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Hypothesis

*THE INFRASTRUCTURAL AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS BY
INFLUENTIAL PERSONS HAVE LED TO MARSH HARBOUR
BEING THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS IN THE ABACOS.*

Topic

*AN INCESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS INFLUENCING
MARSH HARBOUR (CENTRAL) AS BEING THE MAIN CENTRE
FOR BUSINESS IN THE ABACOS*

Introduction

Contained here in my coursework booklet is information gathered as a requirement for the Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (B.G.C.S.E) in Geography. In the span of December 19th 2007 to January 4th 2008 the writer has assembled and recorded all information shown here. A particular sequence was followed to accumulate every feasible data. The researcher has been on field trips and has done interviews to complete this task. Also, the researcher used common sense to get a better understanding of the task. Skills and observation and photography will also be included in my studies. The researcher truly hopes that the information assembled in this booklet from field trips, to the interviews, to all other personal efforts made will help the reader to fully understand the researcher's point of view.

Section 1

History Development of Mars̃ Harbour and its business infrastructure, government offices etc.

The first real settlers in Abaco were British Loyalists. They came to Abaco in the 1780's during the American Revolutionary War. Mars̃ Harbour is centrally located and it was found in 1784 and is the largest and center of commerce.

Mars̃ Harbour, the capital of Abaco, seems to have been a bi-racial settlement. Settlers, including whites, free blacks, and slaves from the first loyalist villages of Carleton and Maxwell Town made their homes at Mars̃ Harbour. The latter had a safer harbor though not so deep. By 1785 44% of the population of Abaco lived at Mars̃ Harbour.

Mainly the whites developed Mars̃ Harbour because they were the ones with the money at the time. They also began growing sisal in the late nineteenth century. Because of a terrible hurricane in 1932, the free blacks who lived in the other settlements in the north were forced to move closer to Mars̃ Harbour. After this occurred, the government provided an agricultural officer to promote the development of farming. Produce was intended for local consumption with the surplus being sold in Mars̃ Harbour. This is what began the development of Mars̃ Harbour.

Mars̃ Harbour is the largest settlement and the seat of government – all Government Offices are located here. It is also a major business center and a Port of Entry. It is the third largest town in the Bahamas, the largest being Nassau and the second largest Freeport, Grand Bahama. The harbor at Mars̃ Harbour is just as spacious as Nassau is, but it cannot accommodate deep draft vessels. However, there is a constant flow of small boat traffic in the harbor as Mars̃ Harbour is home to several Marinas; The Bahamas Yachting Service is the largest in the Bahamas. Mars̃ Harbour also boasts an International Airport, supermarkets, and liquor and hardware stores. Also it entails many restaurants, marinas and other businesses. There is a medical clinic, Post Office and the Offices of the Senior Administrator for the Island. There are also a number of hotels and guest houses in Mars̃ Harbour.

One of the major reasons why Mars' Harbour is the Central Business District of Abaco is because like I said earlier, "the whites were the ones with the money at the time." Most of them lived in Mars' Harbour and some still do; so they wanted to build their businesses closer to home. At that time it made more sense. It was very difficult for those persons living further out.

Abaco is seen as the boat building capital of the Bahamas. This was a skill passed on by the Loyalists and kept alive by the Abaconians. Boat building was done in Mars' Harbour as well as some of the other settlements. Fishery was another small business done within Mars' Harbour using the boats made. The biggest investment made in Mars' Harbour lately was the development of the Port.

The businesses within Mars' Harbour began on a minor scale and later maximized throughout the years. The first gas station was owned by an Abaconian and later sold to another. During the course of the time, the growth of the other two gas stations, owned by the Albury brothers (Texaco and Shell), increased tremendously. There were a variety of services offered at both gas stations such as: an oil change, a tire repair, and many more.

Bertrum Mills, Mr. Swain, and Captain Percy Archer were all businessmen who invested well in their business by expanding the building spaces. In doing this, it allowed them to offer a vacant room where persons, wanting to start a business, could operate from. These men each benefited from this because these tenants would have to pay rent in order to operate there. This mainly occurred in the downtown area of Mars' Harbour.

After a while, Mars' Harbour became more developed because later when the tenants' business got off to a good start, they would be able to afford their own piece of property to manage their own businesses within the Mars' Harbour area.

Because of all the investments made, blocks of buildings were produced such as: The B and V Plaza (owned by Bertrum Mills) and The Percy Archer Square. These buildings still exist today.

As I have stated earlier there are a few government offices located in Mars' Harbour, but none of them are located in government buildings. The only government office that operates in its own building is BTC.

The rapid growth of Abaco has been well acknowledged by the government of the Bahamas. Also, plans have been drawn up showing the enlargement of some buildings.

Other businesses and Banks are based "within a stones throw" to one another. The roads are well kept and are easily approached. Traffic is also governable and allows effortless use for both pedestrians and motorists.

In having new investments opportunities and investors along with the attainability of land, the future development of Marsh Harbour seems very brilliant.

Section 2

Business trends within Mars' Harbour and its Environment.

First of all, I am going to start off by giving the meaning of that statement. It simply means what do all of the businesses have in common and what is its surrounding area like.

What most of these buildings have in common are that they all basically do not own the buildings in which they operate. Instead, they rent from the business men who built these blocks so that persons may rent from them. Also, a lot of them end up in the same business (i.e. selling clothing). Some persons just do not have any imagination to come up with a business

The environment is simple it is all congested. Everything is all in one .when I say that I mean all of the building blocks are side by side or maybe across the road from one another. There are not enough varieties of places to shop from everything are basically the same.

The main shopping centre of Abaco is in Mars' Harbour. Mars' Harbour has everything from banks to schools, food stores and hotels. It's amazing how much it has to offer.

Most persons live around the area so it is much easier for them to do their personal shopping but persons living in the north and south have to travel for almost an hour just to get to Mars' Harbour. Construction workers have to come from far and near to do their banking on Fridays. It is necessary for them to come to Mars' Harbour to do their grocery shopping because in the their settlements there are only convenience stores. The necessities that they look for can sometimes only be found in Mars' Harbour.

Like I said in the beginning mostly clothes are sold in basically every other shop. Then you can also find jewelry, shoes and a lot more. Some of the stores are MJ's Fashion, Sports World, and Roselyn.

Analysis/Conclusion

The writer will conclude by saying that Mars' Harbour is the Central Business District of Abaco because it contains basically everything from stores to hotels and many. It so happens, that Mars' Harbour became this way after the loyalist started it up.

Also, the analysis shows that Mars' Harbour is well developed since the 1970's and that Mars' Harbour is growing to a great extent.

Bibliography

To gather this information the researcher had to do personal research. The researcher went to the ministry of Education to get information on the History of Abaco. To further my studies the researcher went to the Abaconian (newspaper). Later, the researcher did personal studies to complete the task.