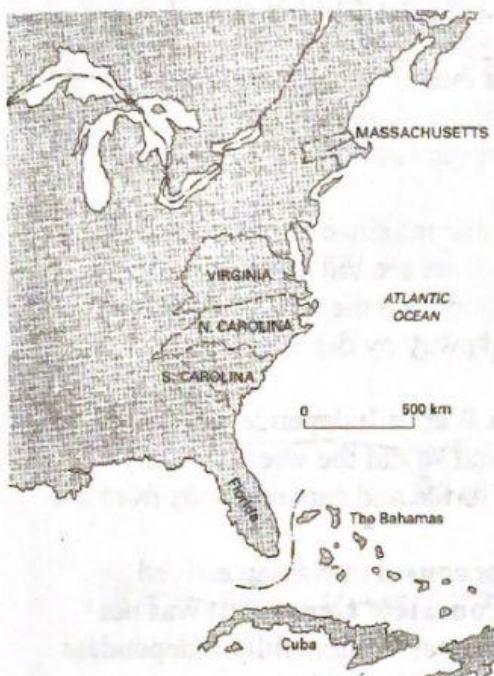


## Early Connections with America

The people in the Bahamas have always been closely associated with America. In 1629, King Charles I of England gave the lands of American Carolinas and the Bahamas to his chief legal advisor, **Attorney General Sir Robert Heath**. By this grant, these lands became British territories.



Charles II of England had given The Bahamas to the Lord Proprietor of Carolina. This meant that the Proprietors took over the Bahamas to make money. But they had very little interest in the islands and appointed **Governors** to rule over them.

The people who lived in the Bahamas were expected to pay some of their wages to the Proprietors in America. The Governors were supposed to collect this money, but often the people refused to pay.



In those early years, settlers in the Bahamas looked to settlers in North America for advice, help, and trade. Settlers in America sent help to the Adventurers. In return, the Adventurers later give money towards the building of the famous **Harvard College** in Massachusetts.

Many of our islands made a living by trading with America colonies. Nassau became a second home to many American sea captains and pirates, and Bahamians sailed to and from Carolina, Virginia, and Massachusetts.

The Lord Proprietors of Carolina were also Proprietors of the Bahamas. In 1670,



The rule of the Proprietors ended in 1718 when Woodes Rogers was appointed as the first Royal Governor of the Bahamas.

Nearly 60 years later, in 1775, the American War of Independence began. Americans wanted to govern themselves and not to be ruled by Britain. Ships of the American Navy were sent to Nassau to take the powder and ammunition stored at **Fort Nassau**. But Governor Montfort-Browne had already sent most of it away. When the Americans landed, they found only 24 barrels of gunpowder and a little ammunition. They took over Fort Nassau for two weeks. Then they set sail again, almost empty-handed.

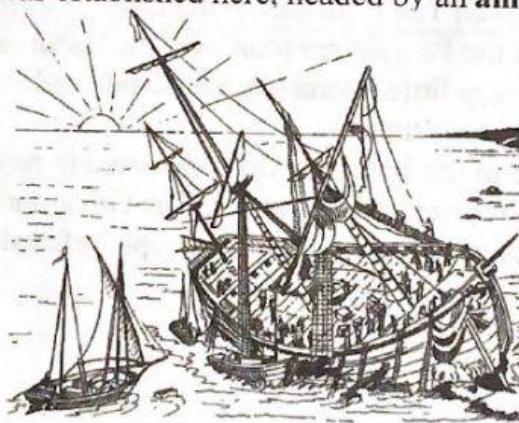
Not long afterwards, in 1782, New Providence was invaded again, this time by the Spaniards. The Governor was forced to surrender to the Spanish troops who took over the island. They remained there for nine months, until a loyalist officer, **Colonel Andrew Deveaux**, attacked with forces from Harbour Island and Eleuthera and recaptured the fort.



**Wrecking** had been big business in The Bahamas since the first settlers arrived. Many ships were caught by the tricky currents around these islands and swept ashore. Some ships were deliberately attracted onto the cays and reefs by false lights. Then the goods on board were carried away by the wreckers and later sold.

In the 1780's after the end of the American War of Independence, trade between America and The Bahamas increased – and so did the wrecks. Many Bahamian wreckers worked along the shores of Florida and carried goods from the wrecks there to Nassau.

The first official American representative or **consul** in Nassau arrived in 1821. By 1859, the consulate was known as the **Consulate General**. It was not until this century, on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1973, when the Bahamas became fully independent that an **embassy** was established here, headed by an **ambassador**.



The first **steamships** began a regular service between New York and Nassau in 1859. This was the start of our tourist industry. Many years later, in 1929, the first regular **airline flights** between Miami and Nassau began.

Between 1861 and 1865, during the years of American Civil War, all ships were prevented from using the ports in the southern states of America, this was a **blockade**. Nassau became very important at that time, supplying guns and ammunitions to the troops of the Southern States, which were called the Confederacy. Nassau also exported cotton from the plantations in these states in Britain.

In 1919, the American government passed an act which prevented the American people from making, selling, importing or exporting liquors anywhere in the United States. So from 1920 to 1933, during the period that was called **Prohibition**, many people in the Bahamas were involved in **smuggling** liquor into America.

During the **Second World War** (1939-1945), many American men went to Europe to join the troops there. It was a difficult time for farmers in America because there were not enough people to work the land, so people from the Bahamas also went to America to work on the farms and in the food production factories there. This was the result of an agreement called the **Project** or **The Contract**, arranged between the governments of the United States and The Bahamas.

# EARLY CONNECTIONS WITH AMERICA

## Historical Timeline

- 1629 – The Bahamas became a British territory
- 1718 – The rule of The Lord Proprietors ended
- 1861 -1865 – The years of the American Civil War
- 1920 – 1933 – The period of Prohibition in The United States of America
- 1929 – Regular airline flights between Miami and Nassau began
- 1939 – 1945 – The Period of the Second World War

a. **"The Bahamas was a colony before gaining its independence in 1973."**  
Which country ruled The Bahamas before it obtained its independence in 1973? [1]

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b. Define the term '**colony**'. [2]

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c. In what year did the rule of The Lord Proprietors end in The Bahamas? [1]

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d. Explain how the even that took place in 1929 on the timeline helped the economy of The Bahamas? \_\_\_\_\_ [2]

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e. There are several periods in the development of the history of The Bahamas. Look at the list of words in the box and then write the words that correctly complete the timeline of early events in The Bahamas. \_\_\_\_\_ [3]

Blockade	Contract	Prohibition	Second World War
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PERIODS IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORY OF THE BAHAMAS		
DATE	DESCRIPTION	EVENT
i) 1861 - 1865	Closed ports	
ii) 1920 - 1933	Ban on liquor	
iii) 1939 - 1945	International conflict	

f. During the Second World War many Bahamians went to work on *The Contract*. State **TWO** advantages and **TWO** disadvantages this had on the people of The Bahamas. [4]

**Advantages:**

i. \_\_\_\_\_

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ii. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Disadvantages:**

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_

**END.**