

THE BAHAMAS
DURING
THE GREAT WAR



FRANK HOLMES

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With The
Author's
Compliments.

Nassau,

Bahamas.

April 9th 1945.

THE BAHAMAS
DURING
THE GREAT WAR

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THE BAHAMAS
DURING
THE GREAT WAR

By

FRANK HOLMES

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



"THE TRIBUNE"
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
MCMXXIV

THE GREAT WAR
DURING
THE GREAT WAR

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SIR GEORGE HADDON-SMITH, K.C.M.G.
Governor of The Bahamas, 1912-1914.

TO
SIR GEORGE
BASIL HADDON-SMITH, K.C.M.G.,
GOVERNOR OF THE BAHAMAS
AT THE OUTBREAK OF WAR
WHO
IN SEPTEMBER 1914
APPOINTED
THE BAHAMAS
WAR RELIEF COMMITTEE
WHICH FOR NEARLY FIVE YEARS
PLAYED THE LEADING PART
IN
THE PATRIOTIC ACTIVITIES OF THE COLONY

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS brief account of the Colony of the Bahamas during the Great War was written in 1920 at the request of Sir William Allardyce, K.C.M.G., (Governor of the Bahamas 1914-1920) on behalf of the Bahamas Government, for inclusion in "The Empire at War," edited by Sir Charles Lucas, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., for the Royal Colonial Institute, London (Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press.) A short digest of this book appears in Section X, Part III, Volume II of that work.

Nassau,

May 1924.

LETTER NO. 1

This letter contains the substance of the
information given to the Hon. Secy of War
on 12th of the month of July 1864
concerning the late Col. James M.
Smith, late of the 2nd Mass. Cav.
The name of the person to whom
this letter is addressed is James M.
Smith, late of the 2nd Mass. Cav.
and was killed at the battle of
Cold Springs, Va. July 1st 1864.
The name of the person who
gave the information is John
H. Smith, son of the late Col. James
M. Smith, late of the 2nd Mass. Cav.
and was killed at the battle of
Cold Springs, Va. July 1st 1864.

J. H. Smith

July 1st 1864

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THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

CHAPTER ONE.

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

NASSAU is the capital of the Bahama Islands, a small British Colony lying off the coast of Florida, and on July 1st 1914 her citizens, peacefully engaged in the pursuit of their usual summer vocations, were as little perturbed by the publication in the local press of a brief telegram announcing the assassination in Serajevo of the Austrian Heir-Apparent, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and hismorganatic wife, Duchess Hohenburg, as was the rest of the Empire—little dreaming that out of that tragedy would spring the Great War which was to disturb the peace of the world for over four years. Local business interest was at the time divided chiefly between the matter of the renewal

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of the Colony's all-important mail, passenger and freight steamship service with New York and the price of sisal, one of the principal exports of the Bahamas, while the attention of the sporting contingent was centred on the doings of the *Shamrock IV* in her trials off the South Coast, and her chances of "lifting" the America Cup. The City was dependant for telegraphic communication with the outside world on a small wireless system which had been but recently installed to take the place of the old and worn out Nassau-Jupiter submarine cable line, and but little reliable intelligence of what was happening in Europe reached its citizens. But on July 14th it was learned that Austria had sent an ultimatum to Serbia, and by the first of August it began to be recognized that a grave international crisis existed.

On August 3rd a Government notification of the suspension of telegraphic and radio-telegraphic service throughout the Empire, except under certain stringent restrictions, was published, on the same

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

day a Staff of Censors of telegraphic correspondence was appointed and certain other appointments were made in connection with the Defence Scheme of the Colony. Guards consisting of small detachments of the local Constabulary were placed at certain important points within and about the City, and by that time it was generally realized that war was practically a certainty. Excitement ran high and the suspense was extreme, but the tension was relieved when on the morning of Wednesday, August 5th, it became known that England had thrown in her lot with her partners of the Triple Entente and had declared war against Germany late the day before—the memorable Fourth of August. The news was received with gravity mixed with profound satisfaction that England had responded to the call of her honourable obligations and had taken her stand for Right and Justice, and on all sides were to be heard expressions of sentiments highly creditable to the patriotic instincts of Bahamians. Crowds gathered before the bulletin board,

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where every single item of war news—and no other received a moment's consideration—was eagerly read, weighed, argued and debated from every possible point of view. For the first time in all her experience Nassau's streets resounded to the shrill cries of darkey newsboys shouting "War Extra", "Latest War News", and many of their hearers thrilled to the realization that the Empire was involved in a tremendous struggle and had indeed arrived at a grave crisis in its history. Events rapidly succeeded each other, and it soon began to be perceived that war was indeed a stern business. Local sponge merchants—Nassau is one of the principal sponge markets of the world—received telegrams warning them not to buy or ship any more sponge, and prices on the Sponge Exchange soon collapsed. The sisal market was similarly affected and it was not long before commercial circles realized that the universal business depression, which had abruptly resulted abroad upon the outbreak of war, was to have its reactions in the Bahamas.

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

But throughout it all the prevailing note was one of invincible optimism and cheery confidence, and sentiment generally was well voiced by a local newspaper of August 5th when it said:—"Critical as the situation is, dark as are the war-clouds that obscure the future, Englishmen and Britons the world over will do their duty and, steadfast and true, face with calm and confidence the perils which beset their nation. They will rally ardently to the support of that Flag, that Throne and that Empire which are to them the finest things in all the world. Patriotic devotion and self-sacrifice shall be our watchwords, and shoulder to shoulder we shall face the onslaughts of the hosts that would dismember our Empire. Assurance of the justice of our cause and confidence in the imperial destinies of our nation will inspire our hearts and guide our actions, and lead us to look ever forward to the day when the laurel wreath of victory shall crown our efforts and our

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“foes shall be destroyed—

*‘Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true’ ”*

During the day or two after the outbreak of war certain Proclamations necessitated by the situation were issued, and on Friday, August 7th, the Legislature met in special session. The Bahamas is one of the three small British Colonies possessing representative—though not responsible—government, which includes a House of Assembly consisting of twenty-nine members elected from fifteen districts by a suffrage based on a small property qualification. There are also a Legislative Council nominated by the Crown and the usual Executive Council, composed partly of official and partly of unofficial members who also have a seat in either the upper or lower branch of the Legislature. At the outbreak of the war the Governor of the Bahamas was His Excellency Sir (then Mr.) George Basil Haddon-Smith, K.C.M. G., who had at that time been about two years in the Colony and was very popular, and at noon on Friday the Governor met both branches of the Legislature in the

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Legislative Council Chamber. In the short speech with which he opened the special session he stated that as the Empire of which the Colony was a part was at war, and it would become necessary to issue proclamations, a bill would be introduced to give legal effect to those issued. He also said that as owing to the closing of the European markets for sponge and for other reasons stagnation of trade was bound to ensue, relief measures might become necessary and that another bill authorizing the Governor-in-Council to provide such relief as required would also be submitted.

The opening ceremony then concluded with the singing of the National Anthem and the members of the House of Assembly returned to their own Chamber, where with the unanimous consent of the House the Member representing the Government obtained leave to introduce the two bills mentioned in the Governor's speech, which were read a first time. The House then adjourned until the same evening, when, two

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of its standing rules having been suspended for the sitting, the Proclamations Bill and the Emergency Relief Bill were read a second time, committed, and read a third time and passed.

The Proclamations Act was of such a general nature and vested such wide powers in the local Government that the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right Honourable L. V. Harcourt, (afterwards Lord Harcourt) subsequently adopted the unusual course of directing the Governor to express to the House of Assembly the satisfaction felt by His Majesty's Government at the proof afforded by the Act of the confidence reposed in them by the Bahamas Legislature.

The two Bills passed the Legislative Council the next day immediately after which the Governor again met both bodies, and after cordially thanking them for the legislation so readily granted, closed the shortest session in the history of the Colony and declared the Legislature prorogued until November 5th.

Immediately after the opening of the

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Legislature on the preceding day a large public meeting was held on Rawson Square at which the Governor delivered an interesting and apposite address. He assured his attentive audience that owing to the presence in neighbouring waters of certain of His Majesty's ships there need be no fear of any enemy attack, and with prophetic insight said that as food would soon become scarce and war conditions would send prices to unprecedented heights, it had become absolutely necessary that food products of every description should be widely cultivated throughout the Colony; the strictest economy should be exercised by all, resources of every kind should be carefully husbanded and extravagance of all description banished.

The speech was well received and had an excellent effect on the public mind, containing as it did much excellent advice coupled with a word of sober warning as to probable future contingencies. At its conclusion the large crowd present, thoroughly representative of all classes of the community, sang the National Anthem,

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gave three hearty cheers for His Excellency and then slowly dispersed, thinking meditatively of what the future might hold in store for His Majesty's "Antient and Loyal Colony of the Bahamas."

CHAPTER TWO.

THE BAHAMAS

WAR RELIEF COMMITTEE.

IT soon became evident that there was a deep, underlying desire among the people of all classes in the Colony to be of some use, to take some part in sharing the burden which had so suddenly been placed upon the Empire. Far, very far removed from the scene of the struggle, yet the tidings which reached them of the varying fortunes of the Allied Armies, of the suffering and privation which had followed quickly in the wake of a cruel war, and of bereaved homes mourning the loss of their loved ones on the cheerless battle fields of foreign lands, stirred a wave of compassion for the unfortunate victims and created a deep-seated desire to do what they could to relieve the distress and alleviate the misery. This all-prevailing sentiment required but a directing hand to transform

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it into practical achievement, and, anticipating a suggestion from the Secretary of State for the Colonies that steps should be taken to enable the Bahamas to contribute to the common weal, the Governor summoned a public meeting of the citizens of Nassau to arrange means for helping the Mother Country in her time of trouble.

The meeting was held in St. Andrew's Hall on Friday, September 4th, and was attended by a very large and thoroughly representative gathering, which filled the Hall to overflowing. The Governor presided, and in his opening address said that he had invited them to determine in what way Bahamians could best provide a practical demonstration of their loyalty and play their part in the crisis which had arisen. He warned his audience that any plans that might be adopted should not be of an official nature, but that they must spring from the people and be carried out by the people. His speech was warmly received, as were those by other speakers who followed, among whom were Mr. George Weech, Senior Member of the House of Assembly for the City District, Mr. Geo.

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M. Cole, M.L.A., Mr. L. Walton Young, M.L.A., and Mr. S. Albert Dillet, and stirring, even turbulent cheers greeted the patriotic sentiments which fell from their lips. Towards the end of a most successful meeting the Governor announced that he had appointed a representative Committee, which had powers to add to their number, to deal with the whole matter of contributions from the Bahamas, and said he felt sure that they would do all that was possible to further the objects in view.

The original members of the Committee appointed by the Governor, which assumed the name of Bahamas War Relief Committee, were:—Mrs. Geo. B. Adderley, Mrs. Nigel B. Burnside, Mrs. W. E. S. Callender, Mrs. Geo. H. Gamblin, Mrs. Haddon-Smith, Miss Hart-Bennett, Mrs. E. T. Higgs, Mrs. F. A. Holmes, Mrs. G. H. Johnson, Mrs. T. H. C. Lofthouse, Mrs. Harcourt Malcolm, Miss Moseley, Mrs. W. J. Pinder, Mrs. W. A. Pitt, Mrs. Jas. P. Sands, Mrs. J. Ronald Young, Messrs. G. Harold Adderley, W. P. Adderley, M. L. A., Dr. J. Baird Albury, Messrs. John

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Alfred, Chas. O. Anderson, M.L.A., Geo. W. Armbrister, M.L.A., Rev. S. J. Bennett, Rev. W. H. F. Bleby, Messrs. L. G. Brice, M.L.A., R. H. C. Crawford (Commandant) George M. Cole, M.L.A., S. Albert Dillet, His Honour F. C. Wells-Durrant, K.C., (Acting Chief Justice.) Messrs. W. E. Fountain, R. S. Hanna, Hon. W. Hart-Bennet, C.M.G., (Colonial Secretary) Messrs. E. T. Higgs, Thos. S. Hilton, Frank Holmes, Right Rev. Dr. W. B. Hornby (Bishop of Nassau) Mr. T. C. Huyler, Hon. G. H. Johnson, M.L.A., Messrs. W. C. B. Johnson, M.L.A., H. W. Lightburn, Hon. T. H. C. Lofthouse, Mr. E. W. T. McPherson, Hon. Harcourt Malcolm, K.C., (Speaker) Messrs. W. A. Mather, Chas. Menendez, D. S. D. Moseley, M.L.A., David Patton, Dr. W. A. Pitt, Messrs. Jerome E. Pyfrom, Jas. M. Rae, R. H. Sawyer, Eric V. Solomon, M.L.A., George Weech, M.L.A., N. A. White, Rev. Daniel Wilshere, Hon. J. Ronald Young, M. L. A., and Mr. L. Walton Young, M.L. A. Others subsequently elected members of the Committee were:—His Honour

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Daniel T. Tudor, Chief Justice, and Mrs. Tudor, Hon. Sir Joseph Brown and Lady Brown, Mrs. F. C. Wells-Durrant, Captain Fred J. Lobb, R.N., Mrs. Allardyce, Hon. Sir James Sands and Major Turner (Acting Commandant.)

The first meeting of the Committee was held in the Legislative Council Chamber on September 7th, when the Honourable Harcourt Malcolm, K.C., Speaker of the Bahamas House of Assembly, was elected Chairman, Mr. Frank Holmes was elected Honorary Secretary and Mr. George M. Cole, M.L.A., Honorary Treasurer. An Executive Committee was also appointed, the members of which were the Chairman, Mrs. T. H. C. Lofthouse, Mrs. E. T. Higgs, Miss Moseley, His Honour F. C. Wells-Durrant, Hon. W. Hart-Bennett, C.M.G., His Lordship the Bishop, Hon. G. H. Johnson, Mr. Jas. M. Rae, Hon. J. Ronald Young, Messrs. George Weech, S. Albert Dillet, W. A. Mather, W. C. B. Johnson, Rev. W. H. F. Bleby and the Honorary Secretary. Sub-committees were subsequently appointed as

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follows:—For the collection of monetary subscriptions, Hon. G. H. Johnson, Messrs. E. W. T. McPherson, W. C. B. Johnson, W. A. Mather and W. E. Fountain. For the collection of contributions other than money, Mrs. T. H. C. Lofthouse, Mrs. E. T. Higgs and Miss Moseley. For obtaining local volunteers for active service, Messrs. R. H. C. Crawford, Geo. M. Cole and S. Albert Dillet. The work of the last named Committee will be dealt with subsequently.

No time was lost in getting to work, and in a very short time over a thousand pounds had been subscribed. The dwellers on the numerous Out Island settlements of the Colony were approached through the Resident Commissioners and many enthusiastic meetings were held there, employees of many Companies promised a day's pay and some 8,000 envelopes were sent out in connection with a Children's Fund. Many entertainments were given and sales held, the proceeds of all of which went to swell the Funds, and a general spirit of enthusiasm prevailed. The women of the Colony were

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appealed to to make garments, bandages, etc., for the use of the Red Cross, special services were held in the churches when the offertories were devoted to the Fund, and by the end of September the Committee was in a position to make a first remittance of £2000 to the Prince of Wales National Relief Fund, to which it had been decided that the collections in the Bahamas should be sent. By the middle of December a further £1000 was remitted to London.

Perhaps the most remarkable circumstance about the subscriptions to this initial contribution of the Colony to the War Funds was their universality. The Governor in a despatch to the Secretary of State of December 16th, 1914, said:—"The majority of the inhabitants
"of these Islands are poor. Many,
"by contributing, I am sure, have
"not only denied themselves luxuries,
"but in many cases, the neces-
"saries of life, but to have refunded their
"offerings would have given pain. There
"have been instances of seamstresses and

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“market women earning a few shillings a
“week insisting on giving either three or
“two shillings. There have been other in-
“stances of people who had buried gold
“which they would not have unearthed ex-
“cept in dire need, but to be one of the
“subscribers to the War Fund they have
“dug up their hidden treasure; this has
“been the case in the Out Islands and
“accounts for many of the contributions of
“£1 0 6, which is the (present) exchange
“of the American \$5 gold piece.”

While subscriptions of money were being collected, the Committee was not idle in other directions, especially the sub-committee of lady members appointed to obtain donations other than money. This sub-committee, all of whom were members of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, invoked the assistance of that Order, which was a strong organization in the Bahamas, and a vigorous campaign was soon instituted. An appeal was made to the women of the Colony to assist in making garments required by the British Red

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Cross Society for their work, and a considerable quantity of material was distributed among many willing workers. Pyjamas, shirts, vests and many other articles were forthcoming in respectable quantities and were forwarded to England at frequent intervals. It having been made known that tropical fruit would be acceptable at the Hospitals, many generous donations of oranges and grape fruit were made, and a first shipment of over thirty crates was forwarded in November. Sponges also were sent to the Hospitals, and supplies of warm clothing were forwarded to the Belgian Relief Committee in London. In December 156 boxes of grape fruit, oranges and lemons were sent to England, including over 100 boxes of choice fruit as a special Christmas gift from the children of the Colony. A large shipment of fruit was also sent to the Vegetable Products Committee for the men of the Navy. This fruit, according to communications from London, was highly appreciated by the wounded in hospitals, and especially on board His Majesty's ships,

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where supplies of really good fruit, according to Sir Arthur Hay, C.B., Director General, Medical Department of the Royal Navy, were difficult to obtain. These shipments were continued throughout the winter season, when the fruit is available in the Bahamas, and at intervals throughout the War. But all of this by no means exhausted the activities either of the Bahamas War Relief Committee, or of the Daughters of the Empire, as will be seen from subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE.

VOLUNTEERS

FROM THE BAHAMAS.

At the very first meeting of the Bahamas War Relief Committee the question of enlisting volunteers in the Colony for service abroad with the Armies of the Empire was raised, and a member of the Committee then stated that he was making a list of those willing to offer their services, a statement which was received with hearty applause. Very shortly afterwards a sub-committee was appointed to deal with the subject of obtaining local volunteers for active service out of the Colony, and opportunities were provided for volunteers to put their names down for service abroad. A series of public meetings was arranged, and as a large proportion of the inhabitants of the Bahamas—a Colony consisting of a large number of small islands extending through several degrees

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of latitude—were seagoing folk, it was thought preferable in the first instance to enlist volunteers for service in the Royal Navy, and by the end of September 225 volunteers had been enrolled. The wisdom of this course became evident when early in 1915 a telegram was received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies offering the volunteers employment as prize crews to take to England enemy ships condemned in West Indian ports. A subsequent telegram from London stated that the employment of the volunteers as prize crews had been found impracticable, and great was the disappointment among them when this became known, some of the best seamen of the Colony having shown the greatest eagerness to join the Empire's forces afloat.

In December 1914 Mr. Haddon-Smith, who had then been for two years Governor of the Colony, during which period he had proved himself a successful administrator and had achieved universal popularity, was promoted to the Governorship of the



SIR WILLIAM ALLARDYCE, K.C.M.G.
Governor of The Bahamas, 1914-1920.

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Windward Islands and left Nassau on December 17th for Grenada to take up his new appointment. Before his departure it was announced that Mr. William Allardyce, C.M.G., Governor of the Falkland Islands, had been appointed to be Governor of the Bahamas, and pending his arrival the Honourable W. Hart-Bennett, C. M. G., the popular Colonial Secretary of the Colony, took up the reins of government as Administrator. Mr. Allardyce did not arrive at Nassau until June 1915, but with what afterwards came to be recognized as his proverbial activity immediately began to take an active part in the war work of the Colony.

He was therefore quite ready to act on the invitation of the Bahamas War Relief Committee, acting on the suggestion of the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organizations (London), to summon a Public Meeting for August 4th, one of those wonderful patriotic gatherings which were held all over the Empire on the first anniversary of England's Declaration of War against Germany. And at

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that meeting, which was of a most successful nature, the momentous decision was taken to send a Bahamas Contingent to the Front to take their place by the side of those others of the Empire's sons who had rallied to the Flag.

The British West Indies Regiment at that time had not taken formal shape, but as Jamaica was already enlisting and training men and sending them to England, the War Office having approved of raising 1000 men in the West Indies, it was decided, with the assent of the Jamaica Government, to send the Bahamas Contingent to Kingston, thence to be despatched to the Mother Country. The work of collecting subscriptions for defraying the expenses of the men and of enlisting and training recruits was, at a subsequent meeting of the Bahamas War Relief Committee, entrusted to the sub-committees previously appointed for similar purposes in September 1914, and the Honourable W. Hart-Bennett, Colonial Secretary, announced at the same meeting that the Bahamas Government would keep open

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for them on their return the positions of any Government officials who might accompany the Contingent. The rates of pay obtaining in Jamaica, about 1|- per day and 1|3 for rations, etc., were adopted, the estimate of cost for a contingent of 25 men being £1250.

Within a week £600 had been subscribed for the purpose, and £1315 was ultimately collected for the Bahamas Contingent Fund. The Recruiting Committee entrusted with the duty of enlisting volunteers, to which Messrs. D. S. D. Moseley and L. Walton Young were appointed additional members, set to work immediately, and on the first day eleven recruits were enrolled, the volunteer to obtain the proud position of No. 1 in the 1st Bahamas Contingent being William Fletcher Albury—afterwards Lieutenant Albury of the British West Indies Regiment—who was placed in charge of the Contingent until its arrival in Jamaica. Nearly 70 men volunteered for service with this Contingent, of whom after a careful medical examination 30 were selected. The men

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were promptly initiated into the intricacies of drill, were put into a serviceable khaki uniform, and in a fortnight's time, by September 6th, when the Contingent was inspected by His Excellency the Governor, they had made such progress as delighted their instructors. On September 7th an interesting and impressive ceremony took place on the Parade, when a silken Flag bearing the Colony's Coat of Arms in the fly (attached to an historic staff that once had borne the Colours of the old Bahamas Militia) which had been provided by the Daughters of the Empire, was presented to the Contingent by Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Allardyce, the wife of the Governor. Since its formation the Contingent had had every imaginable form of hospitality showered upon its members, to say nothing of gifts of cigarettes, tobacco and a vast variety of other articles, and on the day before their departure a reception in their honour was given at Government House.

The departure of its 1st Contingent on

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Thursday, September 9th, 1915, was indeed a memorable and glorious occasion in the history of the Colony, and one that will live for long in the memories of the many thousands of persons who gathered to give the Contingent a fitting send off. Nassau was *en fete*, the City was gaily decorated with bunting and a general holiday was observed. The desire to show appreciation and to do honour to the departing pioneer volunteers was conspicuous and universal, and a crowd of an utterly unprecedented size in the history of the Colony gathered at Rawson Square to witness the farewell proceedings. Here, with appropriate ceremony, bands playing and flags flying, the Contingent was given its formal farewell, the Governor, members of the Legislature, public officials, members of the Committee and many others taking part in the final proceedings. Enthusiasm and excitement of the wildest description prevailed, and continuous cheering accompanied the schooner *Varuna* until, with the Contingent aboard, all sails set and every yard drawing, she crossed the Harbour bar,

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

carrying the first detachment of its sons that the Bahamas had ever sent abroad to fight for the Motherland.

The men comprising the *1st Bahamas Contingent, the "Gallant Thirty," were:—

- WM. F. ALBURY, *Nassau*
WILLIAM THOMPSON, *Andros Is.*
GEORGE ARANHA, *Harbour Is.*
GEO. M. COLE, JR., *Nassau*
IRWIN S. BAIN, *Andros Is.*
HOLBRETON W. BROWN, *Nassau*
ORIGEN MASON, *Nassau*
HENRY A. ROACH, *Nassau*
FREDERICK C. C. LIGHTBOURN, *Nassau*
SIDNEY C. FARRINGTON, *Nassau*
JAMES R. TAYLOR, *Nassau*
HERSAL S. HALL, *Nassau*
ROBERT L. ATWELL, *Nassau*
CHARLES BAIN, *Nassau*
MATTHEW ARMBRISTER, *Cat Is.*
CHARLES P. BETHEL, *Nassau*

*The names of those comprising the 2nd and 3rd Contingents and the five Drafts for the Contingents will be found in the Appendix.

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ARTIE KEMP, *Nassau*
REGINALD W. WOOD, *Nassau*
HAROLD D. BASCOME, *Nassau*
FREDERICK FLOWERS, *Nassau*
AUSTIN V. ROBERTS, *Harbour Is.*
ARTHUR H. FOUNTAIN, *Nassau*
JAMES BAIN, *Nassau*
GEORGE H. JOHNSON, *Nassau*
CHARLES BETHEL, *Nassau*
JOHN DEMERITTE, *Governor's Harbour*
AUSTIN DEAN, *Nassau*
JOHN WILLIAMS, *Long Is.*
BRUCE M. MAURA, *Nassau*
JAMES H. KNOWLES, *Nassau*

The Contingent arrived in Kingston, Jamaica, twelve days afterwards, when they were described in the local press as "a very fine body of men." They were taken charge of by the military authorities in Kingston, put into training at Up-Park Camp and Swallowfield Camp with Jamaica recruits, where they soon proceeded to earn the good opinion of their commanding officers, and, shortly after their arrival were paid the compliment of being selected

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as a machine gun section. With other recruits from the West Indies the Contingent arrived in England on November 25th where their training was completed, and they were drafted into the 2nd battalion of the newly formed British West Indies Regiment, in which most of them remained throughout the War.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE BAHAMAS CONTINGENTS.

THE enthusiasm which greeted the proposal to raise, equip and despatch a Bahamas Contingent to the Front, the facility with which the necessary funds had been raised and the success which attended the execution of the scheme, all made it inevitable that further efforts should be made in the same direction and that provision should be made to enable other Bahamians to join their fellows in the ranks of the Armies of the Empire. The public had responded handsomely to the call for funds in the first instance, but a strong feeling existed that the Government should carry on the work so well initiated by voluntary subscriptions. The Legislature was not at the time in session, but an informal meeting of the members of the House of Assembly with His Excellency the Governor took place on September 16th, 1915, when the question of further contributions from the Bahamas to

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the Mother Country was fully discussed. The consensus of opinion at that meeting was in favour of recruiting and despatching an additional contingent of 100 men and for the provision by legislative grant of £5000 to defray their expenses.

In order to give effect to this informal decision, which was but the expression of a wide-spread determination to send a larger contingent to join those who had shown the way, formal legislative sanction was necessary and in consequence the Governor summoned a special session of the Legislature on September 27th. It was the first occasion on which Mr. Allardyce, (afterwards Sir William Allardyce, K. C. M. G.) but recently arrived in the Colony, had formally met the Legislature, and his speech with which he opened the session was brief and to the point. He said that he had been induced to summon the special session by “the enthusiasm which attended the departure of the 1st Contingent and “the keen desire which has since been expressed by the public to despatch a larger “contingent at the expense of the Colony”

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and that he would immediately acquaint the Legislature with the conditions under which such a contingent would be accepted for active service, leaving to the lower House the consideration of the financial expenditure entailed "with due regard to "the existing financial stringency". At a meeting of the House of Assembly the next day the House, in committee of the whole, adopted a Vote of Indemnity, subsequently concurred in by the Legislative Council, authorizing the payment of a sum not exceeding £5000 for sending another contingent of 100 men to form part of the West Indian Contingent, as it was then called. The "existing financial stringency" alluded to in the Governor's speech, which had been brought about by the depression of trade resulting from the War, was a depressing factor which could not be overlooked, and an effort was made in the House to have this additional expenditure defrayed by the immediate imposition of fresh taxation. But as further taxation had already become inevitable in order to make both ends meet, and as the issue of a

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

lo al loan seemed probable, the House decided that the question of finance could best be considered at the next regular session of the Legislature, when more complete and detailed information as to the financial affairs of the Colony would be forthcoming. The special session convened on September 27th was prorogued on October 4th, when His Excellency briefly expressed his cordial thanks for the measures adopted, saying that “the
“promptitude with which you have met the
“situation sufficiently indicates, were fur-
“ther proof needed, the loyalty and patriot-
“ism of the people of this Outpost of Em-
“pire.”

Funds having been provided by the Legislature no time was lost in carrying the scheme into effect. The duty of enlisting, equipping and despatching the men was entrusted by the Governor to the same Recruiting Committee of the Bahamas War Relief Committee which had so successfully raised the 1st Contingent, and within a very short time of the publication of the enlistment notices over 100 men had

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE BAHAMAS

offered, attestation papers were taken and the medical examination proceeded with. Recruiting continued with marked success, public meetings were held at which much enthusiasm developed, and it was not long before the Contingent, slightly over the contemplated strength, was ready to sail to Jamaica.

Much the same scenes of enthusiasm and approval were witnessed before the departure of the 2nd Contingent as preceded the first. The recruits were regularly drilled and made frequent appearances in the streets of Nassau. They were most hospitably entertained, and were the recipients of many useful gifts from all classes of the community. Previous to their departure Colours were presented to the Contingent, and they were entertained at a garden party at Government House by His Excellency the Governor and Mrs. Allardyce. For the first time in the history of the Colony the Guard of Honour for the Governor on the occasion of the opening of the Legislature on November 22nd was furnished by Bahamians about to proceed

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abroad on active service, the Contingent presenting an excellent and soldierly appearance as drawn up in front of the Public Buildings it performed that duty.

Towards the end of November the Contingent was ready to depart, and on the 25th of the month the men sailed, 105 strong, on the schooners *Zellars* and *Lady Shea* for Jamaica, amidst scenes of great popular enthusiasm and after final ceremonies similar to those which had taken place on the departure of the 1st Contingent. This Contingent, like the 1st, became part of the British West Indies Regiment, as it had then become, and bore an honourable share in the part played by that Regiment during the War.

CHAPTER FIVE.

THE BAHAMAS CONTINGENTS.

IN the speech with which His Excellency the Governor on November 22nd opened the regular 1915-1916 session of the Bahamas Legislature he reminded his audience of the Message of the King of October 23rd which had invited "men of "all classes" to come forward and take their share in the great struggle in which the Empire was involved. He said that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had expressed his gratification at the action of the people and the Legislature of the Bahamas in raising the 1st and 2nd Contingents, and that he himself felt that the Colony might well be proud of the patriotism of her sons and the response they had made to the call to arms. The need for further reinforcements was however still urgent, and the Legislature would be asked to decide whether the Colony should endeavour to recruit more men than those for whom provision had already been

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made. He also drew attention to the necessity of drafts to maintain the Contingents at strength and in a complete state of efficiency while on active service, and to the question of determining separation and other allowances and of making other financial arrangements.

These matters were more definitely alluded to in a subsequent Message, which dealt with the financial aspects of the arrangements for recruiting, equipment, transportation, reinforcements and separation allowances. The cost of the 2nd Contingent landed in England was estimated at £3000, to which were added separation allowances, computed at about £1200 per annum. The Secretary of State had intimated that reinforcements would be welcome and had asked to be acquainted with the number of recruits likely to be forthcoming from the Bahamas and of the prospect of obtaining sufficient men to enable the Colony to contribute its due proportion of the total reinforcements necessary to keep the battalions of the British West Indies Regiment up to strength.

THE BAHAMAS CONTINGENTS

A very general desire existed to see the total of the Bahamas Contingent to that Regiment raised to and maintained at 200 men, and the Select Committee of the House of Assembly, to which had been referred the Governor's Messages on the subject, early in January reported a resolution authorizing the expenditure of two thousand pounds for the purpose of paying the expenses of another Contingent of 65 men and making provision for the reinforcements necessary to maintain the number of men contributed by the Colony at two hundred. This resolution was ultimately adopted, though not without considerable debate due to diversity of opinion as to how many men should be sent, and the duty of enlisting the men was once again entrusted by the Government to the same Recruiting Committee which had handled the 1st and 2nd Contingents. Recruiting was undertaken, not only for the sixty-five additional men required to bring the Colony's quota up to 200, but also for the drafts for January, February and March needed to maintain the strength of the first

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two Contingents. The onerous and responsible duties entrusted to the Recruiting Committee were once more successfully performed, and on May 10th the 3rd Bahamas Contingent, numbering 87 men, embarked for Kingston, Jamaica. It spoke well for the patriotism of the Colony and for the interest of its citizens in their fellows who were to represent them at the Front that not the slightest diminution of enthusiasm was perceptible during the functions and concluding ceremonies—of a similar nature to those in the case of the departure of the first two Contingents—which accompanied the sailing of the 3rd Contingent, and their departure was again the occasion of much voluntary hospitality and many stirring farewell scenes. The Contingent proceeded to England from Jamaica and like its predecessors was ultimately incorporated in the ranks of the British West Indies Regiment.

The Bahama Islands War Contingent Act 1916 authorized the raising of the Bahamas Contingent of 200 men and its maintenance at that strength, and made

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liberal financial provision for the payment of separation and other allowances, pensions, gratuities and other matters incidental thereto. Pensions, allowances, etc., were payable under the scale in force from time to time under The Army Act or The King's Regulations with reference to the British West Indies Regiment, return passages were provided for in certain circumstances, and a clause required that an itemized return of all payments under authority of the Act should be laid upon the table of the House of Assembly within thirty days after the close of the financial year. Its duration was limited to June 30th, 1917, and in a despatch to the Governor dated September 26th, 1916, Mr. Bonar Law, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, expressed his appreciation of the action of the House in assuming "the whole responsibility of separation allowances, pensions, gratuities and disability allowances in respect of the Bahamas Contingent."

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

Under the authority of that Act further drafts, recruited as before, were forwarded as follows:—

August 5th, 1916	78	men
June 29th, 1917	53	”
July 19th, ”	51	”
” 30th, ”	50	”
Sept. 6th, ”	32	”
Previously despatched	222	”
	<hr/>	
Total	486	”
	<hr/>	

Included in the above were 16 public officials, but these figures do not include other Bahamians, to the number of 80, who proceeded to Canada and the United States of America, generally at their own expense, and joined the British Army, Canadian Forces, or the United States Army after that country had entered the War. About 1800 men all told offered for service in the Bahamas; 53 Bahamians living in England, America and British Honduras enlisted in different forces, and 50 Bahamian labourers in Panama also enlisted in the British West Indies Regiment—a total, with the Contingents and Drafts, of close



1st Bahamas Contingent. Sailed September 9th, 1915.

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on 700 men. Of Bahamians enlisted in the Colony six were killed in action, three died from wounds and 28 died from other causes. One man, Corporal Henry Butcher, gained the D.C.M. for distinguished service in Egypt, and a number of others earned their commission. This is not the place for supplying the *history of the activities of the British West Indies Regiment, which originally proposed to contain 2000 men ultimately was increased to something like 12,000 all told, but it may be mentioned that in August 1917 the following telegram was received in Nassau through the Secretary of State for the Colonies from Sir Edmund Allenby, commanding the Forces in Egypt:—

“I have great pleasure in informing
“you of the gallant conduct of the Machine
“Gun Section of the British West
“Indies Regiment during two successful
“raids on the Turkish trenches, all ranks

*Major the Rev. A. E. Horner, C. F., B. W. I. Regt., has written a pleasant little book ‘‘From The Islands Of The Sea—Glimpses of a West Indian Battalion in France’’, dealing with the experiences of the 9th Batt. of the Regiment.

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“behaving with great gallantry under heavy rifle fire and contributing in no small measure to the success of the operation”.

A report furnished by Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig towards the close of 1917 also bore testimony to the good work done by the battalion of the Regiment serving in France. They had been employed in all the main operations that had taken place after their arrival, including the battles of the Somme, Arras, Messines and the fighting near Ypres of that year. The physique of the men was reported to be exceptional, their discipline excellent and their morale high. They had rendered valuable services at times of great pressure and had been of the utmost assistance to the Siege Artillery of the Armies.

After the cessation of hostilities the men were returned to the Bahamas on various transports between the months of April and November 1919 for demobilization. Their arrival in every case was the scene of tremendous enthusiasm, and they received such an ovation and such a popular greeting as must have convinced them of

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the proud position they occupied in the esteem of their fellow citizens. A formal reception was in each instance tendered them, appropriate speeches were made and nothing was left undone to convey to the returned soldiers the general appreciation of the inhabitants of the Colony for their loyal services.

The total cost of recruiting, equipping and despatching these Contingents and Drafts was £27,621. 8. 7.

Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori

**THE
COLONY'S ROLL OF HONOUR**

—:0:—

BAHAMIANS

WHO DIED

IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY.

- Pte. JOSEPH ALBURY, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Pte. EMMANUEL ASH, " "
- Pte. PRESTON ADDERLEY, " "
- Pte. HARTLEY ALBURY, *Canadian Forces.*
- Pte. J. A. ARTHUR, " "
- Pte. HAROLD BROWN, *1st Canadian Contingent.*
- Pte. ALEXANDER BUTLER, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Pte. OSBORNE BOONS, " "
- Pte. CHARLES BLACK, *Jamaica Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Pte. CHARLES A. BETHEL, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*

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- Lce. Cpl. ALFRED CURRY, *1st Canadian
Contingent.*
- Pte. DANIEL CHARLTON, *Bahamas Continen-
gent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Pte. HENRY DUNCOMBE, " "
- Pte. JOHN DRIGGS, " "
- Lce. Cpl. HERBERT FERGUSON, *Jamaica
Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Lce. Cpl. E. FERNANDEZ, *Bahamas Continen-
gent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Pte. HERBERT GRANT, " "
- Pte. EDMUND HANNA, " "
- Pte. ALFRED HALL, . . " " "
- Pte. GEO. H. INGRAHAM, " "
- Pte. ALLAN JOHNSON, " "
- Pte. JOS. JOHNSON, " "
- Lieut. RALPH KNOWLES, *Royal Air Force.*
- Pte. JOHN KNOWLES, *Yorks Regt.*
- Pte. ROBT. A. MITCHELL, *Bahamas Continen-
gent, B. W. I. Regt.*
- Pte. THOS. MOSS, " "
- Pte. CHARLES W. MOSS, " "
- Pte. JOHN MCNEAL, " "
- Pte. OLIVER MOSS, *Jamaica Contingent,
B. W. I. Regt.*

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Pte. JOSEPH MCQUAY, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*

Pte. JOSEPH NEWMAN, " "

Capt. W. B. S. O'BRIEN, *Royal Engineers.*

Pte. DAVID ROLLE, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*

Pte. BENJAMIN E. ROBERTS, " "

Pte. SOLOMON S. ROKER, " "

Pte. STUART RAE, *Canadian Forces.*

Pte. SYLVANUS ROLLE, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*

Lieut. Cpl. ROY SEARS, *1st Canadian Contingent.*

Pte. JEREMIAH SAUNDERS, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*

Pte. BENJAMIN SMITH, " "

Pte. CHARLES S. SPARKMAN, " "

Pte. GEORGE SAUNDERS, " "

Pte. ERSKINE STORR, " "

Pte. RAYMOND SANDS, *U. S. Army.*

Lieut. ROBIN H. SAWYER, *Royal Air Force.*

Pte. JAMES A. THOMPSON, *Bahamas Contingent, B. W. I. Regt.*

Pte. WILLIAM THOMPSON, " "

Pte. JAMES C. TAYLOR, " "

Pte. JAMES WALLACE, " "

Pte. JOSEPH WILSON, " "

CHAPTER SIX.

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS.

THE activities of the Bahamas War Relief Committee and of its Recruiting Committee by no means exhausted the tale of war contributions which for five years flowed in a steady stream from the Colony to the Motherland to aid in the prosecution of the War, the alleviation of the sufferings of the Empire's fighting men and the assistance of their families and dependants. As has been indicated in the brief account of the varied contributions to the fund collected by the Bahamas War Relief Committee in 1914, contributions were of every station and class, the poor giving their mite as cheerfully as the better-off did their more substantial contributions. Many of them preferred to remain anonymous, and much excellent war work was performed by many who voluntarily forewent the credit which might have been theirs had they so desired. This spirit obtained throughout the War, and there was

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

no diminution of public interest nor any falling off in contributions, as was evident from the fact that the subscriptions to the Governor's Red Cross Fund in 1918 very nearly equalled in amount the first war collection of 1914. It is hoped that the following attempt to outline the Colony's gifts during the War has been successful in including all the various Funds—the collections of all of those who so willingly and generously gave their time, labour and money to the cause that one and all had at heart; but it may be that the work of some—and especially of those who were mindful of the injunction “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth”—has escaped the public gaze and has been overlooked by the present writer. Any such omission is of course unintentional, and the spirit which prompted and animated the patriotic labour of five years will forgive any lacunæ in the particulars of efforts upon which Bahamians may well now look back with pleasure and with pride.

Dealing first with what may more or less be properly described as the Colony's official contribution, the Bahamas Legisla-

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS

ture, after pledging itself to that effect at an informal meeting held in October 1914, in 1915 voted the sum of £10,000 to the Imperial Government as a donation from the Bahamas towards the Empire's war expenses—the total revenue of the Colony for the financial year 1914-15 having been £76,911. The expenditure incurred under The Bahamas War Contingent Act in raising, equipping and despatching the Contingents and in paying separation allowances, pensions, etc., up to 30th June 1919 amounted to £27,621. The issue of a special Red Cross Stamp, which proved—like many other Bahamas issues, surcharges, etc., during the War—to be of considerable interest to philatelists, was authorized in 1917, half of the proceeds of which were given to the Red Cross Fund and which by June 30th 1919 amounted to £1016. In addition the Colony expended under the Home Defence Scheme—initiated in 1917 under the authority of a Proclamation by the Governor—up to the same date the sum of £8,655.

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

Put in tabular form these official monetary contributions of the Colony during the War appear as:—

Contribution voted by the Bahamas Legislature to British Government	£10,000
Cost of the Bahamas Contingents to the British West Indies Regiment	27,621
Half proceeds of sale of Red Cross Stamps	1,016
Expenditure for Home Defence	8,655
	<hr/>
Total	£47,292.

It may be added that a grant of £240 was subsequently made by the Legislature for the purpose of entertaining the members of the Bahamas Contingents as they arrived in the Colony after demobilization, and during the legislative session of 1920, when the Colony was enjoying greater prosperity, a cash bonus of £5 was voted to each of the members of the Bahamas Contingents as a small tangible recognition of their services abroad.

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The Bahamas War Relief Committee had collected in 1914 the sum of £3,193, of which £3,000 was sent to the Prince of Wales Fund and £167 spent on 315 cases of Bahamian grown fruit—principally oranges and grape fruit—which were sent to the British Red Cross for distribution among the hospitals and the ships of the Royal Navy. In 1915 that Committee had also collected £1,315 for defraying by popular subscriptions the cost of the 1st Bahamas Contingent. It has already been stated that His Excellency Sir (then Mr.) William Allardyce had arrived in the Colony as Governor in June 1915, and that he played a prominent part in the organization of the Patriotic Public Meeting of August 4th 1915, which resulted in the 1st Bahamas Contingent. The Colony was soon to witness a further exhibition of the indefatigable energy of its new Governor in connection with the British Red Cross Society, the special cause to which the Governor's untiring efforts were mainly devoted throughout the continuation of the War.

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About the middle of October it was announced in the local press that Lord Lansdowne, the President of the Society, had telegraphed to the Governor informing him that with the approval of Their Majesties the King and Queen he was making a special appeal throughout the Empire on Trafalgar Day for funds for the Society and inviting His Excellency's co-operation. The Governor, with his customary energy at once took the matter up, with the result that one of Nassau's public spirited citizens, Dr. J. Baird Albury, M. D., M. R. C. S., England, who had from the outbreak of War been most open-handed in his patriotic donations and assistance, offered to supply a Motor Ambulance for the British Red Cross, at a cost of £400, provided that others in Nassau subscribed for one or more ambulances. His Excellency promptly accepted the offer, and by steady hard work and unlimited enthusiasm his collections shortly afterwards enabled him to remit to the Society in London £2,500 for the purchase of six Motor Ambulances as a Trafalgar Day gift from the Bahamas.

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS

The occasion for the special appeal was well chosen as far as the Bahamas was concerned, as the Colony may be said to have had its own peculiar interest in the greatest of Nelson's sea-fights, (news of which did not reach Nassau until January 3rd, 1806) inasmuch as one of the captured ships was named the *Bahama*—she fell a prize to the *Colossus*, a ship of the same size, which fought the Spanish *Bahama* and French *Swiftsure* and captured them both!—and also to the fact that the news of the famous victory when it reached Nassau was celebrated in the Capital with all the means then at its disposal. And a hundred years later the centennial anniversary of the day had again been celebrated in Nassau with great enthusiasm, when a patriotic concert organized by the Daughters of the Empire, a regatta and a Water Carnival were prominent items of the programme.

In 1916 a similar appeal was issued from England for funds for the same Society and again met with a ready response in

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the Colony. That year the Governor enlisted the aid of the Nassau Chamber of Commerce in collecting "Our Day" subscriptions, and the Chamber issued a circular appeal to all employers of labour, merchants, business men and others soliciting a percentage of sales, salaries, wages, etc., while peasant proprietors and small farmers were invited to contribute sisal, sponges, vegetables and other saleable commodities for the same purpose in lieu of cash. A Flag Day was also held, a pageant, "The Empire and our Allies," was arranged by The Misses Allardyce, in which Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and some 200 children from the public schools took part, while the Governor himself again devoted much time, energy and enthusiasm to making the collection a success. The result was subscriptions to the amount of £2,125, which was forwarded to the Society in London.

In the two following years, 1917 and 1918, in response to further appeals for Red Cross funds from London, His Excellency again took the matter up and in

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS

conjunction with the Bahamas War Relief Committee, through whose assistance a vigorous campaign was conducted in New Providence and among the Out Islands of the Colony, was most successful in raising funds. In 1917 the subscriptions totalled £2,508 and in 1918—the last year in which war contributions were invited in the Colony—they reached the sum of £3,082, the largest amount collected for the British Red Cross Fund in the Bahamas during the War, and with one single exception, that of the first war subscriptions in 1914, the largest made in the Colony while the War continued. Summarized, the contributions in the Bahamas to the British Red Cross Funds through the Governor and his assistants were:—

1915 Collected by His Excellency the Governor	£2,600
1916 Collected by His Excellency in conjunction with the Nassau Chamber of Commerce	2,126
Forward	<hr/> £4,726

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Forward	£4,726
1917 Collected by His Excellency in conjunction with the Bahamas War Relief Committee	2,508
1918 Collected by His Excellency in conjunction with the Bahamas War Relief Committee	3,082
	<hr/>
Total	£10,316.
	<hr/>

CHAPTER SEVEN.

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS.

THE contributions already briefly indicated were to a large extent the work of organizations, the activities of which were mainly controlled and directed by the male element in the Colony; but the women of the Bahamas, like the women everywhere else in the Empire, were just as active in war work and well-doing as were their brothers, and a full and complete record of their patriotic enthusiasm and steady and consistent efforts during the War would doubtless fill many volumes. The necessity for the aid of women in the cause had been fully recognized and the duty of rendering all the assistance in their power fully admitted by the women of the Colony, and right well did they accept their responsibilities and fulfill their duties. Unremitting endeavour by ready and willing helpers yielded in the end magnificent results in the work of collecting funds and material

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and making garments to be sent abroad, and the War Record of the Bahamian women is one of the finest things achieved in the Colony during the War.

First among the organizations prominent in the war work of the Colony was the National Chapter of the Bahamas of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. This Chapter had already a long and honourable record in the Colony to its credit, and from the outbreak of War the sympathy and assistance of its many members were actively enlisted in war work. They played a useful part in collecting with the Bahamas War Relief Committee the Colony's first subscription for the Prince of Wales Fund, and subsequently became actively interested in the work of relieving the distress of the Belgians, sending over 3,000 articles of clothing for that purpose in addition to substantial cash donations. Weekly sewing meetings were held during the War for Red Cross work, at which 31,161 articles of clothing were made and forwarded to the British Red Cross. On the Silver

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS

Anniversary of the Wedding of Her Majesty Queen Mary a garden fete resulted in contributing £75 to Her Majesty's Gift Fund, as well as many comforts and gifts of native fruits, preserves, etc., for wounded men. As has already been mentioned, the Order was of the greatest assistance in the work of despatching the Bahamas Contingents, and showed a thousand kindnesses to the men, both before and after they had left the Colony—as also on their return upon demobilization. Christmas gifts were sent to the men each year they were abroad by the National Chapter, in addition to other gifts from various Chapters and their members, and on their return the Order was largely responsible for many of the entertainments at which the men were feted.

The following is, as far as is known, a summary of the war achievements of the Chapter:—

Collected for War Relief.....	£500. 0. 0.
Entertaining returned Contin-	
gents30. 0. 0.
Forward	£530. 0. 0.

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Forward	£530. 0. 0.
Contribution to Queen Mary's Fund	75. 0. 0.
Collected for Belgian Relief..	150. 0. 0
	<hr/>
	£755. 0. 0.
	<hr/>

Trafalgar Day gift of citrus fruits
38 barrels

Native preserves sent to England
500 lbs.

Clothing sent to British Red Cross
31,161 articles

Old linen sent to England
250 lbs.

Postcards sent to Bahamian Soldiers
1450

In September 1915 at the instance of Mrs. Allardyce, wife of the Governor, the Bahamian Red Cross Guild was founded for the purpose of organizing and collating Red Cross work in the Colony. Mrs. Allardyce accepted the Presidency of the Guild, other officers were appointed and no time was lost in obtaining a ready and willing band of helpers for the work of

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS

collecting funds, making garments, etc., for the use of the Red Cross Society abroad. The first balance sheet published by the Guild, after only seven months' work, showed that £1,059 in cash had been collected and a large number of garments made. The work of the Guild, under the guidance of its President, continued throughout the War, with the splendid result that £3,642 was collected, of which the greater part was remitted to charitable organizations in England and Europe. Materials were purchased which were made up by members of the Guild into suitable garments and comforts for troops, and altogether 44,059 articles were sent to England. The work of this Guild and of its President received recognition in 1919, when Lady Allardyce's name appeared in the Honours List as the recipient of the O. B. E.

Another society which did excellent work was the Bahamian League of the Cross of Geneva. Originally founded by Mrs. Charles Menendez (who became its President) in an informal way for the purpose

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of providing relief for the Belgians, and consisting largely of young girls, the League soon extended the scope of its activities. Many parcels of children's clothing and £100 in cash were sent to England for Belgian relief, 6733 articles of clothing and comforts for the troops were made, a quantity of native products was forwarded to the Bahamians of the British West Indies Regiment, and very nearly £438 in cash was contributed to various organizations in England. This last included the proceeds of an excellent Pageant at Government House arranged by The Misses Allardyce after a great deal of very hard work, which was fully repaid by the success which attended its several performances.

In 1915 *The Tribune* newspaper had organized a successful "Flag Day", which resulted in the contribution of £61 to the Bahamas Contingent Fund, and in 1917 a Ladies' Committee was formed for the purpose of organizing a West Indian Flag Day for the benefit of the British West Indies Regiment, through their efforts the sum of £160 being collected in Nassau and

OTHER WAR CONTRIBUTIONS

sent to the West Indian Contingent Committee in London, which did work of the most valuable kind on behalf of the men of the Regiment.

The oldest newspaper in the Bahamas, *The Nassau Guardian*, was the first to take up in Nassau the work of assisting those Belgian refugees who were in such distress after the outbreak of War, and in 1915 inaugurated a Belgian Relief Fund, with the result that the appeal to its readers for funds for that purpose enabled its Editor to send the substantial sum of £260 to London to be distributed for Belgian relief.

The St. Andrew Society of the Bahamas, the oldest society in the Colony, in response to an appeal from the National Committee for Relief in Belgium, took up the work afresh, and through the energetic efforts of the Honourable Sir James Sands, its President, and its members and friends, collected in 1916 the sum of £500, which was forwarded to the National Committee in London.

Another appeal to the people of Nassau for aid for their gallant allies was that

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

from the Montenegrin Red Cross Relief Fund of London. This was entrusted to the care of the Nassau Chamber of Commerce, with the result that £100 was collected in 1918 and sent to London as the response to the efforts of the members of that body. In 1916 a similar collection of £44 was made by the Consular Agent for France on behalf of the French Red Cross.

Even the above does not exhaust the tale of the activities of Nassau in war work, as several regimental collections, notably one for the Royal Air Force, were made with excellent results, and in conclusion it may be said that the War Contributions of the Bahamas from all sources amounted to very nearly 700 men, £70,000 in cash and gifts of clothing, fruit and other articles to the number of 87,000

CHAPTER EIGHT.

FINANCIAL.

THE outbreak of War found the Bahamas in a position as regards public finance which may be said to have compared favourably with previous periods in the history of the Colony. The total revenue for the financial year April 1st 1913—March 31st 1914 was £100,753, an increase of £3,179 over the previous year and greater by £23,355 than the annual average of the preceding five years. Of the revenue customs (with an *ad valorem* tariff of 25 per cent) contributed no less than £83,928—a significant remainder of the extent to which the revenue depended upon the volume and value of imports. The fact that the revenue depended so largely on import duties had frequently been criticised, and the course of local financial events during the War largely justified the attitude of many who had consistently advocated a broadening of the basis of taxation.

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

Against this revenue the expenditure for the same year had been £96,495, which although an increase of £10,418 over the previous year still left a surplus of £4,257. On March 31st 1914 the Colony's assets exceeded its liabilities by nearly £52,000 as compared with an excess of £30,000 the year before, and the Public Debt, originally £113,000, was then only £42,000 which in ordinary circumstances would have been completely liquidated by 1926. Some of these assets were in liquid form in London and were to a small extent subsequently used to assist in tiding over the financial stringency which was soon to make itself felt. The balance due depositors from the Post Office Savings Bank was £26,200, and the two banks doing business in the Colony, The Bank of Nassau (a local institution) and a branch of The Royal Bank of Canada, held deposits to the extent of about £145,000.

The advent of War materially changed these conditions. Both sponge and sisal, the two chief products of the Bahamas, were adversely affected. Seven-eighths

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of the sponge and all the turtle shell had been marketed in Europe, and the War resulted in practically closing the continental markets to these products. The extent to which the sponge market was affected may be gathered from the statement that the sales for the six months July-December 1914 were only £18,382 as compared with £46,737 in the corresponding period of 1913. Sisal, which found its market almost entirely in the United States, was also adversely affected, as while the quantity exported more than held its own values fell off greatly on account of the War, the consequent stringency in the money market of the United States and the low rate of Mexican exchange. The total *exports for 1914 were £223,491 as compared with £263,954 in the preceding year.

Consequent upon the comparatively favourable financial situation existing in

*Figures for revenue returns are from April 1st of one year to March 31st of the next year. Figures for imports, exports and trade returns generally are from January 1st to December 31st of each year.

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the early months of 1914, the general tariff had been reduced from 25 per cent to 20 per cent *ad valorem*, although a number of articles had been transferred from the free to the dutiable list and the duty on spirits considerably increased. This, with the general depression in trade and distressed conditions in some of the Out Islands of the Colony on account of prolonged drought, combined to cause a serious decrease in the revenue for 1914-15, which was only £76,911 as compared with £100,753 of the year before. As the expenditure for 1914-15 was £102,000 (including the sum of £10,000 voted by the Legislature as a contribution to the Imperial Government for the prosecution of the War) the apparent deficit for the year was about £25,000; but as upon the outbreak of War expenditure was curtailed in every possible direction and the execution of many urgently required public works postponed, the actual deficit was ultimately in the neighbourhood of £19,000. The estimated revenue and expenditure for 1915-16 were respectively £68,454 and

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£85,210, which would result in a deficit of £17,000, so that for the two years the Colony was faced with a joint actual and anticipated deficit of something like £36,000.

In a despatch of November 18th 1914 the Secretary of State for the Colonies had pointed out that owing to the uncertainty as to the duration of the War it would be "imprudent to assume that the financial difficulties of the Colony will be limited to one year only," and that where other resources were not available "there will be no alternative but to impose additional taxation sufficient to meet the deficit." And the despatch closed with the intimation that in the opinion of that Minister the wiser course would be "to face the problem at the outset and provide sufficient revenue from taxation in connection with the budget for the ensuing year." It is well known that a point can be reached in the imposition of customs duties when too high a tariff will defeat its own object and result not in increased revenue but in diminished imports. The

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tariff had but recently been reduced, the House of Assembly was reluctant to place it again on a 25 per cent basis, and in Message No. 13 from His Excellency the Administrator (the Honourable W. Hart-Bennett, C. M. G.) to the House of Assembly on February 15th of the session of 1915 he suggested that the situation might be met by a local loan of £30,000, the imposition of a customs duty of 10 per cent *ad valorem* on the majority of articles then on the free list and a surtax of the same amount on the existing *ad valorem* duties. Ultimately the Legislature imposed the surtax as advocated, and an Act was also passed authorizing the Government to raise a local loan not exceeding £30,000 repayable in 20 years with interest at the rate of 5 per cent. The surtax was estimated to produce £5,000, so that by new taxation to that extent and by borrowing £30,000 a sum of about £35,000 was available to meet the deficit on the two years of some £36,000. This as will be seen, proved hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of

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the situation, although the revenue ultimately exceeded the revised estimates of £73,454, which included the yield from the additional customs duties imposed.

The loan was successfully placed locally, £20,000 in £100 debentures having been issued to the local branch of The Royal Bank of Canada and £5,000 to The Bank of Nassau, the annual charge on account of interest and sinking fund being £2,407. The remaining £5,000 was subsequently placed with The Royal Bank of Canada.

Owing to a decided improvement in local business conditions, due largely to the considerable increase in the prices now beginning to be received abroad from the Colony's sponge and sisal—the former the result of the small supply consequent upon decreased fishing and the latter largely owing to Mexican troubles and efforts to found a gigantic Sisal Trust—the revenue for 1915-16 finally reached the sum of £86,251, the increase in customs of £9,500 being due to the surtax and improved conditions of trade generally. The expenditure was £90,925, as compared with the

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estimate of £85,000, but this did not include the sum of £5,000 voted for the 2nd Bahamas Contingent, and the deficit on the year was for the time being regarded as about £5,000. It may be noted here that for an appreciable period what was known locally as "Contingent Finance" was to some extent kept separate from the regular Government returns of expenditure, an ostrich-like policy which did not make it any the easier to arrive at the actual state of financial affairs, and which certainly did nothing to ameliorate existing conditions

In this year imports were valued at £363,410, or some £4,000 less than the preceding year. This was partly due to high freight rates and the difficulty and delay experienced in getting goods from England. The exports were valued at £243,431, an increase of £20,000 over the year previous, largely due to the increased prices obtained for sisal owing to disturbed conditions in Mexico.

For two years the Colony had been providing for its absolutely necessary

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expenditure partly from borrowed funds, and the revenue returns for the year ending March 31st 1917 were awaited with considerable interest. When available these showed that the revenue amounted to £90,472, some £5,000 more than the estimate, and the expenditure to £97,213—this time including the expenses of the Bahamas Contingents to the British West Indies Regiment—the increase being largely due to the cost of the Contingents. This resulted in a deficit on the year's operations of about £7,000. A Select Committee of the House of Assembly which sat during the session of 1916 reported that in the opinion of the majority the practice of meeting current expenditure, or in other words, balancing the budget by funds obtained from loans, was not “sound finance”—an elementary proposition which might have been expected to meet with more general acceptance than it did. The decision to use available balances from that and other sources drew from His Excellency the Governor the expression of the pious hope that the

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

reluctance to impose additional taxation instead might not result in financial embarrassment in the future. For it had now become obvious that the revenue had recently pretty well reached the average, while the expenditure, owing to the War, had been unduly restricted, and that, in the language of the minority report of the Committee mentioned, "every day it is becoming more pressingly urgent to resume the ordinary annual expenditure of the Colony." With the exception of the imposition of an export duty on sisal of one farthing per pound and some increase in postage dues no further taxation was, however, imposed at this period, a considerable expansion of trade leading to the hope that it might not become necessary. The imports during the year ended December 31st 1916 were £475,000, an increase of £111,000 due largely to the great advance in the price of all commodities which by this time had become so noticeable. Imports from the United Kingdom had decreased from 22.6 per cent of all importations in 1913 to 11.5 per cent in 1916 owing to the

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high trans-Atlantic freight rates, the heavy insurance rates and the difficulty of obtaining transportation. The value of exports from the Colony in 1916 was £332,679, an increase of nearly £90,000 occasioned by the higher prices obtained abroad for local products, which to some small extent offset the cost of goods imported; unfortunately, a large proportion of the foodstuffs consumed came from abroad and the seriously enhanced price of these was now beginning to be felt severely among all classes of the population.

CHAPTER NINE.

FINANCIAL.

DURING the financial year ending March 31st 1918 much the same conditions prevailed. The revenue was £86,767, a decrease of £3,805 as compared with 1917, which was more than accounted for by a decrease of £4,654 in customs. For the same period the expenditure was £105, 254, an increase of £8,041 over the previous year, mainly due to the expenditure on the Bahamas Contingents to the British West Indies Regiment, which reached its apex during this financial period. This preponderance of expenditure over income made it necessary again to resort to borrowing, and The Loan Act, 1918, authorized the issue locally of short term debentures up to the extent of £30,000, bearing interest at the rate of 5½ per cent per annum and redeemable two years after date of issue. While the rate of interest was attractive, the period was but a short one; nevertheless, the plan worked out very well in practice, and

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enabled the Government to raise funds by the sale of debentures only as they were required.

Owing to the failure of The Bank of Nassau in December 1916 its note issue, which had proved a considerable convenience in view of the usual scarcity in Nassau of a sufficient circulating medium and which was guaranteed by securities lodged with the Government, had been called in and the notes redeemed at the Treasury. On March 31st, 1918 only £840 of the original total issue of £6,500 remained unredeemed.

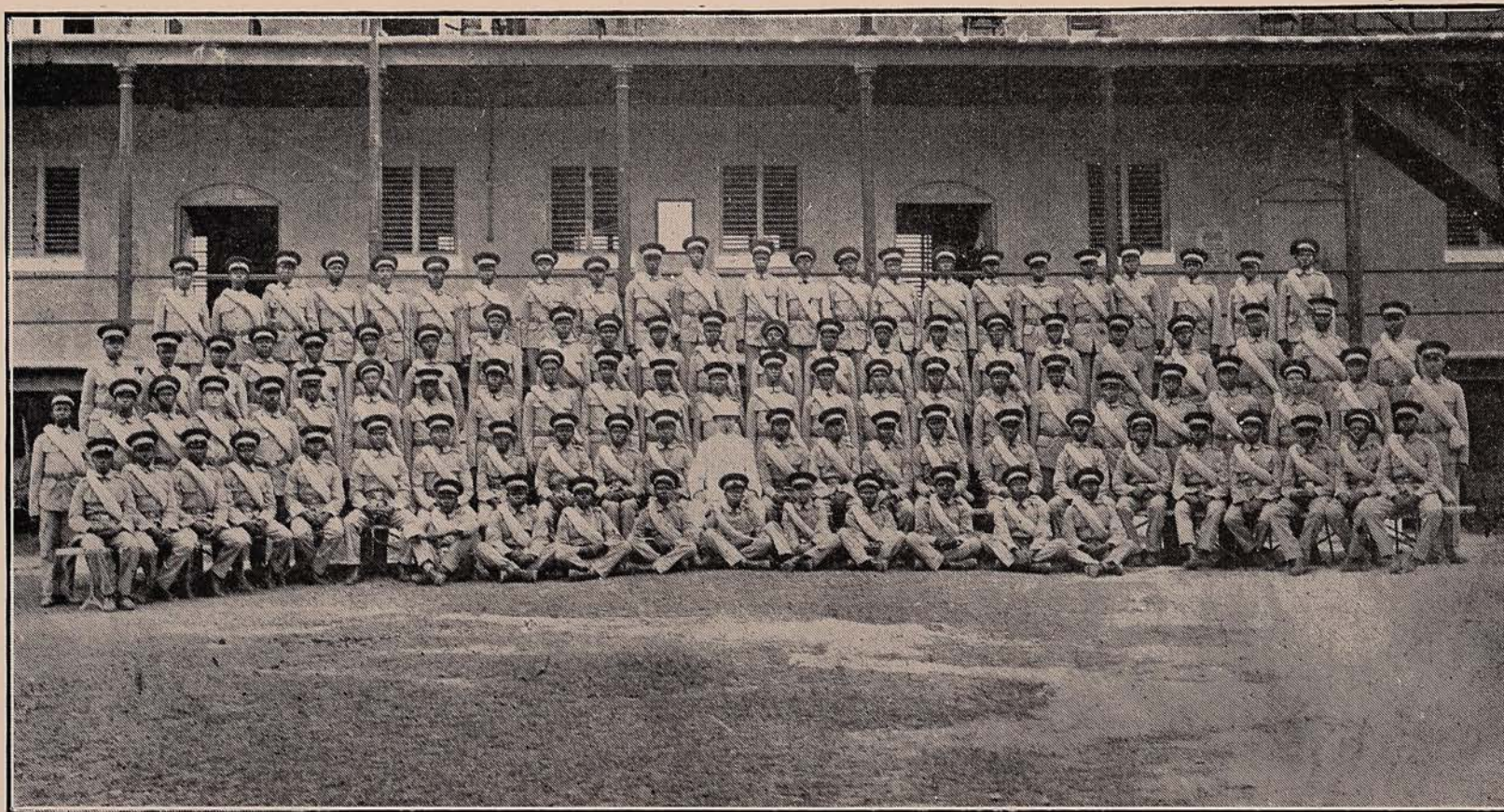
The imports were again considerably larger than in 1915, amounting to £493,584, an increase of £18,517 over those for 1916, due principally to the enhanced cost of food products. The exports during the same period were £402,477 as compared with £332,679 in 1916 and £243,431, in 1915, Sisal again showed a substantial increase to £181,700, although the actual quantity shipped was less than in 1916. The sponge catch was large and prices high, the sales on the local Exchange reaching £152,000,

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exceeding by £38,000 those for 1916 and by £52,900 those for 1913, the largest pre-war year on record. Owing to the obstacles to trading relations with the Home Country already mentioned trade steadily drifted from the United Kingdom to the United States, that with Great Britain showing a decrease of nearly 3 per cent of the total, while that with the United States increased from 82 per cent to 84.2 per cent.

For the year April 1st 1918-March 31st 1919 the revenue was £81,048, or £5,718 less than in the preceding year. In addition, debentures to the amount of £26,430 had been sold under the authority of The Loan Act 1918, making the total funds available to the Government £107,478. Customs duties again showed a further decrease to £61,829, or £10,000 less than in the preceding year, The expenditure was £98,236, or £7,000 less than the year before, the decrease being accounted for mainly by diminution of expenditure on the Bahamas Contingents.

Imports showed a very notable decrease of £126,400 under the preceding year,



2nd Bahamas Contingent. Sailed November 25th, 1915.

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being only £367,000. To the difficulty of having orders filled and obtaining goods generally, the very high prices prevailing and the greatly decreased transportation facilities, must be attributed this falling off in trade. The restrictions placed by the United States Government on the export of foodstuffs resulted in considerably reducing importations of that description, but incidentally led to some expansion of trade with Jamaica. The percentage of imports from the United Kingdom had by this time dropped to 5.3 per cent of the whole, as compared with about 20 per cent in 1914, and exports thereto from the Bahamas to 6.2 per cent as compared with about 17 per cent in 1914. Exports during 1918 showed a similar falling off, being only £278,171 as compared with £402,477, this loss being due almost entirely to the suddenly curtailed demand abroad for the Colony's two staple exports, sponge and sisal.

As the year under review witnessed the signing of the Armistice and the practical termination of hostilities it will be of

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interest to compare, by way of conclusion, the financial condition of the Colony generally on March 31st 1919 with its condition on March 31st 1914. The excess of assets over liabilities on March 31st 1914 was £51,915 and on the corresponding date in 1919 it was *£37,829. The Public Debt of the Colony in 1914 was £42,829, bearing interest at 4 and 4½ per cent, whereas in 1919 it was £69,423, bearing interest at 4, 4½, 5 and 5½ per cent, the latter sum including the loans raised under the Acts of 1915 and 1918, the annual charge on account of interest and sinking funds having risen from £6,580 to £10,600. Bank Deposits—excluding the Post Office Savings Bank—had on the other hand risen from about £145,000 in 1914 to £227,000 in 1919. The total aggregate trade of the Colony in the year ending December 31st 1918 was £645,351 as compared with £591,015 in 1914—an increase of about £54,000, but considerably less than the two years 1916 and 1917, in which the figures were £807,746 and £896,061 respectively.

*On March 31st 1920 it was £138,354.

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It will be seen, therefore, that although the Public Debt had as a result of the War been increased and the excess of assets over liabilities decreased trade returns had also increased and bank deposits had grown. But when the greatly reduced purchasing power of money—or, in other words, the highly appreciated value of all commodities—is taken into account, it will be realized that the apparent improvement in some respects was largely fictitious and merely the result of the vast economic changes which had followed inevitably in the wake of the Great War.

It is pleasant to be able to add that, owing largely to the adoption of Prohibition in the United States in January 1920, the consequent large increase in the importation of beer, wines and spirits into the Colony and the establishment in Nassau of bottling and rectifying plants by foreign capitalists, the finances of the Colony have undergone the most remarkable improvement, and an era of prosperity has dawned which has already resulted in placing the Government in possession of large surplus

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funds, enabling many urgently required public works to be undertaken and many local improvements effected. On March 31st 1920 there was an actual surplus for the year of revenue over expenditure amounting to no less than £95,000—a sum considerably greater than the original estimate of the total revenue for the year—while the actual importations up to that date which had been bonded would, it was estimated, ultimately produce additional revenue amounting to something like £400,000. The revenue for 1920-21 is estimated at something like £200,000—notwithstanding a 50 per cent reduction in the *ad valorem* tariff duties—with good reason to suppose that this state of affairs will continue, and the Colony now finds itself in a condition of prosperity unparalleled since the days of the Civil War (when Nassau was the principal base of the blockade runners) and as unexpected as it is welcome.

CHAPTER TEN.

GENERAL—1914.

OWING to the fact that the Bahamas were so far removed from the actual scene of the conflict, and that until the United States entered the War and submarines began to be seen off the American coast actual hostilities as a rule were far distant, there were but few incidents of importance occurring in the Colony apart from the major events already recorded. Interest in the great conflict was of course of the keenest nature, and the kaleidoscopic course of events as pictured in official despatches and the press was followed with the closest attention; but within the confines of the Colony life and affairs, when not affected by subscriptions and recruiting, for some time flowed on evenly much as usual. The strain and tension were of course evident, minds were eagerly on the alert in the effort thoroughly to comprehend the underlying causes and effects of

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

what was happening in Europe, but outwardly at any rate the calm secluded life of a small and distant Colony was but little interfered with and "Business as usual" in the absence of any active participation in the stirring scenes being enacted in all the theatres of War, may be held to describe generally the tenour of life in the Bahamas.

One of the two bills passed during the special session of the Legislature of August 7-8, 1914, was the Emergency Relief Bill, which was designed to enable the Government to take any measures that might become necessary to relieve any distress that might arise from the expected stagnation of trade or other reasons. Acting under the authority of that Act the Governor on August 17th appointed a small representative "Emergency Committee" to deal with any foodstuffs imported by the Government, the members of which were the Hon. Jas. P. Sands, Chairman, Hon. G. H. Johnson, Messrs. L. G. Brice, E. L. Bowen, J. B. Curry, W. C. B. Johnson and H. C. Stronge. Most

fortunately for the Colony, negotiations with the New York and Cuba Mail Steamship Company (Ward Line) for the regular steamship service with New York, which had been initiated prior to the outbreak of War, had been successfully concluded, and a contract was entered into which assured for a period of two years a virtually weekly service with New York—at that time practically the only American port with which Nassau had direct business relations of any importance. The service was faithfully performed, and proved to be of inestimable benefit for the two years it lasted during the early stages of the War, enabling the export of what sponge and sisal could be sold abroad to be continued, as well as the customary importation of foodstuffs from the United States.

Pending the conclusion of that contract the Government had chartered steamers on their own account to bring cargo from New York, and on one of these a quantity of foodstuffs to the value of £3,079 was imported in August and placed under the control of the Emergency Committee. In

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a report dated March 23rd 1915 the Committee expressed their belief that the importation of these foodstuffs at a moment when local business affairs were much disturbed owing to the fear that the usual supplies might not be forthcoming had had a restraining influence on rising prices and had allayed public anxiety. The importation enabled the Committee to meet the unprecedented state of affairs which arose at Inagua and Long Cay, Fortune Island, which had hitherto been dependent for food supplies largely on ships of the Hamburg-American Line, which had made a practice of calling at those places to pick up stevedores when *en route* for Central and South America—a practice which was of course brought to an abrupt termination upon the outbreak of War. A portion of the importations was used by the Government in relieving distress at certain of the Out Islands, and the rest was disposed of locally as the situation warranted, the operations of the Committee, which came to an end in March 1915, resulting in the small debit balance of £87. 19. 6.

GENERAL — 1914

Shortly after the outbreak of War the notorious German cruiser *Karlsruhe* was surprised in mid ocean, when coaling about 120 miles northeast of San Salvador, one of the Bahamas, by H. H. S. *Suffolk*, and was very nearly captured. But the German ship, with her 27.5 knots, was considerably the speedier of the two vessels, and succeeded in making her escape. So hurried was her flight that she did not stop to pick up her boats, and one of these, a fine 30-foot motor-boat, marked with the letter "K" and having a German flag on board, ultimately drifted into Hope Town, a settlement on Abaco, one of the Bahama Islands, and was brought to Nassau on September 3rd. There she was taken charge of by officials of the Admiralty Court, which having by a Proclamation dated September 7th 1914 been created a Prize Court under authority of The Prize Court Act 1894, held the launch pending the usual legal proceedings. On November 19th a writ was issued "against the owners and parties interested," and in the Supreme Court a motion was made by the Procurator General for

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the requisition of the launch on behalf of the Admiralty. The launch was valued, and was ultimately sold at auction on February 25th 1915 by order of the Court. She was purchased by an American visitor, which was a great disappointment to many Nassauvians, who had not unreasonably expected that the Colony's first—and, as it proved, last—prize of war would be retained by the local Government as an interesting memento of the German raider and her proximity to the Bahamas at one period of her career. The German naval flag, stated in the local press to have been in the launch when she was found at Abaco, vanished mysteriously, and is now doubtless the cherished possession of some private individual instead of being a valued memento in the keeping of the Government in Nassau.

In connection with the *Karlsruhe's* activities in West Indian waters an interesting story obtained some currency in Nassau

GENERAL — 1914

some time afterwards. On Sunday, December 13th 1914, a large man-of-war, apparently a first class battle cruiser, appeared off Nassau for a short time without stopping, steaming at a high rate of speed, and it soon became rumoured among the knowing ones that she was the British battle cruiser *Princess Royal*, sent out from England especially to deal with the *Karlsruhe*, the speed of the other Allied ships in these waters being considerably less than that of the speedy German with her 27.5 knots. Subsequently, it was reported, it had become known to the Admiralty that the *Karlsruhe* had arranged to coal from a collier, which she was to meet at Grassy Creek Cays, a small group of Bahamian islets on the south-western edge of the "Tongue of Ocean," a narrow stretch of the Atlantic running in between New Providence and Andros Isld., which is in one part some 1,700 fathoms deep. As the distance between New Providence and the nearest point of the Andros coast is some 40 miles, it would have been quite easy for a vessel to

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slip in between unobserved, and the rendezvous was well chosen, as it was quite off the beaten track of ocean travel. The story ran that the *Princess Royal* arrived on the scene just too late, evident traces of the operation of coaling having been discovered at the Cays, but—the bird had flown! The *Karlsruhe* had replenished her stock of coal and had made good her escape, to continue her depredations until she was destroyed not long afterwards, it was supposed by an internal explosion, somewhere near Grenada in the Windward Islands.*

The movements of the famous German cruiser in Bahamian waters on the outbreak of War are not without interest, especially to residents in the Colony, and

*No corroboration of this story is to be found in Sir Julian Corbett's book, except that the *Princess Royal* did leave England for Jamaica at the end of November 1914; but there is good reason for believing that the incident occurred as narrated. It seems now to be definitely established that the *Karlsruhe* was instantly destroyed by an internal explosion on the afternoon of November 4th 1914, when some 300 miles away from Barbados—although this was not known until some time afterwards.

have been described at some length in the first volume of Sir Julian Corbett's "Naval Operations." It is therein stated that the *Karlsruhe*, which had previously been stationed on the Mexican coast, left Havana on July 30, her commanding officer, Captain Kohler, being then aware that war was imminent. He remained somewhere in the vicinity of that city, until, having learned that war had broken out in Europe, he steamed through the Old Bahama Channel to the Plana or French Cays, which lie between Acklin's Island and Mariguana (or Mayaguana) in the south-eastern extremity of the Bahama group. There, while H. M. S. *Berwick* was searching for her 400 miles away in the Florida Channel (getting wireless indications all the time that the *Karlsruhe* was somewhere about) and H. M. S. *Suffolk* was doing likewise south of Cuba, she remained safely concealed, receiving twice a day the wireless press telegrams from Sayville, New York, and, on the afternoon of August 4th, her War Telegram from Berlin.

Having opened his sealed orders, Captain Kohler at once steamed off in a northerly

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direction, and on the evening of August 5th, the *Berwick*, who, after carefully examining the anchorages in the neighbourhood of Great Isaacs Light, situate on the north-western edge of the Great Bahama Bank, had passed through the North West and North East Providence Channels to search Cat Island, heard the *Karlsruhe* arranging a rendez-vous with another German ship in order to arm her as a raider. Admiral Sir Christopher Craddock, in the *Suffolk*, who on the afternoon of the 4th had left Jamaica for Bermuda, at 11 a.m. on the morning of August 6th, when 120 miles north-east of Watling's Island (San Salvador) actually saw the *Karlsruhe* apparently coaling from the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, the last German liner to leave New York before war was declared. Two guns had been placed on board the liner, and although only a small proportion of ammunition had been transferred, the German ships immediately separated, the *Karlsruhe* going north and the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* in a north-easterly direction. It was then

that the *Karlsruhe*, as already narrated, left her motor launch behind. The *Suffolk* went after the *Karlsruhe*, at the same time calling to the *Bristol*, then 400 miles to the northward, to intercept her. Her news was also conveyed to the *Berwick*, then searching the vicinity of the Windward Passage, who was directed to proceed to a rendezvous sixty miles north-east of Mariguana, in case the *Karlsruhe* should turn and endeavour to get south by the Caicos Passage.

The *Karlsruhe* was something more than a knot faster than the *Suffolk*, and by nightfall, although there was a good moon, she had dropped the flag ship out of sight—but only to run into the *Bristol*. That ship, hurrying south and steering for the enemy ship as directed from the *Suffolk*, at 8:15 p.m. made out the *Karlsruhe* ahead, right under the moon, a little on her port bow. The German, still steering north, was only six miles away, and, not seeing the *Bristol*, held on until the range had fallen to 7,000 yards, when the *Bristol* opened fire. The *Karlsruhe* returned the

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fire, turning away to the eastward. Her speed again told, and she soon escaped in a cloud of smoke. But when the *Suffolk* lost her the Admiral had turned to the eastward to cut the enemy off if she were driven south by the *Bristol*, and about 8 a.m. the next morning must actually have crossed the *Karlsruhe's* track only some twenty miles astern—just out of sight! The wireless of the British cruisers chasing her could easily be heard on board the *Karlsruhe*, where it was fully expected that the end would come at daylight. Soon afterwards she began to hear the *Berwick*, who, having arrived at her rendez-vous, very nearly directly on the southerly course of the *Karlsruhe*, at 2 p.m. of the same day, turned westwardly again for a further search of the southerly Bahamas. And so the *Karlsruhe*, after three of the narrowest possible escapes from capture or destruction in Bahamian waters, and assisted by superior speed and marvellous good luck, got safely to Porto Rico the next morning—with only twelve tons of coal remaining in her bunkers! What an

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exciting experience it would have been for Nassau had she been captured and brought there by one of His Majesty's ships!

On October 15th 1914 Nassau enjoyed the first visit of a British warship since the outbreak of the War. Considerable excitement was occasioned by the news that a man-of-war was approaching, every available lookout being crowded and many conjectures being made as to her nationality. The Red Cross of St. George was, however, soon distinguished, and it was not long before H. M. S. *Essex*, a 10,000 ton cruiser, lay at anchor off the Bar. Captain Watson, C. B., M. V. O., Captain of the *Essex*, and some of his officers were warmly greeted when they landed to pay an official call on the Governor, and a large crowd assembled on Rawson Square to see them off the same day. Quite a large collection of papers, magazines, etc., for the ship, including a quantity of fruit, cigars and cigarettes, had been made, and the picket-boat left the wharf considerably lower in the water than when she came into the Harbour. Hearty

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cheers were given for the *Essex* amid a scene of considerable enthusiasm as the boat shoved off, Captain Watson calling in return for three cheers for the King which were as lustily given and were followed by the singing of the National Anthem. The visit of the *Essex* was as welcome as it was unexpected, made a most agreeable break in the life of the City and gave its citizens their first view of the Navy at war, there being evident on all sides the most active desire to show the general admiration and confidence felt for Britain's "first line of defence."

On December 17th 1914, the popular Governor, Mr. (now Sir) George Haddon-Smith, and Mrs. Haddon-Smith left Nassau to take up the administration of the Windward Islands. The Governor had spent but the short period of two years in the Bahamas, but during that time—the last six months of it being indeed a term of stress and responsibility—he successfully gained the confidence and regard of the community and his departure occasioned practically universal regret. Prior to his leaving he

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was presented with a farewell address from the citizens of Nassau, who also subscribed to a piece of plate, emblazoned with the Arms of the Colony and engraved with a suitable inscription, to be presented to him, and Mrs. (now Lady) Haddon-Smith, was presented with a large cameo by the Daughters of the Empire as a souvenir of her connection with the Order in the Bahamas.

On the following day the Hon. W. Hart-Bennett, C. M. G., Colonial Secretary and Senior Member of the Executive Council, was sworn as Administrator of the Government and continued to fill that position for the next six months. Mr. Hart-Bennett had been for some time in the Colony, had on several previous occasions administered the Government, and enjoyed the confidence of the community—which he successfully retained during the period in which he remained in the Bahamas.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

GENERAL—1915-16.

THE annual session of the Legislature of 1915 was opened by the Administrator on February 8th with a speech in which he commented upon the adverse effect the War had had upon the Colony's principal exports, sponge and sisal, and the distress which had prevailed among certain of the Out Islands, which had been due, however, as much to a prolonged drought as to the War. Owing to depressed conditions of trade and the resulting financial stringency he said that withdrawals from the Post Office Savings Bank had increased and the Government had in consequence made the Bank a temporary advance of £3,000, as securities could then only be realized at a loss. It was not proposed, he stated, to submit any legislative proposals of a controversial nature or involving expenditure which was not immediately necessary, and strict economy

would as far as possible be exercised. The session terminated on May 31st, the only bills of importance which were passed being The Tariff Amendment Act, which imposed a surtax of 10 per cent on all customs duties, and The Loan Act, which empowered the Government to raise a local loan not exceeding £30,000, the particulars of which have already been indicated.

On May 31st Nassau enjoyed a short visit from H. M. A. S. *Sydney*, Captain Glossop, R. N., the conqueror of the famous German raider *Emden*. Everyone who could possibly do so visited the *Sydney*, which still bore marks of her recent encounter with the German ship, and heard many interesting and graphic accounts of the fight which stopped short the *Emden's* career. Her officers and men were most hospitably entertained in Nassau, the Daughters of the Empire and the Boy Scouts especially contributing largely to the pleasure and comfort of the City's distinguished visitors.

On June 15th Mr. (now Sir) William Allardyce, the new Governor of the Bahamas, arrived in Nassau, and was sworn in

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as Governor and Commander-in-Chief the same day, the Honourable W. Hart-Bennett, C. M. G., who had successfully administered the Government since the departure of Sir George Haddon-Smith, resuming the office of Colonial Secretary of the Colony.

Another warship arrived on June 29th, when the French cruiser *Conde* anchored off the Bar for a brief stay. The *Conde* had been in the West Indies since the outbreak of War, at which time she was at Vera Cruz, Mexico.

On August 4th a special service was held in the Cathedral in Nassau on the first anniversary of the outbreak of War. Persons of all denominations and classes attended, and the fine old church was filled to overflowing. A profound appreciation of the significance of the occasion was generally manifested, and during the hour of the service the great majority of business places in the City were closed and work was suspended in the Government offices. On the same day was held the first of the series of Public Patriotic Meetings,

suggested by the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organizations in London. The meeting, which was presided over by the Governor, was very largely attended. Of the two Resolutions adopted, the first pledged the loyal sympathy and support of the citizens of Nassau to the Mother Country in the determination to continue the struggle to a victorious end, and the second, which came as a complete surprise to the great majority of those present, recommended the despatch of a Bahamas Contingent to join the Empire's fighting forces—with the outcome which has already been recorded. The meeting was unmistakably enthusiastic and spontaneous in its demonstrations of approval, and showed very plainly that the results of the first year of War had merely served to confirm the people of the Colony in their determination to do all in their power to help the Empire to win. Similar meetings were held on the same date at many of the Out Islands of the Colony.

On September 27th a special session of the Legislature was summoned for the

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purpose of considering how best to render further assistance to the Motherland, and, as already described, the result was the passing of a Vote of Indemnity for £5,000 to defray the expenses of a Contingent of 100 men to Jamaica. No other legislation was enacted, and the session terminated on October 4th, having lasted only eight days.

The next regular annual session of the Legislature commenced on November 22nd, somewhat earlier than usual. In his opening speech the Governor referred to the gratification expressed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the despatch of the 1st and 2nd Contingents and also availed himself of the opportunity to acknowledge the "devoted and untiring services" of the local Recruiting Committee. Attention was directed to the recent Message from the King, and he intimated that the question of sending more men and reinforcements abroad would be brought before the Legislature at an early date. Some improvement, he said, had taken place in the market prices abroad for the

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Colony's sponge, and there was reason to hope that the financial situation would also show some improvement. The Legislature continued in session until August 1916, when it was prorogued, the principal legislation enacted being The War Contingent Act, the provisions of which have already been indicated.

General pleasure was felt at the return of H. M. A. S. *Sydney* on November 30th. Her officers and men were greeted as old friends and the City was gay with flags in their honour. Hospitality was the order of the day, and many of Nassau's citizens again visited the famous ship during her brief stay. The *Sydney* turned up again on Christmas Eve, when her officers and crew were again warmly welcomed and received such hearty greetings as must have convinced them that at Christmastide British hearts are the same all the world over, and that the Christmas sentiment, strong and genuine, was to be found on a tiny British island in the Atlantic as well as in any other corner of the Empire.

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The year 1916 opened with the announcement that the King had been pleased to confer the honour of knighthood upon the Governor, Mr. William Allardyce, C.M.G., who had then been but a little over six months in the Colony. The Governor had already visited several of the Out Islands of the Colony, had favourably impressed those with whom he had come in contact, and was, it was generally recognized, an energetic and devoted war-worker, and he and Lady Allardyce were the recipients of many congratulations upon the honour he had received.

On May 25th a Message was sent by the Governor to the House of Assembly stating that a bill for the constitution of a local Volunteer Force would shortly be submitted to the House, and that the bill would in effect be a transcript of similar Acts then in force in the West Indies and other parts of His Majesty's dominions. The force was not to exceed 200 in number and the expenditure thereon was to be limited to £1,000 per annum. The Message also pointed out that while it would be possible under the

generous provisions of The Proclamations Act, 1914, to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Volunteer Defence Force, the Governor felt that the House would prefer first to have an opportunity of considering the advisability of placing such an act on the statute book. The bill came up for a second reading on June 1st, when notwithstanding the arguments adduced on behalf of the bill—the fact that the Bahamas was unique in possessing no volunteer force or organization of a naval or military nature and the urgent necessity of such a force at the present juncture—it was rejected by a large majority.

The House on June 8th passed a resolution in the form of an address to His Majesty the King expressing profound regret for the loss sustained through the lamentable death of Lord Kitchener, and afterwards adjourned as a tribute of respect to the distinguished soldier whose loss all the Empire was mourning.

On August 4th another Patriotic Anniversary meeting was held in Nassau similar to that of the preceding year, which

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was again of a most successful and enthusiastic nature, the occasion being enlivened by the presence of nearly 80 men, drafts for the Bahamas Contingents, who sailed the next day for Jamaica *en route* for England.

Towards the end of 1916 the increasing strain on the relations between the United States and Germany, the intensive submarine warfare and the presence of German submarines on the American coast began to have their effect on affairs in the Colony, and rumours were current in Nassau to the effect that enemy submarines had been seen in the Gulf Stream near the more westerly islands of the Bahamas, although it is very doubtful if any German submarine ever visited those waters. One result was the visit on September 5th of H. M. S. *Berwick*, who, it was reported, was making a tour of the British West Indies for the purpose of concerting and arranging measures for local defense. The *Berwick* returned on November 25th, and on December 2nd, notwithstanding the rejection by the Legislature earlier in the year

GENERAL — 1915-16

of the bill to create a Volunteer Defence Force, a Government notice was published stating that the Commandant of the Bahamas Constabulary would receive the names of persons between the ages of 18 and 40 who were desirous of offering their services for the purpose of forming a volunteer defence force.

Four days later another Government notice appeared informing the public that on the advice of the Commander-in-Chief at Jamaica and as a precautionary measure the Government had decided to stop showing the lights in the lighthouse on Hog Island (at the entrance to the Harbour of Nassau) and on Egg Island (some 40 miles north-east from Nassau on the southerly edge of the North East Providence Channel) and that a light at East End, New Providence, which was useful to vessels arriving from the windward islands of the Colony, would be screened from the north. For a limited period a patrol boat was to be stationed outside the Harbour to warn approaching shipping. Residents of

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the City, which is built on the slope of a low hill and faces in a northerly direction, were also requested to extinguish or screen effectively all lights showing seawards from north-east to north-west, and the public was notified that no powerful lights on motor cars or other vehicles would be permitted. Vessels lying within the Harbour were prohibited from exhibiting riding or other lights showing seawards. The notice asking for volunteers for local defence was followed by an informal meeting of the Legislature at Government House on December 12th, when the Governor laid the situation before its members, and, on December 16th, by a Proclamation of the Governor, issued under authority of The Proclamations Act, 1914, constituting a Volunteer Home Defence Force and outlining the conditions of service. On the same date appeared another and more lengthy Proclamation laying down the very stringent regulations for the enforcement of what soon came to be known as the Lighting Restrictions. As may be supposed, these measures excited

an extraordinary amount of interest, were very freely discussed and occasionally as freely criticised and, as will be seen, continued for some time to come to exercise the minds of the community.

But about the same time something occurred which effectively diverted public interest from precautionary war measures, largely futile in the opinion of most people, and transferred it to a matter of more immediate and personal interest to the majority of the inhabitants of the Colony—the suspension of payments by The Bank of Nassau. This was a cherished local institution, founded in 1889 with a capital of £10,000, which for many years between the failure of a Public Bank in 1885 and the advent of The Royal Bank of Canada in 1908 had effectively provided the business interests of the Colony with much needed banking facilities. It had paid good dividends, and, properly and efficiently managed, should have continued to be an institution of great value both to its shareholders and to the Colony; but inadequate

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supervision, extremely slack management, utterly inefficient audits and over-confidence in certain of the Bank officials led to the usual result, and the Bank on December 15th had to suspend payment. An investigation into its affairs was made by the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General and the Manager of the local branch of The Royal Bank of Canada, the Hon. G. H. Gamblin, M. L. A., a reassuring notice to the effect that depositors were fully protected was published, an Interim Receiver was appointed and an effort was made to continue the business of the institution. But public confidence in the Bank had been completely destroyed, the effort proved a failure and ultimately its affairs had to be wound up, all depositors finally being paid in full, although the shareholders got nothing. This unfortunate occurrence shocked the community, and, as the sequel proved, continued to be a most disturbing influence in its life and affairs for many months to come. Coupled with the hated Lighting Restrictions, which had resulted in plunging the streets of the City

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into profound darkness after sunset, it cast a gloom over everybody, effectively chilling the holiday spirit, and the year 1916 ended on a quite unusual note of widespread depression.

CHAPTER TWELVE.

GENERAL—1917.

ABOUT the middle of February, 1917, Nassau welcomed the intelligence that Mr. Daniel Tudor, K. C., who had been Chief Justice of the Bahamas since November, 1911, had been knighted. The Chief Justice was deservedly popular among his fellow citizens, and was the recipient of many hearty congratulations upon the honour conferred upon him.

The annual session of the Legislature was opened on February 26th. The Governor, in his opening speech, said that but few bills, and those of a non-controversial nature, would be submitted by the Government. He also noted the gratifying response to the appeal for volunteers for the Home Defence Force, and while regretting the enforcement of the Lighting Restrictions as a precautionary measure against raids by enemy submarines, expressed his opinion that these were necessary. The

new Home Defence Force had by this time taken concrete shape, was practically at full strength, and under command of the Commandant of Police made its first public appearance upon the occasion of the opening of the Legislature, forming with the Bahamas Constabulary and the various Volunteer Fire Brigades of the City the Guard of Honour for His Excellency.

The Lighting Restrictions had from the date of their imposition been a source of great discomfort and annoyance to residents in Nassau. Although generally and justifiably regarded as utterly futile for the purpose for which they were imposed—the rendering invisible of the City at night to enemy raiders—they were rigorously enforced with the maximum of tactlessness and with but little regard to the practical requirements of the community. While the beautiful white sandy beach on the north side of the long narrow island forming the Harbour of Nassau showed brilliantly clear every night, a veritable sign-board for all who wished to see, and while on moonlight nights the roofs of the

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houses of the City were easily discernible miles away, the streets of the City were plunged into Cimmerian darkness and pedestrians negotiated them at peril of life and limb, while householders were deprived of the requisite amount of light for fear that a tiny flicker might show to seaward and be seen by some predatory German submarine! Owing to the popular outcry against them efforts were made by the local Government to have the restrictions removed, but the Admiralty, which must have been very badly advised indeed as to local conditions, remained adamant and, it was said, commanded their continuance.

But while hitherto the Lighting Restrictions had only inflicted discomfort, the people of Nassau were now realizing that they were bringing upon them a very considerable pecuniary loss also. Owing to its proximity to the American coast, its particularly salubrious climate and the fact that Nassau possessed first class hotel accommodation, unequalled throughout the West Indies, in addition to its many other attractions, the City had long been a

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favourite winter resort for Canadian and American visitors. Notwithstanding the War, during the winter seasons of 1915 and 1916 the City enjoyed the presence of about the average number of tourists and the business community reaped the usual benefit from their presence. But stories of conditions existing in Nassau were of course soon circulated abroad, and from its commencement it soon became clear that the season of 1917 would prove a failure.

Coupled with this state of affairs, the breakdown of the winter steamship service to Florida and the increasing strain on the relations between the United States and Germany all had a disastrous effect, and most of the visitors who had come to Nassau for the winter speedily returned to the States—a serious interference with the success of the winter season which was, as the Governor said, “such an important “asset to the Colony.” The rupture of diplomatic relations between Germany and the United States put the finishing touch to the situation, and the “season” fizzled out almost before it had begun.

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A visit from H. M. S. *Eileen*, a small ship on the station largely engaged in patrol duties and flying a Commodore's pennant, occurred on April 4th. The *Eileen* returned again in September and December of the same year. On April 18th Nassau had its first visit from a warship of our new Ally, the United States, when the U. S. S. *Ammen*, a modern torpedo-boat, made a brief stay. The officers of both ships were hospitably entertained, and their crews were well looked after at the Canteen, which had been recently instituted largely through the exertions of The Misses Allardyce, with the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides of the City as willing helpers and ready workers.

The entry of the United States into the War on April 6th was not, as far as the Bahamas was concerned, an unmixed blessing. One of its first results was to make it impossible for the Government to obtain a renewal of the contract with the Ward Line for the New York mail, passenger and freight service. Negotiations

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for another contract had been initiated towards the expiration of the contract made just before the outbreak of War, but owing to the shipping requirements of the American Government the Company found itself unable to enter into a fresh contract. During the two years of the old contract, which expired on August 21st, the Colony had enjoyed the advantage of low freight rates—compared to the war-time rates existing elsewhere—which had done much to assist the trade of the Colony. The cessation of the New York contract meant, as it proved, greater difficulty in obtaining supplies and a further increase in prices due to infrequent and irregular steamship communication with New York, and higher freight rates. On the other hand, the prices of foodstuffs, which to a very large extent are imported from the States, had risen to a very high figure. In his opening speech to the Legislature, the Governor, with wise foresight, had insisted upon the urgent necessity for extending the cultivation of food crops within the Colony, and in April a food

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campaign was instituted by the Government with the object of inducing the inhabitants to plant more maize and other crops so as to be less dependent upon outside supplies. Public meetings were held throughout New Providence for the purpose of impressing upon the people the urgent necessity for growing larger crops and the Commissioners at the Out Islands were instructed to urge the extension of cultivations in their districts. In many cases land belonging to the Crown was given free to *bona fide* cultivators, and the sympathies of private owners of large tracts of suitable land were enlisted. A Message from the Governor to the People of the Bahamas appeared in the local press containing a careful, clear and convincing account of the situation, in which it was pointed out that as no large stock of food-stuffs was kept in hand, an even partial cessation of trade with the United States might precipitate a serious food crisis. Leaflets were distributed broadcast, and public interest was greatly stimulated and

GENERAL—1917

led to a considerable increase in agricultural activities. It is not easy to say just what practical effect resulted from these efforts, but that a good deal was achieved is certain; and as the months went by the wisdom of the policy advocated became more and more obvious.

On May 29th, greatly to the satisfaction of all Nassauvians, the Lighting Restrictions were *temporarily* suspended—a suspension which ultimately proved to be permanent. Notice had, a little before that date, been given in the House of Assembly of a resolution to the effect “That in the opinion of this House the present Light Restrictions are unnecessary and should be modified or discontinued.” Consideration of the resolution was, at the request of the Government, deferred, but the notice of its introduction was apparently sufficient to bring about the withdrawal of the futile and obnoxious restrictions which had been generally disliked; and their disappearance, following almost immediately upon the mere notice of the resolution advocating their suspension, did

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something to confirm the suspicion generally entertained that not the Admiralty but the local Executive were responsible for their imposition. Other resolutions, which were moved in the House on June 14th, advocating the disbandment of the Home Defence Force—which had by this time come to be styled satirically the “Home Expense Force”—and for limiting the expenditure upon it to £300 per annum were defeated by large majorities. It is worthy of note that some thirty members of this force enlisted and left the Colony for service abroad with the Bahamas Contingent in the British West Indies Regiment. In connection with the measures taken for local defence a 4.7 gun arrived in Nassau early in October, was subsequently mounted in a suitable place commanding a wide range of fire seawards and placed in charge of a small detachment of marines sent from Jamaica for the purpose. An anti-submarine patrol around the western islands of the Bahamas group situated on the edge of the Gulf Stream, was also established during the

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summer and several temporary wireless stations were with the approval of the Imperial and local Governments set up on those islands and placed in charge of the American naval patrol in the vicinity.

On June 4th the citizens of Nassau learned with pleasure that the King had been pleased to confer upon Mr. Jas. P. Sands, senior unofficial member of the Executive Council and a prominent member of the business community, the honour of knighthood. Sir James had throughout a long and honourable career devoted much of his time to the public service, and had for several years led the Government in the lower branch of the Legislature. Thence he was removed, at the beginning of 1916, to be a member and President of the Legislative Council, and it was universally felt that the honour conferred upon one of Nassau's most respected citizens had been well earned.

The Legislature was prorogued on July 17th. In ordinary circumstances this would

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have been, under The Septennial Act, the last session of the House of Assembly, but among the bills passed during the session was one—The General Assembly Act, 1917—continuing its existence for a further period of eleven months in view of the undesirability of holding a general election under then existing conditions. Other legislation passed was a bill—the outcome of a Commission appointed towards the end of 1916 to enquire into the adequacy of the salaries of the subordinate members of the public service of the Colony—to increase the salaries of public officials whose emoluments did not exceed £200 per annum, and another amending The Tariff Act 1914 by imposing an export duty of one farthing per pound on sisal, from which it was estimated that revenue to the amount of £7,000 would accrue.

August 4th witnessed another successful War Anniversary Meeting, over which His Excellency the Governor presided and which was largely attended. Resolutions were carried again declaring the inflexible determination of Nassau's citizens to

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continue the struggle to a victorious end, recording their confidence in all Bahamians on active service abroad and expressing their gratification at the entry of the United States into the War.

H. M. S. Warrior, originally an American yacht owned by a prominent member of the New York Yacht Club, who had placed her at the disposal of the British Government during the War, arrived at Nassau in command of her owner on September 7th, and in October the well known U. S. S. *Dolphin* also paid a visit to the City.

The next session of the Legislature was opened by the Governor on November 26th. His Excellency said that he had convened it at an earlier date than usual, as under The Expiring Laws Continuance Act 1917 both The Proclamations Act 1914 and The War Contingent Act 1916 would expire on December 31st of the current year. The necessity for the former Act was, he said, more urgent than hitherto. Dealing with conditions generally he noted that

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the food campaign had resulted in the cultivation of largely increased areas, which was satisfactory in view of the serious diminution of the world's food supplies and the steadily rising prices of all food stuffs imported from the States. The Government hoped that it would not be necessary to interfere with the ordinary conditions of demand and supply or to attempt to fix the prices of certain food commodities, as had been done in some of the other West Indian Colonies.

Among the earliest business transacted was the adoption in both branches of the Legislature of resolutions expressing confidence and gratitude to the sailors and soldiers of the Empire, with especial reference to all native-born Bahamians associated with them, and placing on record profound sympathy with the relatives of those who had made the supreme sacrifice for King and Country. Legislation continuing the Acts above mentioned and also The Emergency Relief Act 1914 was passed before the end of the year, although

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not without an effort by certain disgruntled members of the House to have The Proclamations Act stricken from the schedule.

The stringent regulations imposed by the American Government for the effective control and conservation of their food supplies, especially the establishing of the Administration's Food Control Board, which soon instituted a system under which many of the most important commodities could only be exported under license, and the interruption of regular communication with New York had during the latter half of 1917 made it increasingly difficult for Nassau business men to obtain the necessary foodstuffs from the United States. Prices had risen steadily until practically the whole of the population was feeling the pinch, and at times there had been experienced a shortage of certain provisions as novel as it was unpleasant. In view of these conditions and the necessity of complying with the requirements of the American

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Government it became imperative to acquire some supervision over local importations and on December 12th 1917 a Proclamation was issued constituting a local Food Control Committee composed of the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General and the Comptroller of Customs. The Proclamation conferred wide powers upon the Committee, some of them partaking somewhat of an inquisitorial nature, and laid upon them the duty of taking such measures as might be necessary to maintain the supply of articles of commerce which formed part of the food of the Colony or were required to meet the wants of the public. The same day business men were notified that all orders for goods from the States must be submitted to the Committee for consideration and action under the Proclamation, and that orders which had not been endorsed by the Committee would not be recognized by the American Government Food Control Board—in other words, that licenses for export to the Bahamas could only be obtained with the approval of the local Committee. And

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on December 27th His Excellency the Governor left on a short visit to the States to confer at Washington with the British Ambassador and the American Food Control Board with the view of arranging for licenses for the continued export to the Colony of its necessary supply of foodstuffs.

On December 16th the people of Nassau learned with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret that their popular Colonial Secretary, the Honourable W. Hart-Bennett, C. M. G., had been appointed to be Governor of British Honduras. Mr. Hart-Bennett had held his office in the Bahamas since 1905, during which period he had earned the genuine esteem and respect of the entire community and had greatly endeared himself to his many personal friends. During the previous session, on the spontaneous initiative of the House of Assembly, a bill had been passed increasing his salary during his occupation of the office of Colonial Secretary in recognition

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of his interest in the welfare of the Bahamas, and it was generally felt that he was an official whom the Colony could ill afford to lose.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

GENERAL—1918.

DURING the Governor's absence in the United States on official duty the Honourable W. Hart-Bennett again acted as Administrator, and the Honourable F. C. Wells-Durrant, K. C., Attorney General of the Colony, took Mr. Hart-Bennett's place as Chairman of the Food Control Committee—a position he afterwards filled while the Committee continued in existence—the Honourable P. W. D. Armbrister, Receiver General, filling the vacancy in the Committee thus created. On January 2nd the Committee issued an Order to the effect that, as it had been found from returns of the principal foodstuffs in the Colony made by local merchants that the stock in hand was insufficient to supply normal requirements until further importations could be obtained, sales of those articles—except in the case of very small dealers—were to be limited to 50 per cent of the stock

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in hand during the next fortnight, while retailers were forbidden to dispose of more than one-fifth of their stocks to any one individual. At the same time an appeal was made by the Administrator asking the public patriotically to cut down as far as possible their consumption of the articles mentioned in the Order during its continuance and intimating that any unnecessary or undue rise in local prices would inevitably lead to further action by the Committee. A further notice was published on January 5th stating that official notification had been received that the War Trade Board of the United States had sanctioned the export to the Bahamas of approximately one-twelfth of the annual requirements of the Colony, and urging the exercise of the greatest care in the consumption of articles of food. On January 15th appeared another Proclamation considerably enlarging the scope of the powers of the Committee, and on the 19th, in exercise of their extended powers, the Committee fixed a maximum price for kerosene oil—the first instance of such action in the

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Colony since the old days of long ago when the price of bread was regularly notified by the old parish authorities.

The Governor returned from New York on January 19th, having been largely successful in obtaining from the various American authorities licenses for the exportation of food and other articles to the Bahamas. In a memorandum of his visit to the States sent to the House of Assembly on January 24th he made known the interesting fact that the food situation in the West Indies had not been overlooked by the Imperial Government, who had instructed him to prepare a return of the probable cereal requirements of the Colony in 1918 and forward it to the British Ambassador in Washington for the information of the United States Government, who had expressed their readiness to assist the West Indian Colonies in obtaining food. He had also submitted a tabulated statement prepared by the local Committee based on the average importations of 1914-16, but subject to such modifications as the

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Committee regarded practicable. Negotiations on this basis resulted in the granting of licenses for the one-twelfth already mentioned, subject to the substitution of a certain percentage of corn and rye instead of wheat flour, and the practical elimination of all fats, butter, pork, etc., and he was assured that only physical difficulties would prevent the War Trade Board from continuing to issue permits regularly to fill orders endorsed by the local Committee. Attempts on the part of local business houses to obtain unauthorized importations would, the Governor pointed out, only result in the dislocation of the arrangements made and might create an impression of bad faith in the United States. He also expressed the opinion that it was imperative that a representative of the Colony should proceed to Washington in order to expedite shipments by further explaining local conditions to the American authorities, and the memorandum ended with another appeal for the co-operation of the public by the exercise of rigid economy in the use of food. The thanks of The House were subsequently conveyed to

His Excellency for his services to the Colony during his mission to the United States, and a grant was made to cover the expenditure incurred.

The next day the business men of the City attended a meeting held under the auspices of the Committee, when their Chairman emphasized these aspects of the situation and asked for hearty and sympathetic co-operation in their efforts to obtain a regular food supply. The results of His Excellency's mission were now generally recognized as having eased the situation considerably, and it was with no small relief that the public accepted the assurance that while economy was strictly necessary and straight dealing with the American Government imperative, there was no need for serious apprehension as to not obtaining the requisite food supplies from the States.

The foregoing will, it is hoped, convey some idea of the food situation created in the Colony by the entry of the United States in the War. Gradually the operations of the Committee were extended. Food

THE BAHAMAAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

stocks were in some instances commandeered, prices were fixed and a few prosecutions for violation of Orders took place. As the year went on and American regulations grew more and more stringent it became increasingly difficult to obtain the promised export licenses, while the lack of regular transportation helped materially to complicate an already difficult situation. At one time the supply of flour in the Colony was only sufficient for one week, and on one or two days in August no bread could be purchased at the bakeries of the City. It is not to be supposed that the operations of the Committee met with the unqualified approval of the community, as they had undoubtedly resulted in some cases in increasing the already high cost to the consumer of a number of the necessities of life, and as a matter of fact they were conducted, to borrow a phrase from an official report, "under a running "fire of criticism". Nor can it be said that they were entirely successful in the methods adopted for ensuring supplies. For although Orders—frequently varied within a day or two of publication—continued to

flow they did not always produce the desired result, and too much red tape was sometimes responsible for unnecessary delay. But it must be fully admitted that the task of the Committee was a most difficult one, and that the duties they were entrusted with were of a thankless nature. In May a resolution was adopted by the House and sent to the Governor asking that an Order of the Committee ordaining that no wheat bread should be made with less than a twenty per cent admixture of rye flour or corn meal and that no wheat flour should be sold unless at the same time a twenty-five per cent proportion of rye flour or corn meal were purchased, should be rescinded. This very nearly precipitated a serious difference between the House and the Executive, but the matter was ultimately adjusted—if not to the satisfaction of all concerned. The local Chamber of Commerce had previously adopted a resolution—among others on the same subject—to the effect that the addition of three business men of the Committee would be to the advantage of everybody and would conduce to the more harmonious operation of the

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control of food supplies, but to this recommendation, which was very generally endorsed, the Government turned a deaf ear, and the Committee continued to pursue the anything but even tenour of their way. After the Armistice was signed the gradual relaxation of American export restrictions slowly permitted a resumption within the Colony of conditions approaching to normal, although the scarcity of tonnage and the irregularity of communication continued to affect the food situation; but although the Committee's activities gradually waned it remained in existence until June 1919, when, the House of Assembly having then refused to continue in force The Proclamations Act, the operations of all bodies created under its authority came to an end.

H. M. S. *Shearwater*, a Canadian training ship for boys, arrived on January 20th, and also paid another visit to Nassau in June. The French cruiser *La Gloire*, the flagship in West Indian waters, with Admiral de Grasset on board, made a brief stay early in February, when notwithstanding linguistic difficulties the distin-

guished representatives of our great Ally were cordially welcomed. In April the U. S. S. *Dolphin*, with Admiral Anderson and his staff, returned for a short visit, her officers apparently greatly appreciating the hospitality shown them in the City.

Towards the end of January resolutions were adopted in the House to the effect that the rate of postage on letters to the United States should be increased from one penny to two pence per ounce, to which view practical effect was shortly afterwards given by the Government; and among the legislation of the session was a War Tax Stamp Act considerably extending the stamp taxes previously in force, which together with sales of war stamp issues to dealers and collectors abroad enabled the Post Office to produce a revenue of over £13,000 and a net surplus of £5000 over expenditure.

Early in February a Commission, with the Chief Justice, Sir Daniel Tudor, as President, was appointed to enquire into the question as to what measures should be taken to provide medical treatment, to render assistance, to furnish employment

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and to arrange for the settlement on such lands as might be available in the Colony for the purpose, of discharged soldiers, with especial reference to the men of the British West Indies Regiment. The Commission sat for several months, faithfully discharged the duties laid upon it and in time produced a voluminous report containing a number of recommendations; but it cannot be said that much if any practical effect has so far resulted from their labour.

On March 17th Mr. Hart-Bennett left Nassau to take up his new appointment as Governor of British Honduras. Before his departure he was presented with an illuminated address signed by the principal citizens of Nassau, and was the recipient of other addresses, while many entertainments were given in his honour and many resolutions were adopted by public bodies with which he had been connected, expressing regret at his leaving and wishing him success in his new sphere of duty. Seldom in the history of the Bahamas has any public official received so many expressions

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of good will from all classes of the community, and there could be no doubt of the general regret over his departure. It will be realized, then, in view of his universal popularity, that the intelligence of his tragic death in Belize only seven months afterwards, the result of an injury sustained during a disastrous fire which occurred there, was received in Nassau with deep and lasting regret. His successor in the office of Colonial Secretary, the Honourable H. E. W. Grant, C. M. G., arrived in Nassau on the same day that Mr. Hart-Bennett left. Mr. Grant was not a newcomer, as he had about twenty years previously spent two years in the public service of the Bahamas, when he had made himself deservedly popular and respected.

In March the war work of the three principal, patriotic bodies of the Colony, the Bahamas War Relief Committee, the Bahamas National Chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire,

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and the Bahamas Red Cross Guild, received some recognition through the appointment of some of their principal officials to the newly instituted Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. The Honourable Harcourt Malcolm, K. C., Chairman of the War Relief Committee, was made an Officer of the Order, and Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Lofthouse, President of the National Chapter of the Daughters of the Empire, and Mrs. Agnes Norah Johnson, Honorary Secretary of the Red Cross Guild, were made Members. The Insignia of the Order were subsequently presented to the recipients of these honours by His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber on December 6th of the same year.

The Legislature was prorogued on July 6th after a lengthy session of about eight months. Just previously the House passed a resolution authorizing the expenditure of £1,000 for the payment of travelling expenses of individual volunteers desirous of enlisting in Canada or the United States. Among the Acts passed were one to

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amend The Septennial Act further prolonging the life of the General Assembly, a Loan Act (already dealt with), one amending The War Contingent Act, 1916, one making provision for the payment of the salaries of public officials in the military forces of the Crown and who were reported missing and subsequently presumed to be dead, and another Proclamations Act. The latter continued the power to issue proclamations during the War conferred upon the Governor by The Proclamations Act 1914, but gave the power of abrogation and revocation of any proclamation to either branch of the Legislature, except in the case of proclamations issued under specific instructions from the Secretary of State in connection with the Defence Scheme of the Colony or for the maintenance and preservation of Imperial interests. Further, no expenditure of public money could be made under any proclamation if the House passed a resolution condemnatory of such expenditure, and a monthly return of expenditure was

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required by the House when the Legislature was in session—all provisions which considerably modified the original Act of 1914. Resolutions had also been adopted in the House advocating the maintenance of the Home Defence Force during the War and afterwards under statutory authority.

On August 4th another—and, as it happily proved, the last—successful Anniversary War Meeting was held, when the Governor again presided. The substantive resolution, pledging the citizens of Nassau to continue the struggle to a victorious end, was again adopted, as was another expressing confidence in Bahamians abroad on active service and recording sympathy with those who had been wounded and with the relatives of those who had been killed.

Owing to the proximity of the Bahamas to the United States the vast war preparations of the latter were a source of constant interest in the Colony and one of them at least proved to have an immediate personal interest for many Bahamians.

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This was the plan of the American Government to create at Charleston, South Carolina, a great port containing terminal facilities, docks and warehouses, barracks and hospitals and emergency embarkation stations, costing about £6,000,000—all for the purpose of facilitating the maintenance in France of the American Army. This project of course entailed the employment of large numbers of labourers, and towards the end of July representatives of the United States Government Department of Labour arrived at Nassau for the purpose of enrolling 3000 labourers for construction work at Charleston. Attractive terms were offered and, permission for the recruiting of such labour having been granted in a Proclamation dated July 31st, something like 2,500 men were engaged and despatched to Charleston. The exodus of so many men from the Colony created some alarm at the time, as it was feared that the growing of crops and the prosecution of the sponge and sisal industries would be seriously interfered with. But the economic results were not, as it proved, of any great moment and, as it

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was pointed out at the time, should not in any case be permitted to weigh against the all-important aim of assisting in winning the War. Upon the cessation of hostilities the work at Charleston was suspended, and the labourers returned to the Colony about the end of 1918.

Throughout the year direct passenger transportation between Nassau and New York was practically suspended owing to the lack of steamship communication and the almost prohibitive passport restrictions imposed by the American Government. The mail service was carried on by motor-vessels plying between Nassau and Miami, Florida, and by the occasional freight steamers from New York. One important result was to divert a considerable portion of the business previously transacted with New York to Florida ports—a movement since confirmed and extended as the proximity of those ports to the Bahamas and their excellent railway communications with the great inland food-producing centres of the States enabled successful business relations of mutual advantage to be established.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

THE ARMISTICE—AND AFTER- WARDS.

THE thrilling course of the events on the Western Front in 1918, the great German drives of the Somme in March, at Ypres in April and on the Oise and the Marne in June and July, with the grave menace involved to the Allied cause, had been followed with breathless interest in Nassau. The almost immediate check administered to the Germans' last great offensive, the subsequent counter-attack between the Aisne and the Marne, resulting in the elimination of the great Marne salient, the glorious succession of British victories commencing on August 8th, initiating, as it proved, the irresistible forward movement of the whole Allied line, the successive elimination from the struggle of Bulgaria, Turkey and Austria and the subsequent *pourparlers* for peace, had all been welcomed with a passionate thrill of pride at the success of the Allied arms and a

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profound conviction that the titanic conflict was nearing its appointed end. The negotiations resulting in the conveyance to the Germans of the terms upon which the Allies were prepared to grant an armistice were followed with the closest attention, and throughout Saturday, Sunday and Monday, November 9th, 10th and 11th, the City was on tiptoe with expectation. Not until 3.25 p.m. on Monday afternoon did a private telegram reach Nassau containing the splendid news that the Germans had signed the Armistice. It was immediately posted on the bulletin board, whence the news spread through the City much faster than the proverbial wild-fire.

Doubtless all the world went mad on that famous Monday, and certainly Nassau along with the rest had her highly justified fit of temporary insanity, for such a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm was witnessed as had never even been dreamed of. The wonderful news seemed to reach every part of the City at the same moment, and bells rang out on all sides—church bells, fire bells, ship bells and all other

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kinds of bells. Bunting appeared everywhere like magic, fluttering gaily in the breeze and the streets were soon filled with triumphant and cheering crowds parading up and down with bands playing and flags flying. Market women, their heads garlanded with flowers, danced with joy, and motor cars, cabs and pedestrians were all mixed up in inextricable but hilarious confusion. The Governor and his party were in the thick of it all, and every man, woman and child seemed moved by a common impulse to demonstrations of loyalty and patriotism and of pride and jubilation at the downfall of the foe. In the evening joyous crowds continued their celebrations, and thanksgiving services were held in the churches. Deep down in the hearts of one and all was a stern sense of exultation over the complete overthrow of the common enemy, with an unlimited feeling of joy and satisfaction over the glorious victory, and hearts overflowed with thankfulness and eyes filmed with tears at the realization that the terrible struggle was at last over.

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The next day official confirmation of the news was received, and in the Supreme Court, which was in session, after some appropriate remarks by the Chief Justice the National Anthem was sung and hearty cheers given for the victorious fighting forces of the King and his Allies. At Queen's College, which had the names of no less than 36 "Old Boys" on its Roll of Honour,—a splendid record for a small school—a thanksgiving service was held, and the scholars, including a large complement of Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Cubs and Brownies, afterwards paraded to Government House. Wednesday the 13th was declared a general holiday and a day of public rejoicing, inasmuch, in the quaint terms of the Proclamation, "An Armistice "has been concluded with Germany and it "is deemed advisable that so momentous "an event should be appropriately observ- "ed in the Colony." The next day a garden party was given at Government House, when the Governor read the fragmentary but intensely interesting terms of the Armistice which up to the moment had reached him. The news of the Armistice of

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course took some time in making its way to the more distant parts of the Colony, but it was everywhere received in the same spirit and celebrated vigorously with all the means at command.

Some difficulty having been experienced by the Bahamian labourers at Charleston in obtaining transportation to Nassau upon the cessation of the Government work there, the Honourable F. C. Wells-Durrant left Nassau in December for Washington to endeavour to make arrangements for facilitating their return. In this he was eminently successful, an American transport and other vessels shortly afterwards arriving with batches of the men. Their presence occasioned scenes of considerable activity in the City, and its shops did a thriving business, while bank deposits of considerable amounts were made by many of the more thrifty. Mr. Wells-Durrant subsequently received a warm letter of thanks numerously signed by the labourers expressing their appreciation of his services on their behalf.

The King's Christmas Message, which did not reach Nassau until several days

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afterwards, was published as the Old Year drew to a close, and the simple words of the Sovereign, with his heartfelt good wishes to his people, were received with genuinely responsive sentiments and mutual ardent aspirations for "brighter years to come."

The New Year opened with the dissolution of the House of Assembly by the Governor on January 6th, and writs for the election of representatives in the new House were issued the next day. The Assembly which was thus terminated was elected in the summer of 1910, and met for its first session on January 10th, 1911. As has already been stated, its life had been twice prolonged beyond the usual limit by the General Assembly Acts, 1917 and 1918, each of which practically added a year to its term of existence. The Assembly had probably the longest existence of any House since the first meeting of the Bahamas General Assembly in Nassau on September 29th, 1729, and was chiefly notable for the legislation enacted in connection with the Great War just ended.

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Great excitement was occasioned towards the end of January by the visit of the first aircraft that had ever been seen in Nassau, two American naval seaplanes having flown to the City from Miami, Florida, a distance of about 160 miles. The first foreign mail to be sent from the Colony by air was made up and closed on January 30th for despatch by the planes on their return journey, letters being marked *Air Service*. The planes were, as it proved, the precursors of many others, and during the succeeding months, especially in the winter season, passengers arrived from Florida by air with considerable frequency.

The Legislature met for the session of 1919 on February 18th, the election of members for the new Assembly having been completed. The Governor's speech contained some interesting matter. The financial outlook was anything but cheerful, the estimated deficit on the current financial year being put at £20,000, while that for 1919-20 was placed at the larger figure of £30,000—a forecast happily not realized owing to the remarkable change effected

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in the Colony's financial affairs early in 1920. The problems of reconstruction seemed therefore beset with difficulty, as they depended for solution largely on the amount of funds available for the purpose. Among other matters the Governor suggested that the erection of a War Memorial in Nassau should be undertaken to commemorate the part played by the Colony and its sons in the great conflict. Early in the session both branches of the Legislature adopted Addresses to the King offering their congratulations on the cessation of hostilities and the prospect of an honourable Peace, expressing their admiration for the achievements of the fighting forces of the Empire, presenting their felicitations to the King on the part he and the Royal Family had played during the struggle, and ending with an assurance of their loyalty and devotion to the Throne.

His Excellency the Governor left on March 24th on a visit to England, the Honourable H. E. W. Grant, C.M.G., Colonial

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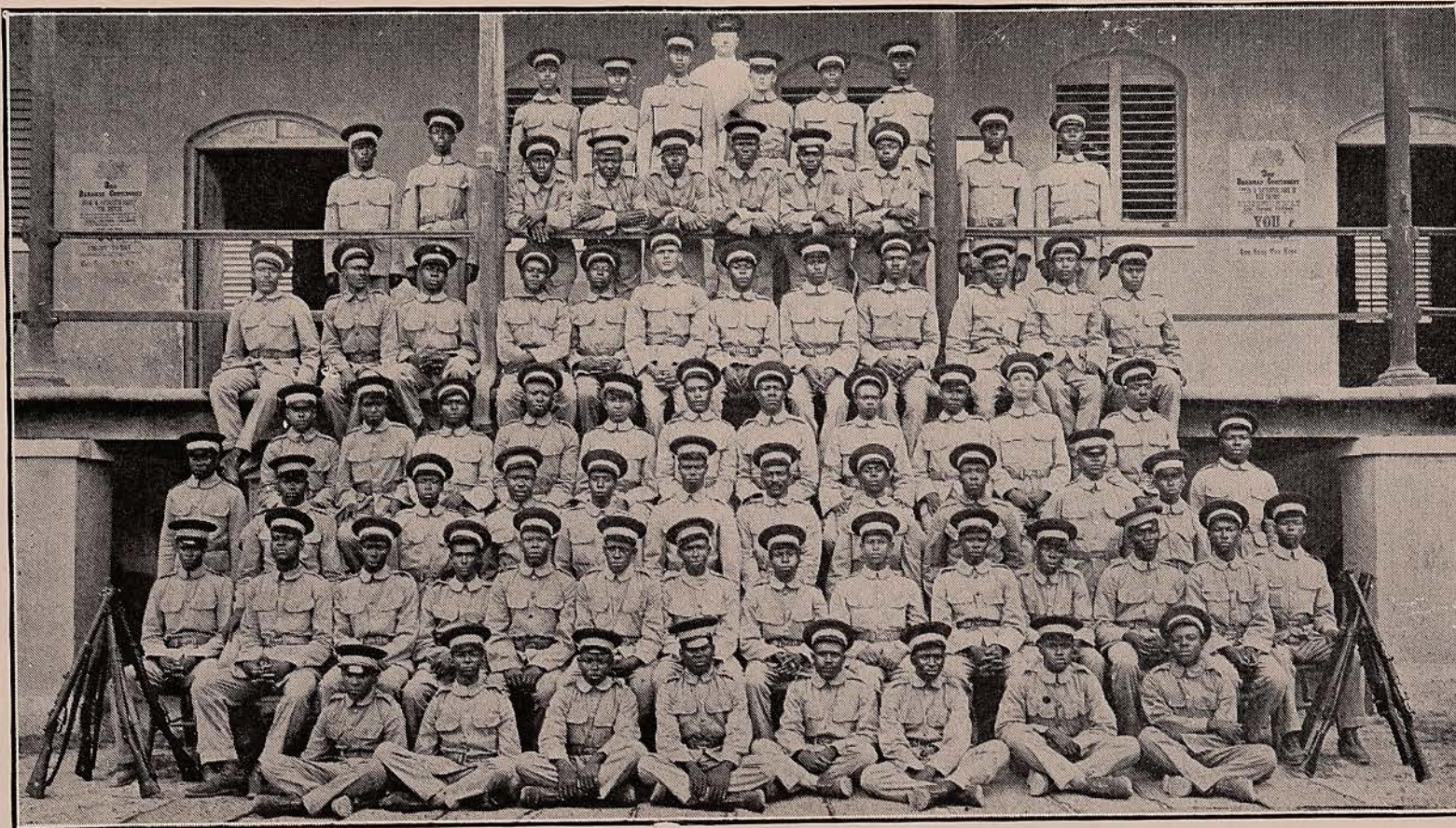
Secretary and Senior Member of the Executive Council, assuming the reigns as Administrator during his absence. The Governor's exertions on behalf of the Colony's contributions to the Empire's cause, both in men and money, were generally recognized as having been of a most effective nature, and it was felt that he had well earned his holiday.

Early in April the community learned with deep regret of the death of one of its prominent citizens, Mr. George Maurice Cole, who throughout the War had set a splendid example of patriotic activity on behalf of his country. A prominent member of the House for some twelve years, upon the outbreak of hostilities he was elected Honorary Treasurer of the Bahamas War Relief Committee, was appointed a member of the Recruiting Committee, and at once threw all his energy into the cause of recruiting. On two occasions, at the request of the Government, he accompanied Contingents to Jamaica, and when the threatened proximity of submarine warfare to Bahamian shores necessitated

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the presence of a capable and responsible officer to represent the Government at Bimini, Mr. Cole was sent to that district as a temporary First Division Commissioner. Upon the cessation of hostilities the post became unnecessary, and Mr. Cole received the thanks of the Government for the efficient and satisfactory manner in which he had performed the delicate duties which the exigencies of the War had laid upon him.

Individual Bahamian volunteers had been drifting back to the Colony at intervals upon demobilization, and each and all received a warm welcome; and on April 30th the first draft of returned Bahamians from the British West Indies Regiment arrived in Nassau in the transport *Hellenus*. The men, sixty strong and all looking in splendid condition, were accorded the heartiest of welcomes as they landed on Rawson Square, when they were inspected by His Excellency the Administrator, and upon a subsequent march through the City they were accompanied by surging and admiring crowds and vigorously cheered all



3rd Bahamas Contingent. Sailed May 10th, 1916.

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along their route. The City was *en fete* in their honour, bunting and banners floated everywhere and a number of triumphal arches with appropriate greetings were to be seen. An official Thanksgiving Service was held in the Cathedral the next day, when the returned soldiers and a very large congregation were present, the sermon being preached by Major the Reverend A. E. Horner (*Croix de Guerre*) Bahamas Contingent, B.W.I. Regt., who had served as a chaplain of the Regiment in France. The same afternoon the men were hospitably entertained at a garden party in the Barrack Grounds of the Bahamas Constabulary, which largely owing to the Commanding Officer of that force, Major E. E. Turner, was a great success. The Administrator delivered a stirring address of welcome, expressing in effective terms the great pleasure the Government, the Legislature and the people of the Colony felt over their safe return and the pride that their fellow citizens took in the manner in which they had done their duty and maintained the credit of the Colony abroad.

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Many other hospitalities were offered the men and nothing was left undone to convince them that the spirit animating their reception was both hearty and sincere and that the Colony was indeed proud of its soldier sons.

Other drafts arrived on transports in June and August, and on each occasion the men were greeted with the same popular enthusiasm and were the recipients of the same honours and hospitalities which had been showered on the first draft. The Administrator, Mr. Grant, took an active interest in all the arrangements and played a prominent part in all the public functions. The Bahamas War Relief Committee voted funds, the Daughters of the Empire, with the assistance of the Scouts and Guides, were indefatigable in arranging entertainments, and practically everybody in Nassau did all in their power to make the men feel the sincerity of their welcome and the esteem in which they were held. In time those who lived among the Out Islands of the Colony reached their homes, where they were again feted and welcomed

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and made much of among their own people.

In May Nassau enjoyed visits from two British cruisers, the *Berwick* and the *Cumberland*. The former stayed for about a week, when field sports, dances and other entertainments were the order of the day, and Nassau's citizens seized with pleasure the opportunity afforded of doing honour to the Navy and showing the officers and men every attention.

During the same month two German machine guns, which had been presented to the Colony by the Imperial Government, reached Nassau. The guns, which bore the date "Berlin 1916", were captured on the Western Front, and carried a number of battle scars in the shape of bullet holes. They were thoroughly cleaned and polished up, and were entrusted to the keeping of the Trustees of the Nassau Public Library, where they were placed in a prominent position in close proximity to excellent enlarged photographs of all the Bahamas Contingents and Drafts—a grim reminder in otherwise peaceful surroundings of the

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terrible struggle which had but recently terminated.

Official announcement of the signing of the Peace Treaty was published in Nassau on Monday, June 30th, as was also a Message from His Majesty the King to the People of the Empire. The good news, as in the case of the signing of the Armistice, had reached the City unofficially the day before and was greeted with the pealing of bells and the display of bunting. The Message from the King voicing in a few simple but expressive words the feeling of the British peoples at the final conclusion of the struggle, was received with deep appreciation and a profound sense of thankfulness for "the victory of the ideals of freedom and liberty" for which the Empire's sons had fought and died. The same week the Proclamation by the King enjoining upon his subjects the inviolable observation of the Treaty was published, as was also another "appointing and commanding that a General Thanksgiving to Almighty God for these His manifold and great mercies" should be observed throughout

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the Empire on Sunday July 6th. A telegram from Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies, was also published conveying on behalf of Ministers their thanks to the members of the Colonial Service and expressing appreciation of their devotion to duty shown throughout the continuance of the War—a graceful act especially appreciated by those whose duties in a distant sphere had claimed their presence and prevented a more active participation in the struggle. Thanksgiving services were accordingly held in all the churches of the City on Sunday, and the day was generally observed as requested. The Administrator, members of the Legislature, public officials and representatives of public bodies attended the official celebration in the Cathedral, where a large congregation was present and the service was well worthy of the occasion.

Later on a Proclamation appeared appointing Saturday the 19th and Monday the 21st of July to be public holidays for the celebration of the formal termination

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of the War, and a representative committee was nominated by the Administrator to arrange for the Peace Celebrations. An adequate sum was voted by the Legislature for the festivities, both in New Providence and among the Out Islands, and a programme worthy of the occasion and sufficiently comprehensive to attract everybody was arranged. The celebrations were initiated by a successful banquet at The Club—the principal social organization in Nassau, 25 per cent of the members of which had served in the Empire's Forces—when the Administrator was present, but the programme of the official events was sadly interfered with by torrents of rain. It had been generally felt that the choice of Saturday as a holiday—notwithstanding the suggestion to that effect from England—was an unfortunate one, as local circumstances were such as made it extremely inconvenient to keep holiday on the last day of the week; but in any case rain effectually put a stop to anything of the kind on that day. The celebrations were therefore all crowded in on Monday, and included

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a review by the Administrator of the various forces of the City and exercises by the children of the public schools of New Providence in the morning, a dinner to the poor in the grounds of the Bahamas General Hospital, water sports in the afternoon and a general illumination of the City and a carnival and torch-light procession at night. The unfortunate weather that prevailed exercised a dampening influence generally, and other trivial although regrettable circumstances combined to prevent the most having been made of an occasion which should certainly have been an historic and joyous one in the annals of the "Loyal and Antient Colony of the Bahamas".

CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

RETROSPECT.

WITH the formal conclusion of the War and the termination of the celebrations in honour of the return of Peace this brief chronicle of events in the Colony of the Bahamas from August 1914 to July 1919—the years of the greatest struggle of all time—may fittingly be brought to a close. The fact that Peace had indeed once more descended upon a waiting world and that after the turmoil and strife of nearly five long years life was once more to resume its normal aspect, was not at once, perhaps, completely and entirely realized. Indeed, memories of the recent conflict, distant, but in one sense ever near, were so vivid and so poignant that it is safe to say that the dominating thought, the inspiring ideal resulting from all that had passed was—“Never Again!” And the aspiration was general that Peace, lasting, profound and beneficent, would reign in future and that

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the clash of arms should henceforth be forever banished from human affairs.

Life in the Bahamas apart from conditions due to their remoteness from the chief scenes of the conflict, did not probably differ very much in essentials from life throughout the War in other distant parts of the Empire. As has been seen, business experienced in an accentuated form those ups and downs inseparable from the history of commerce, and poor markets abroad were succeeded by improved demands, only again to be followed by a falling off in foreign requirements of the Colony's products. Until the prices of provisions, and, indeed, of commodities of all description, increased as they did, it cannot be said that the War inflicted on the whole any serious financial losses on local trade, and during 1916 the prices obtained for the Colony's products were reflected favourably in conditions prevailing in Nassau. But in 1917-1918 the pressure of events was beginning to make itself felt and it is probable that had the struggle continued very much longer, the Bahamas,

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owing to their dependance on outside sources for most of the necessities of life, would have experienced a state of affairs from which they had previously been singularly and fortunately free. As it was, there was but little actual hardship and still less of that suffering—apart from that occasioned by the casualty lists—with which so many other localities were painfully familiar.

Nevertheless it may be truthfully said that the grave issues—the triumph of justice and the freedom of the British peoples—depending upon the outcome of the struggle were fully realized, and that the Colony stood heart and soul with the Motherland and the rest of the Empire. The spirit which animated its citizens in the beginning of August 1914 prevailed throughout the War, and nowhere was there to be found any signs of slackening in the determination to persevere to the end, or any doubt in the ultimate outcome. The Great Cause—the cause of Britain, of civilization, of humanity, appealed to all hearts, and stirred profoundly those sentiments of patriotism and loyalty which had

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ever animated the citizens of the Colony. Cheerfully they gave of their best, in men, in money and in toil. The result of the recruiting appeals exceeded expectation and the response from a population, far removed from external influences and living, as a rule, an insular and an isolated existence, may be regarded as highly creditable. Without those terrible experiences of peril and privation, of ruin and suffering, which were the unhappy personal fate of millions, to stimulate patriotic endeavour, yet the call was heard and heeded, and the splendid courage of the Empire's sons elsewhere found its echo also in the Bahamas.

The Governor who held the reigns of administration on the outbreak of War described the people of the Colony, in a telegram to the Secretary of State, as "second to none in loyalty to King and Empire." That description was eminently true, and six years afterwards it is also eminently true to say that the loyalty, the patriotic devotion of the Colony to the Throne, the Flag and the Empire have been fortified and invigorated by the long years of War and are to-day more wide

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spread and deep-seated than ever. Its people are aware of a new and higher standard of those wide and noble obligations which dominion entails, and a new consciousness of the duties of British citizenship. The principles of liberty, of justice, of equal rights for all, of good government, of security for the individual and regard for the well-being of the many, which make British Rule to-day the synonym for wise and beneficent administration, appeal to all Bahamians with irresistible force. Pride in the Empire and in the glorious achievements of the Empire's fighting sons, confidence in the imperial destinies of the nation and assurance that the glorious traditions of the past will always worthily be maintained, make for them the privilege of being enrolled within that Empire an inestimable one. The bonds of patriotic union and concord between the Mother Country and the Colony have indeed been strengthened and intensified, and, proud of their status as British citizens, secure, happy and content—owing to the strong arm of Britain—within their island shores, Bahamians desire nothing

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better than to continue to dwell under the ægis of the Crown of England and within the confines of “a greater Empire than hath been.”

FINIS.

2ND BAHAMAS CONTINGENT.

SAILED NOVEMBER 25TH, 1915.

ERNEST G. WILLIAMS	JAMES ARTHUR
GEO. O. MCKENZIE	NAPOLEON ROKER
FREDERICK MOULTRIE	HERMAN PYFROM
DANIEL SWEETING	JAMES MAJOR
HEZEKIAH JOHNSON	JEREMIAH JOHNSON
JOHN DRIGGS	WILLIAM BALFOUR
SAMUEL BROWN	J. SAUNDERS
WM. MUNNINGS	C. ANTROBUS
RALPH N. LOTMORE	OSCAR YOUNG
HILTON RUSSELL	EDWARD WILSON
ARTHUR PERPALL	JOSEPH RAHMING
OSBORNE BOONES	JOHN MARSHALL
DANIEL CHARLTON	JAS. W. SANDS
ALEXANDER BUTLER	WILLIAM MOSS
FRANCIS MORTIMER	C. SMITH
HAROLD KEMP	PERCY A. HANNA
WILLIAM SIMMS	ALFRED WEECH
WILLIAM CAMPBELL	NATHANIEL MILLER
W. MACLURE	BRUCE MINNS
JAS. POITIER	WOLSEY JORDAN
WILLIAM JONES	CHARLES ROSE
BENJAMIN SMITH	RAYMOND JOHNSON

APPENDIX

JAS. MAJOR	ALFRED BELL
THADDEUS J. BROOKS	FREDK. ALBURY
LACITAS SWEETING	ALLAN JOHNSON
CLAUDIUS MCLEOD	W. HIGGS
LABAN R. THOMPSON	CHAS. H. ROBERTS
JNO. E. H. FERNANDER	JOSIAH A. SANDS
LEWIS ALFRED BOWE	MOSES T. INGRAHAM
SAM'L. J. MORRISON	HERBERT N. GRANT
CHAS. JOHNSON	N. KERR
THOS. CRAYDOCK	CHAS. DAN. FORSYTHE
CLARENCE MOXEY	JAS. A. THOMPSON
HAROLD FERNANDER	HENRY DUNCOMBE
R. H. SANDS	CUBEL FERNANDER
HERMAN ROBERTS	JAS. MAJOR
SAMUEL HUMES	RICHARD BETHEL
JAS. H. BETHEL	PETER DAVIS
THOMAS MOSS	ERSKINE STORR
REGINALD W. BULLARD	ARTHUR W. SANDS
JOSEPH THIMOTE	CHAS. L. BARTLETT
THEODORE ROLLE	HENRY M. JOHNSON
EMANUEL STURRUP	THOS. H. BOSTWICK
HERBERT SMITH	HENRY M. BUTCHER
SAMUEL SWEETING	CHAS. S. NAIRN
ERSKIN ARMBRISTER	CHAS. HANNA
JOS. N. BULLARD	JAPHETH CLARKE
ALEXANDER CHAMBERS	CHAS JOHNSON

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

JOSEPH BLYDEN

GEO. GIBSON

CHAS. BETHEL

H. C. SANDS

ROBT. A. MITCHELL

CHAS. S. R. L. TAYLOR

JOSIAH DEVEAUX

JOHN GOODMAN

3RD BAHAMAS CONTINGENT.

SAILED MAY 10TH, 1916.

ALFRED CARGILL	JAS. E. W. BULLARD
SAM'L. O. AMBROSE	ISRAEL McCARTNEY
JAS. LLOYD	DONALD INGRAHAM
JAS. DAVIS	GABRIEL BROWN
JOS. YOUNG	JAS. BOYD
WM. W. THOMPSON	GEO. A. THOMPSON
DAN SWEETING	WM. EVANS
ASA KEMP	ALARIC SAUNDERS
THOS A. JOHNSON	BENJAMIN HAMILTON
STEPHEN H. SAUNDERS	ROBT. TAYLOR
WM. R. A. BETHEL	SOL. S. ROKER
ALBERT BARRY	SOLOMON DAVIS
JAS. W. HALL	JOHN WHYLLY
ALBERT BIZZARD	JAS. A. YOUNG
DAVID ROLLE	ERNEST R. GIBSON
CHAS. A. BETHEL	VINCENT CAREY
GEO. FISHER	JOHN TURNQUEST
SAM BROWN	ROBT. GREEN
ED. M. ROLLE	JAS. BAPTISTE
DANIEL SWEETING	NATH. GORDON
HORACE JOHNSON	HOWARD ROBERTS
WM. A. THOMPSON	CLARENCE COAKLEY

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

GUS. PETERSON	OCTAVIUS DEAN
EDWARD SMITH	LEON ALBURY
FRED KERR	ROBERT W. SAWYER
ALLAN A. THOMPSON	THAD. EVANS
ANDERSON SEYMOUR	MALVIN INGRAHAM
LEES HALL	HENRY BRENNAN
GEO. L. SWEETING	HILARY GIBSON
WM. T. CULMER	GRANVILLE JOHNSON
EDWIN ROLLE	JAS. ROLLE
MANASSEH ROLLE	ZAC. FERNANDER
JOHN CLEARE	WM. R. C. MCPHEE
JOSEPH GORDON	E. FRANK HANNA
GEO. L. SANDS	CLARENCE L. MOSS
CHAS. S. SPARKSMAN	FELIX R. TURNQUEST
WM. P. B. COOPER	

1ST DRAFT FOR BAHAMAS UNIT.

SAILED AUGUST 5TH, 1916.

ALFRED ETIENNE DUPUCH	PAUL BETHEL
GEO. TINKER	JAS. MCBAIN JOHNSON
CLARENCE WHITE	ARTHUR H. LIGHTBOURN
ALBERT A. LLOYD	OBADIAH CAMBRIDGE
WILLIAM THOMPSON	IVANHOE BROWN
FRANCIS M. JOHNSON	SAM'L. A. SMITH
CLARENCE PETERS	ERNEST KEMP
HUGH L. CASH	EDMUND HANNA
VICTOR TOOTE	WILLIAM BEVANS
HAROLD TURNQUEST	JAS. A. PAYNE
JAS. WALLACE	EDWIN RODENWALT
LOUIS CAPRON	JAMES DAVIS
ABRAM LAFLEUR	CAMPBELL BALFOUR
CHAS. EVANS	JOS. ALBURY
GEO. ROLLE	GEO. SAUNDERS
JAS. A. ROSE	HAROLD B. BOWE
ARTHUR SANFORD	JARIS JOHNSON
GEO. H. INGRAHAM	OTHANIEL COOPER
JEPHTAH HUNTER	WILFRED MCKENZIE
MAURICE ROLLE	SYLVESTER FERGUSON
ARNOLD WILLIAMS	WILLIAM THOMPSON
VANDRUFF BUNCH	JONATHAN BAKER

THE BAHAMAS DURING THE GREAT WAR

FERRIS PEARCE	ORMOND S. FERNANDER
JOHN SMITH	JAS. EDWARD HOLMES
RICHARD GEO. COOPER	GEO. HIGGS
HARRY THOMPSON	LEANDER SMITH
ELIJAH THOMPSON	ALBERT HALL
JAMES WOOD	HUDON HULEN MOSS
REGINALD PETTY	NATHANIEL SYMONETTE
ALFRED CLARKE	HAROLD PETERSON
ALEX. PINDER	JAS. NEWMAN
WILLIAM B. CAREY	BENJAMIN E. ROBERTS
HERBERT MILLER	EDMUND HANNA
ALFRED SWEETING	HEZEKIAH STUART
HERBERT ALEX. HART	LORENZO BANNISTER
	ALFRED PITT

2ND DRAFT FOR BAHAMAS UNIT.

SAILED JUNE 29TH, 1917.

REV. A. E. HORNER	A. ROLLE
F. RUSSELL	A. TAYLOR
R. A. BRICE	A. W. HALL
T. ROXBOROUGH	H. HIGGINS
SGT. HARRISON	R. SEYMOUR
F. LARRIMORE	H. LONGLEY
R. MORRISON	C. FERGUSON
I. J. JOHNSON	N. MAJOR
J. TAYLOR	W. N. HALL
L. SAUNDERS	W. G. SAUNDERS
D. PENN	F. KNOWLES
G. BERRY	S. U. ROLLE
A. WELLS	J. A. EVANS
A. WILLIAMS	C. MORRIS
L. BARR	E. HIGGS
A. GAY	W. T. SAUNDERS
THEO ROKER	N. ROBINSON
F. SAIR	H. C. SWEETING
R. SAUNDERS	J. W. MOULTRIE
T. LIGHTBOURN	J. H. JOHNSON
G. DAMES	T. ROKER
H. MORRIS	R. SWEETING
W. L. ROBERTS	C. H. TINKER
T. SMITH	G. MARSHALL

J. MUNRO

3RD DRAFT FOR BAHAMAS UNIT.

SAILED JULY 19TH, 1917.

NORMAN A. YARD	HAMBLIN S. BURNSIDE
STANLEY E. BEST	JAMES CERUTI
RAYMOND MINNS	ALLAN J. BENJAMIN
HENRY J. GILL	HENRY TINKER
FRANK THOMPSON	GEO. WALTERS
JOSEPH MCQUAY	CHAS. THOMPSON
HENRY STRACHAN	RONALD W. KNOWLES
JOHN A. COAKLEY	EZEKIEL ROLLE
MELVIN DAMES	GEO. MITCHELL
BERTRAM FERGUSON	ARTHUR R. HIGGS
WHEELOCK MINNS	MOSES FERGUSON
FRANCIS HARRIS	ARCHIBALD L. BROWN
JOS. DAWKINS	LABRON J. FRANKS
ALFRED A. MILLER	GEO. ALMGREEN
THEO. WILSON	CHAS. LORD
JOHN CLARKE	HAROLD WILKINSON
ISMAEL DORSETT	OBILE DEMERITTE
JOHN DEMERITTE	JOHN MCNEIL
RANDOLPH RAHMING	JOS. JOHNSON
HORACE A. HUNT	SAMUEL YOUNG
LAWRENCE PINDER	LEANDER MARSHALL
WILLIAM CULMER	JACOB DEAN
JACOB ANDERSON	LEWIS RUSSELL
ALFRED CRAWFORD	DAVID FOX
NATHANIEL ASH	NEHEMIAH GRIFFIN
CLEVELAND WILKINSON	JOSEPH WILSON

4TH DRAFT FOR BAHAMAS UNIT.

SAILED JULY 30TH, 1917.

ARTHUR H. CODRINGTON	EDWARD FORBES
EDWARD WILLIAMS	HORACE ROLLE
ARCHILAUS ROLLE	THOMAS FERNANDER
ORMOND W. BOSFIELD	HOWARD RANGER
EMANUEL KELLY	CHARLES BRICE
JOHN SAUNDERS	RUPERT CAREY
HENRY MOXEY	ROLAND CULMER
TIMOTHY ASH	SAMPSON THOMPSON
SAMUEL ROBERTS	LEANDER DUNCOMBE
FRANK O. ARCHER	SAMUEL WEECH
AUSTIN FRANKS	EMMANUEL ROLLE
SAMUEL H. ROLLE	SAM'L. GEO. MINNS
CHARLES ELLIOT	ALFRED BEST
HERBERT STURRUP	JOHN SMITH
STANLEY THOMPSON	SAMUEL BARR
PRINCE NESBITT	JAMES WEBSTER
JAMES MANUEL	ELKANAH DELEVEAUX
HAROLD MINUS	LIONEL L. LUNN
EVAN CHISHOLM	LABRON SMITH
THOS. P. FERNANDER	HESKETH SPENCE
JOHN P. MINUS	CHARLES NORTH
THEO. BULLARD	LEWIS DAVIS
SAMUEL HALL	WILLIE INGRAHAM
HERBERT BAKER	CHARLES JOHNSON
JAMES HARTMAN JOHNSON	

5TH DRAFT FOR BAHAMAS UNIT.

SAILED 6TH SEPTEMBER, 1917.

LIEUT. HERBERT W. BROWN	EDDIE BETHEL
NEVILLE SAUNDERS	CHARLES KERR
JAMES MCINTOSH	JAMES CULMER
WM. E. SEARS	WELLINGTON A. BURROWS
SYLVANUS ROLLE	EDDIE NEWTON
MELBOURNE CARROLL	JAS. HERMAN DEAN
WALTER JAS. FISHER	WILLIAM DELANCY
ROBERT MINUS	HARTMAN DEAN
JOSEPH HUMES	RICHARD SMITH
HENRY JOHNSON	HEZEKIAH STRACHAN
WILMORE WOODSIDE	HANSEL ARMBRISTER
ALFRED WATKINS	JEREMIAH HEPBURN
SAMUEL BOWLEG	ZENAS MACKAY
HAROLD CARGILL	SAMUEL YOUNG
DRILL INS. WATSON	JOSEPH SANDS
JOHN ALBURY	GARNETT E. TURNQUEST
WILFRED BARTLETT	HEZ. LIGHTBOURN

