

1959

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THE ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE DISTRICT OF GRAND BAHAMA ISLAND
FOR
THE YEAR 1959
BY
COMMISSIONER S. R. DARVILLE.

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND CLIMATE.

GEOGRAPHY.

The District of Grand Bahama, which comprises and includes the main Island of Grand Bahama and the adjacent Cays, including Sweetings Cay and Water Cay as well as many others that are not inhabited, lies on and forms a part of the Southern fringe of the Little Bahama Bank, separating the deep water of the Atlantic Ocean from the shallow water covering the Little Bahama Bank, and is situated West North West, one hundred and forty miles from the Island of New Providence and Sixty miles East South East of West Palm Beach, Florida. The Main Island of Grand Bahama is about eighty-three miles long and from about one-half to ten miles wide with an area of about four hundred and thirty square miles. There are twenty-three settlements or villages in the District including Sweetings Cay and Water Cay. The Main land, as well as the inhabited Cays, is covered with vegetation with an enormous pine forest covering more than two-thirds of the area. The land is generally low with only traces of small hills rising to a height of not more than forty feet above low water level. These hills are composed of cross-bedded limestone of presumed Pliocene age, the oldest exposed rock in the District. Fresh water is available at depths of from three to thirty feet throughout the District, and the rainfall averages from thirty to fifty inches annually.

CLIMATE.

The Climate in the District is sub-tropical and the humidity is high. It is salubrious and equable, being warmed by the Gulf Stream in Winter and cooled by the South-easterly Trade Winds in Summer, making it an ideal Tourist Resort. The yearly average winter temperature ranges from 52 to 72 degrees F., and the Summer temperature is usually from 75 to 85 or 90 degrees F.

HISTORY.

Grand Bahama was first settled in the year 1787 by a few Loyalists, among whom were the Grants, Feasters, Hields and the Wilchoombes. The Wilchoombes made their homes at Settlement Point, -West End,- the Grants at Eight-Mile-Rock, the Hields at Free Town and later at Water Cay, and the Feasters at Sweetings Cay. These Loyalists married mammitted slaves and as a result the present inhabitants, that is, the natives, are of Creole and African parentage.

In the year 1847 grants of large acreages of Crown Land were made by The Crown to these early settlers some of which has remained in the possession of their descendants to this day, although most of it has been sold to foreign investors.

Headquarters of this District were first established at Golden Grove (now known as Gold Rock Creek) and was later transferred to Eight-Mile-Rock about sixty years ago, and then later removed to West End.

This Island, and the settlement of West End, was a rendezvous for "Bootleggers" during the prohibition era, or during the enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment of The Volstead Act in the United States of America. American influence in the commercial life of the Island, but much more so in West End, became, and still remains, quite strong. Many of the men engaged in this "industry" are still with us today and are always delighted to recall the good old days of the "Rum-runners".

CHAPTER II.

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

GOVERNMENT.

The District of Grand Bahama ~~is~~^{was} represented in the Honourable House of Assembly by the Honourable Charles W. F. Bethell, but just before the end of the year Mr. Bethell was appointed a member of the Legislative Council, thus ending his career as a member of the Honourable House of Assembly, leaving a vacant seat to be filled by Bye-election in 1960.

Courts of Revision, for the Registration of Voters, were held in the three Divisions (later, four, under the new Act) of the District during the months of April and September, in accordance with the requirements of the General Assembly Elections Act, Chapter 4, and in November and December in accordance with the requirements of the new General Assembly Elections Act, Number 39 of 1959. At the close of the year under review, there were 312 Registered Voters in this District.

ADMINISTRATION.

The Administrative duties of this District were performed by the writer during the year.

Assisting the Commissioner in his Administrative duties during the year were, one Clerical Assistant, one Post Office Clerk, one Collector of Revenue at Freeport and another at Gold Rock Creek, two senior Customs Officers from Nassau with a number of assistants and two Immigration Officers. Stationed at West End and Freeport, these Officers greatly relieved the Commissioner of the pressing and increasing duties of these offices. Members of the Nassau Constabulary were stationed at West End, Freeport and Riding Point. Two First Grade Local Constables, one at West End and the other at Eight-Mile-Rock, two Second Grade Local Constables, one at High Rock and the other at Pelican Point. Five Sub-postmasters, one each at Eight-Mile-Rock, Freeport, Smith's Point, High Rock and Sweetings Cay.

Clerical and other work in connection with the Administrative

duties of this District have increased beyond the capacity of any one man to cope with satisfactorily even though the hours of work begin at early morning hours and extend, very often, into the late hours of the night. The result is that one thing has to be sacrificed for the other and very often some of the work, especially correspondence, is lagging far behind. This increase in work, of course, is expected as a result of the ever-increasing developments in the Island and the consequent increase in employment and economic development, and it is expected too, that plans will be made to cope with this increase in work as mentioned above and to meet the demands of the various Departments of Government, to which the Commissioner is responsible, as well as the increasing demands of the general public. I must here beg to emphasise that the need for additional and capable help has reached the point where it should not be longer ignored or over-looked.

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION.

The estimated population of the District, for the year 1959, was about 6,600 total with about 5,400 natives. This estimated total is made up as follows:-

West End.....	1,250.	Water Cay.....	150
Deadman's Reef.....	10.	Pinder's Point.....	400;
Holmes Rock.....	160.	Hunters.....	175.
Eight-Mile-Rock.....	700.	Lewis Yard.....	90.
Smith's Point (including Mather Town, Williams & Russell Town.	160.	Crabbing Bay, Rocky Creek and McLeans Town.....	95.
Sweetings Cay.....	195.	Freeport.....	800.
Palican Point.....	75.	High Rock.....	280.
Marco City.....	1,550.	Free Town.....	110.
Gold Rock Creek.....400.			

The Following is a record of Births and Deaths in the District during the year:

There was a total of 233 Births. Of these 113 were males and 120 females. There were 8 Still Births, 6 males and 2 females.

The Birth rate for the year 1959, according to population, was 4.3% or 43 Births to every 1,000 of the population. Of the 233 Births, 50 of them were illegitimates, 20 males and 30 females.

There were 36 Deaths, not including the 8 Still Births, 20 males and 16 Females. This makes the natural increase for the year about 3.7%.

Infant Mortality.

Of the 36 Deaths recorded, 14 of them were infants under one year of age, not including the 8 Still Births.

Causes of Death.

The main causes of death were: Hypertension, heart disease, Cancer, general debility, paralysis, premature, tuberculosis and fever. There were three deaths by drowning, but these are not included in the above figures as they were not residents and resulted from the sinking of a tug boat near Martinella Shoal. There were no fatal accidents during the year under review.

CHAPTER IV.

HEALTH AND SANITATION.

The general health condition of the District has, again this year, been very satisfactory indeed. Most diseases and ailments were successfully treated by the District Medical Officer throughout the District, and in and around the Freeport area and the Gap and Hiding Point, by the private Medical Officer employed at Freeport.

All Public Wells were cleaned regularly throughout the District. These open wells are still the only Public water-supply in many, or rather, most of the settlements. Closed wells, with hand force pumps, operated very satisfactorily in Water Cay. Similar pumps purchased for Sweetings Cay and McLeans Town, but funds are not yet available to cover the cost of installing them. Without a doubt, these pumps will serve to help in the improvement of the health of those who use them and it is the sincere hope of the writer that in the not very distant future we shall see the last of the open wells replaced with these pumps in every settlement of the District.

For the first year in nine no new case of tuberculosis was discovered or dealt with. This disease is now restricted to only a few and these patients are under constant care and supervision. As to Venereal Disease, only Gonorrhoea still remain of some numerical significance.

Needless to repeat, I suppose, but Alcoholism still remains Problem Number One on Grand Bahama, with no changes, except again for the worse, resulting in an increasing number of cases of Neurological and Psychiatric disorders and two deaths from acute alcoholic poisoning. The various forms of Alcoholism dealt with by the District Medical Officer again this year, ranged from acute intoxication, leading to death, to chronic forms with polyneuritis, enlargement of the liver and mental disorders with delirium tremens. There is still no ray of hope, however, in the fight against this problem. There is no decent and proper outlet for any interest outside of work, and the more energetic the man or woman the greater is the danger of Alcoholism. Whether this has any bearing or influence as to the cause, it is noteworthy to mention that there is a marked increase in the number of deaths by Cancer in this District.

There were no epidemics reported during the year under review. Forty-three cases (21 males and 22 females) were sent to the Princess Margaret Hospital, three of whom died there. Of these, there were 23 surgical cases, & mental, all the result of alcoholism, and the others were maternity and medical cases. These were almost all emergency cases but it was only necessary to use three charter flights. The remainder were sent by the schedule flights of Bahamas Airways.

There is one known case of leprosy in the District, - there were two but one is now completely cured, - but this patient refuses any contact with other persons and lives in a rather remote settlement. It is however, the opinion of the District Medical Officer that her isolation is not necessary.

From his records of minute details, I gleaned the following with regards the duties and movements of the District Medical Officer: During the year 1959, he travelled a total of 17,100 miles, gave 11,676

treatments to 6,409 persons and made 313 visits outside of West End, in spite of the fact that he has had a twelve weeks vacation during this year.

SANITATION.

There were no improvements made in this direction and Sanitation remains one of our essential problems. Again, I feel that it should be pointed out that an Officer to direct and enforce a proper Sanitation program in some of the major settlements, will be a great asset and fill one of the outstanding needs of this District.

Garbage disposal, such as can be handled with the limited funds at our disposal for this purpose, was carried out in West End only, but the results, while helpful, are far from satisfactory, and leaves a lot to be desired.

CHAPTER V.

HOUSING.

The houses throughout the District, as pointed out in previous Reports of this kind, with the exception of West End and Riding Point, are constructed principally of native stone and lime with little or no cement. Those constructed in the last few years however, are of concrete blocks manufactured in the District. The houses in the Gap and the Riding Point area were all constructed of native pine milled at the Pine Ridge Lumber Mills years ago, and since, in fact, mostly the same houses built and used at this mill and carried to The Gap and Riding Point, when Owens Illinois of the Bahamas transferred its pulpwood operations to that area. These houses have all now been removed to the Island of Abaco as this Company has ceased its operation in Grand Bahama. In fact, there is no longer such a settlement as The Gap or Riding Point.

It is indeed, gratifying to report again this year that there has been quite a number of new houses, both homes and business-places, built again this year, and further improvements made to a number of the old ones.

It is particularly pleasing to note that this is not limited to any one or two settlements, but in every one in the District, bar none, new homes are going up and the old ones are being improved. In a few of the settlements, the people are sticking to the old 'lime and plaster' type of building, but in most places, concrete blocks, which are now easily obtained at reasonable prices, are being used extensively; in yet other settlements, wood is still the principal material used, and while this is no longer milled here, it can now be purchased in the Island from dealers in building material at reasonable prices.

These new homes and business places, are built mainly, although not altogether, on separate plots, and while considerable improvement in appearance is being made, there is still quite some disorderly pattern of over-crowding on small plots. This is particularly true of West End. With the price of land continuing to go up as it has been doing in the last four years, this situation is not expected to improve but rather to get worse. It must be pointed out in this connection that there is not one inch of Crown Land available to the natives of this Island to lease or buy for the extension of the settlements. What the men and women of tomorrow, in this Island, are going to do about a place to build and live, is a question that this writer would dare to try and answer at this time.

Houses and business places constructed within the Freeport area are of Concrete Blocks, steel and some of wood; the wooden structures however, are mostly of a temporary nature. They are all modern in design and very well built. How many of these houses were built during the year under review, is difficult to say at this time; it would help though, to report here, that within the last twelve or fifteen months a modern little city has sprung up out of the pine barrens in the Hawksbill Creek area of Grand Bahama. To mention only a few of its amenities: An ultra modern medical clinic, a super-market with the last word in shopping convenience, banking and other living and commercial facilities that can be mentioned with pride. If this was the plan of some dreamer it is fast becoming a reality.

There is still the problem of over-crowding of large families in small houses in some of the settlements, but this, I am afraid, will so remain for a long time to come, and for which I do not see any kind of a solution to look forward to. Demands for lodgings in almost all of the settlements are increasing and people are renting whatever space they can get. In some cases, one can hardly regard what they get, as living accommodation. Most of these houses are from two to six rooms, very few are any larger, and an increasing number of them are provided with modern sewerage and electricity from privately owned generators.

CHAPTER VI.

PRODUCTION.

Forest and marine products are the natural resources of this District, although forest products ceased with the departure from this Island of The Owens Illinois of Bahamas Limited, in October of this year.

FOREST.

From the cast pine forest, covering more than two-thirds of of the area of the District, more than 110,000 tons of pulp-wood have been cut and exported to Jacksonville, Florida, for the manufacture of paper and paper containers in the factories of National Containers Corporation and the Owens Illinois Glass Company. The wood was cut and shipped from Riding Point by Owens Illinois of the Bahamas Limited, on shallow draft barges towed by powerful ocean-going tug-boats. The total estimated value of this more than 110,000 tons of pulp-wood is about £550,000. This was the final shipments of this wood from this Island, as this Company ended its operations here and moved to Abaco in October of this year.

No lumber was milled nor exported this year.

MARINE PRODUCTS.

The principal marine products are fish, conch, and crawfish. Some turtles are caught and sold on the local market, while sea-shells, corals, sea-stars and sea-fans and feathers are also gathered and sold

and exported to markets in the United States.

FISH.

Edible and sport fish of numerous varieties and quantities, abound in the waters of this District. Apart from the many pleasure boats which entered at West End during the year to fish in these waters, thousands of visitors came by air to join in the fun and frolic with the champions of the deep. The fishing has been excellent, they report, and the catches have been most satisfactory.

Small groups of men and women continue to come here each week to indulge in spear-fishing as a sport, and continue their destruction of many fish, and we are powerless to prevent them as there is no Law nor any Rule made by The Agricultural and Marine Products Board against this type of fishing in this area as I am aware of. I feel, however, that some definite steps must be taken if we are going to protect our fishing grounds against the onslaught of these ruthless destroyers. One step in the right direction has been taken by the new management of the Jack Tar's Grand Bahama Club at West End, and that is that conventions of these "fishermen" have been refused accommodation at this Club, in an effort to discourage this type of sport-fishing in this area. The Agricultural and Marine Products Board may support this commendable effort of this Club by "outlawing" this type of fishing within twenty miles of the shore-lines of this Island.

The edible fish is caught mostly for the local market here where the demands are ever increasing as well as the price. Very little, if any, of this fish is now exported to the United States as in former years, as the price on the local market is much better than can be gotten for fish for export. The methods used locally to catch the fish are hand-lines, fish-pots or tryps, and sometimes a net. A considerable number of smacks, some of them from the Island of Abaco, as well as many small dinghy-boats are continuously engaged in this fishing business. If and when the fish is preserved, it is either salted or frozen. In spite of the fact that there is, at present, no scarcity of fish in the waters of this District, it is by no means the cheapest food.

CONCH.

This product is not exported because it is illegal to do so. By Order-in-Council the Agricultural and Marine Products Board prohibited the export of the conch-shells in the Summer of this year. This Act dealt a very severe blow on the people of the Eastern end of this District, who depend almost entirely upon the sale of these shells to earn a few pounds during the Summer months.

Conchs are still quite numerous on the banks adjoining the West North and East sides of this Island and the immediately adjacent Cays; one would venture the opinion that the supply in these areas is inexhaustible. Like fish, and in spite of the innumerable quantities, the price of this food supply has increased tremendously over the past three or four years. Conch is now regarded as delicacy more than a food and its vitality giving properties are supposedly matched only by the water from the "fountain of youth".

CRAWFISH.

Crawfish may be caught and exported during the open season from 1st., January to the 15th., March and from the 1st., October to the 31st., December of each year. After the close of the season, the quantity of these fish that may be taken or caught is very limited and may only be used as personal food or as bait by fishermen, however, they are very scarce and not easily found after the close of the season.

The season for this year was not a bad one, but again this year, it seems that the general run of the fish, although very plentiful, was very small, especially in the West End Area. The price asked by the fishermen was somewhat high,- at least so the buyers thought,- but the price in the United States was also good. All in all, the season was considered a fairly profitable one. These fish were exported from West End mostly by aircraft. From records available 24,300 of these fish were shipped by aircraft and 20,000 by boats clearing at West End.

TURTLE.

Turtles are to be found in fair quantities in the waters of the District, especially at the Eastern End, where the Green Turtle is more plentiful, and at the Western End, where the Logger-head is substantially the most plentiful. The Hawksbill, in much smaller quantities,

is found, as well, at both ends of the Island. The meat of all of these turtles is readily sold on the local market at good prices and the demand is usually much more than the supply.

AGRICULTURAL.

What little was being done in this direction is still being carried on. As I have stated in other Reports of this kind, very few people in this Island are interested in agriculture and those who are, are only so in a very small way. In some places like Water Cay, which, incidentally, has some of the best farming land I have seen anywhere in the Bahamas, in McLeans Town, Pelican Point and in Sweetings Cay, they continue to cultivate small areas of the local general food crops. In some of these areas there are some Mangoes, - a poor variety, - some Oranges, avocados, grape-fruits, lemons, limes and bananas. There has been no increase in the acreage cultivated during the year under review; if anything, it has been less than in previous years, and a fair estimate would be less than 160 acres now under cultivation in the whole District. In recent months, however, large United States Capitals have been investigating the agricultural possibilities of this Island and are convinced that large investments along this line can be made to bring very profitable returns. It is hoped that ere long one or more of these investors will venture 'out into the deep' and prove that this Island is just as, - if not more, - agriculturally productive as any other of the Bahama Group.

STOCK AND POULTRY.

The number of cattle in the District is ever decreasing as no special effort is made to improve and increase the stock. Many inquiries are also made into the possibility of cattle-raising in this Island, but so far, no special effort is made in this direction.

Efforts in poultry raising, on a commercial basis, however, have continued and increased and have proven rather successful. The flocks have continued to increase in numbers, and the stock and the yard facilities have been considerably improved. While these flocks have continued to be increased in numbers, the quantity produced cannot meet the ever increasing demands of the local market. Considerable quantities of

fresh eggs and dressed poultry are still imported from the United States to meet the demands. In this field also, large investors are exploring the possibilities.

The following is a fair estimate of what may be found in the District in the way of livestock and poultry:-

Cattle.....	60.
Hogs.....	170.
Sheep.....	40.
Goats.....	100.
Horses.....	3.
Poultry.....	15,000.

CHAPTER VII.

COMMERCE.

An estimated total of about 35,000 crawfish, small quantities of scale-fish, sea-shells, sea-fans, feathers and coral were exported to markets in Florida in the United States. The estimated value of this export would be in the neighbourhood of £15,000. The sale of these exports in Florida, brought in a considerable amount of United States Dollars, but the exchange at this Office was negligible. Exchanges were made at the local Banks and elsewhere.

Over 110,000 tons of pulpwood was exported to Jacksonville, Florida, by Owens Illinois of the Bahamas Limited, at an approximate value of £550,000. 0. 0. This pulpwood was purchased by the National Containers Corporation and the Owens Illinois Glass Company for the manufacture of paper and paper products.

Customs Duties collected on imports at West End only, amounted to £62,475. 17. 5. as compared with £19,951. 5. 3. in the preceding year. Customs Duties taken in by the Collector of Revenue at Freeport amounted to £ (Not available) for the year under review. These figures (for Freeport) also include Customs Duties collected at Riding Point for the same period.

Some of the foods and clothing and all of the liquor are imported from or through Nassau. Most of the foods and clothing, however, and all of the fresh milk, eggs and other dairy products, and also all of the fresh meats, fruits and vegetables,- except what is produced locally,- are imported from the United States. Practically all of the building material, except concrete blocks, which are manufactured locally, and cement which comes primarily from Europe, are also imported from the United States. These commodities and material are brought in both by aircraft and boats, entering at the ports of West End and Freeport.

CHAPTER VIII.

WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Government basic wage for the common labourer was increased to a maximum of £1. 12. 0. per eight-hour day for men and £1.4.0. for women. In some instances and in some places, it has been necessary to pay as much as £ 36/- per day in order to get the work done. Private enterprises and contractors, operating in the District, continue to pay considerably higher wages not only to the common labourer, but also to their skilled employees.

The following shows the wages that prevailed generally in the District during the year, except at Gold Rock Creek, at the Guided Missile Base, where wages were still the lowest paid in the Island. (This matter of low wages at The Base, was discussed with the Commanding Officer and the Base Manager and recommendations are being made to the proper authority in the United States Government for an increase in pay to all local personnel employed at this Base.)

Common Labourers (men).....	3/6 to 6/-	per hour.
Common Labourers (women).....	2/6 to 3/6	" "
Semi-skilled labourers.....	4/- to 6/-	" "
Carpenters and Masons.....	6/- to 15/-	" "
Plumbers and Electricians.....	8/- to 18/-	" "
Painters and Chauffeurs.....	6/- to 15/-	" "
Domestic Workers.....	2/3 to 3/6	" "

Hours of work are generally from 7.00 am. to 4.00 p.m. with one hour off for lunch, but this varies under certain circumstances, especially where the work is done by job or piece work, as in the case of employees of contractors who work most of the daylight hours and often into the nights. The employees are ~~paid~~ paid by the hour and the day is still reckoned at eight hours and the week of five and one-half days. Time over this, is reckoned at one-and-a-half to one.

Again it must be reported that prices on all commodities have increased and so increases the already high cost of living in this Island. There is a slight increase in wages, the prices of everything go up and the cost of living increases. How much further ahead are we. Here, one is reminded of the philosophy of the Italian ditch-digger: I dig the ditch to make the money to buy the spaghetti, and I eat the spaghetti to give me the muscle to dig the ditch. Cost of living in this Island equals any and far exceeds many of the other Islands of the Bahamas, and a lot of other places in the world, for that matter.

CHAPTER IX.

EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

Schools are established and conducted, under the supervision and control of the Board of Education, in all the largest settlements of the District. There are five Board Schools and seven Grant-in-aid schools. These are located as follows:-

West End,	Board,	Wallington Butler.
Holmes Rock...	Board,	W.P.Parker.
Eight-Mile-Rock,	Board,	W. Ferguson.
Riding Point,	Board,	E. Rigby. (Closed)
McLeans Town,	Board,	T. Albury.
Water Cay,	Grant-in-aid,	M. Thomas.
High Rock,	Grant-in-aid-	R.A.Wildgoose.
Sweetings Cay,	Grant-in-aid,	Norman Russell.

Smith's Point,	Grant-in-aid,	Doris Smith.
Pelican Point,	Grant-in-aid,	B. Laing.
Free Town,	Grant-in-aid,	C. McIntosh.

Schools were conducted as well, at Marco City in the Freeport Area, where the building was recently enlarged, and at Hunters. The school at Marco City is run by Grand Bahama Port Authority, with an Englishman as teacher, at which only children of the white residents of the Freeport are admitted. The school at Hunters is run by the Roman Catholic Church and is open to all children. Three Catholic Nuns are in charge.

The School at Riding Point was closed permanently with the Summer holiday period, as all operations in this area, in the pulpwood industry, have ceased. The school at Smith's Point which was closed in June of 1958, because of the resignation of the teacher, was reopened at the beginning of this year with Miss Doris Smith as Head-mistress. The school at McLeans Town, which was closed for most of 1958, was also reopened during this year with a new Headteacher, Mr. Terevas Albury, who was transferred from the post of Assistant Teacher at West End.

All of these schools are reported to have operated and most of them have been fairly satisfactorily and regularly conducted. Much as to be desired, however, in most of them, in the way of improvements, not only in the buildings but as well in the conduct and discipline of the children and the classes. This has been particularly true in the school in West End, where discipline seems to have taken the "wings of the morning". Further improvements have been made in the seating accommodation in some of the schools, but this is still far from satisfactory and can scarcely be remedied in the present buildings. Some of the buildings have long out-lived their usefulness as school buildings in which to properly train out children. There is a dire need, in some areas, for increased seating capacity to accommodate the ever-increasing number of children on the rolls. In spite of all of this, however, the parents of our children are very grateful to Government and to the Board of Education, and especially so to the Officers of the Education Department, for our schools, and we look forward with anxious antici-

pation to the completion, in 1960, of two or three new and more modern school buildings, which were started this year, and to increased and more modern facilities in the old ones.

WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

Friendly and Burial Societies, including a few branches of several Secret Orders, are operating throughout the District, and comprises a total membership of far more than a thousand men and women, and are established in every settlement of the District. These 'Societies' are established particularly to aid the sick and bury the dead of their members. They also render assistance to families of their members whenever the need arises, and they contribute, in one way or another to improve the social life of the communities in which they are severally located. Some of these institutions are registered with Government and carry substantial deposits in one of the local banks. Two very large buildings neared completion at the end of this year, ~~known~~ owned by two separate branches of Secret Orders, and in addition to being used as their "Temples", they will also be used for recreational and business purposes.

In no small way, any longer, these institutions are doing a very good job in the performance of their philanthropic duties. Many widows and orphans have been relieved by their charity, and many a burden lifted from the shoulders of the bereaved of their members.

CHAPTER X.

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT.

MAIL SERVICE.

The regular weekly mail service was performed by the Motor Vessel, Richard Campbell, during the year. I regret to have to say again this year, that more and more, and far too often now, this mail vessel has proven, and is proving, that the needs and requirements of this District has long out-grown its capacity and type of service both in passengers and freight accommodations.

In addition to this weekly service of the mail-vessel, there was also other freight services between Nassau - Freeport- Miami - Nassau, as well as an air-mail and air-freight service between West End - Nassau - Bimini - West Palm Beach - Miami - West End, which have been extremely helpful and appreciated by all.

This air-mail - air-freight service was operated by Bahamas Airways Limited, and Mackey Airlines aircraft, and transported many thousands of tourists and residents to and from this District through both West End and Freeport, proving of invaluable assistance to all, and especially so to those engaged in businesses and investment enterprises.

During the year under review, 2,406 aircraft Cleared and 1,981 Entered the Port of West End alone, bringing ~~passengers~~ and carrying passengers and freight. Hundreds of vessels entered and cleared also through the Port of West End during the year (figures unavailable at present), bringing and carrying freight and passengers. Most of the vessels entering and clearing were yachts and pleasure cruisers.

ROADS.

All Public Roads in the District have been maintained as far as available funds would permit. The Grand Bahama Main Road, West End to Eight-Mile-Rock, was resurfaced, one portion, - about 500 feet, - of it was raised to prevent flooding, and washed-out sections were refilled repaired and resurfaced. The section of this road from Pinder's Point to Hunters, a distance of about three miles, was repaired and resurfaced in washed-out areas, and one section of it was also raised to prevent flooding. This portion of the Grand Bahama Main Road, was extended to the settlement of Mack Town, a small settlement East of Hunters about three-quarters of a mile. A cross road in the settlement of Lewis Yard leading to the Burial ground and the sea, was reconstructed, raised and resurfaced. Public Roads in the settlements of High Rock, McLeans Town and Sweetings Cay, were extended and improved. Public Roads at Rocky Creek, and between Rocky Creek and McLeans Town, were improved and extended. The construction of the bridge across Rocky Creek, was continued and the one connecting the settlement of McLeans Town with the mainland was satisfactorily completed. Public Roads in Water Cay were

also extended and improved. A new cross road into the settlement of Smith's Point was constructed by The Grand Bahama Port Authority, connecting this settlement with the old Pine Ridge Main Road to West End and other parts of the Island. The Cross road into the settlement of Free Town, from the Island's Main Road, was completely rebuilt, raised and resurfaced. The Old Pine Ridge Main Road, going into The Gap, Riding Point and Gold Rock Creek, was extended to and beyond the settlement of McLeans Town, the Creek between this settlement and the mainland was bridged by a sixty feet wide causeway; this road extension is among the best roads in the Island, and was done at very little or no expense to Government. A section of road connecting the settlement of Pelican Point to the Main Gold Rock Creek Road, and consequently giving access to all other parts of the Island, was constructed to replace the old road along the water-front, which was impassable most of the time, and practically useless. All in all, construction, improvement, extension and maintenance of Public Roads in the District during this year, have been very satisfactory indeed.

POST OFFICE.

The District Post Office is located at West End and under the Direction and supervision of the District Postmaster, and the business of this Post Office is conducted by a Clerk of the Out Island Department. In addition, there are five Sub Post Offices in the District, located at Eight-Mile-Rock, Smith's Point (reopened during the year), High Rock, Freeport and Sweetings Cay. These Sub Post Offices, except the one at Freeport, handle only mails and parcels. The one at Freeport also handles the sale and payments of all Money Orders and Post Office Savings Bank Accounts. Each of these Sub Post Offices holds an Imprest of Stamps, as well as the Clerk at the District Post Office, from the District Postmaster at West End. The Sub Post Office at Smith's Point, was operated some years ago, but was closed for some time and only reopened during this year. The Sub~~main~~ Post Office at Freeport was opened in January of this year to meet the needs of that fast growing commercial area. The others have been in operation for many years.

The business in most of these Sub Post Offices is continually increasing and much more time is demanded of each Officer. It is regrettable to note however, that the salaries of these Officers have been given no consideration in the recent increase of salaries. They are still paid £30. per year or (as they are paid) £7. 10. 0. per quarter year. It is interesting to compare this salary with that paid the Sub Postmistress at Freeport: She is paid £68. 6. 8. per month and her assistant is paid £37. 10. 0 per month. These Officers are continuing to carry on this work out of sheer patriotism.

I cannot close this chapter without again appealing for some consideration of the establishment of a Sub Post Office at the settlement of Water Cay, as I have done for several years now. I trust that ere long the needs of these people, in this respect, will be considered, and arrangements will be made to help them in the not very distant future.

The following is a detailed statement of the financial transactions of this District Post Office during the year, 1959 :-

REVENUE.

Post Office Savings Bank Deposits.....	£ 5,381.	8.	3.
Sale of Telegraph & Domestic Money Orders....	25,682.	14.	5.
Sale of U.K. & Jamaican Money Orders.....	418.	15.	4.
Sale of U.S. & Canadian Money Orders.....	4,631.	2.	6.
Sale of Postage Stamps.....	2,500.	5.	0.
Parcel Post Duties Collected.....	368.	16.	7.
Short Paid Postage.....	1.	2.	0.
Total Revenue.....	<u>£38,384.</u>	<u>4.</u>	<u>1.</u>

EXPENDITURE.

Withdrawals, Post Office Savings Bank.....	£ 6,740.	12.	3.
Telegraph & Domestic Money Orders Paid.....	1,999.	1.	6.
U. S. Money Orders Paid.....	136.	18.	10.
Total Expenditure.....	<u>£ 8,876.</u>	<u>12.</u>	<u>7.</u>

TELECOMMUNICATIONS.

The three Telegraph Stations in the District are located at West End, Freeport and Sweetings Cay. These stations, baring some technical difficulties from time to time, have all operated satisfactorily during the year. Overseas Telephone Services are available at West End and Freeport to all parts of the Bahamas, where there is a similar service, and all parts of the United States and Canada. There is also an Overseas Telephone Service at Water Cay which was installed during this year and which has operated with a fair amount of satisfaction in spite of the lack of technical knowledge by the operator. This service has been very helpful and most appreciated by all of the people of this settlement.

The Local Telephone System, has operated fairly well and with some minor repairs and upkeep has continued to be of valuable service to all within the area which it serves. Plans for its extension to other parts of the Island are under way and it is hoped that this extension will continue in 1960 until the full length of the Island is given this invaluable service.

The total Telegraph Revenue for the year, 1959, at West End, was £ 1,154. 18. 11. The Overseas Telephone Revenue was £1,913, .11. 3. The Local Telephone Revenue was £ 21. 16. 0., making a total of £3,090. 6. 2.

CHAPTER XI.

FINANCE.

The following is a detailed statement of Revenue and Expenditure in this District for the year, 1959:

BANK ACCOUNT.

BANK BALANCE 31/12/58 (as shown in Cash Book).....	£ 1,302. 5. 7.
Total Deposits during 1959.....	622,677. 9. 7 93,677. 9. 7
Total.....	<u>£94,979. 15. 2.</u>
Withdrawals From Bank Account during 1959.....	£94,408. 8. 5.
BANK BALANCE (as shown in Cash Book) 31/12/59.....	<u>571. 6. 9.</u>
Total.....	<u>£94,979. 15. 2.</u>

1959

R E V E N U E

1959

Revenue and Deposits Balance 31/12/58.....£	474. 17. 2.
Parcel Post Duties.....£	368. 16. 7.
Motor Cars and Drivers Licences.....	670. 10. 0.
Liquor Licences.....	242. 5. 0.
Shop Licences.....	3. 10. 0.
Fines and Forfeitures.....	1,515. 11. 9.
Fees of Office.....	2. 19. 2.
Telegraph Revenue.....	1,154. 18. 11.
Overseas Telephone Revenue.....	1,913. 11. 3.
Local Telephone Revenue.....	21. 16. 0.
Passenger Ticket Taxes.....	269. 0. 0.
Import Duties and Emergency Taxes.....	62,475. 17. 5.
Departure Taxes.....	6,395. 10. 0.
Stamp Duty(Customs).....	921. 16. 0.
Music and Dancing Licences.....	51. 8. 0.
Landing and Parking Fees(Civil Aviation)...	123. 1. 10.
Total Revenue.....	76,130. 11. 11.

Deposits, Etc.

Post Office Savings Bank Deposits.....£	5,381. 8. 3.
Sale of Teleg. & Domestic Money Orders.....	25,082. 14. 5.
Sale U. S. & Canadian Money Orders.....	4,631. 2. 6.
Sale of U. K. & Jamaican Money Orders.....	418. 15. 4.
Sale of Postage Stamps.....	2,500. 6. 0.
Short Paid Postage.....	1. 2. 0.
Payments on Dinghies.....	399. 4. 0.
Crown Land Rentals.....	23. 7. 0.
Conditional Sale of Crown Lands.....	79. 13. 0.
Out Island Court Deposits.....	1,008. 5. 9.
Library Subscriptions.....	1. 8. 6.
Remittances and Sale of Drafts.....	24,921. 15. 11.
Withdrawals from Bank Account.....	94,408. 8. 5.
Proceeds of Provost Marshal Sale.....	1,207. 15. 0.
Total Deposits.....£	160,065. 5. 1.
Grand Total.....£	236,670. 14. 2

1959

EXPENDITURE.

1959.

On Account of;			
The House of Assembly.....£	40.	10.	0.
Customs Department.....	2,943.	19.	7.
Judicial Department.....	143.	15.	6.
Registrar General's Department.....	29.	8.	0.
Education Department.....	231.	2.	0.
Police Department.....	5,518.	19.	4.
Post Office Department (Salaries).....	115.	0.	0.
Prisons Department.....	146.	1.	0.
Telecommunications Department.....	4,083.	1.	10.
Audit Department.....	32.	0.	0.
Medical Department.....	1,834.	16.	9.
Pub. Works, Recurrent, Out Islands.....	5,547.	9.	2.
Pub. Works, Non-Recurrent, Out Islands.....	27,657.	19.	11.
Out Island & General Improvement Act.....	4,821.	12.	9.
Out Island Department.....	1,440.	12.	10.
Government Telegrams and Messages.....	163.	13.	5.
Pensions and Gratuities.....	388.	18.	0.
Old Age Pension.....	2,801.	10.	0.
Immigration Department.....	391.	0.	0.
Civil Aviation Department.....	469.	11.	6.
Miscellaneous Expenditure.....	9,228.	16.	4.
Total.....	£ 68,623.	17.	11.

PAYMENTS OF DEPOSITS, ETC.

Withdrawals Post Office Savings Bank.....£	6,740.	12.	3.
Payments of Tel. & Dom. Money Orders.....	1,999.	1.	6.
Payments of U.S. Postal Money Orders.....	136.	18.	10.
Payments of Out Island Court Deposits.....	545.	8.	9.
Family Allowances.....	1,002.	0.	1.
Deposits made to Bank Account.....	93,677.	9.	7.
Bailiff's Fees (Magistrate's Court).....	1.	19.	11.
Libraries.....	34.	2.	0.
Remittances to the Public Treasury.....	61,000.	0.	0.
Commission on Crown Land Rentals.....	3.	4.	7.
Advance to H.M.S. Troubridge.....	500.	0.	0.
Advance Freeport Post Office.....	986.	5.	0.
Total.....	£166,627.	2.	6.
Balance 31/12/59.....	1,419.	13.	9.
Grand Total.....	£2236,670.	14.	2.

The Financial Statements on Pages 21 to 23 do not include Telegraph Revenue, Customs Duties, Etc., and Post Office Accounts collected at Freeport and Riding Point. These are paid to and accounted for by the Collector of Revenue at Freeport.

CHAPTER XII.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Under Head 31, Items 65 to 69 inclusive, which provides for General Upkeep in the District under four separate Boards of Works, and the Maintenance of the Grand Bahama Main Road, the sum of £4,155. 0. 0. was allocated for the upkeep of Public Roads, Walls, Burial Grounds, Buildings and Landing-places. Of this amount, the sum of £4,106. 1. 11. was spent. This allocation provided also for the collection and disposal of garbage at West End and the maintenance of a garbage truck.

Further expenditure under this Head, 31, was made from Item 70, for the maintenance of an Electric Generator to supply Electricity to Government Buildings and the sum of £990. was allocated and spent. £200. from Item 104 was used to build a seawall for the new Government Warehouse at West End. £250. from Item 112 for the operation and maintenance of Oil Navigation Lights in the District.

Under Head 33, and the Out Island and General Improvement Act, the sum of £32,636. 8. 0. was granted for works in this District. This amount also included some revotes from 1958. Again, some of the Votes were not broken into because of the lack of time to do the work. Revotes of the amounts, and of unspent balances of other Votes, have been requested for the year 1960. The total spent from the total granted as mentioned above, was £28,187. 16. 1. This amount was spent on the following works.

1. Repair and replace roof of Commissioner's Residence.
2. Provide Rest-room at Commissioner's Office.
3. Extension of the Pinder's Point - Hunter's Road.
4. Construct a warehouse at High Rock.
5. Improve and extend roads in Sweetings Cay, Hugh Rock, Etc.
6. Improve Road Rocky Creek - MoLeans Town.

7. Construction of Dock at McLeans Town.
8. Construction of Cross-road at Holmes Rock.
9. Construction of Cross-road at Free Town.
10. Extension and Improvement of Bridge at Rocky Creek.
11. Extension of the Front Road at High Rock.
12. Reconstruction and extension of Main Road at McLeans Town.
13. Further Extension of Roads at Sweetings Cay.
14. Construction of Cross-road at Pelican Point.
15. Raising and resurfacing the Grand Bahama Main Road.
16. Rebuilding of the Dock at Water Cay.
17. Construction of Government Buildings at West End.
18. Construction of a New Warehouse at West End.
19. Reconstruction of a Bridge at McLeans Town.
20. Repairs to Government Building at Sweetings Cay.
22. Construction of a new Cross-road at Smith's Point.
22. Repairs to the District Medical Officer's Residence.
23. Extension of Roads in Water Cay.
24. Construction of additional bed-room to Commissioner's Residence.

Most of the works undertaken, were completed, others were not for reasons stated in my Report on Out Island Works in this District, of the 27th, January, 1960, in which revotes, of unexpended balances and amounts of unbroken Votes, were requested.

CHAPTER XLII.

JUSTICE, POLICE AND PRISONS.

Peace and good order were effectively maintained throughout the District during the year, even in the Freeport Area, opinions to the contrary notwithstanding. 133 Cases were heard by the Magistrate, including two sent to the Supreme Court and two appealed. The following table shows the number and nature of the various offences and persons dealt with in these cases and how they were disposed of:

Assault.....	17.
Abusive Language.....	43.
Wounding.....	16.

Prædial Larceny..... 8.
Police Cases.....61.
Other Offences.....20.
Traffic Offences.....65.
Indecent Assault..... 1.
Indictable..... 6.
Matrimonial Cases..... 2.

161 persons were involved; 135 males and 26 females.

These Cases were disposed of as follows:

Fined.....97.
Imprisoned..... 7.
Cautioned.....14.
Bound Over..... 5.
Whipped..... 2.
Dismissed..... 2.
Withdrawn..... 2.
Appealed..... 2. (1 Fined, 1 Pending).
Sent to Supreme Court..... 6.

Sixty-five (65) Civil Cases were heard during the year. No cases were disposed of by the Justices of the Peace,. Two Inquests and one Inquiry were held into the death, by drowning, of three men, (Americans), as a result of the sinking of a Tug-boat near the Martinella Reef on the Little Bahama Bank.

POLICE:

Members of the Nassau Constabulary were stationed at West End, Freeport and The Gap, Riding Point. While there was always one at The Gap, the numbers in Freeport and West End varied. There are two First Grade Local Constables, one at West End and the other at Eight-Mile-Rock, and two second Grade Local Constables, one at High Rock and the other at Pelican Point. These Officers worked hard and long hours in the performance of their duties and in an effort to see a job well done. The District Constables, in most of the settlements, have been of some assist- in the maintenance of peace and good in their settlements, but in others these men were more troublesome than anyone else. With all efforts

combined, however, peace and good order were effective^{ly} and satisfactorily maintained, and there were only a comparatively few minor incidents that tended to mar the peace and quiet of this District, but without these, I suppose, life would be rather monotonous.

The following men have been appointed as District Constables for the year 1960, in the settlements under which their names appear:

West End.

Clifford Davis.
Hiram Johnson Jr.
Bernard Hanna.
Benjamin Pinder.
Alexander Rolle.
Henderson Smith.
George Forbes.
Granville Garvey, Sr.
Ivan Russell.
Wilbert Russell.

Water Cay.

Walter Hield.
Locksley Hield.
Bernice Rolle.

High Rock.

Isaac Smith.
Henry Smith.
Willis Kemp.

Bacca Hill.

Ural Smith.
Percy Barr.

Pinder's Point.

Alphonso Cooper.
Leon Pinder.
Aranha Laing.

Holmes Rock.

John Rolle, Sr.
Horatio Stuart.
Archie Jones.

Braudie Point.

Arnold Martin.
Harris Russell.
Elmore Stuart.

Hunters.

James Russell.
Buddie Russell.
Roland Bevans.

Pelican Point.

Walter Laing.

Lords Yard

Floyd Russell.
Samuel Russell.
Henry Russell.

Eight-Mile-Rock.

Albert Rolle.
Alfred Johnson.
Willard Martin.

Smith's Point.

Henry Edden.
Henry Nesbitt.

McLeans Town.

Jeremiah Thomas.
Bertram Davis.
Henry Carey, Jr.
George Leathan.

Sea Grape.

Robert Bain.
Arthur Martin.
Alfred Jones.

Mather Town.

Nathaniel Mather.

Sweetings Cay.

Peter Feaster.
Wellington Bevans.
Rupert Bevans.

Free Town.

Ormond Laing.
Solomon Hield.

West End. (additional)

Charles Grant.
Joseph Cartwright.

PRISONS.

No Prison terms are served except in the Prison at West End. There are Lock-ups at Freeport and at Eight-Mile-Rock, but these are only used for over-night detentions. All of these buildings are in good condition.

During the year, 1959, 41 persons were sent to prison or held at West End, some for short periods pending payment of fines, 16 of these were sent to Her Majesty's Prison at Fox Hill, New Providence for terms

of over six weeks. There were no prisoners in the gaol on the 1st., January of this year. 25 were dismissed or released during the year and two were still serving sentences on the 31st., December, 1959, but none were awaiting trial. The health of the prisoners was good except for two mental cases sent to Sandilands for observation and treatment. There were no casualties. In spite of the increased cost of commodities of all kinds, including prisoners' food, the cost of feeding the prisoners has not been increased.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEGISLATION.

The General Assembly Elections Act No.39 of 1959, came into effect in this District in October of this year, which extended the franchise to all male adult British Subjects over Twenty-one years of age, and a new Register of Voters was compiled for this District.

CHAPTER XV.

TAXATION.

There is no direct form of taxation in this District. The Real Property Tax Act has not yet been put into effect here.

CHAPTER XVI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PAUPERISM.

Pauper rations were issued by Government, through the Princess Margaret Hospital, including grits, flour, sugar and milk, and through the Bahamas Branch of the British Red Cross, cheese and powdered milk, to 46 paupers, throughout the District. Four of the paupers died during the year and five were added to the list.

RELIGION.

The Baptist Faith is still the leading system of Religious Worship followed by more than 50% of the population. With the influx of English and other foreigners at the Freeport, both the Anglican and the Roman Catholic Faiths are growing in numbers of followers. Others, like the Brethren, Church of God(Jumpers) and the Jehovah Witnesses appear to be rather dormant or stagnant. It is note-worthy to mention that some improvements, long over-due, are being made in some of the church buildings, and most of them are now electrically lighted from privately owned generators.

VISITS BY OFFICIALS.

The District was visited by The Chief Out Island Commissioner several times during the year, and by Lady Arthur and two Directors of The British Red Cross Society, in the Bahamas and in the Caribbean areas. The District was also visited by a number of ^{other} Heads of Departments at various times during the year. These visits were mostly business visits, but some of them were also to enjoy the salubrious environment of the largest and most modern Tourist Resort in the Colony, here at West End.

COMMISSIONER'S VISITS.

Special efforts were made to visit every settlement of the District at least four times during the year, but for some, this was useless if not impossible. Most of the settlements, especially the larger and more accessible ones, were visited regularly; some of them weekly, when the need warranted it. These visits were made chiefly, this year, to organize and supervise Public Works, to pay Family Allowances and Old Age Pensions and for the Registration of Voters in the three, and later, four Divisions in the District. Transportation was effected by Government Land Rover, by private cars and by boats. Transportation to Water Cay is always by boat only, and to Sweetings Cay it is partly by Land Rover, or car, and partly by boat. Travelling, however, have been made considerably more comfortable, by extensive road improvements and the availability of good motor boats.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Prosperity in this District reached an all-high peak during this year. I am quite safe in saying that there was very little, if any, unemployment in the District during the year, and very good wages were paid to all. In some of the settlements, the people acted very wisely with their earnings, and are providing themselves with comfortable little homes, while others are investing in small businesses, which are proving anything but failures. It is regrettable to note however, that in other settlements of the District, the people are taking this prosperity for granted and are 'wasting their substances in riotous living'. This is only history repeating itself in Grand Bahama, and "the sins of the fathers falling upon their children unto the third and fourth generations". In the midst of all of this prosperity, there are men, and women, here, - especially in West End, - who have not accepted a day's employment in the last two or three years, or even longer. They are still subsisting on the memories of the good old days of the 'Rum-runners'. These men are 'kings' of the pool and the 'crap' tables. Their loot at the end of a night, sometimes, is not to be lightly regarded.

Apart from additional investments made at the Guided Missile Base, and estimated four to five Million pounds were 'poured' into this Island in various forms of investments. At West End, The Jack Tar's Hotel chain took over ownership of the Grand Bahama Club, and at the end of the year their expenditure on improvement and re-habilitation neared the three million dollars mark. All available labour, of all kinds, was employed here.

At Freeport, among other things too numerous to mention in this Report, a three-and-a-half million dollars Bunkering Terminal went into operation in January. This Terminal has a storage capacity of 32 million gallons of bunkering and diesel fuels and gasoline and other petroleum products. This supply is brought in by large Oil-Tankers, carrying 50 to 60 thousand tons, and ships of all sizes are refueled at this terminal. Business, I am informed, has exceeded the fondest expectations of this Company.

The Freeport International Airport was completed and opened to International air traffic in May of this year. This airport boasts proudly of a terminal building second to none in the Out Islands.

A modern, self-service Super Market opened its doors to the public also in May of this year at which almost anything can be purchased at reasonable prices.

Smaller investments are being spread all over the Island and are extending into the adjacent Cays.

Thousands, yea, tens of thousands, of tourists came to this District during the year, and continue to come in increasing numbers. Large Conventions are booked for 1960 long before the close of the year, - as many as five thousand in one group, - and several smaller groups.

Many Miles of very good roads have been built by the Owens Illinois of the Bahamas Limited, in connection with their pulpwood industry. This Company has now left the Island, but their roads are still with us and will be for many years to come. In this connection I would like to express my sincere appreciation to this Company, and the resident manager in 1959, for making it possible to drive, comfortably, from West End to the End of the settlement of McLeans Town, a distance, by this road, of about eighty miles or more. Many miles of this road, in fact most of it, was built at no expense to Government. This road includes the building of cause-ways, over fifty wide, across four or five Creeks, some of them running completely through the Island, from North to South sides.

This Report would not be complete, I feel, unless I, for the people of this District and myself, make some mention of our appreciation and thanks to Almighty God and to those in Government, and otherwise, who have helped to make these blessings and this prosperity possible for us during the year 1959.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,


Commissioner.

The Chief Out Island Commissioner,
Nassau, N. P.