

1954-55
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VICTORIA

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SOLDIER SETTLEMENT COMMISSION
FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE, 1954

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 16 OF
THE SOLDIER SETTLEMENT ACT 1945.

[Approximate Cost of Report:—Preparation—Not given. Printing (400 copies), £70.]

By Authority:
W. M. HOUSTON, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

No. 33.—[1s. 3d.]—3775/55.



REPORT

Soldier Settlement Commission,
Melbourne, C.2.

The Honourable the Minister of Lands.

SIR,

The Soldier Settlement Commission has the honour to transmit to you herewith, pursuant to Section 16 of the *Soldier Settlement Act* 1945, its Annual Report and Balance-sheet for the year ended 30th June, 1954.

NEW LEGISLATION.

During the year, Parliament enacted ~~the~~ *Land Settlement Act* 1953. This legislation affords an opportunity for settlement on the land to suitable applicants with the necessary farming experience, who otherwise may not have the opportunity of becoming farmers in their own right.

The Soldier Settlement Commission is the Authority charged with the responsibility of implementing this new Land Settlement Scheme which will enable the development of large areas of Crown lands in the high rainfall areas, which, heretofore, have remained unproductive. The Commission does not visualize that large-scale operations under the Land Settlement Act will begin until the primary task of soldier settlement is tapering off. However, the development of the suitable Crown lands still available for settlement, from their present virgin state, is not a task which can be accomplished without a great deal of preliminary research and planning, particularly the provision of road access. The Commission, therefore, recommends that an initial allocation of funds be made available to it to enable such preliminary work to commence.

Present indications are that the development, by new techniques, of otherwise unproductive Crown lands in high rainfall areas offers considerable scope for the production of additional real wealth. However, such new and improved techniques of land development can be most economically applied when the development is carried out on a relatively large scale with equipment which would be beyond the resources of the average individual who will desire to obtain land under this new legislation. The legislation provides that land will be made available to settlers on Perpetual Leasehold basis, but settlers will have the right to freehold ten years after the commencement of such a lease.

Provision is also made in the legislation for advances to enable settlers to effect improvements and to acquire stock, plant and equipment.

The Land Settlement Act 1953 also contains certain amendments to the existing soldier settlement legislation. Most of these amendments were consequential upon the Soldier Settlement Commission being given the responsibility for the administration of the Act. These amendments, however, include provision to increase the maximum advance to assist a discharged soldier purchase a Single Unit Farm to £9,000 and also, for the staff of the Commission to be subject to the Public Service Acts and brought under the control of the Public Service Board. The Land Settlement Act became operative as from the 1st July, 1954.

SETTLEMENT OF EX-SERVICEMEN UNDER THE WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEME.

The Commission has been able to make satisfactory progress in the development of farms, and is able to report that the actual development of the allocated settlement holdings has progressed at a more satisfactory rate than has been possible in past years.

In its last report the Commission indicated that the high cost of land and the resultant cost of establishing an ex-serviceman on the land, is a matter which would require very careful consideration. This problem of the acquisition of sufficient land at reasonable prices to meet the Commission's requirements is still present, and is causing the Commission grave concern. The recent series of good seasons with exceptionally high yields and prices for products has given land-owners a profit margin which is probably unprecedented. For this reason the Commission finds it almost impossible to locate willing vendors. Based on previous experience, which the Commission believes to be the only reasonable basis to adopt, it is reasonable to assume that the present inflated market price of land brought about by the conditions mentioned, is above its economic value over a long-term period of average prices and seasonal conditions.

Whilst a number of settlers are taking advantage of the present favourable conditions to consolidate their financial position, the Commission feels that it should repeat its warning that settlers would be unwise to expect the favourable conditions which have prevailed in the past nine years to continue. In fact, the present tendency towards falling prices and steadily increasing costs has already reduced the profit margin.

Development of Crown Lands—Experiments in Methods of Raising Productivity of Crown Land.

With the technical assistance of associated Departments, the Commission has continued with experiments in the development of Crown lands for settlement purposes. In the Heytesbury forest area, the pastures established on the experimental area on some 160 acres have continued to show very satisfactory results following the use of copper, lime and superphosphate. The smaller plots in the Parishes of Kentbruck and Drajurk in the Portland-Casterton district have not yet yielded conclusive results, although indications to date show some promise on the plots in the Parish of Kentbruck.

Classification of Applicants as to Eligibility and Suitability.

One hundred and sixty ex-servicemen applied for classification as to eligibility and suitability to apply for War Service Land Settlement in Victoria during the last financial year, bringing the total number of applications received to 16,415. Included among that number are a good proportion of ex-servicemen who served in the Korean or Malayan theatres of war.

In so far as ex-servicemen of the 1939-45 war are concerned, applications are required to be lodged within five years of the date of discharge, and the time limits for the receipt of applications for those who continue to serve after the cessation of hostilities lapsed on the 30th June, 1954. Consequently, only ex-servicemen who served in the Korean or Malayan theatres of war are now eligible to apply for classification.

Ten thousand eight hundred and eighty-three ex-servicemen have been classified as suitable for farm ownership, and of that number 2,407 have been assisted to purchase Single Unit Farms of their own choice (a form of rehabilitation for which the Commonwealth, up to date, accepts no responsibility) and 2,141 have been allotted holdings under the General Land Settlement Scheme.

Over 3,000 of the 10,883 ex-servicemen classified as suitable have merely applied for classification and have shown no further desire to obtain a holding under the General Settlement Scheme or Single Unit Farm advance. The Commission is at present carrying out a survey of these ex-servicemen to ascertain how many are still genuinely interested in obtaining rural rehabilitation and who have the capacity for same.

Acquisition of Lands.

The very high values ruling for all classes of land made it difficult for the Commission to make prudent decisions in acquiring the area it considered necessary for soldier settlement purposes. The Commission, however, did purchase 49,152 acres for £1,174,176; an average of about £23 18s. per acre, which is approximately the same average price as paid the previous year.

The following table gives details of acquisitions made since the Commission's inception :—

	Acres.	£
Land acquired prior to 1st July, 1947	233,208 ..	2,134,554
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1947, to 30th June, 1948	312,384 ..	2,812,176
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1948, to 30th June, 1949	106,566 ..	1,022,397
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1949, to 30th June, 1950	79,994 ..	1,175,313
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1950, to 30th June, 1951	£5,826 ..	2,018,018
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1951, to 30th June, 1952	72,042 ..	1,234,616
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1952, to 30th June, 1953	21,489 ..	513,168
Land acquired during the period 1st July, 1953, to 30th June, 1954	49,152 ..	1,174,176
	<hr/> 960,661 ..	<hr/> 12,084,418 <hr/>

An additional 6,238 acres of Crown Land were set apart for soldier settlement during this year.

Subdivision and Allocation of Land.

The total number of holdings made available for settlement to the 30th June, 1954, was 2,199, comprising 868,732 acres, including 165 holdings with an area of 50,531 acres, made available during the last financial year. 850,035 acres have actually been allocated to 2,141 ex-servicemen of whom 2,122 are in occupation of their holdings.

Development of Crown Lands.

Robinvale—During the year, Victoria received the concurrence of the Australian Agricultural Council to extend dried fruit plantings in Victoria by a further 1,200 acres, and the Commission proceeded immediately with the development of a further 80 holdings in the Robinvale irrigation district. The clearing of this land is already well advanced, and in the coming Spring, the first 15 holdings in this extension will be planted, followed by 35 in the Spring of 1955 and the balance in 1956. This will bring the total number of holdings in the Robinvale area to approximately 250.

Nyora—The development of 2,400 acres of former forest land at Nyora has proceeded satisfactorily during the year, and the initial clearing operations in this area are now almost completed. The first areas to be cleared have been sown down to pasture and, whilst the development of virgin Crown land into dairying country is not an easy or a rapid process, the establishment of pasture on Nyora Settlement has shown very satisfactory results. Two settlers are already on their holdings, and it is expected that settlers will be on the remaining holdings within the next twelve months.

Yanakie—The Commission has for some time been investigating the possibilities of the development of the Yanakie Run near Foster for soldier settlement, and proposes in the very near future, to recommend to the Government that initially, approximately 12,000 acres of this land be set apart for soldier settlement purposes. Subject to this being done, the Commission proposes to commence the development of the area in the Spring of 1954.

Development and Improvement of Settlers' Holdings.

During the year under review, steady progress has been maintained in carrying out improvements on settlers' holdings. Generally supplies of essential materials have been available in reasonable quantities, although it has not been possible to obtain sufficient supplies of fencing wire and corrugated galvanized iron from local sources. A high proportion of the Commission's supplies of these materials is still being imported from overseas.

During the year, 281 new houses were completed, and 22 existing houses were redesigned and renovated to the required standard for occupation as settlers' permanent homes. This makes a total of 1,996 permanent houses provided for settlers. Also, in the period under review, 318 temporary living quarters (ultimately, farm out-buildings), were provided for occupation by settlers pending the erection of their houses.

In addition to the living quarters previously mentioned, the following is a summary of essential farm buildings constructed during the year, together with the total constructed since settlement commenced—

	Erected Prior to 30th June, 1953.	Erected during Year 1953-54.	Total.
Dairy and milking sheds	837	94	931
Shearing sheds	652	119	771
Utility and general purpose sheds	1077	422	1499

In addition to the above, the Commission has proceeded with the fencing involved in the subdivision and management of over 2,000 farms and the treatment for pasture improvements associated therewith.

Water supply to settlers' holdings has involved the provision of 1,318 bores, 994 dams, 1,820 wind mills, of which 166 bores, 258 dams and 468 wind mills were erected in the year under review.

During the year, the 5,400 acres extension to the Murray Valley Irrigation Settlement Area has been subdivided and development is proceeding. It is expected that the bulk of the settlers on this extension will be on their ~~holidays~~ in the coming financial year.

The land purchased near Horsham for development into approximately 25 irrigation holdings for dairying, has been subdivided and a centre has been established in Horsham from which the development work will be controlled. Development of the area is proceeding, and it is expected that approximately half of the settlers will be on their ~~holidays~~ during the coming financial year.

As was mentioned when this project was proposed, one of the results of establishing this settlement area at Horsham will be that the Wimmera area will be provided with supplies of whole milk from a source reasonably close to the centres of consumption.

In addition, the Commission, in conjunction with the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, is carrying out preliminary investigations with a view to establishing a small settlement on similar lines near Murtoa.

Road Construction to Serve the Holdings on Settlement Estates.

As has been pointed out in previous reports, the construction of roads to serve settlement estates is an essential preliminary to their development for settlement. Construction of such roads, however, many of which fit into the State roading pattern, was a serious drain on funds made available for settlement.

Following consideration of this matter by the Government, a general formula has been adopted whereby the Commission provides half the cost of roads which serve settlement estates, and the balance is provided by the Country Roads Board and the municipalities concerned. This arrangement has afforded the Commission considerable relief, although the expenditure on roads is still a very substantial item in the Commission's costs. During the year under review, the Commission expended £74,892 on this item, making a total expended to date of some £462,000 on roads.

Assistance Period Granted to Settlers.

After a settler's holding is brought to a reasonable stage of productivity, he is granted certain benefits. These include the payment for one year (known as the Assistance Period), by the Commonwealth, of a living allowance which is not repayable, the use of his farm rent free for twelve months and the remission of interest on advances for stock, plant or equipment. These benefits are provided in accordance with the original agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria on War Service Land Settlement, with the primary object of allowing a settler to conserve his income during that year, to assist in his establishment and pay for his stock, plant and equipment.

Two hundred and eighty-one settlers were granted these benefits during the year, bringing the total number of settlers who have now received such benefits to 1,706.

Provision is made under the Soldier Settlement legislation to enable a settler who has repaid his advances for stock, plant and equipment, to make additional payments to the Commission, which may be applied in reduction of his farm liability. This is achieved by means of a Credit Account to which any settler may make payment and any amount standing to his credit in such account is credited with interest at a rate equivalent to the current long-term bond rate which, at present, is $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum. Settlers throughout Victoria have now paid £554,556 to their Credit Accounts and, in addition the Commission holds on behalf of settlers, gilt-edged securities to the face value of £46,510. On the grant of a Settlement Purchase Lease the amount standing to the credit of a settler in the Credit Account is applied in reduction of his liability under such Settlement Purchase Lease.

Valuations of Allotments.

During the past year, Interim Lease liabilities were determined for an additional 100 holdings, making a total of 996 holdings valued for such purposes. The Commission could have determined a much larger number of Interim Lease liabilities had it been able to reach agreement with the Commonwealth War Service Land Settlement Authorities on the valuation of land purchased after the lifting of land sales control (as distinct from structural improvements). The Commonwealth Government has never agreed to make a determinable contribution to any write-off in respect of land costs, and the Commission therefore felt that it could not commit Victoria to continue with the grant of Settlement Interim Leases on the same basis as had been adopted for land purchased during the currency of Land Sales Control, involving a higher write-off, unless it had a specific assurance that the Commonwealth would bear its share of the excess costs.

The Commonwealth's refusal to accept its share of such excess costs has received the consideration of the Victorian Government, and it is hoped that during the current year it will be possible to arrange a common basis of valuation with the Commonwealth.

Settlement Purchase Leases.

Many of the settlers who received holdings in the early stages of settlement are now eligible for the grant of Settlement Purchase Leases under the Soldier Settlement Acts, and the Commission is proceeding with the grant of such Leases where possible. It is anticipated that, from now on, a steady flow of Purchase Leases will be maintained. These Leases provide for the settler eventually freeholding his farm. Interest at the rate of 2 per cent. per annum is charged on the outstanding liability, and a settler has 55 years in which to repay his liability, although he may make additional payments, and so freehold his land in a shorter period.

ADVANCES FOR STOCK, PLANT, EQUIPMENT, ETC.

Two thousand six hundred and thirty seven settlers under the General Settlement and Single Unit Farm Schemes have been made advances under the provisions of Part IV. of the Soldier Settlement Act.

The sum advanced during the year was £524,520, bringing the total amount advanced to £1,788,680. An amount of £314,512 was repaid during the year, bringing the total repayments to £911,163. In addition £84,914 has been advanced to settlers in the Robinvale and Murray Valley areas to purchase shares in co-operative companies, which were established to process produce from settlers' holdings. Of the total amount advanced, £13,101 has been repaid.

In previous reports, the Commission has pointed out the high level of debts with which a settler without capital incurs in the acquisition of stock, plant and equipment for the operation of his holding. Some settlers who borrow their total requirements, are necessarily in a very precarious position until their financial positions are consolidated. The Commission has found the consolidation of their finances to be a rather lengthy and difficult task, particularly when the productivity of the farm has to be lifted as expeditiously as possible, concurrently with the stabilization of the settlers' finances.

SINGLE UNIT FARM ADVANCES PURSUANT TO PART III. OF THE SOLDIER SETTLEMENT ACT 1946.

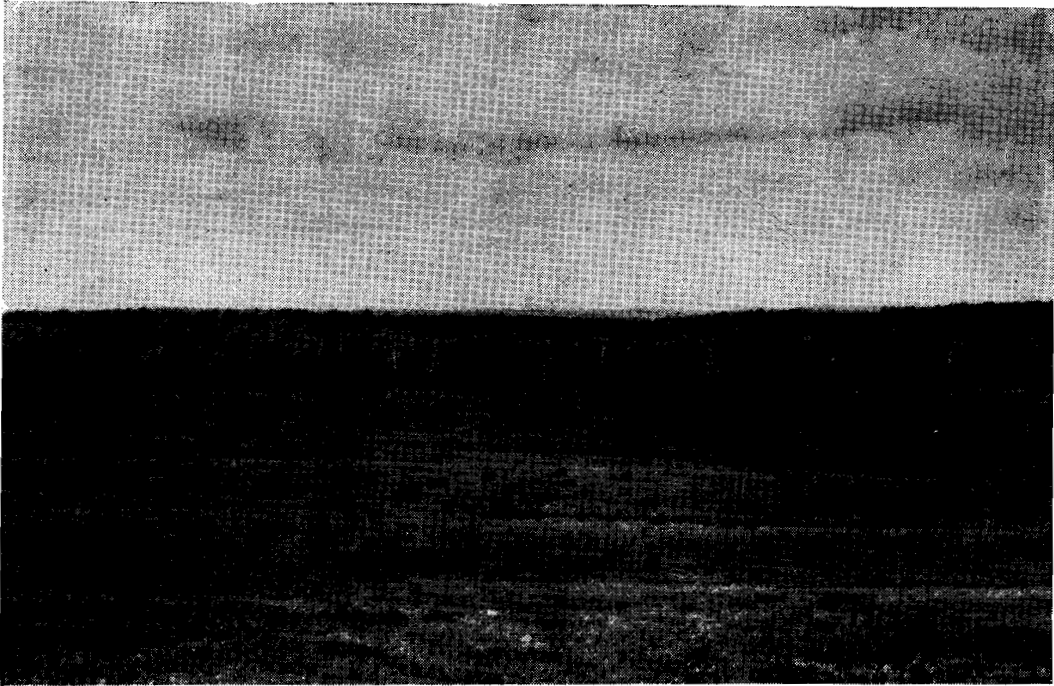
During the year, 97 ex-servicemen were assisted to purchase Single Unit Farms, involving advances of £512,888 and, in addition, advances amounting to £167,323 have been approved in 27 cases which are awaiting finalization.



A typical grazing holding in the Western District.



A canning fruit orchard block in the Murray Valley in its first year.



Fat bullocks grazing on the Heytesbury Experimental Area.



Crown lands near Wilson's Promontory in its virgin state before development for soldier settlement.

A statistical summary of the actual amounts paid by the Commission for Single Unit Farm Advances is set out hereunder—

Period.	Number of Settlements Effected.	Total Loans.	Average Loan.
		£	£
From commencement to 30th July, 1947	93	319,173	3,431
1st July, 1947 to 30th June, 1948	752	2,537,814	3,375
1st July, 1948 to 30th June, 1949	417	1,460,838	3,503
1st July, 1949 to 30th June, 1950	368	1,356,907	3,687
1st July, 1950 to 30th June, 1951	434	1,736,861	4,002
1st July, 1951 to 30th June, 1952	195	914,518	4,690
1st July, 1952 to 30th June, 1953	51	247,890	4,860
1st July, 1953 to 30th June, 1954	97	512,888	5,288
Totals to 30th June, 1954	2,407	9,086,889	3,775

£2,192,437 has been repaid by settlers and 526 have repaid their loans in full.

Whilst some capital losses should be visualized in a scheme where the percentage of the advance in relation to the valuation of the property is high, the State has not yet been involved in any capital losses in respect of these advances. In addition to their obligations under mortgage, settlers have repaid an additional £196,009 which now stands to their credit in the Mortgagors Credit Account.

AGRICULTURAL LOANS AND ALLOWANCES UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH RE-ESTABLISHMENT AND EMPLOYMENT ACT 1945.

The Commission is administering in this State, on behalf of the Commonwealth, the Sections of the Commonwealth Re-Establishment and Employment Act relating to Agricultural Loans and Allowances.

Loans totalling £1,796,239 have been made to 2,970 ex-servicemen and of this amount £1,311,403 has been repaid.

Agricultural allowances totalling £296,013 have been made to 2,311 ex-servicemen to assist in establishing them in various farming undertakings throughout the State.

Due to the effluxion of time and to statutory limits on the time in which such assistance may be granted, very few additional loans are being made under this legislation.

CONSENTS TO SALES OF LAND UNDER SECTION 87 OF THE SOLDIER SETTLEMENT ACT 1946.

This year a record number of applications have been lodged, 3,970 being received to the 30th June, 1954—making a total of 24,929 applications since the legislation to control sales of farming land to persons other than discharged soldiers came into operation on the 27th May, 1946.

A total of 1,012 objections have been lodged by ex-servicemen—55 during the past year.

The provisions of this Section of the Act are beneficial to ex-servicemen requiring land. They have also been helpful in bringing to the notice of the Commission, a number of suitable properties which have been acquired for settlement.

INSURANCE.

The following brief summary sets out the position of the Fund established by the Commission pursuant to the *Soldier Settlement Act* 1946, No. 5179 :—

		To 30th June, 1953.		During 1953-54.	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
<i>Receipts.</i>					
Credit Balance in Fund as at 30th June, 1953 .. .. .		..	..	104,756	19 8
Premiums received		143,046	6 9	52,515	17 8
				<hr/>	<hr/>
				157,272	17 4
<i>Payments.</i>					
		To 30th June, 1953.		During 1953-54.	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Claims Paid—					
Reinstatement		14,651	2 4	12,088	10 10
Sec. 71 (8) (b)		3,142	13 11	31	12 6
				<hr/>	<hr/>
		17,793	16 3	12,120	3 4
Administration Expenses		20,495	10 10	7,231	15 0
				<hr/>	<hr/>
		38,289	7 1	19,351	18 4
Balance of fund—30th June, 1954				137,920	19 0
				<hr/>	<hr/>
				157,272	17 4

Arrears of Premiums at 30/6/54 amounted to £617 4s. 7d.

Claims admitted but not paid at 30/6/54 amounted to £9,363 4s. 3d.

INSURANCE COVER
AT 30TH JUNE, 1954.

	<i>Total Contingent Liability.</i>
	£
Estates	4,437,752
Single Unit Farm Mortgagors	3,638,149
General Settlers	3,881,406
	<hr/>
	11,957,307

STAFF

The staff which the Commission has built up since its inception some eight years ago, has continued to handle the difficult problems associated with the settlement of ex-servicemen on the land with efficiency and in a spirit of whole-hearted co-operation, and the Commission wishes to express its appreciation to its officers.

The Commission recognizes that any degree of success which it may have obtained in the fulfilment of its obligations and tasks has been attributable in no small way to the efficiency, loyalty and enthusiasm displayed by the members of its staff. Their efforts are reflected in repayments of loan expenditure totalling £5,275,862, the payment to Consolidated Revenue of gross income totalling £1,757,346, and a very favourable cost structure for farms when compared with other Authorities on similar work. However, the Commission regrets to have to record the loss of a number of able officers since January of this year, who felt they could better safeguard their future in other fields.

The *Land Settlement Act* 1953 brings the Commission's staff within the scope of the Public Service Acts and the Commission trusts that, as the change-over takes effect, it will be able to rely on the same personal co-operation and efficiency as has been evident in the past.

Other Government Departments have continued to render valuable assistance and advice to the Commission whenever it has been requested, and, as in previous reports, the Commission wishes to place on record its appreciation of the services which have been rendered by departmental heads and officers of the various departments concerned.

H. L. SIMPSON, Chairman.

E. SINGLETON, Member.

SYDNEY J. KING, Member.

S. P. BROMFIELD, Secretary.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT ACTS.
BALANCE-SHEET AT 30TH JUNE, 1954.
(Adjusted to nearest £.)

	£	£	£	£	£
	Cred.	£	Debit.	£	£
1. Loan Expenditure	38,241,961				
Less Repayments to Loan Fund Credit Account	5,275,862				16,484,212
Loan Liability	32,966,099				824,037
Less Loan Liability transferred to and borne by the State	2,725,023				772,016
		30,241,076			15,056
2. Amounts Claimed from Commonwealth Government under an agreement to share costs in excess of valuations	1,033,803				36,965
Less Amounts contributed by the Commonwealth Government	1,002,993				32,492
3. Crown Lands taken over and set apart for settlement	30,810				92,700
4. Interest on Loan Expenditure capitalized during the developmental period	128,694				6,714,370
5. Advance to Country Roads Board for road construction	998,397				554,555
Less Amount held by the Country Roads Board	21,000				9,086,889
6. Amounts held in trust for Sundry Persons	66,274				395,467
Less Balance in the Trust Suspense Account	66,274				1,994,598
7. Settlers for Securities Lodged pending Settlement Purchase Lease	46,510				1,788,680
Less Securities held for Settlers	46,510				890,322
8. Sundry Creditors for rents payable in advance, &c.	48,987				28,524
9. Amounts Provided from Consolidated Revenue to meet Interest on Loans and Costs of Administration	2,919,200				918,846
Less Amounts paid to Commonwealth Revenue	3,675,255				84,914
Commonwealth Government for one-half share of rents and interest remitted during the Assistance Period	17,073				13,101
	2,936,273				71
	738,982				567,677
					14,633
					1,302
					266,755
					2,304
					9,145
					1,033,803
					1,002,993
					30,810
15. Sundry Debts to Loan Fund Credit Account—					
Sundry Persons for Materials supplied					9,774
Settlers, for Arrears of Principal Instalments					9,596
16. Sundry Debts to Consolidated Revenue—					
Arrears of Interest, Rents and Fees due and payable					19,370
17. Interest and Rents accrued since instalments dates					24,231
18. Loss on Revenue Account (see explanatory footnote)					154,830
Accumulated Deficiency to 30th June, 1953					1,394,248
Deficiency for year ended 30th June, 1954					363,098
Less Profits on working Station Properties					1,757,346
					1,073,620
					683,726
					32,186,946

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1954.
(Adjusted to nearest £.)

	£	£	
<i>Debit.</i>		<i>Credit.</i>	
Interest on Loans including discount and expenses of loan raising	975,444	Interest Earned	317,048
Less Interest in Loan Liability transferred to and borne by the State	69,958	Interest on Expenditure for Land and Improvements capitalized	294,601
	<u>905,486</u>	Rents, Fees and sundry earnings	119,003
Costs of Administration—		Contributions by Commonwealth Government of amounts paid in lieu of Shire Rates	9,891
Salaries and Wages	139,222		
Travelling Expenses	8,973		
Stores, Stationery and Incidentals	12,076		
Maintenance of property, repairs	3,270		
Payments in lieu of Shire Rates	15,018		
	<u>178,559</u>		
Depreciation	2,219		
Bad Debts—			
Contractor for Materials Supplied	39		
Grazing Rents	238		
	<u>277</u>		
Remission—			
Rents and Interest Remitted during the Assistance Period	34,146		
Less half-share to be contributed by Commonwealth Government	17,073		
	<u>17,073</u>		
Interest waived on overdue Instalments	27		
	<u>17,100</u>		
	<u>1,103,641</u>		
Accumulated Deficiency to 30th June, 1953	1,394,248	Accumulated Profits on working station properties to 30th June, 1953	1,053,908
Revenue Account Deficiency for year ended 30th June, 1954	363,098	Profit on working station properties for year ended 30th June, 1954	19,712
	<u>1,757,346</u>		<u>1,073,620</u>
	<u>1,757,346</u>	Balance	683,726
			<u>1,757,346</u>
		Balance carried down	363,098
			<u>1,103,641</u>

The accumulated deficiency shown in the Balance Sheet and Revenue Account is due mainly to the provisions of the Agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments and of State legislation designed to assist the establishment of discharged soldiers on the land.

1. *Remission of rents and interest.*—During the early stages of occupation, referred to in the Agreement as the Assistance Period, all rent and interest charges are remitted. The cost is to be shared equally by the Commonwealth and State Governments. The Victorian Government's share to date is £91,565
2. *Concessional Interest rate.*—The Act fixes the rate to be charged to settlers at 2 per cent per annum. Having regard to the average interest rate payable on loan monies the reduced rate amounts to a statutory concession of £631,012
3. *Other costs not charged to settlers—*

(a) Discount and expenses on the raising of loan monies amounted to	£ 89,126
(b) Costs of administration also borne by the State were	903,260
	992,386
	1,714,963

S. P. BROMFIELD, Secretary.
R. D. HOWELLS, Accountant.

H. L. SIMPSON, Chairman.
E. SINGLETON, Member.
SYDNEY J. KING, Member.

The accounts of the Soldier Settlement Commission have been audited, and, in my opinion, the balances shown in the Balance Sheet properly disclose the position of the Commission's accounts as at 30th June, 1954, and the Revenue Account and the statement of Receipts and Disbursements correctly summarize the transactions of the Commission during the year ended 30th June, 1954.

E. A. PEYERILL, Auditor-General,
25th November, 1954.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT COMMISSION.
SOLDIER SETTLEMENT ACTS.

STATEMENTS OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1954.

<i>Receipts.</i>		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Amounts Credited to Consolidated Revenue—							
Interest on Land and Improvements	.. .. .	130,976	13	8			
Interest on Advances	.. .. .	143,472	6	7			
Rents and Agistment	.. .. .	82,155	12	11			
Ascertained Profit on Trading in Livestock	.. .. .	65,774	11	7			
Recoup of Land Utilization Vote Expenditure	.. .. .	16,444	6	2			
Proceeds, Sale of Motor Cars	.. .. .	586	18	6			
Contribution by Commonwealth Government to meet Remissions of Settlers' Rents and Interest	.. .. .	11,248	2	5			
Contribution by Commonwealth Government to meet amounts paid in lieu of Shire Rates	.. .. .	9,721	4	8			
Sundries	.. .. .	5,016	5	5			
					465,396	1	11
Amounts Credited to Loan Fund Credit Account Section 5 (2) (e)—							
Receipts in reduction of Purchase Lease Liability	.. .. .	32,528	4	1			
Proceeds, Sale of Land and Improvements	.. .. .	248,288	12	3			
Receipts in reduction of Advances	.. .. .	859,473	2	9			
Proceeds, Sale of Stock, Wool, Plant and Material	.. .. .	31,318	10	5			
Contribution by Commonwealth Government for share of costs in excess of valuations	.. .. .	872,750	19	2			
		2,044,359	8	8			
<i>Less</i> Amounts transferred to Consolidated Revenue from Proceeds Sale of Stock, Wool, Plant and Material	.. .. .	3,515	19	1			
					2,040,843	9	7
					2,506,239	11	6
<i>Disbursements.</i>							
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Expenditure from Consolidated Revenue—							
Proportion of Commissioners' Salaries	.. .. .	6,366	13	7			
Salaries and Wages	.. .. .	107,707	4	10			
Travelling Expenses	.. .. .	8,420	15	7			
Stores, Equipment and Incidentals	.. .. .	2,170	7	0			
Postage, Telegrams and Telephones	.. .. .	3,213	14	1			
Printing and Stationery	.. .. .	3,590	8	11			
Maintenance of Motor Vehicles	.. .. .	650	12	4			
Valuation Fees	.. .. .	1,115	12	0			
Upkeep of Commission's Property	.. .. .	2,425	13	10			
Payments in lieu of Shire Rates	.. .. .	15,017	14	10			
Purchase of Motor Vehicles	.. .. .	1,321	2	6			
		151,999	19	6			
Pay Roll Tax	.. .. .	2,704	11	5			
		154,704	10	11			
Land Utilization	.. .. .	15,510	6	2			
					170,214	17	1
Expenditure from Loans—							
Purchase of Land	.. .. .	1,314,692	5	1			
Advances—							
For Shares	.. .. .	8,000	0	0			
For Purchase of Land, &c.	.. .. .	512,888	4	3			
For Improvements, Stock, Implements, &c.	.. .. .	524,520	1	1			
		1,045,408	5	4			
Irrigation Development	.. .. .	146,804	15	9			
Other Expenditure—							
Development and Improvement of Estates	.. .. .	2,415,634	3	11			
Heytesbury Experimental Area	.. .. .	583	12	3			
		2,416,217	16	2			
					4,923,123	2	4
					5,093,337	19	5

S. P. BROMFIELD, Secretary.
R. D. HOWELLS, Accountant.

E. A. PEVERILL,
Auditor-General,
25th November, 1954.

H. L. SIMPSON, Chairman.
E. SINGLETON, Member.
SYDNEY J. KING, Member.