

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

Council Paper No. 41 of 1924.

MINES DEPARTMENT.

Administration Report of the Inspector of Mines for the year 1923.

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M. P. No. 2928, 1924.

HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

I have the honour to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, the following report of the Mines Branch of the Lands and Mines Department for the period 1st January to 30th June, 1923, and of the Mines Department for the remainder of the year.

OFFICIAL DUTIES.

2. Following on the resignation of the late Mr. R. R. Thompson, as mentioned in my last report, the post of Director of Lands and Mines was abolished as from 30th June, 1923, and the departments of Lands and Mines became separate entities as they existed prior to 1921.

THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

3. The financial conditions prevailing during the period under review have been unfavourable to any large expansion of the petroleum industry of the Colony, with the result that development has been chiefly confined to those companies already operating in the Colony which have, in most cases, concentrated their energies on the extension of the proven fields so that no great amount of prospecting work has been undertaken in new areas. I am glad to be able to report that several of the larger companies have carried out a very active drilling programme and considerably extended their fields with very satisfactory results, and I have to record that the production of crude oil in the Colony during the past year was the largest yet known, the increase over that for the year 1922 exceeding 21,000,000 gallons.

4. No new shipping or refining depots have been constructed during the past year though some additions have been made to existing installations. There are now four outlets for the shipment of petroleum products, viz. :—

Claxton Bay	..	Trinidad Central Oilfields, Limited.
Pointe-a-Pierre	..	Trinidad Leaseholds, Limited.
Brighton	..	Trinidad Lake Petroleum Company, Limited.
Point Fortin	..	United British Refineries, Limited.

Each of these companies also possesses facilities for the refining of crude oil.

5. During the past year a pipeline was laid by the Trinidad Petroleum Development Company, Ltd., from its property at Palmiste to Claxton Bay where a tank was built. A pipeline was also laid by the General Petroleum Company, Ltd. from its field near Fyzabad to Los Bajos in order to connect with the pipeline of the United British West Indies Petroleum Syndicate, Ltd. from there to Point Fortin, where the production was sold to the United British Refineries, Ltd.

6. The exports of petroleum products shew a considerable increase over last year, the figures being 85,000,000 gallons as against 56,000,000 gallons for the year 1922. In addition to the regular shipments of oil fuel made under contract to the Admiralty, large quantities of petroleum products were exported to private firms in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. There was also a considerable trade with the other West Indian Colonies and regular shipments were made by steamers calling here for bunkers.

7. The following table will shew the number of feet drilled and the quantity of oil produced during 1923 compared with the years 1921 and 1922 :—

	YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1921.		YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1922.		YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1923.	
	<i>Feet drilled.</i>	<i>Oil won Imp. Galls.</i>	<i>Feet drilled.</i>	<i>Oil won Imp. Galls.</i>	<i>Feet drilled.</i>	<i>Oil won Imp. Galls.</i>
Crown Lands ..	70,710	61,325,279	97,802	53,725,443	87,148	66,869,135
Private Lands ..	46,150	21,070,316	38,068	31,840,860	58,653	39,911,396
Total ..	116,860	82,395,595	135,870	85,566,303	145,801	106,780,531

8. During the past year the number of new wells drilled was 108 (75 on Crown lands and 33 on private lands), a total increase of 17 over the previous year, and in 73 of these oil was struck. The total number of wells drilled in the Colony to 31st December last is 818 of which 520 are on Crown lands.

9. At the close of the year 17 companies were actively engaged in the winning of oil as against 16 at the end of the year 1922.

10. ROYALTY.—The royalty collected during the period under review was £24,844 18s. 1d.

11. WAYLEAVES.—The revenue obtained from wayleaves in respect of pipelines laid along the Trinidad Government Railway and along the public roads of the Colony was as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Railways	5,212	8	4
Roads	2,153	8	4

12. FEES.—Fees charged for crossing the foreshore, the railway and public roads with pipelines amounted to £29.

13. LEASES AND LICENSES.—No new leases or licenses were issued during the year.

14. RETURNS.—The various oil companies have regularly submitted to the department the returns required to be furnished by them in respect of their operations.

15. INSPECTIONS.—In addition to the regular field inspections which were made by officers of the department, it was necessary, as in previous years, to carry out many additional inspections in connection with accidents, royalty computations, wayleaves, refineries, water shut offs, abandonment of wells, &c. In most cases it was found that the provisions of the Ordinance and Regulations had been satisfactorily observed.

QUARRIES.

16. The quarries in the Colony, with very few exceptions, are small and unimportant. They have been inspected regularly and have, in most cases, been found to be working in a careful manner. The number of quarries in operation during the year 1923 was 69 as against 73 in 1922.

PETROLEUM ORDINANCE NO. 20 OF 1915.

17. The premises in which the various products of petroleum are stored have been carefully inspected, and it is satisfactory to note that as a rule great care has been taken to ensure safety.

PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS ORDINANCE NO. 13 OF 1915.

18. On the whole the machinery in the various factories is efficiently protected by the owners and managers who co-operate with the Department in ensuring safety to the workmen in their employment ; in all 85 factories in Trinidad and 17 in Tobago were worked during the year.

ASPHALT INDUSTRY ORDINANCE, No. 10 OF 1906.

19. No asphalt has been dug on the village lots at La Brea since 1914.

APPENDICES.

20. Appendix A shews the list of oil companies operating in the Colony during the year 1923.

21. In Appendix B will be found the daily average number of persons employed in oilfields and quarries and the quantity and value of minerals obtained during the period under review.

22. A comparative statement of the oil produced, refined and exported is shown in Appendix C.

23. Appendix D consists of curves illustrating the progress made in the oil, asphalt, manjac and quarrying industries from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.

MISCELLANEOUS.

24. STAFF.—I have great pleasure in recording the able and loyal assistance that I have received from the members of the staff.

A. P. CATHERALL,
Inspector of Mines.

31st March, 1924.

APPENDIX A.

No.	Companies.	Nature of tenure of lands on which operations took place.		Disposal of oil.	Remarks.
1	Trinidad Leaseholds, Limited	Crown lands under lease	Fyzabad, Barrackpore	Refined in Company's refinery at Pointe-a-Pierre. Most of the production is exported in bulk	Largest producing Company in the Colony. Nearly all the production is from Crown lands.
2	United British West Indies Petroleum Syndicate, Limited	Crown lands under lease	Los Bajos	Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	No drilling except at Los Bajos.
3	United British Oilfields of Trinidad, Limited	Crown lands under lease.	Point Fortin	Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	Continued drilling on Parry Lands area. Produced also from wells already drilled on private lands at Point Fortin.
4	Trinidad Central Oilfields, Limited	Private lands	Point Fortin		
4	Trinidad Central Oilfields, Limited	Crown lands under lease	Tabaquite	Small quantities refined for local consumption and remainder exported in bulk in the crude state	Considerably extended their field on Crown lands at Tabaquite.
5	Trinidad Lake Petroleum Company, Limited	Private lands	Brighton	The bulk of the production exported in the crude state to the U. S. A.	Producing only.
6	Petroleum Development Company, Limited	Crown lands under lease	Morne L'Enfer	Sold to Trinidad Lake Petroleum Company, Limited	Drilling on Lots 1 and 4, Morne L'Enfer Reserve with satisfactory results.
7	Apex (Trinidad) Oilfields, Limited	Crown lands under lease and private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to the Trinidad Leaseholds, Limited.	Active drilling programme ; field largely extended.
8	Kern Trinidad Oilfields, Limited	Private lands	Guapo	Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	Continued drilling during the whole of the period ; fair production obtained.
9	General Petroleum Company of Trinidad, Ltd.	Private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	Reconstructed from the Oropuche Oilfields, Ltd., and the General Petroleum Company of Trinidad, Ltd., in the middle of the year ; since when a very active drilling programme has been successfully carried out.
10	Trinidad Petroleum Development Company, Ltd.	Private lands	San Fernando	Kept in Storage	Drilling on Palmiste and Phillipine Estates near San Fernando during the whole of the period.
11	New Naparima Oilfields, Limited	Private lands	Naparima district		Two wells drilled on private lands ; no oil produced.
12	Trinidad Freeholds, Limited	Private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Producing only.
13	Petroleum Options, Limited	Private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Drilled one well ; oil struck.
14	Trinidad Friendship Petroleum Company, Ltd.	Private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Drilled one well ; oil struck.
15	British Union Oil Company, Limited	Crown lands under prospecting license	Tabaquite		Suspended operations in the early part of the year and surrendered the prospecting license.
16	British Controlled Oilfields, Limited	Do.	Oropouche	Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Drilled one well and struck high grade oil.
17	Trinidad Oil Producing and Refining Company	Private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Producing only.
18	Transvaal and Rhodesian Estates, Limited	Private lands	Point Ligoure	Barrelled and sold locally	Producing only.
19	E. J. Marsden	Private lands	Aripero Estate		Drilled one well on private lands and then closed down.

or

APPENDIX B.

Daily average number of persons employed in Oilfields and Quarries and the quantity and value of minerals obtained during the year ended 31st December, 1923.

Minerals.	Daily average number of persons employed.		Total.	Quantity.	Approximate Value.
	Males.	Females.			
Oil	3,008	36	3,044	106,780,531 Imp. Gals.	£ 782,689
Asphalt	1,024	15	1,039	221,347 Tons	£ 138,341
Private Quarries (Limestone, Gravel, &c.)	379	145	524	175,374 Tons	£ 22,171
Government Quarries (Limestone, &c.)	306	80	386	46,639 Tons	£ 6,645

APPENDIX C.

Comparative statement of oil produced, refined and exported year by year since the inception of the Petroleum Industry in the Colony.

Year.	Production in Gallons.	Quantity of Crude Oil refined in Gallons.	Quantity of Crude Oil and Refined Oil exported in Gallons.
1905 to March 31st, 1910 ..	368,934
1910-1911	4,378,942
1911-1912	9,985,748	Previous to 1912-1913. 1,324,468	7,685,371
1912-1913	17,626,563	331,928	4,295,707
1913-1914	22,523,060	1,227,134	13,570,152
1914-1915	36,753,931	1,449,445	12,192,289
9 months ended December, 1915 ..	23,489,362	2,045,286	14,286,585
1916	32,475,695	3,773,770	34,129,955
1917	56,080,914	17,675,068	37,777,919
1918	72,872,398	73,722,915	45,689,234
1919	64,436,632	40,248,014	49,219,226
1920	72,905,947	48,842,055	36,221,728
1921	82,395,595	63,210,566	42,817,117
1922	85,566,303	63,700,621	56,550,915
1923	106,780,531	82,609,767	85,136,457
	688,640,555	400,161,037	439,572,658

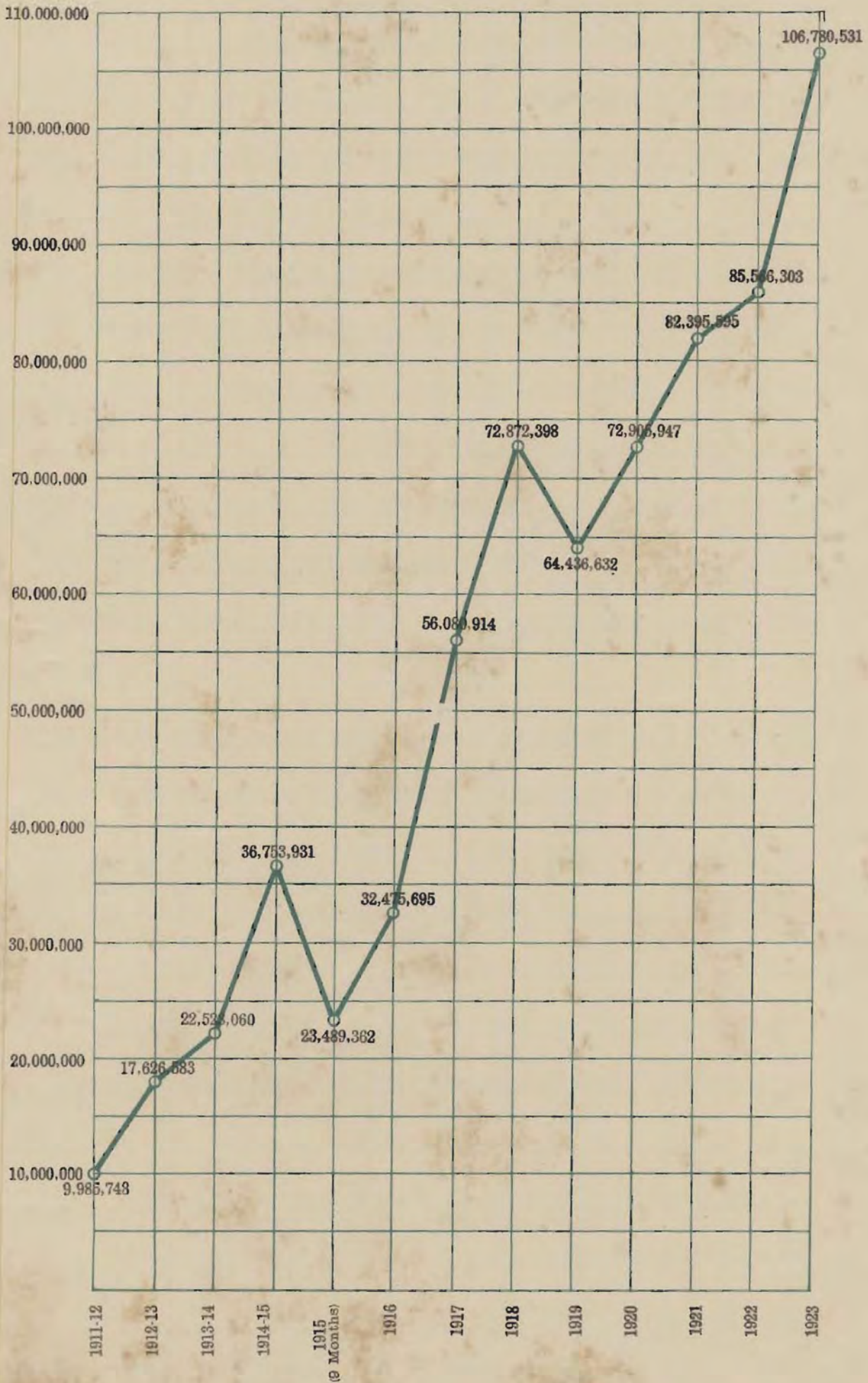
A

Curve showing the number of Oil Companies that have operated annually in the Colony from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.



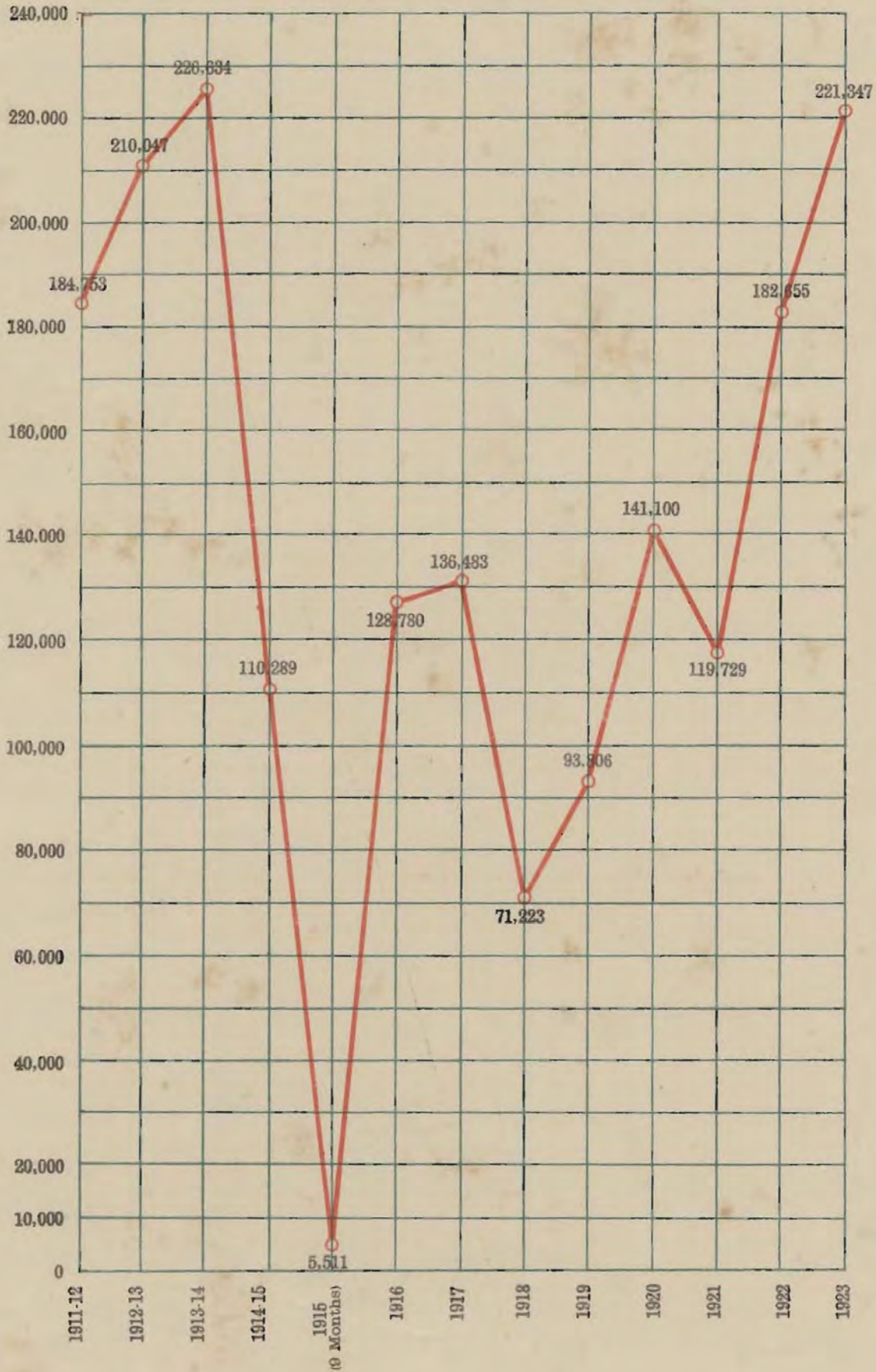
B

Curve showing yearly total production of Crude Oil from the Colony in Imperial Gallons from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.



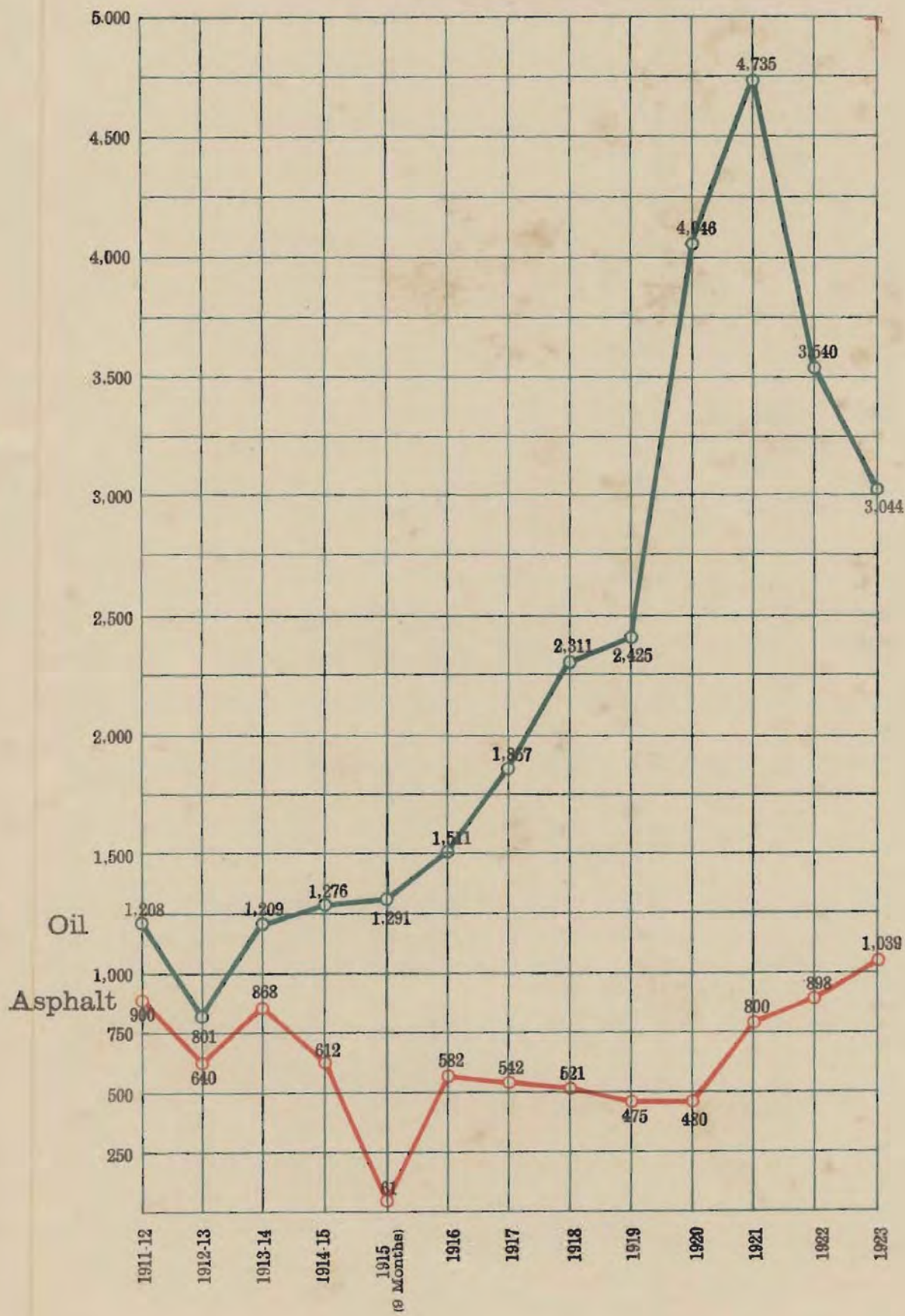
C

Curve showing yearly output of Asphalt from the Colony in Tons from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.



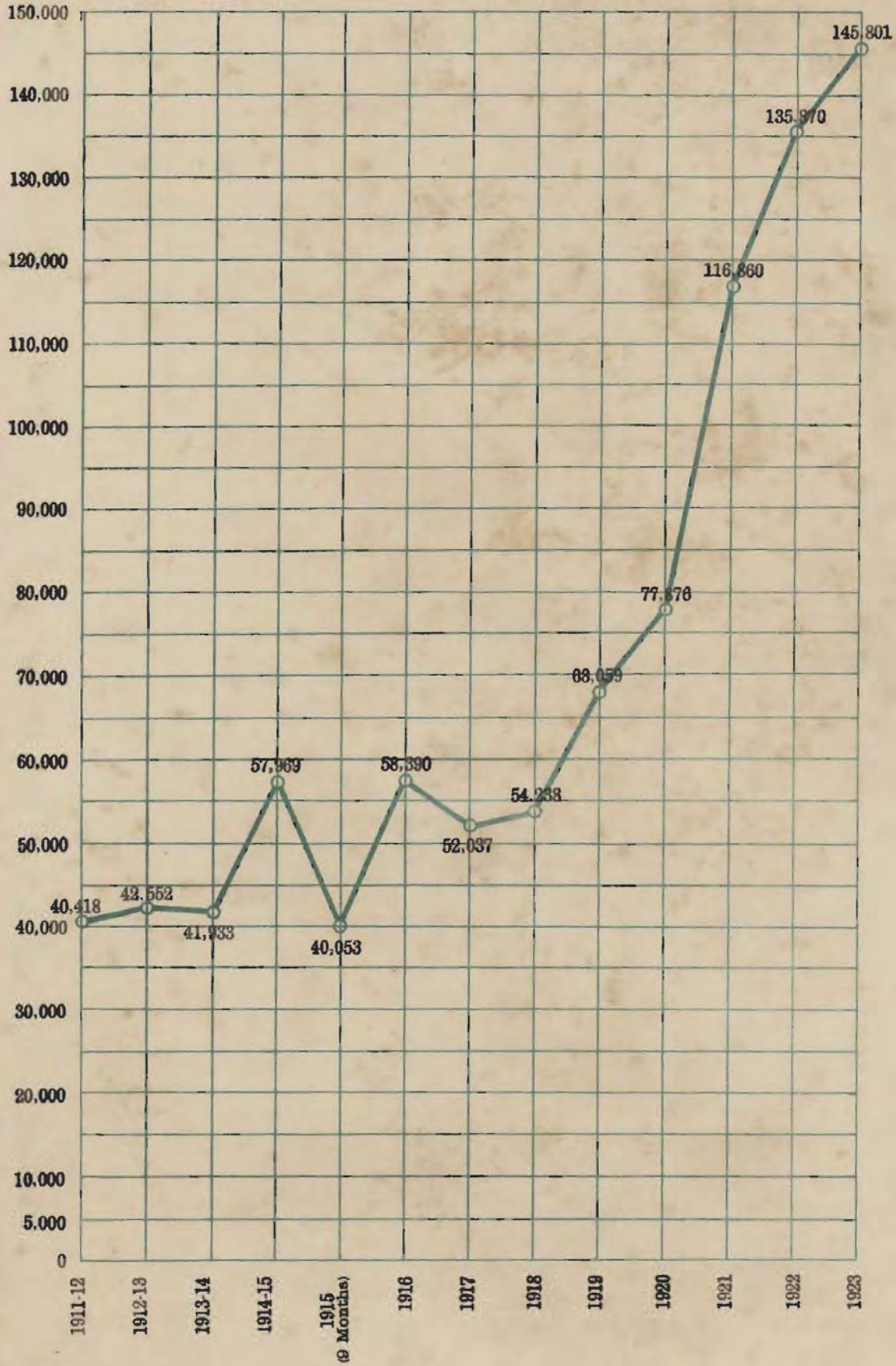
D

Curve showing comparison of daily average number of persons employed in the Oil and Asphalt Industries of the Colony from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.



E

Curve showing yearly total number of feet drilled in the Colony from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.



F

Curve showing the yearly total quantity of Minerals quarried and a comparison of the daily average number of persons employed in Quarries in the Colony from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1923.

Minerals quarried - - - - - Persons employed - - - - -

