OUGH & HURRIED NOTES

(By W.W. WYLLIS)

A little over fifty years ago, pedestrians d to pick their way as they went along me of the streets, lanes, and by-lanes of seau, or suffer pains resulting from a rained ankle or broken kneecap, owing the serious state of disrepair into which ose thoroughfares were allowed to fall such was the case at daytime, how much reater was the risk at nightfall, when e dim light from the kerosene street mps lent a dismal appearance to the apital Town.

It was under the spreading branches of e majestic Sandbox tree, which graced e spot now known as "Peebles' Park," at charcoal and fresh fish vendors plied eir trade; whilst the Southern end of our st Office building served as our meat arket. There was no abattoir at the me, hence the inquisitive fellow who ould dare poke his nose into either of e shanties wherein the late Davis Whitelillie Guye, or Chesterfield Crawford aughtered animals for human consumpon would be greeted with the imperative der, "Get to h- out of here!"

The Market Square, unroofed as it stands to this day, and without the iron railg which gives it the appearance of a ttle-pen, whereon sore-footed people of ery condition trod, and where also the gs, goats and sheep that were allowed roam about the town without let or ndrance, were often seen basking under e mid-day Sun, was, and still is, the prosion market of this British Colony, just the same state as on the day four hunred and sixty-one years ago, when Chrisopher Colombus set foot on our shore.

There were no scavenging carts at the ne. No organized Fire Brigade, for the overnment seemed satisfied that the few ngths of holey hose of the Police, assisted the free voluntary, zealous and effecve assistance of the hoypolloy with their ickets and pans, as ample protection ainst fire. Latrines and urinals, too, ere non est.

Those "troblesome men" of that time, nerally referred to as "Press-men," ere justified, it will be conceded,, in eir habdominal tirades aimed at the overnment for permitting things to reain in the state reported above. The overnment having succumbed under the relenting fire of the Press, capitulated proposing the establishment of a Town oard, on condition that the Board levied ditional taxes on houses and lots in the wn for the purpose of raising revenue, it did not intend to forego the collecon of the Land and House Tax. Our political leaders accepted the Government's proposal, and so in the year 1898, the Roseau Town Board, now the Roseau Town Council, came into existence.

The late Sir H A.A Nicholls was appointed Chairman with the then Colonial Treasurer; and the then Colonial Engineer, as second and third Nominees; whilst the five elected seats were occupied by the late Fr. Potter. Ed Newman; Hy. Elwin. H A. Letang; and Isaac St. Orde. The first Town Clerk, being the late E.W. Elwin.

The annual revenue of the Board derived from all sources, did not exceed £700, nevertheless, in a surprisingly short time, the broken cobbled stone streets and lanes of Roseau disappeared, and were replaced by macadamized steets and lanes, with side-walks. About two decades after its establishment, the Roseau Town Board had to its credit the reconstruction of all the streets in the town; the acquisition by purchase of "Brown's Lot" and its conversion into the now existing Meat, Fish and Charcoal Markets; the establishment of a paid Fire Brigade; the establishment of scavenging carts; the erection of latrines and urinals in several parts of the town; the incorporation of the Western portion of Goodwill Estate, now known as "Pottersville and the laying out of streets and lanes thereto.

How did the Board manage to effect such tremendous improvements to the town with the pittance at its disposal as Revenue, and without owing a single cent to any man? It may be asked. "Cut your coat according to your cloth," was the avowed motto of the Board. Voila la raisen d'être.

But when the Council began throwing away money by acquiring that portion of Bath Estate, now known as Windsor Park, for $1.800.00, and spending annually thereon thousands of Dollars towards its conversion into an unnecessary third recrea ion ground, whilst the bare ground over which sore footed people tread is what is referred to as our Provision Market, in this year of Grace 1953; the creation of unnecessary high paid offices; and extending the Pension By Law which was enacted for the benefit of the late E.W. Elwin solely, to inclu le every empl yee of the Council, down to its very messenger, it did not require a Sage to see whither the Council was heading to—absolute bankruptcy.

By way of comparison, I will note here that the salary of the clerk of the Roseau Town Board at its inception, was £6. per month which was gradually and judiciously increased as the Revenue of the Board increased. Hence after the late E. W. Elwin had served the Board for more than a quarter of a century, not only as Town Clerk but as Town Overseer, Inspector of Fish and Meat markets; *quasi engineer*, etc, etc, etc, his salary was under £200 per annum.

But see the pay of the Town Clerk today $2,132.00 plus $426.40 Cola, and that of the Assistant Town Clerk, $1,280 00, plus, $256.00 Cola. Thus you have a petty bankrupt Town Council paying $1,049 40 of the hard earned money of the overburdened Rate payers, per annum, to its two clerks What work is there for an Assistant Town Clerk. But this is not all for whilst the Council kneels cap in hand, begging financial assistance of the Government, it turns round and appoints a Cashier, at a salary of $700.00 with increments amounting to over $920.00 per annum; and a Typist, at an annual pay of over $920 00 maximum, both of whom are so often seen "eating off their heads" in the Office.

Here are two other huge salaries worthy of noting, that of Chief Sanitary Inspector, $1,968 00, plus $393,60 "Cola"; and that of Sanitary Inspector No. 2, $1152,00 plus $288,00 "Cola". And what work is there for this Assistant Sanitary Inspector? Under the heading "Pensions" the Board paid $1684,56 to some able-bodied men who are working and earning good money, one of whom married a second time, since he went on pension.

About six years ago, the Dupigny Council having declared its inability to carry on the affairs of the Municipality, with the funds at its disposal and its intention, to increase its Revenue by increased Taxation, accepted the proposal of the "Municipal" Improvement Committee "to" stand down, and allow Messrs J.B. Charles; J W. Osborne; J.R.R. Casimir; F.A. Barn; and the late J. Wolsley Edwards, to "carry on", as the latter gentlemen had agreed to do so without increased Taxation. This was done. But on the approach of the following general Municipal Elections, the list of voters was almost doubled secretly, with the result that the elected members of the Charles Council suffered defeat at the Elections, and Messrs Clifton Dupigny and his Colleagues restored to power, the latter having promised the gullible Electorate to transform Roseau into an Eldorado, with government assistance.

The reason for the *Coup d' etat* was that the Charles Council proved that it could do what the Dupigny Council declared was impossible for it to do. But although the successful Dupigny Council increased the Municipal and House and Land Taxes by 33⅓% it got itself into "deeper water" hence the exactment of the Law com-