



**THE BRITISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANARY ISLANDS WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

P. N. DAVIES



An extensive commercial relationship has existed between Britain and the Canary Islands for many centuries and in spite of visits of Sir Francis Drake and Lord Nelson these have usually been of an extremely friendly nature. This has been because the complementary nature of the two economies with their differing factor endowments has ensured that trade has always been of a mutually beneficial nature.

This was especially true during the period that the wine trade was at its zenith in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and also during the short-lived boom of cochineal exports. The subsequent malaise of the economy and its resurrection by the inauguration of the fruit and tourist industries owed much to the interest and investments of Sir Alfred Jones and the Elder Dempster Group in the late nineteenth century. However, this enterprise would not have been possible if authorities in the Canaries had not acted to extend their two main ports so that they could cater for the iron steamships which were being evolved at that time.

The consequences of these independent but inter-locking actions were, of course, immense for they resulted in the establishment of the foundations of what have become the two main pillars of the Island's economy to-day - the export of fruit and the tourist trade.

Much of this work has already been the subject of careful academic study by a number of eminent Spanish and Canario scholars. It is hoped, however, that an expatriate viewpoint will give their understanding a clearer perspective and that, in turn, the present author will learn a great deal from the anticipated discussion.

The discovery and occupation of the Canary Islands has been well recorded in a whole series of works in both English and Spanish so it is

not proposed to discuss these matters in this paper¹. Nor is it felt necessary to analyse the early situation in the new colony for this has also been the subject of much recent research². However, as the subsequent economic history of the Islands is of major importance to any understanding of the events of the second half of the nineteenth century, it is intended to provide an outline of their commercial development with special emphasis on the vicissitudes of their external trade.

From a British point of view the prime source for the study of these events is the Report on the Social and Economic Conditions of the Canary Islands which was produced for the Foreign Office in 1892³. The author of this work was Mr. A Samler Brown who had been a long-time resident of Santa Cruz and whose Report was subsequently to form the basis for a guide-book that ran to many editions⁴. His view that the history of the Canary Islands under Spanish rule was, «...chiefly interesting as a record of agricultural progress or decay»⁵, may have been true at the time he wrote but it was by no means the whole picture.

It is easy to appreciate Samler Brown's opinion for, in addition to providing a large degree of self-sufficiency in food for the inhabitants of the Islands, agriculture also supplied the principal items for export. The position of agriculture was further enhanced by the absence of important mineral deposits and by the failure to develop fishing on any

1. ALEJANDRO CIORANESCU, *The History of Santa Cruz de Tenerife* (of particular relevance is vol. 4, 1803-1977, Historia No. 48, Santa Cruz 1979).

CHARLES EDWARDS, *Rides and Studies in the Canary Islands*, T. Fisher Unwin & Co., London, 1888.

VICTOR MORALES LEZCANO, *Relaciones Mercantiles entre Inglaterra y los Archipiélagos del Atlántico Iberia. Su Estructura y su Historia, 1503-1973*, Instituto de Estudios Canarios, La Laguna de Tenerife, 1970.

OLIVIA M. STONE, *Tenerife and its Six Satellites (The Canaries Past and Present)*, Marcus Ward & Co., London, 1887, 2 vols.

See also the works of A. SAMLER BROWN as detailed in Footnotes 3 and 4 below.

2. FELIPE FERNANDEZ-ARMESTO, *The Canary Islands after the Conquest: The Making of a Colonial Society in the Early Sixteenth Century*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1982.

3. FOREIGN OFFICE MISCELLANEOUS SERIES, No. 246. SPAIN: *Report on the Social and Economic Conditions of the Canary Islands*, London, H.M.S.O. 1892.

4. A. SAMLER BROWN, *Madeira and the Canary Islands. A Practical and Complete Guide for the use of Invalids and Tourists*, Sampson, Low, Marston & Co., London, 1894.

5. *Report on the Social and Economic Conditions of the Canary Islands*, op. cit., p. 3.





scale. Such industry that had emerged was also on a tiny scale, for the size of population and relative ease of communications with Europe meant that locally produced goods could not compete with foreign imports.

In these circumstances it was inevitable that Samler Brown would stress the importance of agriculture. However it was the geographic position of the Canaries that was mainly responsible for the success of its exports and Samler Brown fails to give full weight to this vital factor. Thus it was the situation of the Islands on the major shipping routes between Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and the East that played a substantial part in promoting the wine trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries⁶. Equally, the growth in tourism and the early development of fruit exports which Samler Brown recorded having commenced after the evolution of the steam ship clearly owed more to geography than to any other single factor.

It is the purpose of this paper to demonstrate that the Canary Islands were able to survive and prosper economically because of their *position* at a maritime «cross-road». It will then be further argued that British dominance in shipping and trade in the nineteenth century made co-operation between the two economies mutually beneficial and this, in turn, encouraged both the growth of trade and of personal relationships.

II

«Within thirty years of the completion of the conquest (in 1496) new immigration was almost at an end, a royal administration had all but replaced the seigneurial, the leading *conquistador*, Alonso de Lugo, was dead, and the surviving native guanches had been largely assimilated into a colonial society which itself varied greatly from island to island according to geographic position and climate...»⁷

6. GEORGE F. STECKLEY, *The Wine Economy of Tenerife in the Seventeenth Century. Anglo-Spanish Partnership in a Luxury Trade*, ECONOMIC HISTORY REVIEW, 2nd Series, Vol. 33, No. 3, August 1980.

7. NORMAN BALL, Review of The Canary Islands after the Conquest, op. cit. ECONOMIC HISTORY REVIEW, 2nd Series, Vol. 36, No. 1, February 1983, pp. 164-5.



An earlier priority was to discover an export crop that would enable the economy to pay for the imports which would permit the maintenance of what the ruling elite regarded as a civilised standard of living. At first it appeared that sugar would prove to be the entire answer and, with the aid of slave labour, many plantations were established. These proved to be extremely profitable and expanded in size so that at least one plantation, that at Adeje, employed over a thousand negroes⁸. According to Lord Verulam (Francis Bacon) being first in an invention, «doth sometime cause a wonderful overgrowth of riches, as it was with the first sugar man in the Canaries»⁹.

By 1600, however, competition from Brazil and the West Indies was having a significant effect on the price of sugar so production began to decline. Thereafter the industry only continued at a low level though it enjoyed occasional periods when increased demand encouraged a brief revival. Fortunately, by then, the Canaries were already developing an alternative export so that by 1650 Tenerife was firmly established as a major wine producer¹⁰.

George F. Steckley estimated that Tenerife exported an average of 10,037 half-ton pipes in the period 1636 to 1725 and this included an average of 6,859 half-ton pipes of the choice malvasia variety¹¹. In the earlier period the wine was exported to a wide variety of markets of which Latin America, Portugal and its possessions and Northern Europe were the most important. Gradually, however, the English market emerged as the main outlet and by 1690 almost two-thirds of the malvasia was sold via London¹².

This happy state of affairs which had brought a high level of prosperity to both producer and buyer was not to last much into the eighteenth century. A longstanding difficulty had been the imbalance of trade between England and the Canaries for the Islands could not absorb a sufficient quantity of British products. Thus the trade had to be conducted in «ready money» which was against the mercantilist ideas of many influential politicians so the business was discouraged by heavy taxes. At the same time the growth in imports of wine from Portugal

8. CHARLES EDWARDS, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

9. *Report on the Social and Economic Conditions of the Canary Islands*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

10. GEORGE F. STECKLEY, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 339.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

was encouraged as England was supposed to enjoy a favourable trade balanced with that country. A change in the taste for particular wines further enhanced this transition which was virtually completed by the disruption caused by the «War of the Spanish Succession»¹³.

The difficulties in England could not be compensated by sales elsewhere but the trade did continue at a moderate level until 1850 when the vines were attacked and virtually exterminated by a fungus known as «oidium tuckeri»¹⁴. This attack proved to be so severe that the entire stock had to be replaced by other variations of vine. This process, in turn, changed the character—some would suggest the quality—of the wine and although production and exports resumed they were never again to provide a significant proportion of the Islands revenue.

The decline and temporary cessation of the wine trade did not prove to be as great a loss as might have been expected. This was because of the development of an entirely new export which, for a time, was to make the Canaries so prosperous that all other commercial activities were either neglected or abandoned. The new item was natural dye-stuff known as cochineal which was produced from the dried bodies of the coccus cacti an insect which thrived on a cactus which grew freely in the Islands. The first shipment of 8lbs was made in 1831: by 1850 exports had grown to nearly 800,000lbs. and then increased to a peak of over 6 million lbs. in 1869. This had a value of £788,993 on the London market which was equal to a revenue of £3.25 for every man, woman and child¹⁵. By then, however, the signs of decline were already apparent because the invention of aniline dyes in Europe was beginning to force down the price. A steady fall in production followed and exports were down to 5 million lbs. in 1874 and to 2,300,000 lbs in 1886.

Of equal importance was the decline in price. At the height of the boom the return for the medium grade of cochineal was 3.25 pesetas per lb. but by the early 'eighties it was little more than one peseta per lb. In these circumstances the loans which had been secured to enable the industry to expand could not be serviced and, except in particularly favourable situations, it was not worthwhile to continue with production. Exports were subsequently aided by the discovery of the water-proofing capabilities of cochineal which are not shared by artificial dyes

13. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

14. *Report on the Social and Economic Conditions of the Canary Islands*, op. cit., p. 5.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 6.



so it was possible to maintain a small industry on a permanent basis. However as prices remained low and as only poor returns could be secured from the sale of sugar and wine the Islands lost their state of prosperity and became financially moribund.

III

The successive loss of competitive advantage in the export of sugar, wine and cochineal led to a search for viable alternatives. One possibility which appeared to offer some promise was tobacco which was first cultivated commercially in 1873. Unfortunately the quality of the early crop was not good enough to enable it to compete with Cuban products. Thus although the government attempted to help by purchasing the output in 1876 it found itself incurring heavy losses and refused to repeat its assistance the following year. However, a few planters continued to experiment with the crop and the government were persuaded to re-enter the trade in 1882. The resulting product could not approach the quality of Cuban tobacco but it did gradually secure a position in the lower end of the market and so made a small contribution to the Island's employment and revenue¹⁶.

In spite of the continuation in the export of the three staples—sugar, wine and cochineal—and the growth of tobacco at least as an import substitute, the level of activity remained very low and much hardship was endured by large sections of the population throughout the 'seventies and early' eighties. Fortunately the production of foodstuffs for family consumption provided a basic diet for many people, while some cash-crops could be sold for local consumption. In addition, a traditional trade in cereals, potatoes¹⁷ and onions saw a small export of these items, mainly to Cuba, and the victualling of passing ships also offered a tiny outlet for both crops and livestock. None of these agricultural sectors appeared to offer any hope of substantial expansion and the only bright spot was that subsistence farming tended to reduce the quantities of food which had to be imported when export crops monopolised the land.

The non-agricultural industries were in a similar position. Al-

16. OLIVIA M. STONE, *op. cit.*, pp. 364-5.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 262.





though pumice, sulphur and copper were available there was little effective demand for these items and only a small quantity was extracted. Tobacco processing and sugar-boiling required only a tiny input of labour while basket-making and the linen and lace trades were minute in character.

Boat building for local consumption was undertaken but the failure to develop the fishing industry left this enterprise without a satisfactory market. This omission is the more surprising because the excellence of the fishing and the need for drying facilities were pointed out as early as 1765 by George Glas¹⁸. Thus although local fishermen were able to land substantial quantities the lack of suitable arrangements meant that the catch could only be consumed locally and little was available for export¹⁹.

It would seem, therefore, that the collapse of the boom in cochineal had left the Islands in difficult financial straits. Furthermore the loss of confidence which then occurred meant that the remaining men of substance were reluctant to undertake any venture with an element of risk. One choice which remained available to the more enterprising citizens was emigration. There had been a long tradition of this in the Canaries and in the eighteenth century many had settled, with government encouragement, in the Spanish possessions in the New World while in the nineteenth century the main flow had been to Cuba. Hard times at home always promoted further emigration and, in turn, engendered a flow of remittances which could have been used to increase the level of investment in productive activities. Unfortunately the new capital, like the old, was customarily used to purchase land and there was little inclination of incentive to invest in other projects.

IV

The economic malaise in which the Canaries found itself during the eighteen-seventies was all the more frustrating because of the knowledge that the level of world trade had been rising sharply throughout the nineteenth century. There had, of course, been many fluctuations but the overall trend was consistently upward so that between

18. GEORGE GLAS, *History of the Canary Islands*, 1764.

19. A. SAMLER BROWN, *op. cit.*, 1905 Edition, pp. D. 33-4.

1800 and 1913 the value of international commerce rose more than twenty-five fold. Furthermore, as the following table indicates, most of the expansion, in absolute terms, took place in the later period —just when the economy of the Canaries was faltering:—

The Growth of World Trade in the Nineteenth Century: Estimated Aggregate Values, Distinguishing Exports and Imports, in Selected Years, 1800-1913²⁰.

| | Total Trade £ mill. | Exports f.o.b. £ mill. | Imports c.o.f. £ mill. |
|-----------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1800 | 320 | 150 | 170 |
| 1820 | 340 | 155 | 185 |
| 1840 | 560 | 260 | 300 |
| 1850 | 800 | 370 | 430 |
| 1860 | 1.450 | 680 | 770 |
| 1872-1873 | 2.890 | 1.360 | 1.530 |
| 1895-1899 | 3.900 | 1.870 | 2.030 |
| 1913 | 8.360 | 4.055 | 4.305 |

Sources: To 1840 from Clive Day, *A History of Commerce* (New York, 1923) p. 271, but increased by the difference between British «official» and market value of net imports, namely, £40 millions in 1800, £20 millions in 1820 and in 1840. No adjustment was needed in 1850. It is assumed that the declared values of British exports were used in preparing these estimates. If «official» values of British exports were used, the values cited above should be revised upwards in 1800 by £15 millions, and downwards in 1840 by £50 millions, and in 1850 by £100 millions. Growth from 1800 to 1840 would, therefore, be rather slower than indicated here.

Beginning in 1860, the total values are those compiled from various sources by A.E. Overton in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed. XXII, 350.

To make matters even worse, Britain, with whom the Canary Islands had usually enjoyed a close commercial relationship, was dominating world trade in an impressive manner. As the «First Industrial Nation» Britain was the sole source of many manufactured goods and the cheapest supplier of many others and with her growing population she needed to import large quantities of food as well as huge

20. ALBERT H. IMLAH, *Economic Elements in the Pax Britannica*. Russell & Russell, New York, 1958, p. 189.



amounts of raw materials. This is clearly demonstrated in the following table:

The Preponderance of the British Market in World Trade: British Net Imports as Percentage of Aggregate Non-British Exports, in Selected Years, 1800-1913²¹.

| | Aggregate non-British exports. £ mill. | British net imports | | | | Per cent. of non-British exports % |
|-----------|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|
| | | Value c.i.f. £ mill. | Deduction for Freight etc. £ mill. | Approximate value f.o.b. £ mill. | | |
| 1800 | 97 | 47.6 | 7.1 | 40.5 | 42 | |
| 1820 | 109 | 43.8 | 6.1 | 37.7 | 35 | |
| 1840 | 198 | 81.2 | 10.6 | 70.6 | 36 | |
| 1850 | 287 | 91.0 | 11.8 | 79.2 | 28 | |
| 1860 | 515 | 181.9 | 23.6 | 158.3 | 31 | |
| 1872-1873 | 1.047 | 306.0 | 36.7 | 269.3 | 26 | |
| 1895-1899 | 1.631 | 392.7 | 43.2 | 349.5 | 21 | |
| 1913 | 3.530 | 659.2 | 65.9 | 593.3 | 17 | |

Details of Britain's trade with the principal nations and areas of the world in the latter part of the nineteenth century are provided in Table 1 in the Appendix²². From this it will be seen that trade with Spain (as a whole) rose from just over six million pounds in 1858 to nine million in 1870, to nearly fifteen million in 1880 and to over eighteen million in 1890. Thus it seems apparent that commerce with Spain was expanding at a rate that was little different than that of Britain's other trading partners. When, however, Britain's trade with the Canaries is examined it will be seen that was a decline in her exports from £215,781 in 1869 to £163,398 in 1884 and the earlier figure was only just exceeded in 1887. Canary exports, detailed below,²³ show a stronger decline with the total of £845,390 for 1869 being followed during the 'eighties' by an average value of under £300,000 per annum.

21. Ibid., p. 191.

22. See Table 1 in the Appendix.

23. See Table 2 in the Appendix.





Somewhat paradoxically it was the growth in world trade and of Britain's share in this expansion that was ultimately to play a significant role in restoring the Canary economy to prosperity. This was partly because the authorities in both Grand Canary and Tenerife were able to provide harbours that could cope with the requirements of modern shipping²⁴.

Britain had confirmed her naval superiority during the Napoleonic Wars and in 1816 was the largest commercial operator with a merchant fleet of 2,417,000 tons. At this time her principal rival was the United States which possessed a mercantile marine that was only half the size of Britain's. It was, however, growing rapidly for the availability of cheap and convenient timber gave American builders a competitive edge over British constructors and by 1861 there was only a small difference in the size of the two fleets²⁵.

«...This American success was based on ships built of home produced softwoods that were not only cheaper than contemporary British vessels but which were also very much larger and able to take advantage of many economies of scale. The British ships were constructed of hardwood which, though expensive, could be relied upon to give long service. This was, perhaps, the more economical material in the long term but any marginal gain in this direction was more than offset by the superiority of American design...»²⁶

The situation changed quite dramatically during the eighteen sixties for while the British proportion of the world fleet remained consistently high that of the United States fell rapidly²⁷. This was largely because the transition from wood and sail to iron and steam favoured Britain as the more technically advanced nation but, in addition, the impact of the American Civil War and the subsequent opportunities within the continent led to a substantial decrease in investment in oceangoing vessels. The consequences of these trends can be seen in the following tables:

24. P.N. DAVIES, *British Shipping and World Trade. Rise and Decline. 1820-1939*. Paper given to the International Conference on Business History, 3rd Series, held at the Fuji Education Centre, Japan, January 1984.

25. See Table 3 in the Appendix.

26. P.N. DAVIES, *The Development of the Liner Trades*. Proceedings of the Conference of the Atlantic Canada Shipping Project, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1978, pp. 176-7.

27. See Table 3 in the Appendix.

Merchant shipping tonnage of the United Kingdom 1840-1910²⁸

| | U.K. fleet (million net tons) | U.K. share of world tonnage | U.K. share of world steam tonnage |
|------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1840 | 2,77 | 29,52 | 24,3 |
| 1850 | 3,57 | 39,47 | 23,0 |
| 1860 | 4,66 | 34,80 | 31,3 |
| 1870 | 5,69 | 33,94 | 42,3 |
| 1880 | 6,58 | 32,88 | 50,0 |
| 1890 | 7,98 | 35,83 | 49,2 |
| 1900 | 9,30 | 35,50 | 44,5 |
| 1910 | 11,56 | 33,37 | 40,0 |

(The American tonnage employed in the Great Lakes has been included for the purpose of these calculations).

From a Canary point of view this meant that there was a vast increase in the amount of tonnage that was obliged to pass close by the Islands due to their strategic position at a major maritime «cross-road». The extent of this expansion can be seen even more clearly when actual commodities are considered:

Merchandise carried by sea, annual totals, 1840 and 1887²⁹
(‘000 tons)

| Commodity | 1840 | 1887 |
|-----------|--------|---------|
| Coal | 1.400 | 49.300 |
| Iron | 1.100 | 11.800 |
| Timber | 4.100 | 12.100 |
| Grain | 1.900 | 19.200 |
| Sugar | 700 | 4.400 |
| Petroleum | — | 2.700 |
| Cotton | 400 | 1.800 |
| Wool | 20 | 350 |
| Jute | — | 600 |
| Meat | — | 700 |
| Coffee | 200 | 600 |
| Wine | 200 | 1.400 |
| Salt | 800 | 1.300 |
| Sundries | 9.180 | 33.750 |
| Total: | 20.000 | 140.000 |

28. H.J. DYOS and D.H. ALDCROFT. *British Transport: An Economic Survey from the 17th Century to the Twentieth*. Leicester University Press, 1971, p. 232.

29. M.G. MULHALL. *Dictionary of Statistics*, (4th Edition), London, 1898, p. 130.

This sevenfold expansion took place, therefore, in the period when the Islands were experiencing the boom and subsequent collapse of cochineal exports. While the boom lasted there was little incentive to seek to encourage alternative industries but once it was in decline other possibilities were given much more serious consideration.

For many years it had been obvious that the primitive nature of its port facilities was preventing the Canaries from achieving its full potential in attracting passing shipping. The advent of iron steamships and the consequent increase in scale further emphasised the deficiencies of the existing harbours and representations were made to the central government as early as 1852. The process of securing funds was extremely slow but was eventually successful and resulted in the construction of additional, new, capacity at Puerto de la Luz (adjacent to Las Palmas) and at Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

The completion of the first phase of the opening of Puerto de la Luz in 1883 has been fully described in a centenary publication of great merit.³⁰ A similar programme was undertaken at Santa Cruz de Tenerife where the extension of the mole commenced in 1885. By 1893 the works at both ports had been virtually finished and they could then offer suitable accommodation to even the largest of contemporary vessels³¹. The combination of these new facilities with the growth in world, particularly British, tonnage was then to issue in a fresh period of activity in the Canary Islands and, indeed, was to mark the beginning of its modern economy.

The first consequences of the improved facilities were on the number of vessels which called in at the two main ports and on the quantity of coal which was supplied as bunkers. As will be seen in the tables below both of these activities increased enormously after the port improvements had been partly completed in 1883:

Although some small coaling facilities had previously been available in the Canaries the expansion of the two main ports generated much interest among British shipping companies. Of these the Liverpool firm of Elder Dempster and Company³² was the most directly affected for its

30. AGUAYRO, *Primer Centenario del Puerto de la Luz*, Caja Insular de Ahorros, Year 12, No. 146, March-April 1983. Las Palmas. Of special reference is the excellent work of Fernando Martín Galán and Francisco Quintana Navarro.

31. A. SAMLER BROWN, *op cit.*, 1894 Edition, p. 199.

32. P.N. DAVIES, *The Trade Makers. Elder Dempster in West Africa. 1852-1972*. George Allen & Unwin, London, 1973 (Re-issued 1980).





Number and Tonnage of Steam Vessels Entering the Ports of Santa Cruz (Tenerife) and Las Palmas (Grand Canary), with a Statement of the Quantity of Coals supplied to them.

TENERIFE

| Year | Coasting Trade | | British | | % of British | | All Nations | |
|------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|
| | Number of Vessels | Tons | Number of Vessels | Tons | Number of Vessels % | Tons % | Number of Vessels | Tons |
| 1884 | — | — | 195* | 263.700* | 45 | 58 | 429 | 457.000* |
| 1885 | — | — | 206 | 278.560 | 44 | 55 | 465 | 501.182 |
| 1886 | — | — | 246 | 317.669 | 43 | 51 | 553 | 620.229 |
| 1887 | — | — | 250* | 395.000* | 46 | 48 | 542 | 843.440 |
| 1888 | 51 | 12.904 | 310 | 444.238 | 47 | 47 | 666 | 948.802 |
| 1889 | 158 | 41.696 | 349 | 549.375 | 48 | 49 | 733 | 1.118.652 |
| 1890 | 178 | 40.432 | 350 | 575.000 | 46 | 48 | 766 | 1.204.026 |

GRAND CANARY

| Year | Coasting Trade | | British | | % of British | | All Nations | |
|------|-------------------|---------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|--------|-------------------|------------|
| | Number of Vessels | Tons | Number of Vessels | Tons | Number of Vessels % | Tons % | Number of Vessels | Tons |
| 1884 | — | — | 160* | 264.000* | 68 | 52 | 238 | 505.000* |
| 1885 | — | — | 220 | 263.000 | 66 | 50 | 336 | 725.000 |
| 1886 | — | — | 369 | 600.500* | 72 | 63 | 506 | 950.000* |
| 1887 | — | — | 414 | 680.000* | 63 | 61 | 660 | 1.103.700* |
| 1888 | 51* | 12.904* | 539 | 890.977 | 59 | 59 | 912 | 1.505.089* |
| 1889 | 158* | 41.696* | 601 | 1.360.000* | 59 | 56 | 1.022 | 2.432.000* |
| 1890 | 178* | 40.432* | 718 | 1.635.000* | 57 | 56 | 1.263 | 2.918.570* |

* estimate

TOTAL

| Year | Total of Both Groups | | Coal Supplied | | |
|------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|---------|
| | | | Tenerife | Grand Canary | Total |
| | Number of Vessels | Tons | Tons | Tons | Tons |
| 1884 | 667 | 962.000 | 28.924 | 6.700 | 35.624 |
| 1885 | 801 | 1.226.382 | 33.963 | 18.390 | 62.353 |
| 1886 | 1.059 | 1.570.220 | 38.046 | 38.827 | 76.873 |
| 1887 | 1.202 | 1.938.140 | 53.277 | 78.070 | 126.347 |
| 1888 | 1.080 | 2.479.699 | 76.913 | 130.188 | 213.101 |
| 1889 | 2.071 | 3.634.044 | 101.432 | 166.341 | 267.773 |
| 1890 | 2.385 | 4.203.470 | 107.519 | 226.409 | 333.919 |

Source: Report of the Social and Economic Conditions of the Canary Islands. op. cit., p. 10.

routes to West Africa brought its vessels close to the Islands as a matter of course³³. Word of the work at Puerto de la Luz reached (Sir) Alfred Jones, the senior partner of this Line and he visited the newly-extended port in 1884. He had long wished to develop a coaling depot that would enable his ships to re-fuel during the course of their voyages for the more coal they carried the smaller was the amount of space that was available for paying cargoes. The situation of the Canaries on the direct route from Britain to West Africa made them an ideal location once a harbour was available so Jones immediately formed the Grand Canary Coaling Company to operate at Puerto de la Luz. The success of this project and that of a similar enterprise—the Tenerife Coaling Company based at Santa Cruz—then led Jones to purchase two coal mines in South Wales. Their output was sufficient to cater for the Elder Dempster fleet but Jones was gradually forced to buy more and more bunker coal on the open market and he found it profitable to supply the vessels of other owners when they called at Las Palmas.

As noted earlier, a direct consequence of the construction of the new extensions (and incidentally of Alfred Jones' visit) was that the number of steamships calling at the Canaries rose sharply and the quantity of coal supplied increased at a dramatic rate. The bunkering, watering and victualling of these vessels provided useful employment but their true significance for the Islands' economy lay in the opportunities they provided for two other separate, activities. These were the fruit trade and tourism and, as will be seen, it was the pioner work of Jones and other British entrepreneurs that was to lay the foundations for the successful development of these two, crucial, industries.

The British contribution to the economic development of the Canary Islands was important throughout the whole period of Spanish rule because of London's significance as a major trading centre. This was especially true during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the export of wine was at its peak and Steckley identified no fewer than «... 158 English merchants who were resident in the Islands at one time or another from 1600 to 1730»³⁴.

The further growth of British influence in the nineteenth century

33. P.N. DAVIES. *Sir Alfred Lewis Jones. Shipping Entrepreneur Par Excellence*. Europa Publications Limited, London, 1978.

34. GEORGE F. STECKLEY, op. cit., p. 343. See also p. 347 for a list of the leading wine exporters of Santa Cruz which includes a predominance of British firms.



arose from its increasing domination of world trade and shipping which was based on the twin factors of early industrialisation and the acquisition of widespread colonial possessions and territories. These, in turn, strengthened London's position as the world's leading commercial and financial centre so it is not surprising that British merchants were always to the fore during the boom in the cochineal trade.

The net effect of these long connections between the United Kingdom and the Canaries was that a number of British firms and individuals became permanently established in the Islands. The *Hamiltons* commenced their association in 1799 and developed a whole range of interests that included wine, banking, shipping and forwarding and, later, in the supply of coal. *Millers*, established in 1853, operated as bankers, steamship and insurance agents and as coal depot proprietors. *Reids*, who set up in 1865, acted as bankers and general merchants and also specialised in lace and linen products. *Blandys* had commenced in business in Madeira in 1811 and it was not until 1886 that a branch of the firm opened in Grand Canary. A coaling depot was then established at Puerto de la Luz and the Company subsequently operated a banking agency and entered into a number of other projects.

Other British expatriates who were in business in the Islands at this time included Alfred Williams (banking and exchange) and Henry Wolfson who, apart from his interests in banking and shipping, was to develop a major share in the growing and export of fruit. The Yeoward brothers also became very interested in the fruit trade and, at a later stage, diversified into shipping and the tourist business.

As the export of fruit and the development of the tourist industry were to become the main foundations of the Canary economy in the twentieth century, the origins of these activities and the extent of British participation will now be examined. Both have their roots in the extension of the major ports for once Elder Dempster ships began to call at Puerto de la Luz or Santa Cruz for fuel en route for Liverpool, their Captains sought to purchase any commodities which might profitably fill up empty space. It soon became clear that a large market existed for bananas and tomatoes but a whole series of problems had to be solved before this new export trade could flourish.

The major difficulty was that of carriage, for Liverpool lay seven days to the North. The solution of picking bananas (and to a lesser extent tomatoes) before they were ripe and allowing them to mature en route required great skill which was only acquired at substantial cost. Bananas were largely unknown except to the wealthy and, again, it



took much effort to persuade retailers to handle this delicate fruit. Indeed, the early experimental shipments could not be disposed of via the normal channels at all and Jones had to resort to the expedient of dealing directly with the Liverpool «barrow boys». His success in solving these difficulties then led to a further one in the Canaries as, at first, the supply of bananas lagged behind the growing demand.

Bananas had been produced in the archipelago since the fifteenth century and had rapidly become a staple item of food. A few had been exported even during the era of the sailing ship and the advent of steam meant that a larger proportion of these casual shipments had arrived in an edible condition. But by 1884 it is estimated that only 10,000 bunches were reaching Britain from all sources so when Jones stimulated a mass market it took some time for the growers in the Islands to respond. Never a man to leave matters to take their own course he acted with his customary vigour once he had decided what was required:

«... the land was lying waste and the people sunk in a apathy of despair. Well, observing the prolific character of the soil, I bought up what land I could and grew fruit on it. Then, as I knew that that was not enough for the trade I could foresee, I went round to the farms and offered so much for all the fruit they could grow and, where necessary, made them advances and financed them generally. The consequence is that land has now (1898) gone up to £1,000 per acre, the Islands receive a million a year for fruit, and the people are prosperous and comparatively speaking contented for they more than pay their way...»³⁵

Jones' contribution to the development of the banana trade was to solve the problem of carriage, open up a mass market and aid the growers to produce sufficient quantities of the right quality. Although Jones was the pioneer in many respects the parts played by the Yeoward family³⁶ and by Mr. E. W. Fyffe in promoting the export and sale of the banana should not be overlooked.

Edward Wathen Fyffe was normally employed in London in his family's business as a tea importer but the illness of his wife led the couple to spend 1887 in the Canaries. The climate proved to be benefi-

35. *A Napoleon of Commerce*, GREAT THOUGHTS, 18 June, 1898.

36. ALEJANDRO CIORANESCU, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.



cial and Mrs. Fyffe made a full recovery but while she was convalescing her husband learned a great deal about the local economy. The existence of cheap bananas came as a surprise to the visitors for the Elder Dempster fruit was only sold on Merseyside and the capital had no regular supply of what they regarded as a rare and expensive fruit. This led Mr. Fyffe to investigate the possibility of shipping the fruit to London and he then found that many others were also interested in this potentially profitable trade but that they were experiencing difficulties in transporting the bananas so that they arrived in a saleable condition³⁷. This problem was, of course, already well known to Elder Dempster but as they paid little for the fruit and used spare capacity to ship it at virtually no cost they could afford to accept a relatively high proportion of overripe consignments. Fyffe appreciated that without these special advantages he would have to acquire the expertise to overcome these difficulties and that this was likely to prove expensive. Accordingly it seems that he decided not to attempt to ship on his own account but to provide an import agency in London for those potential growers who wished to find an outlet for their surplus products.

Fyffe's long stay in the Islands had enabled him to establish firm links with members of the expatriate families who controlled much of its commerce. Many of these had gradually become domiciled and had acquired considerable quantities of land. They thus had a vested interest in the development of a viable export crop and a number including the Barkers, Blandys, Leacocks and Wolfsons agreed to back him. The exact nature of their agreement is not known but it seems certain that Fyffe was to sell whatever was sent to him on some form of commission basis. This meant that he did not need to lay out very much in the way of capital and meant that the onus for the provision of saleable fruit lay with the growers.

The first shipment arrived in September, 1888, and according to an eye-witness, Mr. J. Clifford, it realised a good price even though it was fairly ripe! This marked the beginning of regular consignments of bananas and with the benefit of experience the quantities that were spoilt were kept to manageable proportions. Most of the fruit was disposed of via Covent Garden but Fyffe also developed a wholesale business

37. Author's interview with Mr. Noel Reid in 1980 indicated that his grandfather, Peter Reid, had made several unsuccessful attempts to ship bananas to London at about that time.



which sold directly to the «better class» fruiterers in the capital. Until 1892 Fyffe had the London market pretty well to himself and expanded rapidly but in that year Elder Dempster extended its activities from Liverpool and began to provide a great deal of serious competition.

In the period from 1884 to 1901 Canary exports of fruit and vegetables rose sharply. Details are not available for the earlier part of this period but those from 1897 are given below:

FRUIT STATISTICS³⁸
1901-1902 compared with four previous years

| | Bananas | Oranges | Potatoes | Tomatoes |
|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| 1897-1898 | 660.461 | 8.456 | 111.241 | 399.004 |
| 1898-1899 | 783.418 | 13.389 | 155.241 | 492.075 |
| 1899-1900 | 1.044.630 | 8.526 | 110.396 | 341.136 |
| 1900-1901 | 1.208.596 | 14.401 | 169.563 | 458.119 |
| 1901-1902 | 1.597.616 | 8.505 | 224.267 | 414.859 |

(The figures refer to cases. A banana case sometimes contains two bunches. Reckoning 100 bananas to a bunch, the last year's export is, roughly, 170.000.000 bananas!).

As the largest handlers of Canary bananas and tomatoes during this era both Fyffe and Elder Dempster enjoyed substantial profits. These then led, perhaps inevitable, to a rationalisation of the trade which resulted in Fyffe being bought out and ultimately to an amalgamation between the two «giants» of the industry.

Fyffe's success had provided a valuable outlet for his growers in the Canaries and they had shared in his prosperity. Nevertheless, for reasons which are not now clear, the growers' «syndicate» decided that he was no longer an essential part of their operation and in 1897 they bought him out. That this was something of a surprise cannot be doubted for Fyffe had taken a Mr. James Hudson into partnership only twelve months before his banana business came to an abrupt end. The net effect of these events was that their partnership —Fyffe, Hudson and Company— was transformed into a «limited» concern in which the Barkers, Blandys, Leacocks and Wolfsons held all of the preference

38. OSBERT WARD, *The Value of Orotava*, W.R. Russell & Co., London, 1903, p. 79.





and ordinary shares. Four years later, in 1901, Elders and Fyffes Limited³⁹ was formed from a combination of Fyffe Hudson and the Fruit Department of Elder Dempster, and this put Alfred Jones, as the largest shareholder, in command of the whole business.

The subsequent expansion of Canary banana and tomato exports to the United Kingdom indicates the importance of these items to the Island's level of employment and balance of payments.

Imports from the Canary Islands to the United Kingdom⁴⁰

| Average for | Cochineal | Bananas | Tomatoes | Total |
|-------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1885-1889 | £64.579 | £ — | £ — | £ 99.179 |
| 1890-1894 | 36.184 | — | — | 255.757 |
| 1895-1899 | 29.805 | — | — | 612.307 |
| 1900-1904 | 14.186 | 785.559 | 312.849 | 1.246.361 |
| 1905-1909 | 19.147 | 863.120 | 440.675 | 1.542.217 |
| 1910-1914 | 13.388 | 727.396 | 546.254 | 1.494.108 |
| 1915-1916 | 85.248 | 1.077.596 | 729.660 | 2.068.928 |
| 1917-1918 | | No figures available | | |
| 1919-1920 | 33.223 | 2.529.420 | 1.339.525 | 4.048.975 |

VII

In addition to his establishment of coaling stations and the encouragement of the fruit trade Alfred Jones was also responsible for the original development of the tourist industry. Once Elder Dempster ships began to make regular calls at the Canaries he adopted a policy of offering extremely low fares so as to promote a new passenger trade. By 1887 these were down to £15 for a first-class return from Liverpool compared with the £25 charged by the New Zealand Shipping Company and the £18 required by Ferwood Brothers. Part of the explanation for this discrepancy was that Jones' vessels tended to be slower and less luxurious than those of the New Zealand line although they were

39. It is the author's intention to publish a history of the British involvement in the banana industry in 1988.

40. Compiled from the *Annual Statements of the Trade of the United Kingdom*, for the relevant years. H.M.S.O., London.

regarded as quite comfortable for a voyage of seven days. However, the major reason was that the Elder Dempster ships were primarily engaged in the West African trade and the carriage of passengers (and cargo) to and from the Canaries cost very little in real terms - space that would otherwise have been vacant was only required to make a small contribution to overall costs.

Jones was quick to understand that the Islands were worthy of serious consideration and although they were always secondary to his main business with West Africa he concluded that further investment would be advantageous. This decision was aided by the rapid growth in passenger traffic - in the six months from October 1887 to May 1888 no fewer than 1.100 people were carried by his ships. Jones' establishment of the Interinsular Steamship Company in August, 1888, then provided a further incentive to visitors who could henceforth travel cheaply and conveniently between the Island. These sailings were available to the general public and did much to promote trade within the archipelago: they also gave Jones an additional selling point in that his return tickets entitled passengers to land at Santa Cruz and return via Las Palmas (or vice versa) with the inter-island crossing included in the round fare.

Inevitably competition arose on what rapidly became a profitable route in its own right and by 1903 Yeoward Brothers were offering return fares for ten guineas and would arrange hotel accommodation for a further two guineas per week. To combat this, Jones produced a special «holiday ticket» which covered the first-class return passage, plus a fortnight's accommodation and board at the Hotel Metropole, all for £15. This meant that a person could be away from Liverpool for four weeks with full board at a price which even with the level of wages at that time, brought an overseas holiday within the range of many middle-class families.

The growth of this market produced many new hotels in the Islands that were specifically designed to cater for the influx of tourists. These ranged from the Grand Hotel Taora (currently the Casino at Puerto de la Cruz) to a multitude of private pensions. Particularly popular were the «first-class family hotels» like the *Monopole* and the *Marquesa* and the more superior *Metropole* - the latter built by, and largely filled by, Alfred Jones. Other establishments with British connections included the Pino de Oro Hotel kept by Henry James, Turnbull's boarding house at Orotava and the Quiney's hotel at Las Palmas.

Concentration of British residents and long-term visitors gradually



emerged at Orotava⁴¹, Santa Cruz and Las Palmas⁴² and in the course of time English churches, libraries and, later, a school were established. Although statistics of visitors numbers are not available it is clear that they expanded substantially in the period up to 1914. The evidence for this can be seen from the growing number of vessels which called at the two main ports up to the outbreak of the First World War for by then they had risen at least fourfold over 1890⁴³.

The current economy of the archipelago still relies heavily upon its exports of fruit and «imports» of tourists. Today much of the former, especially bananas, is sold in mainland Spain but the structure of the industry to which the British made such a significant contribution is still important. The aeroplane has now replaced the ship as the principal means of reaching the Canaries but the majority of foreign visitors are still from the United Kingdom – another reminder of the strength of the British contribution to the development of the Islands.



41. OSBERT WARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-32.

42. S.F. LATIMER, *The English in Canary Islands*, *Western Daily Mercury*, Plymouth, 1888, pp. 331-4.

43. See Table 4 in the Appendix.

Table 1. TOTAL VALUES OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS IN THE TRADE BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNDERMENTIONED COUNTRIES FROM 1855 TO 1912.

The black figures show the order of importance of the trade with each country.
(Compiled from the Statistical Abstracts for the United Kingdom.)

| IMPORTS AND EXPORTS— | 1855 | 1960 | 1870 | 1880 | 1890 | 1900 | 1910 | 1912 |
|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| France | 4 19.568.290 | 4 30.475.409 | 2 59.590.513 | 3 69.961.257 | 3 69.538.951 | 2 79.469.109 | 5 85.295.754 | 4 91.905.234 |
| Germany (Prussia, Hanse Towns Hanover, till (1870) | 2 30.740.883 | 3 34.450.981 | 4 43.469.742 | 4 53.411.263 | 4 56.589.612 | 4 69.724.457 | 3 96.110.119 | 3 102.468.044 |
| Russia (1956)..... | 5 14.932.778 | 5 21.647.777 | 6 30.631.726 | 7 26.996.212 | 7 32.596.922 | 8 38.344.427 | 7 64.559.311 | 9 60.484.369 |
| Holland | 6 13.630.090 | 6 18.009.652 | 5 31.619.562 | 6 41.563.737 | 6 42.346.916 | 6 46.312.113 | 8 58.451.873 | 7 68.331.672 |
| Belgium | 13 6.480.939 | 13 8.043.915 | 8 20.043.915 | 8 24.241.094 | 8 30.978.742 | 7 38.349.910 | 9 53.567.530 | 8 63.399.027 |
| China, including Hong Kong | 8 10.050.586 | 8 14.775.321 | 9 19.839.840 | 9 22.571.090 | 14 15.560.539 | 16 12.016.444 | 16 17.957.824 | 16 19.811.449 |
| Japan | — | 19 167.513 | 19 1.873.466 | 18 4.345.018 | 18 5.212.366 | 17 11.474.451 | 18 15.205.737 | 18 16.409.087 |
| British India, including Strait Settlements and Ceylon | 3 26.129.392 | 2 38.550.136 | 3 54.521.127 | 2 72.726.587 | 2 80.487.511 | 3 75.978.627 | 2 116.106.158 | 2 142.228.981 |
| Australia (and Australia till 1900)..... | 7 11.721.825 | 7 17.068.460 | 7 24.810.745 | 5 44.411.426 | 5 54.821.038 | 5 47.346.385 | 6 69.648.914 | 6 74.400.312 |
| New Zealand..... | — | — | — | — | — | 14 17.515.173 | 11 30.345.216 | 12 31.489.404 |
| Canada and Newfoundland | 11 7.782.235 | 10 10.813.772 | 11 16.099.791 | 10 21.905.007 | 10 20.717.232 | 10 31.799.453 | 10 50.619.380 | 10 56.643.668 |
| United States of America | 1 43.804.355 | 1 67.643.883 | 1 81.110.770 | 1 145.035.452 | 1 143.623.461 | 1 176.133.216 | 1 182.156.504 | 1 201.312.770 |
| British West Indies and Guiana | 12 7.452.813 | 11 8.633.435 | 14 9.688.210 | 15 9.821.167 | 17 6.636.929 | 20 5.006.943 | 20 6.751.093 | 21 5.941.685 |
| South America, West Coast, Chili and Peru | 10 8.142.070 | 12 8.333.460 | 12 13.330.054 | 16 8.654.500 | 16 9.127.622 | 18 10.740.412 | 17 17.545.691 | 17 17.838.800 |
| South America, East Coast Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina | 9 8.268.775 | 9 11.570.508 | 10 17.420.877 | 11 17.713.881 | 9 27.230.679 | 9 34.857.925 | 4 87.826.603 | 5 90.024.073 |
| Central Americana and Mexico | 18 1.358.247 | 18 1.451.157 | 18 2.792.187 | 19 3.931.415 | 19 4.913.335 | 21 4.294.242 | 21 6.027.159 | 20 6.965.614 |
| South Africa. (Cape of Good Hope and Natal) | 17 1.786.390 | 16 3.876.233 | 17 4.836.287 | 14 12.844.522 | 13 15.899.164 | 12 17.965.201 | 12 29.917.339 | 11 33.533.119 |
| Denmark | 16 4.107.261 | 17 3.491.870 | 16 5.382.774 | 17 7.633.340 | 15 10.681.395 | 13 17.911.938 | 13 26.259.817 | 13 29.155.379 |
| Sweden and Norway (together till 1890)..... | 15 5.339.663 | 15 5.925.691 | 13 11.809.064 | 12 16.121.208 | 11 18.908.614 | 15 17.130.283 | 15 19.167.246 | 15 20.900.249 |
| Spain | 14 6.093.720 | 14 6.615.021 | 15 9.180.769 | 13 14.778.533 | 12 18.211.337 | 11 22.216.986 | 14 19.241.986 | 19 22.081.623 |

Source: A. W. KIRKALDY, *British Shipping* reprinted by Augustus M. Kelly, New York, 1970, Appendix XIX.

Table 2
A Comparative Synopsis of the Progress of Trade in the Canary Islands²³

| Year | I M P O R T S | | | | | E X P O R T S | | | | |
|-------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| | England | France | Germany | Spain | Total | Cochineal | Wine | Spirits | Tobacco | Total |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 1865 | 179.914 | 51.004 | 11.669 | 47.866 | 391.492 | 295.208 | 11.007 | 4.630 | Wanting | 404.055 |
| 1869 | 215.781 | 127.979 | 11.298 | 162.690 | 719.544 | 789.993 | 5.470 | Wanting | " | 845.390 |
| 1874 | 206.714 | 84.771 | 8.435 | 66.000 | 486.239 | 429.931 | Wanting | " | " | 566.432 |
| Total | | | | | 1.597.275 | | | | | 1.815.877 |
| 1884 | 163.398 | 38.785 | 26.923 | 70.035 | 335.820 | 100.844 | 6.740 | 5.530 | 10.380 | 224.418 |
| 1885 | 210.464 | 59.574 | 31.590 | 75.036 | 419.944 | 127.028 | 4.855 | 6.358 | 10.454 | 351.097 |
| 1886 | 207.380 | 70.280 | 49.115 | 45.966 | 447.568 | 151.486 | 10.009 | 10.570 | 50.937 | 341.720 |
| 1887 | 224.996 | 51.675 | 49.922 | 48.920 | 438.340 | 117.819 | 10.957 | 8.027 | 25.458 | 248.774 |
| 1888 | 273.449 | 57.306 | 56.873 | 50.875 | 476.793 | 97.050 | 21.126 | 5.456 | 21.107 | 281.180 |
| 1889 | 286.296 | 48.642 | 61.024 | 42.116 | 517.918 | 82.923 | 18.264 | | 32.557 | 302.175 |
| 1890 | 315.259 | 70.133 | 85.954 | 39.465 | 591.136 | 60.940 | 23.963 | 9.648 | 30.064 | 319.557 |
| Total | | | | | 3.227.519 | | | | | 2.068.941 |
| 1892* | 307.160 | 55.826 | 84.141 | 33.876 | 575.018 | 50.877 | 20.785 | 5.761 | — | 438.941 |

Source: A. SAMLER BROWN, *Madeira and the Canary Islands*. Sampson, Low Marston & Co., London, 1894 Edition, p. 234.

The british contribution to the economic development...



Table 3

NET TONNAGE OF THE LEADING MERCANTILE FLEETS OF THE WORLD FROM 1850 TO 1910, SHOWING:-

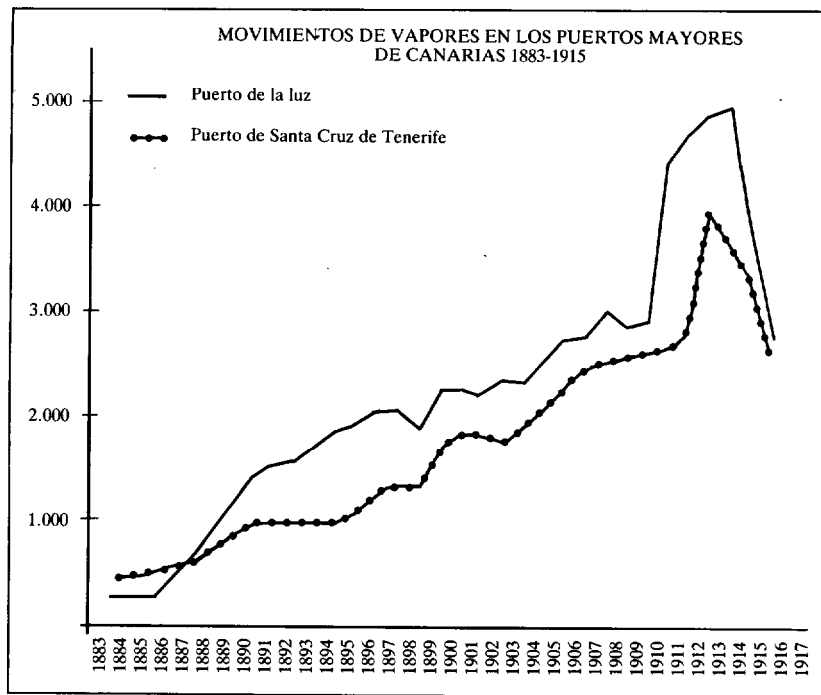
- (a) Sailing ship and Steamship Tonnage.
 (b) World's Totals.
 (c) The British, United Kingdom, United States of America, and German Percentage of the World's Total.
 (d) These Percentages also shown in terms of Steamship Tonnage, reckoning 1 ton of steam = 4 tons sailing.
 (The tonnage figures in this Table are taken from *Progress of Merchant Shipping in the United Kingdom and Principal Maritime Countries*, Cd. 6180, 1912.)

| COUNTRIES | | 1850 | 1860 | 1870 | 1880 | 1890 | 1900 | 1905 | 1907 | 1910 |
|---|---------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| United Kingdom | Sailing | 3,396,659 | 4,204,360 | 4,577,855 | 3,851,045 | 2,936,021 | 2,096,498 | 1,670,766 | 1,461,376 | 1,113,944 |
| | Steam | 168,474 | 454,327 | 1,112,934 | 2,723,468 | 5,042,517 | 7,207,610 | 9,064,816 | 10,023,723 | 10,442,719 |
| British Possessions | Sailing | 648,672 | 1,096,464 | 1,369,145 | 1,646,844 | 1,338,361 | 915,096 | 906,372 | 883,448 | 879,926 |
| | Steam | 19,157 | 45,817 | 89,200 | 225,814 | 371,189 | 532,188 | 696,430 | 814,808 | 926,399 |
| British Empire | Sailing | 4,045,331 | 5,300,824 | 5,947,000 | 5,497,889 | 4,274,382 | 3,011,594 | 2,577,138 | 2,344,824 | 1,993,870 |
| | Steam | 187,631 | 500,144 | 1,202,134 | 2,949,282 | 5,413,706 | 7,739,798 | 9,761,266 | 10,838,531 | 11,369,118 |
| Russia (including Finland) | Sailing | — | — | — | 656,771 | 581,287 | 556,614 | 511,518 | 564,721 | 581,316 |
| | Steam | — | — | — | 100,421 | 234,418 | 417,922 | 440,643 | 501,648 | 535,040 |
| Norway | Sailing | 298,315 | 558,927 | 1,009,200 | 1,460,596 | 1,502,584 | 1,002,675 | 813,664 | 750,862 | 628,287 |
| | Steam | — | — | 13,715 | 58,062 | 203,115 | 505,443 | 668,230 | 819,282 | 897,440 |
| Sweden | Sailing | — | — | — | 421,693 | 369,680 | 288,687 | 263,425 | 238,742 | 175,916 |
| | Steam | — | — | — | 81,040 | 141,267 | 325,105 | 459,664 | 532,515 | 596,263 |
| Denmark | Sailing | — | — | 168,193 | 197,509 | 189,406 | 158,303 | 149,310 | 141,035 | 131,342 |
| | Steam | — | — | 10,453 | 51,957 | 112,788 | 250,137 | 334,124 | 404,946 | 415,496 |
| German Empire | Sailing | — | — | 900,361 | 965,767 | 709,761 | 593,770 | 553,817 | 533,652 | 506,837 |
| | Steam | — | — | 81,994 | 215,759 | 723,652 | 1,347,875 | 1,915,475 | 2,256,783 | 2,396,713 |
| Netherlands | Sailing | 289,870 | 423,790 | 370,159 | 263,887 | 127,200 | 78,493 | 54,417 | 49,640 | 45,936 |
| | Steam | 2,706 | 10,132 | 19,455 | 64,394 | 128,511 | 268,430 | 356,890 | 398,026 | 488,339 |
| Belgium | Sailing | 33,315 | 28,857 | 20,648 | 10,442 | 4,393 | 741 | 2,444 | 964 | 3,402 |
| | Steam | 1,604 | 4,254 | 9,501 | 65,224 | 71,553 | 112,518 | 96,880 | 119,223 | 187,730 |
| France | Sailing | 674,228 | 928,099 | 917,633 | 641,539 | 444,092 | 501,175 | 676,193 | 662,828 | 636,081 |
| | Steam | 13,925 | 6,025 | 154,415 | 277,759 | 499,921 | 527,551 | 711,027 | 739,810 | 815,567 |
| Portugal | Sailing | — | — | — | — | — | 57,925 | 43,126 | 38,363 | 43,844 |
| | Steam | — | — | — | — | — | 51,506 | 58,077 | 62,675 | 70,193 |
| Spain | Sailing | — | — | — | 326,438 | 210,247 | 95,187 | 58,201 | 45,185 | 44,940 |
| | Steam | — | — | — | 233,695 | 407,936 | 679,392 | 585,689 | 676,926 | 744,517 |
| Italy | Sailing | — | — | 980,064 | 922,126 | 634,149 | 371,164 | 541,171 | 468,674 | 432,695 |
| | Steam | — | — | 32,100 | 77,050 | 106,567 | 376,844 | 484,432 | 526,586 | 674,497 |
| Austria Hungary | Sailing | — | — | 279,400 | 258,642 | 138,796 | 52,736 | 39,565 | 37,658 | 32,235 |
| | Steam | — | — | 49,977 | 63,970 | 97,852 | 246,989 | 366,070 | 418,838 | 477,616 |
| Greece | Sailing | — | 263,075 | 398,703 | — | 226,702 | 175,867 | 145,312 | 145,233 | 145,284 |
| | Steam | — | — | 5,360 | — | 44,684 | 143,436 | 225,512 | 257,900 | 301,785 |
| United States of America | Sailing | 1,540,769 | 2,448,941 | 1,324,256 | 1,206,206 | 749,085 | 485,352 | 353,333 | 269,021 | 234,848 |
| | Steam | 44,942 | 97,296 | 192,544 | 146,604 | 197,630 | 341,342 | 601,180 | 602,125 | 558,977 |
| (a) Registered for Foreign Trade | Sailing | 1,418,550 | 1,982,297 | 1,795,389 | 1,650,270 | 1,816,344 | 2,021,690 | 2,364,716 | 2,450,405 | 2,372,873 |
| | Steam | 481,005 | 770,641 | 882,551 | 1,064,954 | 1,661,458 | 2,316,455 | 3,140,314 | 3,677,243 | 4,343,384 |
| China | Sailing | — | — | — | 21,694 | 11,801 | 20,541 | 19,560 | 18,243 | 14,314 |
| | Steam | — | — | — | — | 29,766 | 18,215 | 45,617 | 57,604 | 88,888 |
| Japan | Sailing | — | — | — | 41,215 | 48,094 | 320,571 | 334,684 | 366,013 | 412,859 |
| | Steam | — | — | — | — | 93,812 | 543,365 | 938,783 | 1,116,193 | 1,233,785 |
| Total | | 9,052,191 | 13,295,302 | 16,765,205 | 19,991,863 | 22,265,598 | 26,205,398 | 30,849,067 | 33,132,066 | 34,639,742 |
| World's Total | Sailing | 8,300,378 | 11,844,810 | 14,111,006 | 14,541,684 | 12,016,963 | 9,993,075 | 9,550,075 | 9,126,113 | 8,435,874 |
| | Steam | 731,813 | 1,450,492 | 2,654,199 | 5,450,179 | 10,248,635 | 16,212,323 | 21,298,873 | 24,005,953 | 26,193,868 |
| British percentage of world's total | | 46.86 | 43.33 | 42.64 | 42.25 | 43.51 | 41.02 | 39.99 | 39.79 | 38.58 |
| United Kingdom do | | 39.47 | 34.80 | 33.94 | 32.48 | 35.83 | 35.50 | 34.40 | 34.66 | 33.37 |
| United States of America do | | 38.58 | 39.51 | 25.02 | 26.58 | 19.87 | 19.70 | 20.92 | 21.12 | 21.48 |
| German do | | — | — | 5.85 | 5.91 | 6.43 | 7.40 | 8.40 | 8.42 | 8.38 |
| British percentage of world's total in terms of steamship tonnage, reckoning 1 ton steam = 4 tons sailing | | 42.7 | 40.86 | 43.49 | 47.56 | 48.91 | 45.39 | 43.98 | 43.46 | 41.93 |
| United Kingdom do | | 36.25 | 33.95 | 36.51 | 40.57 | 43.58 | 41.32 | 40.00 | 39.48 | 37.88 |
| United States of America including (a) and (b) do | | 45.09 | 44.55 | 30.00 | 21.19 | 19.46 | 17.55 | 24.24 | 18.86 | 19.61 |
| German do | | — | — | 5.85 | 5.02 | 6.79 | 7.99 | 8.67 | 9.49 | 8.91 |

Source: A. W. KIRKALDY, *British Shipping* reprinted by Augustus M. Kelley, New York, 1970, Appendix XVII.



Table 4



Fuente: Elaborado a partir de los datos que facilita RAMONELL Y OBRADOR, J.: Proyecto de ampliación del Puerto de la Luz. Tip. Diario. Las Palmas, 1917.

Source: AGUAYRO. *Primer Centenario del Puerto de la Luz*. Caja Insular de Ahorros. Year 12, No. 146, March-April 1983. Las Palmas. p. 14.