enforced.

An additional local service has been inaugurated between Headquarters and Water Cay, a Cay of about 150 inhabitants some 40 miles North of Eight Mile Rock. A good regular service has been maintained in a small sail-boat. This / service has been carried out under O.I.I.A. 1924, but has been requisitioned for estimates of Appropriation Act, 1926-1927 under Recurrent Items. Each trip has averaged between 30 and 60 postal packets.

### IMPORTS

7. The chief articles imported were food, clothing and liquor, almost all of which come via Nassau, with the exception of a small amount of clothing by parcel post. A Fordson Tractor and an Electric Light Plant were imported direct from Florida, also Lumber from Norman's Castle, Abaco.

### EXPORTS

8. Sponge is the only article that has been exported in any quantity: a few loads of fire-wood and some fish from the East End of the Island. Practically no sisal has been cleaned, although there is an abundance of the product in the district. One load of crushed rock, about 30 tons, was exported directly to Florida.

## SHIPPING

9. Entered from foreign ports:— 861 ships. 4963 tons. 2259 men.  
Cleared “ “ “ :— 584 “ .3445 “ .1483 “ .  
Entered Coastwise :— 224 “ .5701 “ .1529 “ .  
Cleared :— 615 “ .3872 “ .1727 “ .

The above figures refer to West End as well as headquarters. Owing to the lack of enforcement of transitive[?] regulations, the coastwise figures must be regarded as extremely inaccurate. /

## AGRICULTURE

10. There is deplorably little produce grown on the mainland from a commercial point of view. Many of the inhabitants have small fields but in general grow insufficient for the needs of their own families. The one or two exceptions to this rule seem to find a ready market for any kind of produce at West End, where fantastic prices are paid.

Some farming is carried on on the small Cays to the North of the Mainland, also at the East End of the latter.

## MANUFACTURERS

11. Manufactures are non-existent in the district, unless 3 or 4 cane syrup and one sugar mill can be included in this category.

## EDUCATION

12. There is 1 Public School at Headquarters and 1 under construction at West End. There have been no cases brought before me for inattendance, although from personal observation I think there might well have been.

13. There are 8 Grant-in-Aid Schools in the district, 3 of which have been started during the year. Nothing but favourable reports have reached me from any of them.

14. The schools, with the exception of the Grant-in-Aid School at West End, were inspected towards the end of the / year by the Reverend Poole.

## HEALTH

15. The Public Health has been very good with the exception of one mild outbreak of (presumably) chicken-pox, which was so mild that it escaped my attention until practically over.

## CRIME

16. There were 96 cases of crime reported in the district which were disposed as follows:

Discharged for want of prosecution.	3
Dismissed on merits.	17
Fined.	56
Committed.	3
Whipped.	7
Bound Over.	7
Not yet apprehended.	3

The district is disorderly and serious crime is not unknown very rarely, however, are cases reported by constables and still more rarely by private individuals. Perjury is frequent and Truthfull evidence very difficult to obtain.

## INQUESTS

17. There have been two inquests during the year: the one during my period of office raised no suspicious facts.

## VITAL STATISTICS

18. The number of Deaths registered was 34, the number of Births 38. Owing to the curious regulations controlling registration, it is not possible to register all births and deaths reported. No returns were received during the year from Moore's Island or Sandy Point, Abaco.

## METEOROLOGICAL RECORD

19. Barometer usual range 30.21: highest reading 30.48: lowest reading 29.79. Temperature highest 91°: lowest 59°. All the above readings were taken at 8.00 a.m. Rainfall can only be given since September as guage was not repaired until then: during the last 4 months of the year the total fall was 1.78".

## PUBLIC WORKS

20. The amount available for clearing roads under Appropriation Act 1925-1926 was entirely insufficient to cover all the roads in the district: it was stretched out as far as possible by reducing some of the contract prices.

Very little money was spent under the Out Island Improvement Act, as this is nearly all allocated to the important project of building a good road from Eight Mile Rock to West End, and it was considered desirable by the board to delay commencement of the undertaking pending results of land development schemes by Capt. G. Jordahn and Capt. The Honble Frederick Guest, M.P.

## GENERAL REMARKS

21. As some action has been taken on the part of the / Government regarding the building of a new Commissioner's Residency, it is unnecessary for me to add to my predecessor's comments on the existing one.

22. The general lot of the inhabitants of the district is poor and needy: it would seem, however, to be largely their own fault due to laziness and lack of initiative, although, naturally, other excuses are easy enough to find.

23. A new shop in Eight Mile Rock has been a real blessing to the nearby inhabitants as prices there are considerably lower than anywhere else in the district.

24. It is hoped that the land development mentioned in Para. 20. will be in full swing: these are the only things now in sight which will bring anything like prosperity to the district.

I have the honour to be, Sir  
Your obedient servant  
Edward J. H. Smith, Capt. Ex-Commissioner

The Honorable  
The Colonial Secretary  
Nassau, N.P

*Transcribed from the original by James Baker as a reference so that these past "snapshots" of the Island's economic and social history are available*