

School ¹⁹⁵² With Come Of Age

Lake Opened Up By Channel Now Natural Harbour For Boats

The Nonsuch Training School came of age in January, with Superintendent Arthur Tucker still in the driver's seat. He and Mrs. Tucker have spent 28 years in the civil service. "We joined on Fool's Day," he said with a smile. During the time the school has been on Paget Island off St. George's, perhaps the most spectacular change has been the completion of a channel which was started 100 years ago.

The channel, 500 feet long, 14 feet wide and 12 feet high, was started by a Captain Hinson, who operated a whaling business from nearby Smith's Island. We wanted to cut the channel to gain shelter for his boats in a lake. It was never completed.

In 1948 it was decided to finish cutting the channel connecting the lake with the harbour.

Mr. Tucker told a Royal Gazette Weekly reporter: "The lake was of brackish water. There was only a slight tideway. We opened it up to kill the mosquitoes and also to make a natural harbour for our boats. It took three years to complete the job, most of which was done by blasting. We had about 40 boys here in those days."

Bird Sanctuary

Today the pretty lake is used to moor boats used by the school. It is a delightful spot—cool and quiet.

The air is full of the sound of birds. Paget Island is a bird sanctuary. On one occasion after a storm there were between 20 and 30 herons who sought shelter at the lake. "We keep the cats well-fed,"

said Mr. Tucker "so they won't be tempted to go after the birds."

The boys have many activities. They are making a playing field by hand. They have a vegetable garden in a sheltered valley, and banana and citrus groves.

There are 30 boys on the island now, between the ages of 10 and 17. They go to school in an attractive classroom. They worship in a chapel—formerly a gun-room.

Fort Built in 1875

On the island, and providing many rooms for many activities, is Fort Cunningham, which dates back to 1875. At the entrance is a bell which a boy on watch rings every half-hour. Just inside the entrance is a handsome ship's compass. In fact, with the white caps of the boys, the whole place has a nautical air.

The original light that was on North Rock has been set in concrete and Mr. Tucker said that, if a light was put in it, it would then be seen far out to sea.

Two years ago the Public Works Department built a new dock at the island. The old one was falling to pieces. There is ferry service to the island.