

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

**Council Paper No. 61 of 1925.**

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**MINES DEPARTMENT.**

**Administration Report of the Inspector of Mines for the year 1924:**

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*Laid before the Legislative Council on the  
29th May, 1925.*

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*Previous Council Paper No. 41 of 1924.*

*Registered No. of Correspondence relating to the subject.—M.P. No. 4271/1925.*

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TRINIDAD.  
PRINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTER,  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

1925.

[Price 2/4.]

## MINES DEPARTMENT.

## Administration Report of the Inspector of Mines for the year 1924.

*Council Paper No. 61 of 1925.**M.P. No. 4271/1925.*

HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

I have the honour to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, the following report on the work of the Mines Department for the year 1924.

**THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.**

2. I am glad to be able to report a very large increase in production of crude petroleum during 1924. This was the largest yet known being over 1,005,740 barrels more than won during the previous year.

During the period under review nearly all the oil companies operating in the Colony have carried out an active drilling programme, but owing to the prevailing financial conditions the increase in production has been due to the extension of already proven fields rather than to the opening up of new areas.

3. 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 shipping of petroleum products, viz. :—

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

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

4. The exports of petroleum products show a large increase compared with last year, the figures being 113,000,000 gallons as against 85,000,000 for the year 1923.

It is of great interest to note that for the first time in the history of the Colony the exports of petroleum products were greater in value than the products of any other industry and formed over 30 per cent. of the total exports of the Colony. In 1924 petroleum products to the value of £1,367,160 were exported, compared with £1,276,850 for sugar, molasses and rum and £1,165,816 for cocoa. To realize the phenomenal increase of the importance of this industry to the Colony we have only to compare the figures of ten years ago; in 1914 the value of petroleum products exported was £67,345 and formed less than 3 per cent. of the total exports. The major portion of the export trade is in the form of oil fuel of which a large part is shipped to the admiralty under contract.

5. The following table will show the number of feet drilled and the quantity of oil produced during 1924 compared with the years 1922 and 1923 :—

	YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1922.		YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1923.		YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1924.	
	<i>Feet drilled.</i>	<i>Oil won Brls. of 35 galls.</i>	<i>Feet drilled.</i>	<i>Oil won Brls. of 35 galls.</i>	<i>Feet drilled.</i>	<i>Oil won Brls. of 35 galls.</i>
Crown Lands ..	97,802	1,535,013	87,148	1,910,547	97,039	2,486,269
Private Lands ..	38,068	909,739	58,653	1,140,325	54,853	1,570,343
	135,870	2,444,752	145,801	3,050,872	151,892	4,056,612

6. The total number of wells drilled in the Colony to 31st December, 1924, is 928 of which 596 are on Crown Lands. During the year under review 110 new wells were drilled, of which 76 were on Crown Lands and 34 on private lands, an increase of 2 compared with 1923. In 80 of these wells oil was struck,

7. The number of companies engaged in the mining of oil at the close of the year was 16 as against 17 at the end of 1923.

8. ROYALTY.—I am pleased to be able to report that there has been a very considerable increase in the royalty collected during the past year, the amount being £31,006 6s. 11d. as compared with £24,844 18s. 1d. for 1923.

9. WAYLEAVES.—The revenue obtained from wayleaves in respect of pipe lines along the Trinidad Government Railway and the public roads of the Colony has also shewn an increase. The amounts for the years 1923 and 1924 are as follows :—

	<i>Trinidad Government Railway.</i>		<i>Roads.</i>
1923	....	....	£5,212 8s. 4d.
1924	....	....	£2,153 8s. 4d.
			£2,740 9s. 8d.

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

11. No new leases or licences were issued during the year.

12. RETURNS.—The various oil companies have regularly submitted to the department the returns required to be furnished by them.

13. INSPECTIONS.—A large number of inspections have been carried out by the officers of the department in connection with the various operations taking place on the fields, and I have much pleasure in reporting that the Managers co-operate with this department in endeavouring to carry out the provisions of the Ordinances and Regulations.

14. SAN FERNANDO BRANCH OF THE DEPARTMENT.—Toward the end of 1923 a small branch of the department was opened at San Fernando to deal with the conservation of oil and gas and other problems of the petroleum industry with which the department is concerned; a petroleum engineer, Mr. F. M. Ziegler, being in charge. The work of this branch expanded so rapidly that both additional staff and new office accommodation were found necessary. Mr. C. A. P. Southwell, M.C., B.Sc., Geologist, was transferred from the head office to this branch and has been stationed there during the whole of the period under review, with the exception of the last two months during which he was on leave of absence.

The offices occupied during the early part of the year proving too small, arrangements were made to move this branch into a portion of the Treasury building. These quarters are very satisfactory and it is hoped will prove adequate for many years.

Messrs. Ziegler and Southwell are engaged for a large part of the time on original research and I hope to be able to submit complete reports on the work undertaken during the early part of 1926.

A photograph of a part of the peg model room in which models of the underground conditions existing in the various oilfields are constructed by the officers in charge is enclosed herewith (Appendix E).\*

#### **PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS ORDINANCE NO. 13 OF 1915.**

15. During the period under review 85 factories in Trinidad and 17 in Tobago were worked. Taking the factories as a whole the owners and managers co-operate satisfactorily with the department in ensuring safety to the workmen in their employment.

#### **QUARRIES.**

16. The remarks made in my last report on this subject still hold good. With very few exceptions, the quarries at present being worked in the Colony are relatively unimportant. From the inspections which have been made they have been found to be worked in most cases in a careful manner. The number of quarries in operation during the year 1924 was 70 compared with 69 in 1923.

\* Not printed.

**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.

**ASPHALT INDUSTRY ORDINANCE NO. 10 OF 1906.**

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

**APPENDICES.**

19. Appendix A shews the list of oil companies operating in the Colony during the year 1924.

20. 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.

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

22. Appendix D consists of a series of charts depicting in graphical form the progress made in various industries during the past few years.

**STAFF.**

23. No additions to the permanent staff were made during 1924. Mr. C. A. P. Southwell, Geologist, was re-engaged for a period of two years from 20th December last, to collaborate with Mr. Ziegler in undertaking the special investigations now in progress in the San Fernando branch of the department. The title of the post was changed to Government Geologist, Mines Department.

I have the greatest pleasure in recording the very able and loyal assistance I have received from the members of the staff.

15th May, 1925.

A. P. CATHERALL,  
*Inspector of Mines.*

**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	Pumped to the Company's refinery at Pointe-a-Pierre, and there refined. Most of the production is exported in bulk	Largest producing Company in the Colony. Large purchases of crude oil from other companies are made and refined at Pointe-a-Pierre. Very great activity has been shewn during the past year, and the field on Crown lands at Fyzabad greatly extended. A well was also drilled on private lands at Guayaguayare without striking oil.
		Private lands	Barrackpore		
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. This Company proposes to relinquish a large part of its holdings in the near future.
3	United British Oilfields of Trinidad, Limited ..	Crown lands under lease	Point Fortin, Morne L'Enfer Reserve	Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	Drilling continued on Crown lands at Point Fortin and on Parry lands area.
		Private lands	Point Fortin		
4	Trinidad Central Oilfields, Limited .. ..	Crown lands under lease	Tabaquite, Mayaro Guapo	Exported .. ..	Drilling was continued on the Tabaquite field during the whole of the year and a fair production obtained. A number of test wells were also drilled in dew districts.
5	Trinidad Lake Petroleum Company, Limited ..	Private lands	Brighton	.. The bulk of the production is exported to the United States of America	Producing only.
6	Petroleum Development Company, Limited ..	Crown Lands under lease	Morne L'Enfer Forest Reserve	Sold to Trinidad Lake Petroleum Company, Limited	Drilling on Lots 1 and 4 with very satisfactory results.
7	Apex (Trinidad) Oilfields, Limited .. ..	Crown lands under lease and private lands	Fyzabad	Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Limited	Second largest producing Company in the Colony. Very active drilling programme has been undertaken and the field largely extended.
8	Kern Trinidad Oilfields, Limited .. ..	Private lands	Guapo, Rousillac	.. Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	Development of Perseverance Estate, Guapo, continued during the whole of the year. Drilling commenced on Boodhoo Singh Estate near La Brea in January and continued to the end of the year.
9	General Petroleum Company of Trinidad, Limited	Private lands	Fyzabad, Penal and San Francique	.. Sold to United British Refineries, Limited	Drilling was carried out on the Fyzabad and Penal fields with a fair production from the former.
10	Trinidad Petroleum Development Company, Ltd.	Private lands	San Fernando	.. Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	This Company was originally under the control of S. Pearsons and Sons, Ltd. During the year the British Controlled Oilfields, Ltd., acquired the interests of this firm. Drilling operations were suspended for a great portion of the period.
11	New Naparima Oilfields, Limited .. ..	Private lands	Naparima District	..	.. Shut down during whole of period.
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 and produced from two others.
14	Trinidad Friendship Petroleum Company, Ltd. ..	Private lands	Fyzabad	.. Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Producing only.
15	British Controlled Oilfields, Limited .. ..	Crown lands under Prospecting Licence	Oropuche	.. Sold to Trinidad Leaseholds, Ltd.	Continued drilling during the year with fair success.
16	Trinidad Oil Producing and Refining Company, Ltd.	Private lands	Fyzabad	.. Sold locally .. ..	Producing only.
17	Transvaal and Rhodesian Estates, Limited ..	Private lands	Pointe Ligoure	.. Barrelled and sold locally	Producing only.
18	Trinidad Esmeralda Estates, Limited .. ..	Private lands	Piparo	..	Drilled one well unsuccessfully during the year. A very small production was obtained from the existing wells.

## 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, 1924.

Minerals.	Daily average number of persons employed.		Total.	Quantity.	Approximate value.*
	Males.	Females.			
Oil .. .. .	3,503	68	3,571	4,056,612 Barrels	£ 1,001,575
Asphalt .. .. .	1,033	12	1,045	223,867 Tons	£ 139,917
Private Quarries (Limestone, Gravel, &c.) .. .. .	308	103	411	150,142 Tons	£ 19,072
Government Quarries (Limestone, &c.) .. .. .	242	63	305	47,947 Tons	£ 6,327

\* N.B.—The values in this column are those returned by owners and managers, and represent the value at the place of production.

## APPENDIX C.

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

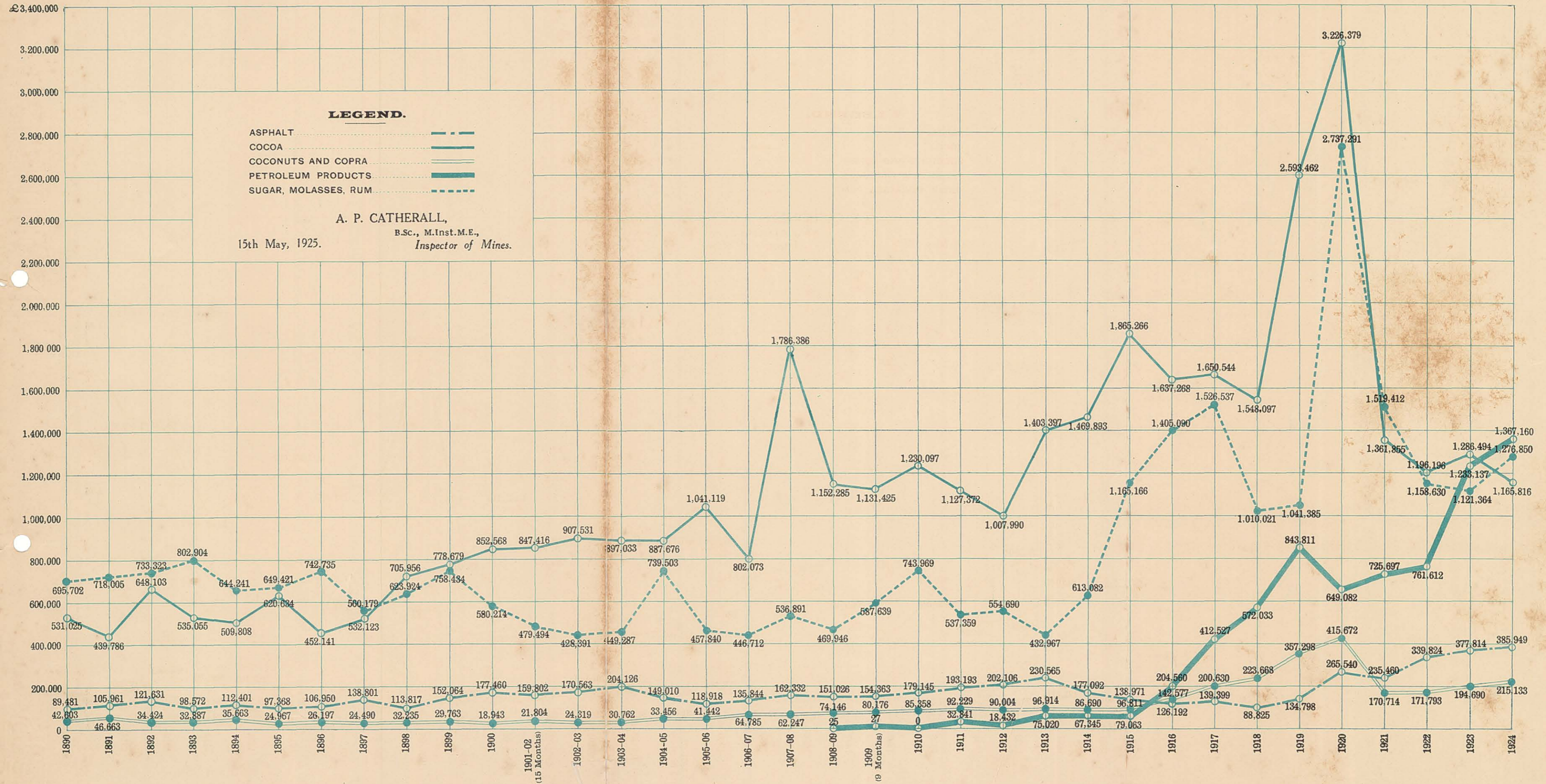
Year.	Production in barrels.	Quantity of Crude Oil refined in barrels.	Quantity of Crude oil and Refined oil exported in barrels
1905 to March 31st, 1910 ..	10,541	..	..
1910-1911 .. .. .	125,112	..	..
1911-1912 .. .. .	285,307	Previous to 1912 to 1913	37,842
1912-1913 .. .. .	503,616		9,484
1913-1914 .. .. .	643,516		35,061
1914-1915 .. .. .	1,050,112		41,413
9 months ended December, 1915 ..	671,125		58,437
1916 .. .. .	927,877		107,822
1917 .. .. .	1,602,312		505,002
1918 .. .. .	2,082,068		2,106,369
1919 .. .. .	1,841,047		1,149,943
1920 .. .. .	2,083,027		1,395,487
1921 .. .. .	2,354,160		1,806,016
1922 .. .. .	2,444,752		1,820,018
1923 .. .. .	3,050,872		2,360,279
1924 .. .. .	4,056,612		3,433,902
	23,732,056		14,867,075
			15,783,748



A

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

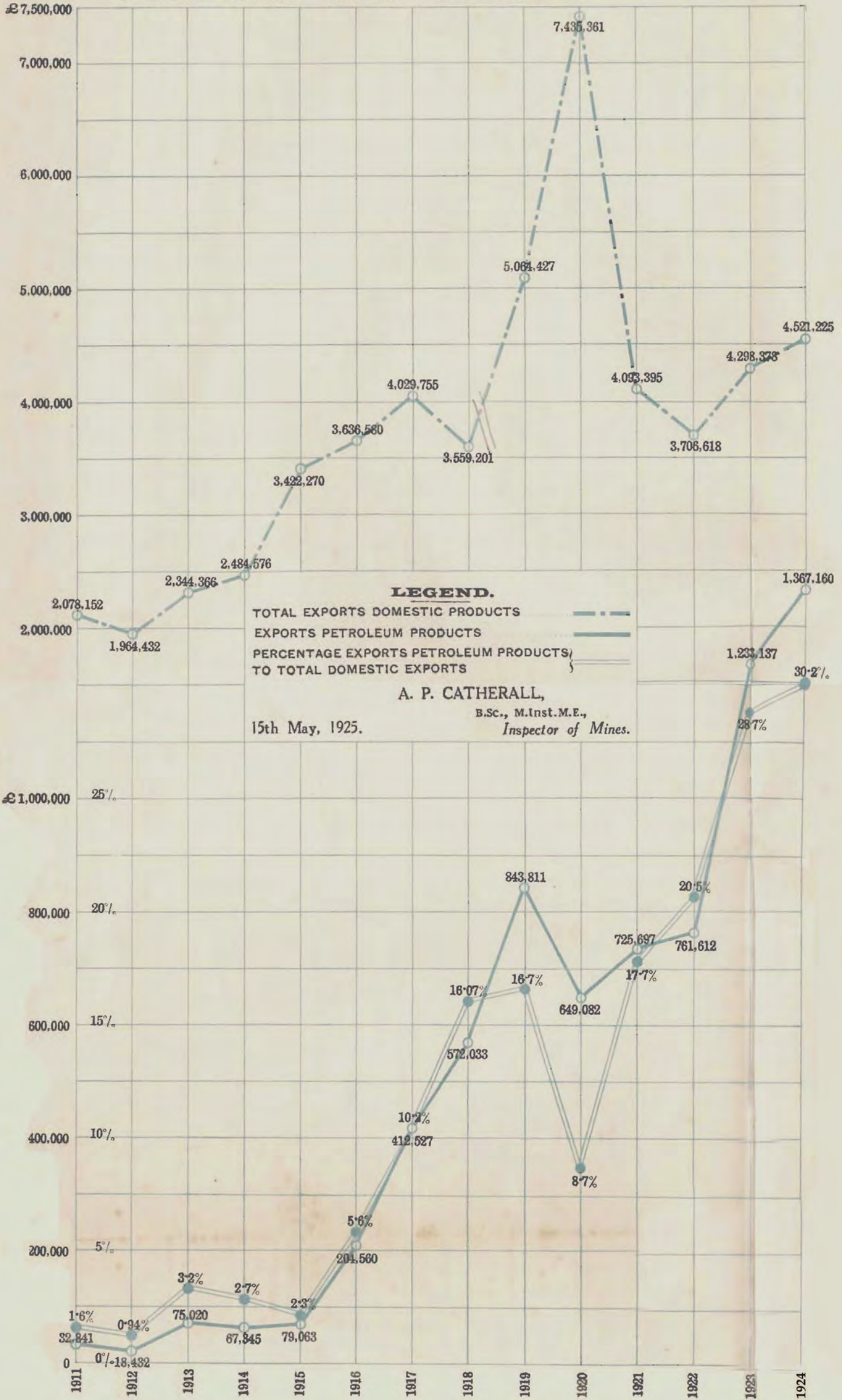
EXPORTS OF LOCAL PRODUCE.





B

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

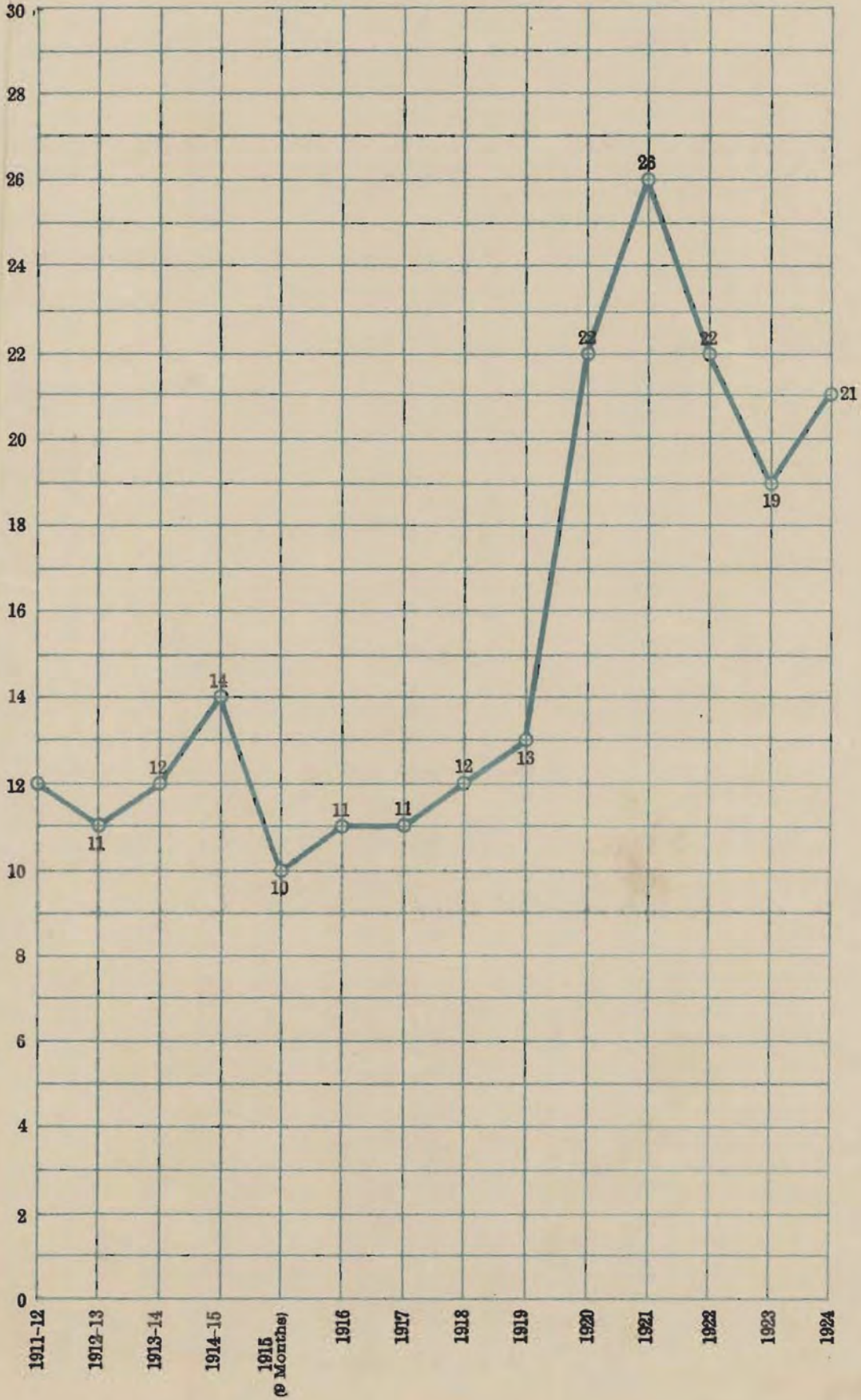




APPENDIX-D.

C

Curve showing the number of Oil Companies that have operated annually in the Colony from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1924.

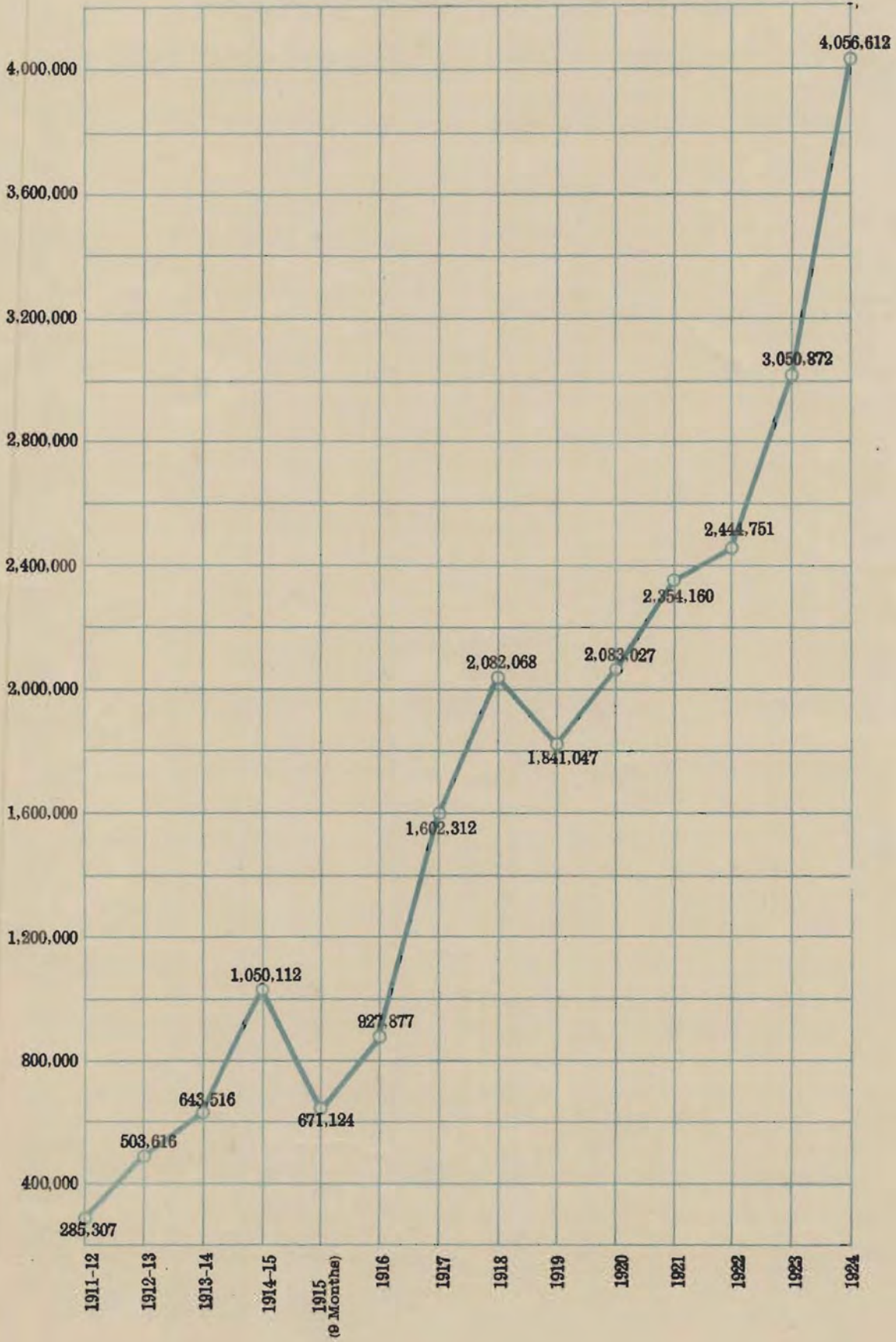


APPENDIX-D.

D

TOTAL ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF CRUDE OIL IN BARRELS.

One barrel = 35 gallons

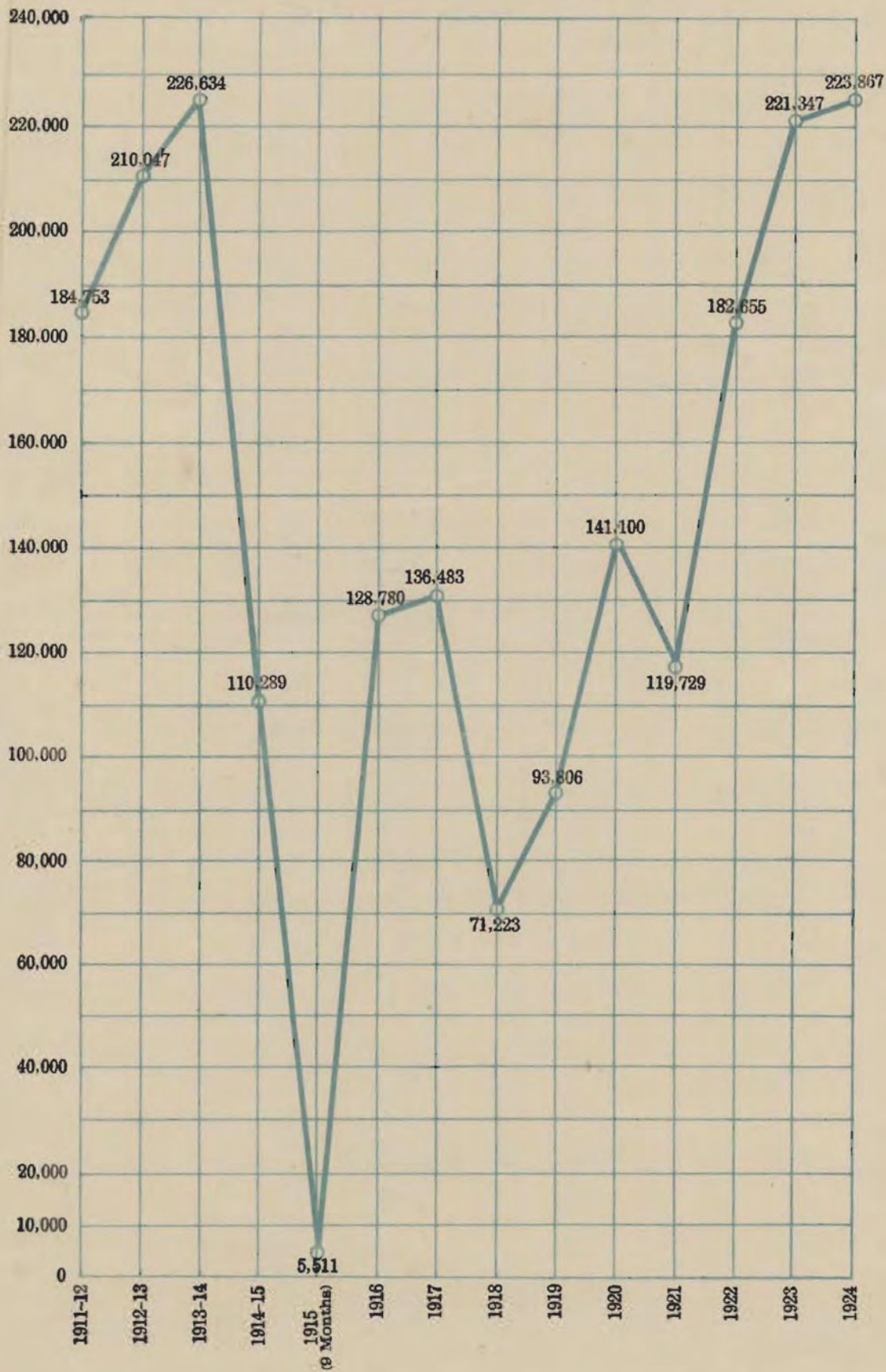




APPENDIX-D.

E

Curve showing yearly output of Asphalt from the Colony in Tons from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1924.

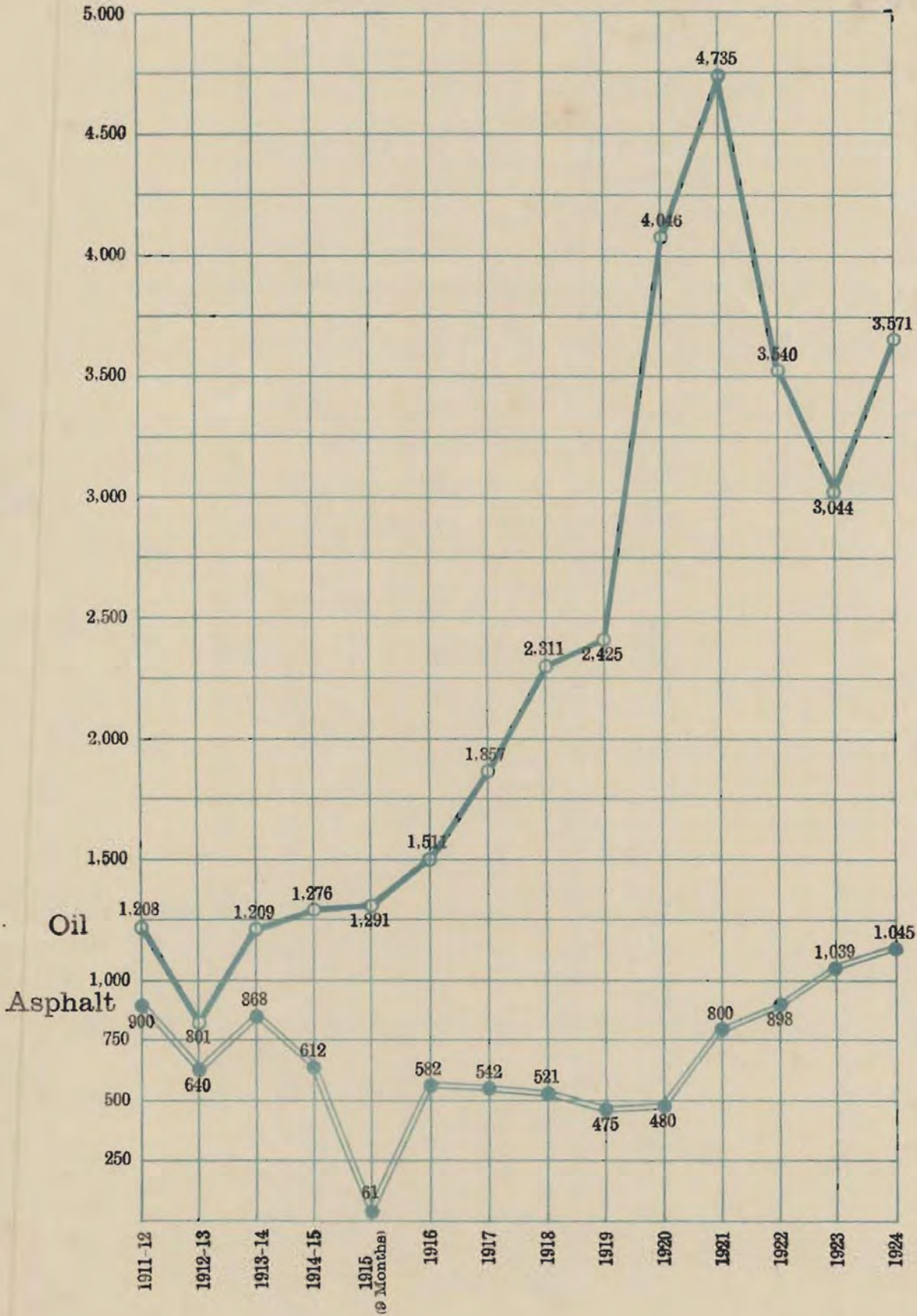




APPENDIX-D.

F

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, 1924.

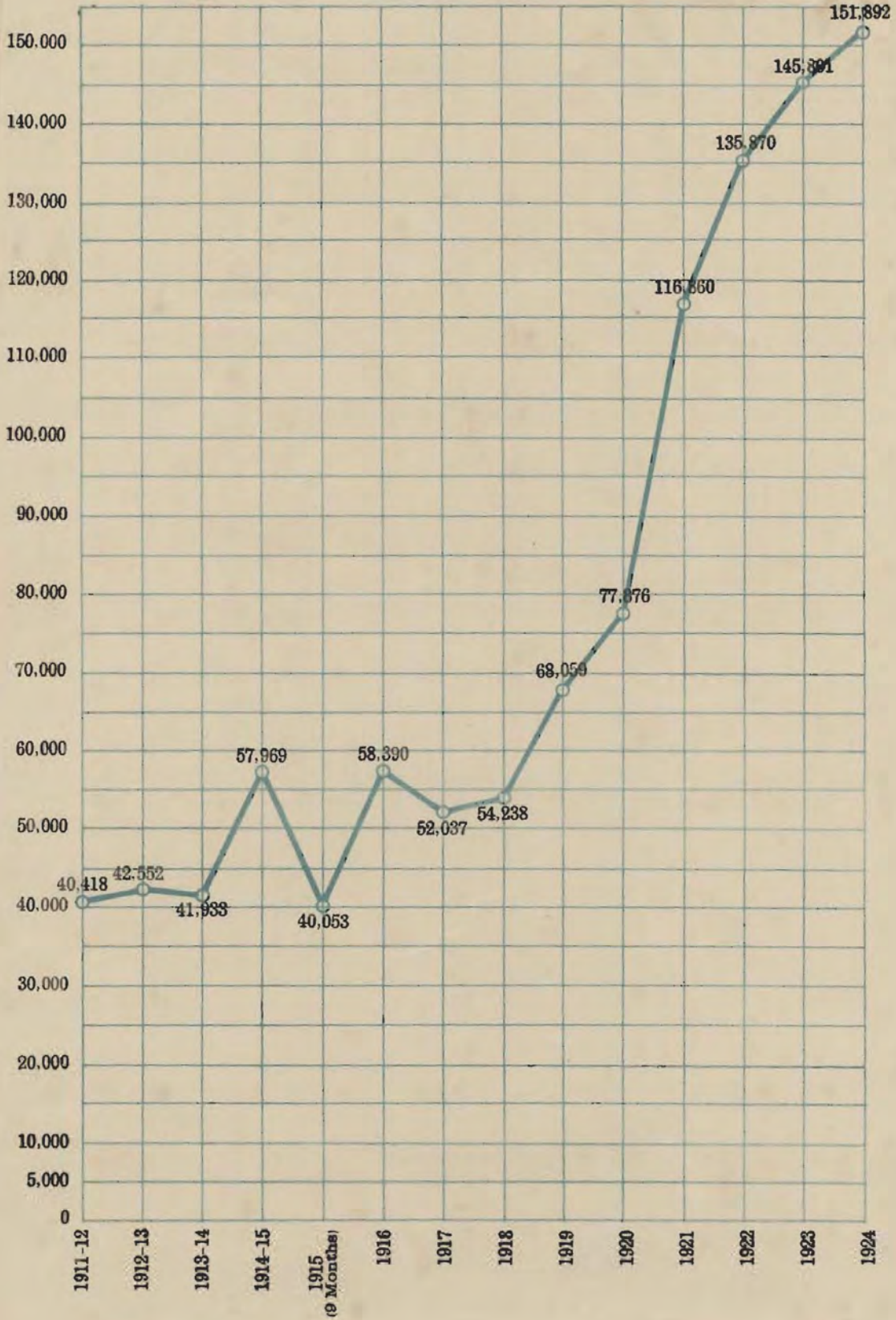




APPENDIX-D.

G

Curve showing yearly total number of feet drilled in the Colony from 1st April, 1911, to 31st December, 1924.





APPENDIX-D.

H

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, 1924.

