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South Australia.

Special Bulletin.



Crown Lands.



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CONDITIONS OF ALLOTMENT.

By E. M. Smith, Surveyor-General.

ISSUED BY

THE INTELLIGENCE AND TOURIST BUREAU,

Under Authority of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Immigration

(Hon. FRED W. YOUNG, M.P.).

Adelaide, February, 1913.

Special Bulletin.]

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

CROWN LANDS.



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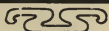
Adelaide, February 1913.



Special Bulletin.]

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

CROWN LANDS.



**Conditions of Allotment
and Areas Available.**



By E. M. Smith, Surveyor-General.

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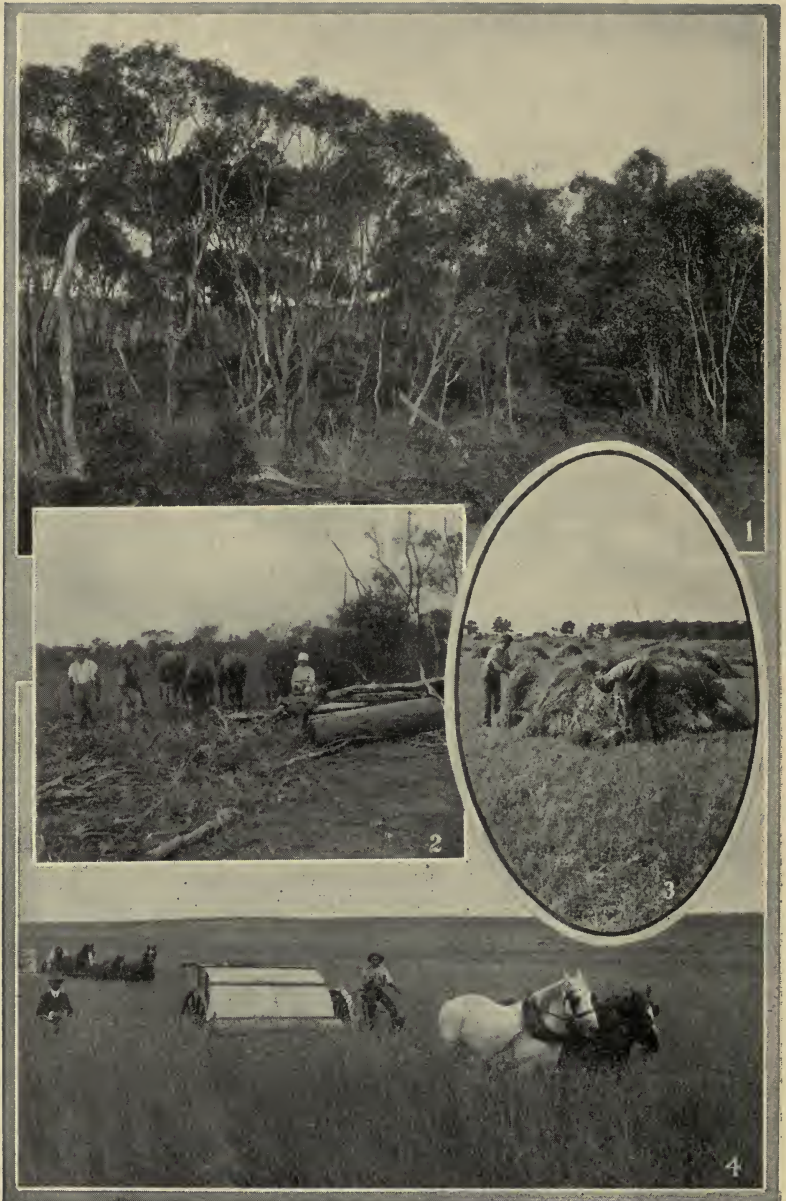
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Pinnaroo Country.

1. Virgin Land. 2. Rolling Down Scrub. 3. Stooking Hay.
4. Harvesting Wheat.

CROWN LANDS.

CONDITIONS OF ALLOTMENT.

PURCHASE-MONEY AND RENT.

Crown lands in South Australia are subdivided into such sized blocks as may be recommended by the Land Board and approved by the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The land is then gazetted open to application at purchase-money and rent fixed by the Board and approved by the Commissioner; the rent under the present law is, as a rule, fixed at 4 per cent. on the purchase value of the land.

Under Act 1109 of 1912 the holder of land under agreement with covenant to purchase is not required to pay any interest for the first four years of the term of the agreement, which will be for 36 years. During the fifth and sixth years interest at 2 per cent. per annum on the purchase-money fixed will be payable, and from the commencement of the seventh year the purchase-money and interest (at 4 per cent. per annum) will be payable by 60 half-yearly instalments at the rate of £2 16s. 5d. for every £100 of the purchase-money. The holder of land under agreement has the right to complete purchase at any time after the expiration of six years of the term, provided he has complied with all the covenants of the agreement, and has expended a sum equal to 5s. per acre in effecting improvements on the block to the satisfaction of the Commissioner.

Under the same Act the rent under perpetual lease is fixed at 4 per cent. per annum on the value placed on the land by the Board. The lessee, however, is not called upon to pay any rent for the first four years of the lease. During the fifth and sixth years he will pay 2 per cent. interest on the purchase value of the block, and from the beginning of the seventh year the full annual rent, at the rate of 4 per cent. on the purchase value, will be payable.

The Act of 1912 will apply to newly-opened lands and such other lands as the Commissioner may direct, the object being to give assistance to settlers undergoing pioneering difficulties.

The holders of both agreements to purchase and leases will be required to clear and render available for cultivation not less than one-eighth of the cultivable area, as specified in the *Gazette* notice, during the first two years of the term of the agreement or lease, and also a similar area during the second two years of the term, and thereafter during

each succeeding year they must clear and render available for cultivation not less than one-eighth of the specified cultivable area until three-fourths of such area has been cleared and rendered available for cultivation. The area so cleared must be maintained in a cultivable condition during the currency of the agreement or lease.

The settlers are also required to reserve five acres out of every 250 acres comprised in their blocks for the growth of timber, and must not destroy any timber trees on the area so reserved.

SIZE OF BLOCKS.

As pointed out, purchase-money and rent are fixed by the Land Board on the value of each block according to its quality ascertained after inspection. No purchase-money or rent can be quoted for any particular district. After survey has been effected of the necessary roads and reserves, the Land Board recommends the size of the blocks into which the land is to be divided. These blocks generally vary from about 1,000 to 1,500 acres, which is quite sufficient for a farm where the land is fairly good for wheat-growing.

APPLICATIONS—HOW MADE.

After the land has been surveyed it is gazetted open to application for periods ranging from one to two months. All applications must be lodged with the Surveyor-General by a specified date, which is notified in the *Government Gazette*, and subsequently places and times are fixed at which the Land Board will hold meetings to take evidence from persons desirous of making oral statements in support of their applications. The evidence is given on oath in open court, and persons present have the right, and are invited, to challenge any statement made which they believe is incorrect. After the Board (which consists of three members) has heard all the applicants, or as many as have attended to give evidence personally in support of their applications, it proceeds to make the allotment, each application being dealt with on its merits. All other things being equal, the Board is required by Act to allot the land to the applicant who agrees to reside on it for at least nine months in each year; and if it is not so allotted, a reason must be assigned for departing from the directions of the Act. The Board's decision on allotment is final.

PROVISION FOR WATER AND ROADS.

During the past year considerable alteration has been made in the method of dealing with Crown lands suitable for agriculture. In the country north and south of the Tailern Bend and Brown's Well railway

line, east of the River Murray, wells and bores have been put down in the hundreds offered for application, and roads have been and are still being cleared for the use of settlers. The cost of these works is added to the price of the land and, considering the great benefit which will be derived by the new settlers, the small additional amount per acre which they will be called upon to pay will be scarcely felt by them. The same provision will be made on the lands in course of survey and to be surveyed for settlement in all hundreds in this district.

On the land in course of survey for offer on Eyre's Peninsula, water will be provided for the use of new settlers by means of tanks and reservoirs, and roads will be cleared and the cost charged to the blocks in a similar manner to that previously described.

Under the provisions of Act 1105 of 1912 (Amendment to the Advances to Settlers Act) settlers may apply to have sheds and tanks erected by the Commissioner for the purpose of conserving water, and may obtain a loan from the Advances to Settlers Board to pay for such work. This provision in the Act will be of great benefit to many settlers in districts where water is not obtainable except at considerable cost, as it will enable them to get on to the land with a sufficient supply of water for them to proceed with the work of development until they can construct tanks or reservoirs, as the nature of the country may permit. These sheds will not only afford catchment for water, but can be utilised as temporary dwelling places, and a protection for machinery, etc.

LANDS REPURCHASED FOR CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

Closer settlement lands are allotted in the same manner as ordinary Crown lands.

The first measure authorising the repurchase of land for closer settlement was passed in 1897. This Act provided that the land repurchased was to be offered on perpetual lease only at a rental of not less than 4 per cent. per annum on the cost of the land, including expenses of subdivision, &c.

In 1902 an Act was passed abolishing the system of leasing repurchased land in perpetuity, and providing for such land being offered on agreement with covenant to purchase. Under this Act the term of the agreement was for 30 years, the purchase-money, with interest thereon, being payable in 60 equal half-yearly instalments at

the rate of £2 16s. 5d. for every £100 of purchase-money. The Crown Lands Act of 1903 contained the same provisions. The purchaser had the right of completing purchase at the expiration of six years if he had fulfilled all the conditions of the agreement.

In 1905 a further Act was passed which extended the term of the agreements to 35 years, during the first five of which the purchasers are required to pay interest only at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum on the purchase-money fixed for the blocks, after which purchase-money and interest become payable as under the Acts of 1902 and 1903. The purchasers cannot, however, complete purchase until the land has been held for nine years.

The conditions of closer settlement agreements require the purchasers to expend during the first five years of the term a sum equal to £3 for each £100 purchase-money in substantial improvements, such as buildings, fences, or making provision for water, &c. The purchasers are also required to fence the boundaries of the blocks within five years from allotment of the land. If there are improvements on the land at the time of allotment, they are paid for in precisely the same manner as the land, or the purchaser has the option of paying for them in cash, and the amount which he is required to pay for such improvements is set against that which the conditions of the agreement require him to expend in improvements during the first five years of the term.

Under the Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1911, the purchaser can—on any date when his instalments are payable—pay off the purchase-money any sum of not less than £50, or any multiple thereof; this, however, does not entitle him to obtain the grant of the land until the prescribed period has expired.

The holders of these agreements are not entitled to cut any growing timber on the land during the first five years, except for the purpose of effecting improvements or rendering the land available for cultivation, and then only with the written consent of the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

HOMESTEAD BLOCKS.

Land for working men is offered in blocks, the unimproved value of which must not exceed £100, and the holder, or a member of his family, must reside on the land for at least nine months in each year. The lands are offered on either agreement to purchase or perpetual lease, and the purchase-money and rent are fixed in the same manner as for ordinary Crown lands. The holders of these blocks have one advantage

which is not granted to the other Crown tenants; they can protect their holdings from sale by creditors by having their titles indorsed as "Protected Homestead Blocks." This indorsement can also be carried on to the land grant when the holder completes purchase. The effect of this indorsement is that no subsequent mortgage will have any validity, nor can any creditor take action for the sale of the holder's interest in the lease or agreement for the recovery of any debt contracted after the indorsement of the deed. The indorsement cannot be removed except in the case of transfer, when the transferee may request that such indorsement be removed from the title.

TRANSFERS OF LEASES AND AGREEMENTS.

No transfer of any lease or agreement can take effect unless first approved by the Commissioner of Crown Lands on the recommendation of the Land Board, and no land that has not been held for five years can be transferred unless the holder thereof proves that refusal to allow the transfer would inflict great hardship on him. This restriction does not, however, apply to transfers by executors or administrators to devisees. All applications to transfer—except those last mentioned above—must be gazetted for not less than two weeks; this also applies to applications for permission to sublet where the land has not been held for six years and the term of the proposed under-lease exceeds three years.

Should the holder apply to transfer any agreement or lease of land allotted under the provisions of Act 1109 of 1912 before the expiration of the sixth year of the term, the Commissioner may require that instalments or rent shall be payable as from the time when the transfer takes effect, *i.e.*, the transferee will not necessarily receive the concession as regards rent or interest during the first six years of the lease or agreement, as the case may be.

MAXIMUM AREA OF HOLDINGS.

Of ordinary Crown lands, suitable for agriculture only, or for agricultural and pastoral purposes combined, one person can hold an area which, together with land already held by him under any tenure—excepting pastoral lease—would not exceed £5,000 unimproved value; or if the land is suitable for grazing purposes only, and is within Goyder's line of rainfall, he can hold up to the carrying capacity of 5,000 sheep or an equivalent number of great cattle, whilst if the land is outside Goyder's line of rainfall the limitation is a carrying capacity of 10,000 sheep or an equivalent in great cattle. This provision applies to land whether acquired by allotment, transfer, or under lease.

Of land repurchased for closer settlement the purchaser can hold up to the unimproved value of £4,000, if suitable for agriculture or for agricultural and grazing purposes combined, or up to the unimproved value of £5,000, if the land is suitable for pastoral purposes only. In cases where there are excessive improvements there is no limitation of the unimproved value of repurchased land which may be held by one person.

ASSISTANCE TO SETTLERS ON CROWN LANDS.

The holders of agreements or leases, which include the lessees of reclaimed and irrigation lands, can apply to the Advances to Settlers Board for loans up to £850, for the purpose of effecting improvements on their holdings, paying off mortgages, purchasing stock, or for any other purpose.

The board has power to advance up to £650 for the purpose of effecting improvements, paying off mortgages, or for any other purpose. It can also lend up to £200 for the purchase of stock with which to stock the holding; the security in this case must be equal to one-third more than the advance to be made. For effecting improvements the first £400 can be advanced £1 for £1 on the full value of improvements and of lease to that amount, and the balance of £250 up to 75 per cent. of **any** additional value of such improvements and lease. For the other purposes the money can be advanced up to 75 per cent. of such value.

Examples.—Suppose a lessee holds a lease which with improvements is worth £360; he would be entitled to a loan of £360 for effecting further improvements, or for any other purpose to a loan of £270, *i.e.*, 75 per cent. of such value.

If his lease, with improvements, were worth £600 he could obtain for effecting improvements a loan of £550, arrived at as follows:—

For £400 value, £1 for £1	£400
For £200 additional value at 75 per cent.	150

£550

The borrower pays interest only for the first five years of the term, after which he commences to pay the principal and interest in half-yearly payments extending over 25 years. The interest is charged at

a rate fixed from time to time by proclamation, and if it be paid within 14 days from due date a rebate of 1 per cent. is allowed, *i.e.*, if the rate fixed is $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and the borrower pays within the specified period of 14 days, only $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest will be required from him.

The Advances to Settlers Act has been largely availed of, especially under the more liberal terms provided in the Acts of 1911 and 1912. Up to the 31st December, 1912, £117,717 had been advanced to 481 settlers, over £80,000 of which was paid during the year 1912.

ADVANCES ON HOMESTEAD BLOCKS.

Loans not exceeding £50 can be granted to the holder of a homestead block on half the value of existing improvements for the purpose of effecting additional improvements on the land, and are repayable with interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum in twenty equal annual instalments at the rate of £7 7s. 2d. per centum. The borrower has the right to pay off the loan at any time.

ADVANCES FOR WIRE NETTING AND VERMIN-PROOF FENCING.

Loans are granted to agriculturists, pastoralists, and others for the purchase of wire netting for the purpose of protecting crops from the ravages of rabbits, and for erecting dog-proof fences to prevent the inroads of wild dogs, which have proved very destructive to the flocks of settlers. These loans are repayable by twenty annual instalments with interest at a rate fixed from time to time by proclamation. Since 1890 nearly £600,000 has been advanced for the purchase of wire netting and for the purpose of erecting vermin-proof fencing. The system has proved highly satisfactory, and, but for the assistance given the settlers in this direction, a large area of land, which is now successfully occupied for agricultural and pastoral purposes, would have remained practically unoccupied, while the yield of wheat would not have been nearly so great as at present had the farmers not protected their crops with wire netting.

TOWN LANDS.

Town lands are surveyed in lots usually one-quarter of an acre in area, and each town is, where practicable, surrounded by park lands. The town lands are offered at auction at upset prices ranging from £10 per acre upwards, the purchaser being required to pay 20 per cent. of the

purchase-money at the time of sale, and the balance within one month. Hitherto there has been no limitation to the number of allotments which could be purchased by one person; but under the provisions of Act 1109 of 1912 the Commissioner of Crown Lands may direct that not more than a specified number of allotments shall be purchased by or on behalf of any one person, and should more than such number of allotments be acquired contrary to the provisions of the Act the sale will be cancelled and become void, notwithstanding the fact that the title may have been issued for the allotments so purchased. Allotments purchased under the provisions of this Act cannot be transferred, mortgaged, or otherwise dealt with within a period of six years from date of the sale without the consent in writing of the Commissioner of Crown Lands; and if any dealing takes place contrary to this condition the sale will become void and the land revert to the Crown.

LANDS AVAILABLE FOR SETTLEMENT.

There are approximately 4,000,000 acres of land on Eyre's Peninsula, and between the Pinnaroo hundreds and the River Murray, surveyed but not yet offered, in course of survey, and to be surveyed. These lands will be available for application during the next few years, and the greater portion will be served by railways constructed, in course of construction, or authorised, viz., the Tailem Bend and Brown's Well line (almost completed); Karoonda and Peebinga line (authorised); and the Cummins and Darke's Peak and Cummins and Minnipa Hill lines (these are both in course of construction, and should be completed during the present year). The Minnipa Hill and Decres Bay line (authorised) will also be the means of developing a large area of land north-westerly from the terminus of the Minnipa Hill line.

There are now over 400,000 acres surveyed and ready for offer as soon as water is provided; the work of constructing tanks is now in progress. About 750,000 acres of land on Eyre's Peninsula and south of the River Murray are in course of survey, and the survey of the greater portion of this area should be completed during the present year.

Although this land was formerly considered unsuitable for agricultural purposes, it has now—owing to the use of superphosphates and the more economical and improved system of cultivation in force during the last few years—become valuable agricultural country, and in ordinary seasons will yield a fair average crop of cereals. Of the approximate area of 4,000,000 acres, it is estimated that quite half

will, during the next few years, be found suitable for cultivation. In addition to this area it is not improbable that in the near future other land hitherto considered useless for farming purposes will, with still further improved means of economical cultivation, be found to be suitable for agricultural settlement. Such settlement would, however, be impossible without further railways to afford a ready means of transport to suitable shipping places.

There is a large area of land south of the Pinnaroo hundreds which has, owing to the density of the scrub and the absence of fodder plants for stock, been considered comparatively useless for grazing, and through the sandy character of the soil has not been thought fit for agricultural purposes. Experience has, however, proved that somewhat similar land in the southern portion of the hundred of Pinnaroo has grown fairly good crops, and during the next 10 years it is anticipated that a large area of this country will be utilised for agriculture and grazing combined. On account of the good rainfall (about 17in. a year) it is believed that fodder grasses would readily grow if planted on the parts too sandy for agriculture, while there are numerous flats and valleys fit for the growth of cereals.

WHERE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION.

The Lands Department affords every facility for intending applicants and other inquirers to obtain information relative to land open to application and to be offered. An officer has been specially appointed for the purpose of answering inquiries in this direction. This officer is conversant with a large portion of the land which is in course of survey and obtains information as to the best means of inspecting the hundreds and other particulars of interest to intending applicants. He also advises them of the conditions under which various lands may be taken up.

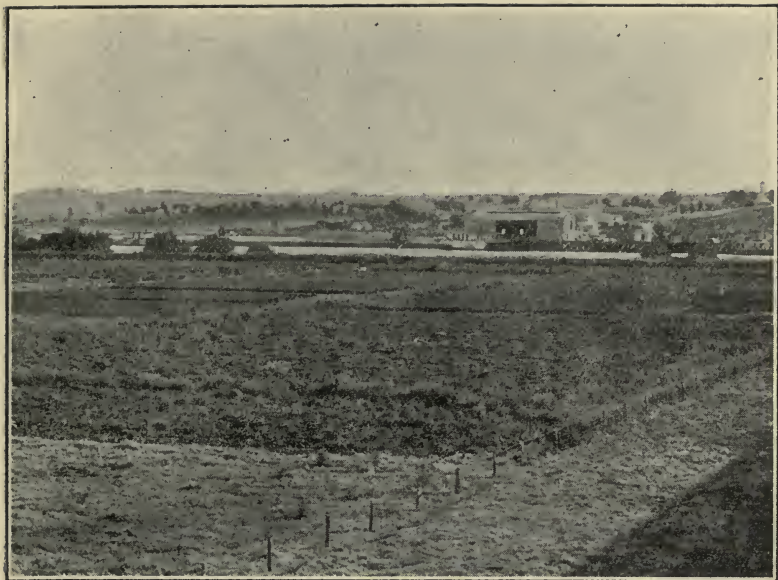
This department distributes free of cost about 16,000 plans annually to inquirers for lands open. These free plans are accompanied by details giving the areas of the blocks and the prices at which they are offered, as well as a short general description of the land and the conditions under which it may be applied for. When any land is gazetted open to application, placards are distributed over the State notifying the fact and also that plans and full detail may be obtained on application to the Surveyor-General.

STATISTICAL.

The State of South Australia comprises an area of 243,244,800 acres. Of this area 9,548,899 acres have been granted in fee simple at a purchase money of £11,077,398 ; 122,789 acres have been granted in fee simple without payment for various public purposes ; 2,221,163 acres are in course of alienation under agreements with covenant to purchase representing a purchase-money of £2,342,157 ; 2,823,883 acres are held on leases with right of purchase (these leases were issued prior to January 1st, 1904, when the Bill—providing for the granting of agreements to purchase extending over a term of 30 years—became law) ; 22,101 acres are let on homestead leases ; 15,112,285 acres are held on perpetual leases at an annual rental of £76,987 (10,949 acres of this area are reclaimed lands) ; 1,315,595 acres are held under miscellaneous leases, chiefly for grazing and cultivation ; and 96,356,850 acres are held under pastoral leases, the terms of which vary from 21 to 42 years. In addition to these areas 172,546 acres have been dedicated as reserves, &c., for various public purposes. The balance of the area of the State, which includes 224,000 acres of fresh-water and 7,686,000 acres of salt-water lakes, is unoccupied country, the greater portion of which is waterless and not fit for occupation in its present state. Should artesian or sub-artesian waters be discovered over this area a large portion of it would be taken up for pastoral purposes. The railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie will probably lead to the development of a considerable area of this unoccupied country.

The land now held from the Crown is included in over 20,000 leases and agreements, held by between 13,000 and 14,000 persons.

In all 624,121 acres have been repurchased for Closer Settlement, at a cost of £1,917,460. Prior to repurchase the permanent population on these lands was very little in excess of 500, whilst at the present time there are over 5,000 persons residing on the country.



Reclaimed Swamp Lands on the River Murray.



For the 1911-12 Season 605,239 Tons of Hay were Cut.

YB 24406

