

REMOUNT DEPOT
1922, 1925, 1937

1922

§ 5. Industrial Establishments and Remount Depot.

1. **Commonwealth Factories.**—There are seven factories established under the authority of the Defence Act in connexion with the Defence Department. The Commonwealth Harness, Saddlery, and Leather Accoutrements Factory at Clifton Hill, Victoria, was opened in September, 1911. On 30th June, 1921, there were 76 persons employed, including 14 females. A large quantity of harness and saddlery, leather and canvas equipment has been turned out for the Defence and other Commonwealth and State Departments. At the Cordite Factory at Maribyrnong, Victoria, cordite is manufactured for the cartridges required for military purposes. On 30th June, 1921, the employees numbered 99. The Acetate of Lime Factory at Bulimba, Brisbane, which manufactures acetate of lime (a raw material used in the production of acetone), commenced operations in September, 1918. On 30th June, 1921, there were 55 persons employed. This factory is worked in conjunction with the Cordite Factory. The Clothing Factory at South Melbourne, Victoria, commenced operations on 3rd January, 1912. Since 1st July, 1912, a satisfactory output has been maintained. The number of employees on 30th June, 1921, was 361, of whom 313 were females. The establishment is able to supply the whole of the uniform clothing required for the Defence Forces and the Postmaster-General's Department, and much of that required by State Departments and local governing bodies. The Small Arms Factory at Lithgow, New South Wales, was opened on 1st June, 1912. The first instalment of Australian arms was delivered in May, 1913. Employees numbered 829 on 30th June, 1921. The Commonwealth Woollen Cloth Factory was established at Geelong, Victoria, for the supply of uniform materials and woollen fabrics, and commenced operations in the latter part of 1915; 359 persons, including 171 females, were employed on the 30th June, 1921.

2. **Expenditure.**—The expenditure up to 30th June, 1921, on land, buildings, machinery and plant, factory fittings and furniture in connexion with the factories now in operation was approximately as follows:—Small Arms Factory, £357,156; Cordite Factory, £276,263; Clothing Factory, £36,324; Harness Factory, £20,493; Woollen Cloth Factory, £204,083; Acetate of Lime Factory, £126,219.

3. **Remount Depot.**—The Act of 1910 authorised the establishment and maintenance of remount depots, farms, and stations for the breeding of horses. Up to the present nearly 2,000 remounts have been purchased. They are primarily to supply the requirements of the Field Artillery Batteries, but are also available for the use of other mounted units. Remount depots have been purchased or are leased in each of the military districts, and veterinary hospitals have also been established in the larger States. In Victoria and South Australia stables have been built. A remount section of the Army Service Corps has been formed for the purpose of breaking, training and looking after remounts generally. These sections were so organised as to be capable of rapid expansion in case of emergency, and when war was declared in 1914 little difficulty was experienced by the Remount Service in coping with the enormous task of obtaining and training horses for the mounted units of the A.I.F. and in providing for the shipment of horses to Egypt and India as required.

§ 5. Munitions Supply.

1. *General*.—Owing to the necessity for the creation of Australian sources for the supply of munitions of war, authority was given for the establishment of a Munitions Supply Board consisting of a Controller-General and two Controllers, who are charged with the following :—

- (a) Provision of such armament, arms, ammunition, equipment, supplies and stores of all kinds as may be demanded by the various Naval, Military and Air Services.
- (b) Research—chemical and physical investigation of raw materials and products, and of the manufacturing processes to which such materials are subjected.
- (c) Inspection and examination of supplies obtained in Australia other than food, forage and fuel supplies up to point of issue to service.
- (d) Administration of industrial establishments and factories established or to be established.

The Contract Board, which is a part of the Munitions Supply organization, consists of a Chairman appointed by the Munitions Supply Board and a representative from each of the three arms of the service. This Board has branches in all States and is the chief purchasing agent of the Department. Apart from the existing munition factories, the Board has set up and controls a Research Laboratory at Maribyrnong (Victoria) and an Inspection Branch at Footscray (Victoria) and Lithgow (New South Wales) and has at present in course of construction a Gun Ammunition Factory for the manufacture of Field Artillery ammunition, an Ordnance Factory which will supply 18-pdr. guns and shells, a T.N.T. and Filling Factory for the manufacture of high explosives and loading artillery ammunition, and a Machine Gun and Pistol Factory at the Small Arms Factory. These factories will provide for normal peace requirements only. They will, however, serve a dual purpose, inasmuch as they will afford an opportunity of preparing for war by training staff and employees in the technique of manufacture according to local conditions, while providing models for expansion and duplication should the occasion arise, in addition to acting as technical schools for commercial establishments in the event of the latter being converted to war purposes.

2. *Factories*.—(1). *General*. The Explosives Factories at Maribyrnong, Victoria, which manufacture explosives for cartridges and artillery ammunition, were established in 1911. The staff at 30th June, 1924, numbered 99.

The Cordite Factory, Maribyrnong, Victoria, which manufactures explosives for cartridges and artillery ammunition, was established in 1911. The staff at 30th June, 1924, numbered 99.

The Acetate of Lime Factory, established at Bulimba, Brisbane, in September, 1918, provides acetate of lime (a raw material used in the manufacture of acetone) and is at present producing alcohol fuel for the use of Government motor vehicles. The number of employees at 30th June, 1924, numbered 30.

The Clothing Factory at Melbourne, Victoria, which had a staff of 222 employees on 30th June, 1924, commenced output in July, 1912, and since that date has been able to supply the whole of the uniform clothing required for the Defence forces, and the Post-master-General's Department. It also supplies clothing required by State Departments and local public bodies.

The Small Arms Factory at Lithgow, New South Wales, which was opened on 1st June, 1912, and delivered the first instalment of Australian arms in May, 1913, had on its pay roll on 30th June, 1924, 345 employees. Rifles are being produced, and the manufacture of pistols and machine guns has been undertaken.

On 1st January, 1921, by virtue of an agreement with the Colonial Ammunition Company Limited, the Defence Department entered into possession on lease of the Company's works at Footscray, Victoria, and had at 30th June, 1924, 189 persons employed there. The works are now known as the Defence Small Arms Ammunition Factory, and rifle and pistol ammunition are manufactured there.

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§ 5. Munitions Supply.

1. **General.**—A statement dealing with the powers and functions of the Munitions Supply Board is given on p. 612 of Official Year Book No. 18.

2. **Factories.**—(i) *General.* The Explosives Factories at Maribyrnong, Victoria, which manufacture cordite and high explosives for cartridges and artillery ammunition, aeroplane dopes, nitro-benzine, and special paints, were established in 1911. The staff at 30th June, 1936, numbered 349.

The Acetate of Lime Factory, established at Bulimba, Brisbane, in September, 1918, has now been abandoned.

The Clothing Factory at Melbourne, Victoria, which had a staff of 358 employees on 30th June, 1936, commenced output in July, 1912, and since that date has been able to supply the whole of the uniform clothing and head gear required for the Defence forces and the Postmaster-General's Department. It also supplies clothing required by State Departments and local public bodies.

The Small Arms Factory at Lithgow, New South Wales, which was opened on 1st June, 1912, and delivered the first instalment of Australian arms in May, 1913, had on its pay roll on 30th June, 1936, 283 employees. Rifles and machine guns for land and air services are being produced, and provision has been made for the manufacture of pistols.

On the 1st January, 1927, the Defence Department entered into possession by purchase of the works of the Colonial Ammunition Company Limited at Footscray, Victoria. As from the 1st July, 1928, this establishment, known as the Small Arms Ammunition Factory, was amalgamated with the Gun Ammunition Factory, and this group is now known as the Ammunition Factories, where in addition to rifle and pistol ammunition, big gun fuses, detonators, cartridge cases and aircraft bombs are also produced. Brass and other non-ferrous metals required for munitions manufacture are rolled at this factory. The staff at 30th June, 1936, numbered 707.

At the Ordnance Factory, Maribyrnong, Victoria, established in 1924, provision is made for the production of guns, shells, gun carriages and military vehicles. This group includes a well equipped forge and woodworking and electrical shops. The number of employees at 30th June, 1936, was 657.

(ii) *Investment in Factories.* Up to 30th June, 1936, the capital invested in the factories now in operation was approximately as follows:—Small Arms Factory, £844,013; Explosives Factories, £913,345; Clothing Factory, £82,267; Ammunition Factories, £697,747; and Ordnance Factories, £82,354.

3. **Research Laboratory.**—At Maribyrnong, Victoria, a Research Laboratory has been established consisting of five main sections, i.e., general chemistry, explosives and ammunition, timber, metallurgy and physics (including optics, metrology and electrical). Plant, buildings, fittings and furniture were valued at £128,249 on 30th June, 1936, and the staff at the same date numbered 68.

§ 6. Remount Depot.

Information in regard to the establishment of this branch of activity is contained in earlier issues of the Official Year Book (*see* No. 18, p. 613). When war was declared in 1914 little difficulty was experienced by the Remount Service in coping with the enormous task of obtaining and training horses for the mounted units of the A.I.F. and in providing for the shipment of horses to Egypt and India as required.

§ 7. Australian Contingents.

1. **General.**—In earlier issues of the Year Book an account was given of the composition, etc., of the Australian contingents dispatched for service in the New Zealand and Sudan Campaigns, in South Africa, China, and the Great War of 1914–18 (*see* Official Year Book No. 12, pp. 1019 *et seq.*).

2. **Australian Troops (Great War).**—Particulars of the enlistments, casualties, honours and decorations won, and engagements of the Australian Imperial Force during the Great War were given in Official Year Book No. 16, pp. 628 *et seq.*

§ 5. Munitions Supply.

1. **General.**—A statement dealing with the powers and functions of the Munitions Supply Board is given on p. 612 of Official Year Book No. 18, but limits of space preclude its repetition in the present volume.

2. **Factories.**—(1) *General.* The Explosives Factories at Maribyrnong, Victoria, which manufacture explosives for cartridges and artillery ammunition, were established in 1911. The staff at 30th June, 1927, numbered 131.

The Acetate of Lime Factory, established at Bulimba, Brisbane, in September, 1918, provides acetate of lime (a raw material used in the manufacture of acetone) and is now being held in reserve. Employees at 30th June, 1927, numbered 5.

The Clothing Factory at Melbourne, Victoria, which had a staff of 249 employees on 30th June, 1927, commenced output in July, 1912, and since that date has been able to supply the whole of the uniform clothing required for the Defence forces, and the Postmaster-General's Department. It also supplies clothing required by State Departments and local public bodies.

The Small Arms Factory at Lithgow, New South Wales, which was opened on 1st June, 1912, and delivered the first instalment of Australian arms in May, 1913, had on its pay roll on 30th June, 1927, 348 employees. Rifles are being produced, and the manufacture of pistols and machine guns has been undertaken.

On 1st January, 1921, by virtue of an agreement with the Colonial Ammunition Company Limited, the Defence Department entered into possession on lease of the Company's works at Footscray, Victoria, but on 1st January, 1927, they were purchased by the Commonwealth Government for the manufacture of rifle and pistol ammunition. The works are known as the Defence Small Arms Ammunition Factory, and the staff at 30th June, 1927, numbered 272.

(ii) *Expenditure on Factories.* The expenditure up to 30th June, 1927, on lands, buildings, machinery and plant, factory fittings and furniture in connexion with the factories now in operation was approximately as follows:—Small Arms Factory, £612,076; Explosives Factories, £567,352; Clothing Factory, £40,583; Acetate of Lime Factory, £160,360.

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(ii) *Expenditure on Factories.* The expenditure up to 30th June, 1924, on land, buildings, machinery and plant, factory fittings and furniture in connexion with the factories now in operation was approximately as follows:—Small Arms Factory, £421,043; Explosives Factories, £307,120; Clothing Factory, £37,142; Acetate of Lime Factory, £154,159.

§ 6. Remount Depot.

The Defence Act of 1910 authorized the establishment and maintenance of remount depots, farms, and stations for the breeding of horses. A few thoroughbred stallions are maintained by the Department for the service, at a low fee, of approved privately-owned mares. Horses are maintained primarily to supply the requirements of the Field Artillery Batteries, but are also available for the use of other mounted units. Remount depots have been purchased or are leased in each of the military districts, veterinary hospitals have been established, and stables have been built in all States. A remount section of the Army Service Corps has been formed for the purpose of breaking, training and looking after remounts generally. These sections are so organized as to be capable of rapid expansion in case of emergency. When war was declared in 1914 little difficulty was experienced by the Remount Service in coping with the enormous task of obtaining and training horses for the mounted units of the A.I.F. and in providing for the shipment of horses to Egypt and India as required.

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§ 8. War Gratuity.

Reference was made in preceding Year Books (see No. 15, p. 930) to the bonus payable in accordance with the War Gratuity Acts of 1920 as a war service gratuity to soldiers and sailors who served in the Great War. Owing to limitations of space this information cannot be repeated, but it may be noted that the gratuity was paid in Treasury bonds, maturing not later than 31st May, 1924, and bearing interest at $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. In necessitous cases, payment was made in cash, when desired by the person entitled. The first gratuities were made available about the beginning of June, 1920. The gratuities numbered 360,000, and the total amount paid was £27,424,317.

§ 9. Special Defence Legislation.

Information regarding special defence legislation enacted by the Commonwealth Government during the War was given in Official Year Book No. 15, p. 930. It may be pointed out here that the War Precautions Act Repeal Act of 1920 repealed the Act 1914–18, but a limited number of matters dealt with under the original Act are now provided for under the War Precautions Act Repeal Act of 1920 or by regulations made thereunder.

§ 10. Repatriation.

1. *General.*—An outline of the activities leading up to the formation of the Commonwealth Department of Repatriation was given in Official Year Book No. 15, p. 931, but limits of space preclude its repetition in the present volume. Some account was given also in the Year Book referred to, and in subsequent issues, of the policy and activities of the Department generally, while detailed information was incorporated in regard to such matters as sustenance rates and pensions to soldiers and dependents. (See Official Year Book 17, pp. 598 to 601.)