

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
DIRECTOR OF LAND DEVELOP-
MENT
FOR THE YEAR
1959.

177

LAND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT,
Brickdam,
Georgetown,

27th March, 1961.

INTRODUCTION

1. In July, 1954, a separate Department of Land Settlement (redesignated Land Development Department with effect from 1st January, 1959) was established. This new Department assumed responsibility for the management of land settlements at Anna Regina, Essequibo, formerly administered by the Department of Agriculture, and at Cane Grove/La Bonne Mere, East Coast, Demerara, Vergenoegen, East Bank Essequibo, and Government Estates (Windsor Forest, La Jalousie and Hague), West Demerara, formerly administered by the Department of Local Government.

ADMINISTRATION

Functions

2.1 The Department which is administered by a Director of Land Development, assisted by a Deputy Director, is responsible for the operation of the various development schemes, for advice as to suitable areas for development and occupation by selected peasant farmers and for the co-ordination of proposals for such development in close consultation with the Departments of Agriculture and Drainage and Irrigation regarding the suitability and utilisation of the areas for the economic production of crops, size of holdings and such drainage and irrigation works as are required to be undertaken.

2.2 An important aim is to make more cultivable land available to small farmers and to encourage the production of suitable crops in order to increase the total production per head of the population. Certain major land reclamation and water control schemes in progress in Essequibo, Berbice and West Demerara, are intended to meet the need for more land, but it is also hoped to obtain quick results by improving and bringing into use a number of areas of Crown Land which are not being beneficially used in the rear of existing schemes and suitable land on the river banks.

Staff

3. At the 31st December, the staff of the Department, including the administrative staff of the various schemes, was as follows:-

Director of Land Settlement	- Mr. W.A. Macnie, C.M.G., C.B.E.
Deputy Director of Land Settlement	- Mr. A.D. Thompson.
Senior Superintendent, Land Settlement Schemes	- Mr. J.E. Mc Watt.
Mechanical Engineer	- Mr. E. White.

/ Administrative Officer

178

C O N T E N T S

PAGE

INTRODUCTION	...	...	1
ADMINISTRATION -			
Functions	...	...	1
Staff	...	...	1 - 2
Staff Co-ordination	...	...	2
SETTLEMENTS -			
Anna Regina	...	...	3 - 5
Cane Grove/La Bonne Mere	...	...	5 - 7
Vergenoegen	...	...	7 - 8
Government Estates	...	...	8 - 1
Charity/Amazon	...	...	10
Onverwagt	...	...	10 - 11
Mara	...	...	11 - 12
Garden of Eden	...	...	13 - 14
FINANCE	...	...	15 - 18
SURVEYS AND LAYOUTS	...	...	18
GENERAL	...	...	18 - 19



- APPENDIX I - Approximate Allocation of Acreages on Settlements for Agriculture and other purposes.
- APPENDIX II - Comparative Statement of Revenue and Recurrent Expenditure for the years 1958 and 1959.

- Administrative Officer (Acting) - Mr. M.F. Collins.
- Chief Clerk - Mr. F.L. Osborn.
- Accountant - Mr. F.O. Emery.
- Senior Accounting Officer - Mr. S.S.M.H. Insanally.
- Secretary - Miss J. Debidin.

- 4 Class I Clerks
- 4 Class II Clerks
- 1 Senior Clerical Assistant
- 3 Clerical Assistants (Women)

- 7 Superintendents, Land Settlement Schemes - Mr. D.A. Pile.
Mr. R.E. Chapman.
Mr. J.I. Brodie.
Mr. N.G. Ouckama.
Mr. C.A. Persaud.
Mr. T.I. Douglas.
Mr. J.R. Browman.

- 5 Assistant Superintendents, Land Settlement Schemes - Mr. J.A. Brassington.
Mr. L.P. Alleyne.
Mr. J.P. Cheong.
Mr. J. Ramphal.
(One Vacant).

Staff Co-ordination

4. The schemes under the control of the Department are scattered over the coastlands of the Colony. Superintendents are stationed on the following schemes:-

- Anna Regina, Essequibo Coast.
- Cane Grove/La Bonne Mere, East Coast Demerara.
- Vergenoegen, East Bank, Essequibo.
- Government Estates, West Demerara.
- Onverwagt, West Coast, Berbice.
- Mara, East Bank, Berbice.
- Garden of Eden, East Bank, Demerara.

The Charity/Amazon Scheme on the right bank of the Pomeroon River operates directly under a Supervisor who is responsible to the Superintendent in charge of the Scheme at Anna Regina.

5. These officers supervise the general running of the schemes and are responsible for the execution of maintenance and development works, expenditure and collection of revenue. The schemes are provided with the necessary staff for normal operation.

6. Technical advice on drainage and irrigation, agriculture, housing and public health procedures on all schemes is obtained at present from the appropriate Government Departments with which there is close collaboration.

7. Settlers' Committees have been formed on all schemes to discuss the problems of the settlers, to promote good public relations and to serve as liaison between the officers in charge of the schemes and the settlers.

LAND DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

8. The Department at the end of 1958 controlled the following schemes -

<u>Existing Schemes</u>	<u>Acreages</u>
Anna Regina, Essequibo Coast	9,541
Cane Grove/La Bonne Mere, East Coast, Demerara	7,233
Vergenoegen, East Bank, Essequibo	3,595
Government Estates, West Demerara (Windsor Forest, La Jalousie and Hague)	3,846
Charity/Amazon, Pomeroon River	170.5
	<hr/>
	24,385.5
<u>New Schemes</u>	
Onverwagt, West Coast, Berbice	6,000
Mara, East Bank, Berbice	3,874 (Approx.)
Garden of Eden, East Bank, Demerara	1,200
	<hr/>
	35,459.5
	<hr/>

Anna Regina Land Development Scheme

9.1 This scheme comprises Plantations Reliance, Bush Lot, Henrietta, Richmon^d, La Belle Alliance and Lima on the Essequibo Coast, and embraces an area of 9,541 acres. The acreages allocated for agriculture and other purposes are as detailed in Appendix I.

9.2 There are 781 families on this scheme whose economy is based mainly on rice cultivation.

9.3 The tenants hold plots varying in size from 2 to 10 acres, but in keeping with the recommendations of Mr. F.A. Brown, steps are being taken where possible to consolidate holdings to provide plots of not less than 10 acres in size. Most of these plots are utilised for rice cultivation.

Agriculture

10.1 Rice - Only 80 acres of Spring Crop was grown because of the severe drought experienced during the first half of the year under review. For the same reason the major portion of the Autumn Crop had to be broadcast as late as July and some transplanting was done even in August. This resulted in the late maturing of the grains when heavy rains fell during November and threatened a comparatively good harvest. A small portion of the crop was lost and damaged, both from heavy rains and insect attack. Approximately 7,400 bags of Pure Line Seed Paddy were produced for the Department of Agriculture. The British Guiana Rice Development Company continued to operate its modern multi-stage rice mill at Anna Regina and to purchase the farmers' paddy.

10.2 The following acreages were cultivated during 1959 as compared with 1958:-

	<u>1958</u>		<u>1959</u>	
	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield Bags</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield Bags</u>
Spring Crop	824	8,254	80	311
Autumn Crop	3,435	80,041	3,754	80,217

11. Dairy Farming - The areas available for dairy farming are located in the rear of the housing areas in the following sections of the scheme:-

Lima	-	103 acres
Anna Regina	-	94 "
Bush Lot	-	20 "
Reliance	-	<u>32</u> "
		<u>249</u> "

12. Pasturage - At Richmond, La Belle Alliance and Lima communal pastures were maintained. Fertilisers were used to improve the quality of the grazing, with satisfactory results. A total area of 642 acres divided into four paddocks for rotational grazing was maintained in fair condition and fully utilised during the year. Suitable watering places were provided for the animals during the drought months.

Pure Water Supply

13. Artesian well water is supplied to the housing areas at Anna Regina and Reliance.

Housing

14.1 Ninety-four termite affected houses were treated with Atlas "AA" with a great measure of success.

14.2 A Mosque, built by the Moslem Community was officially opened in October, 1959.

14.3 The construction of a Hindi School by the Hindu Community was started early in 1959 but was not completed at the close of that year.

Assistance to Settlers

15.1 Building by aided self-help means is also encouraged and the construction of concrete houses under the supervision of Officers of the Housing Department was commenced during 1957 by a self-help group of twelve settlers at Reliance. The construction of these houses was completed during 1959.

15.2 Thirty-four settlers at Anna Regina and Cotton Field Housing Area built houses on their own and with the assistance of loans, received from the British Guiana Credit Corporation.

15.3 The facilities of the workshop at Anna Regina were made available to settlers who own agricultural machinery and allied equipment requiring repair and overhaul. The cost of such jobs which is borne by the settlers is determined on the basis of a charge which takes into account the cost of labour and materials plus 25% thereon.

Development and Expansion

16.1 During the year under review development works were carried out in connection with the Extension of Rice Cultivation, Improvement of Drainage & Irrigation, Layout of Residential Areas and Development of Provision Farm Lands.

16.2 Equipment of Workshop - Several items of equipment and tools were purchased to improve its efficiency and scope of operation. Maintenance and repairs were carried out on the Scheme's machinery and on that of other Government Departments. Repair jobs were also done for private parties.

Cane Grove/La Bonne Mere Land Development Scheme

17.1 The Cane Grove/La Bonne Mere Land Development Scheme which comprises the estates formerly known as Plantations Cane Grove and La Bonne Mere is situated on the left bank of the Mahaica River and is the most easterly of the Plantations which receive irrigation water from the East Demerara Water Conservancy.

17.2 On 11th June, 1948, by Resolution, the Legislative Council approved of the establishment of a Land Development Scheme on these estates and also of the estimated expenditure to be met from the Development Trust Fund and the general revenue of the Colony for reconditioning the drainage and irrigation system and laying out the estates for land development purposes.

17.3 Plantation Cane Grove was purchased by Government for the sum of \$100.00 when the proprietors decided to abandon the estate as a sugar plantation. Plantation La Bonne Mere which was a rice and coconut estate was purchased for the sum of \$60,000.00.

17.4 The entire settlement embraces an area of 7,233 acres and details of the acreages allocated for agriculture and other purposes are shown in Appendix I.

17.5 The lands have been allocated to 545 families whose economy is based mainly on rice cultivation, subsistence crops and dairy farming.

17.6 The settlers hold plots varying in size from 3 to 15 acres but, in keeping with the recommendations of Mr. F.A. Brown, steps are being taken where possible to consolidate holdings to provide plots of not less than 10 acres in size.

Agriculture

18.1 Rice - The Spring Crop at Cane Grove suffered from a shortage of water due to a spell of dry weather. Of 120 acres cultivated only 57 acres produced a crop of 494 bags of paddy. For the Autumn Crop 3,234 acres were cultivated and 44,241 bags of paddy were reaped.

18.2 The following acreages were cultivated during 1959 as compared with 1958:-

	<u>1958</u>		<u>1959</u>	
	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield Bags</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield Bags</u>
Spring Crop	393	4,110	120	494
Autumn Crop	2,870	33,618	3,234	44,241

19. Dairy Farming - At the commencement of the year animals belonging to 112 settlers occupied 67 communal byres comprising 360 stalls in the Uplands and Diamond sections of the scheme. One hundred and five animals were admitted to the farm, bringing the total number of animals in the farm to 570. The Artificial Insemination Service was used during the year and 32 calves were born.

20. Provision Farming - Provision farms totalling 745 acres were generally maintained in good condition. The main crops grown were plantains, cassava and bananas but some farmers at Section South La Bonne were planted permanent crops such as citrus, coffee and coconuts.

21. Milk - Milk produced from the dairy farm satisfied the needs of the farmers and a surplus of 13,798 gallons was sold to the Milk Marketing Organisation operated by the Department of Agriculture.

22. Coconuts - Coconuts picked during the year totalled 468,568 of which 259,406 nuts were sold at Auction to locally registered copra manufacturers and 97,779 selected nuts to the Department of Agriculture. The production of copra on the Scheme ceased on the 22nd April, 1958.

23. Pasturage - The area provided for communal pasturage remained at 1,300 acres divided into four paddocks which were maintained in a comparatively good condition.

24. Pure Water Supply - Artesian well water is supplied to certain sections of the housing areas on the scheme.

Assistance to Settlers

25.1 Housing - No buildings were erected during the year but nine new lots were laid out for building purposes at North Plantation Bagatelle.

25.2 General - As was the case at the Anna Regina Land Development Scheme arrangements have been made for repair and overhaul jobs to be carried out by the workshop at Cane Grove on behalf of settlers who own agricultural machinery and allied equipment. The cost of such jobs is borne by the settlers and takes into account the cost of labour and materials plus 25% thereon.

Development and Expansion

26.1 Fertilisers were purchased for distribution to farmers at Section Diamond and West Uplands where the quality of the lands is poor.

26.2 Due to a shortage of surveyors, surveys for the layout of farm-plots and house lots were not carried out.

Vergenoegen Land Settlement

27.1 The land settlement at Vergenoegen was acquired in February, 1946, and comprises four estates, namely, Vergenoegen, Philadelphia, Greenwich Park and Barnwell, with a total area of 3,595 acres. The acreages allocated for agriculture and other purposes are detailed in Appendix I.

27.2 There are about 200 families on this settlement whose economy is based mainly on rice cultivation, subsistence crops and dairy farming.

27.3 The tenants hold plots varying in size from 3 to 15 acres, but in keeping with the recommendations of Mr. F.A. Brown steps are being taken where possible to consolidate holdings to provide minimum plots of 15 acres in size.

27.4 During the year under review a Rice Factory operated by the Department was sold to settlers who formed themselves into a Co-operative Society known as Vergenoegen Rice Mill Co-operative Society Limited.

Agriculture

28.1 Rice - A large portion of the area under rice cultivation continued to produce poor yields. A soil survey of the area was carried out during the year by the Department of Agriculture. The survey revealed that there are 1584 acres of organic soils which are extremely acid, base deficient and toxic, to correct the fertility of which would require the application of ground limestone and mixed fertilisers. The survey also revealed that there are 1750 acres of clay soil which are more fertile. However, to produce their best yields annual fertiliser dressings with occasional dressings of limestone were recommended.

28.2 The following acreages were cultivated during 1959 as compared with 1958:-

	<u>1958</u>		<u>1959</u>	
	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield Bags</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield Bags</u>
Spring Crop	1,274	6,519	900	3,539
Autumn Crop	1,518	16,373	1,650	19,186

28.3 Settlers occupying land in certain sections of the cultivation area where the soil is known to be toxic and below average in yield were encouraged to apply fertilisers to their holdings.

29. Dairy Farming - Four and six stall communal byres for a dairy herd of 116 animals are maintained on the settlement, and complementary to these are fodder plots of one-third of an acre and an equal area for exercise.

30. Provision Farming - A total of 223 acres is allocated for provision farming. Larceny of crops, which was most prevalent adversely affected production.

31. Milk - Milk produced from the dairy farms satisfied the needs of the farmers and a surplus of 13,545 gallons was sold to the Milk Pasteurisation Plant operated by the Department of Agriculture, as compared with 6,389 gallons during the previous year.

32. Pasturage - During the year under review a total of 1,334 acres was available to settlers for agistment of their cattle. Approximately 300 acres of bush were cleared and basic slag applied to Greenwich Park East and West savannah pastures.

33. Pure Water Supply - Artesian well water is supplied to certain sections of the housing areas on the Scheme.

Assistance to Settlers

34.1 Housing - Towards the end of 1950 Government embarked on a rural housing scheme to assist settlers to build their own houses. Under this scheme houses were provided at an estimated cost of \$1,500: each. The settler was required to deposit one-sixth of this amount and he would then obtain a grant of one-third and be provided with a loan of the remaining half of the estimated cost of the house. These loans were repayable within a period of twenty years at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ % interest. Settlers erected 89 houses under this scheme which was suspended at the end of 1953.

34.2 Settlers were encouraged to build houses by aided self-help means, and eighteen such houses in process of erection by settlers under the supervision of the Housing Department in 1957 were completed by the end of the year under review.

34.3 General - The workshop facilities at Vergenoegen were made available to settlers who own agricultural machinery and allied equipment requiring repair and overhaul, on terms similar to those in force at the Anna Regina and Cane Grove Land Development Schemes.

Government Estates, West Demerara

35.1 Plantations Windsor Forest, La Jalousie and Hague, formerly sugar estates, were acquired by Government at Execution Sales during the period 1910 - 1912. The original proprietors were unable to pay the sea defence rates levied in those days and consequently the properties were sold to recover the outstanding amounts.

35.2 Government decided that the estates should be utilised to provide a means of livelihood for the people who became displaced through the closing down of a number of sugar estates in various parts of the Colony.

35.3 The estates have a gross acreage of 3,846 acres and the acreages allocated for agriculture and other purposes are shown in Appendix I.

35.4 There are 450 families on this settlement whose economy is based on rice cultivation, subsistence crops, cane cultivation and dairy farming.

186
- 9 -
35.5 The tenants hold plots varying in size from 2 to 10 acres and where possible settlers are being encouraged to consolidate their holdings to provide plots of not less than 10 acres. These holdings were leased to the people in 1915 for a term of 99 years at a fixed rental of \$6.00 an acre per annum, with no provision for revision or payment of maintenance charges.

Agriculture

36.1 Rice - This forms the main crop grown by the settlers and generally two crops are cultivated each year. A campaign against bad cultivation practices inimical to soil conservation was initiated in 1957 and the results have been encouraging. Many of the farmers were convinced that the loss of top soil from their rice lands was inimical to their interests and therefore readily adopted the practices which ensured better management of the land. The Spring Crop was adversely affected by shortage of water.

36.2 The following acreages were cultivated during 1959 as compared with 1958:-

	<u>1958</u>		<u>1959</u>	
	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield</u> <u>Bags</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield</u> <u>Bags</u>
Spring Crop	2,086	27,443	1,678	10,338
Autumn Crop	2,087	40,593	2,105	40,624

37. Provision Farming - The provision farms totalling 353 acres were generally maintained in fair condition. The chief crop grown was cassava.

38. Cane - Seventy-four acres were under cane cultivation and the crop reaped during the year totalled 1,536 tons of cane, as compared with eighty-three acres cultivated and 1,163 tons of cane reaped during the previous year. The cane is sold by the cultivators to Plantation Versailles, West Bank, Demerara.

39. Dairy Farming - A communal byre is maintained at Windsor Forest. The Artificial Insemination Service continued to operate satisfactorily and two stud bulls obtained from the Agriculture Department during the year; making a total of three bulls, are being maintained for use at Windsor Forest.

40. Milk - Milk produced satisfied the needs of the farmers and a surplus of 2,188 gallons was sold to the Milk Pasteurisation Plant operated by the Department of Agriculture, as compared with 2,815 gallons during the previous year.

41. Pasturage - At Windsor Forest and La Jalousie the settlers own over 1,500 head of cattle. The maximum area available for grazing is approximately 470 acres, part of which is poor land. At Hague the area available for grazing is 186 acres.

42. Pure Water Supply - Artesian well water is supplied to the Housing areas on the settlement. Drilling

of a new artesian well to provide water for the settlers at Hague Back Settlement commenced during 1958 was completed in 1959.

43. Housing - Hague Back Settlement. Permission to build new and repair existing houses was granted to the settlers at Hague Back in September, 1958. A number of new houses were built in 1959.

Charity/Amazon Land Settlement

44. A plot of land comprising 170.5 acres on the right bank of the Pomeroon River, known as Charity/Amazon, was declared a Settlement in 1944. It is capable of useful expansion as a residential and commercial centre being the entrepot of the Pomeroon River District. The area was originally laid out into 35 agricultural lots and 140 house lots. A new layout is however being designed for the area by the Central Housing and Planning Authorities.

45. Pure Water Supply - Artesian well water is supplied to the settlement.

Onverwagt

46.1 During 1955 the Board of Directors of the British Guiana Rice Development Company, Limited, decided to exclude from the Company's operations the whole of the area known as Plantation Onverwagt (No. 27) on the West Coast of Berbice, comprising about 6,000 acres which, under an agreement with Government concluded in 1952, had been acquired by the Company for the purpose of expanding the area under direct mechanised cultivation by the Company.

46.2 A part of this area had been cultivated during the three years prior to 1955 but the Company decided that the area previously utilised for mechanised cultivation was adequate for the attainment of its objective, and Onverwagt was accordingly handed over to the Land Development Department for development as a land development scheme.

46.3 Details of the final arrangements for formally handing over the property to Government have not yet been concluded.

46.4 The whole area is suitable for the cultivation of rice and plots totalling 4,800 acres were allocated during the year under review on temporary tenancy to selected farmers on a risk basis, as compared with 4,362 acres allocated in 1958.

46.5 The acreages allocated for agriculture and other purposes are as detailed in Appendix I.

Agriculture

47. Rice - The following acreages were cultivated during 1959 as compared with 1958:-

	<u>1958</u>		<u>1959</u>	
	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield</u> <u>Bags</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Yield</u> <u>Bags</u>
Spring Crop	-	-	-	-
Autumn Crop	4,362	23	4,800	40,585

48. Pasturage - A communal pasture comprising about 400 acres was closed around September to agistment of cattle pending the allocation of the area for rice cultivation.

49. Development and Expansion - Final plans for the full utilisation and occupation of the entire area depend upon the conclusion of arrangements, financial and otherwise, for acquisition by Government of title to the land and upon approval of proposals submitted for comprehensive drainage and irrigation of the area.

Mara Land Settlement

50.1 Location and background - This settlement is situate on the East Bank of the Berbice river about 25 miles at the end of the road from New Amsterdam. It comprises the estates of Mara, Germania, Vryberg, Schepmoed, L'Enterprise and Ma Retraite totalling approximately 3,935 acres and was selected in 1955 with a view to its acquisition by Government for land settlement purposes in keeping with the general recommendations of the International Bank Mission and Mr. F.A. Brown regarding development of riverain lands.

50.2 Negotiations for its acquisition were concluded by the end of 1955 and a preliminary land survey was commenced during 1956 to determine acreage, etc., on which the agreed purchase price at \$50.00 per acre should be paid.

50.3 The report of the preliminary inspection of the estates disclosed that the dams and trenches, although in a fair state of preservation, were impassable and that the whole area was overgrown with bush of varying density, the majority being heavy bush. The land is high and lends itself to easy drainage. The soil varies from a sand-clay to a clay-pegasse mixture and is very fertile. It is considered that the area is suitable for the cultivation of rice, cocoa (which was cultivated on this land by the early settlers) citrus, leguminous fodder and grasses, and for the development of mixed farming on proper lines. Early records show that coffee was formerly grown on these estates.

51.1 Objective - The objective at Mara, as it will be in the case of future land development schemes, is not merely to bring more land under cultivation but to develop a contented peasantry deriving full occupation and an improved and reasonable standard of living from the land, thus contributing towards the relief of unemployment and under-employment.

51.2 In order to achieve this objective it was decided that the allocation of lands to settlers should be as follows:-

- (a) where the main crop is rice each settler should be allocated 15 acres of rice land, plus a 2½ acre homestead upon which he will build his house, keep one or two cows, cultivate permanent and vegetable crops (other than rice) and raise poultry; and
- (b) farmsteads of 15 acres on which the settler will build his house, grow no rice, but cultivate vegetable and permanent crops, e.g. citrus, cocoa, and keep poultry and a limited number of dairy cattle depending upon the availability of a market for dairy products.

52.1 Development account of an acute under-employment situation existing on the lower Corentyne Coast which it was imperative to relieve as quickly as possible, Government decided late in December, 1956, to proceed with the reconditioning and development of these sections of Mara which could be more rapidly rehabilitated and put under cultivation by settlers.

52.2 Land clearing and excavating machinery as well as aluminium buildings to serve as temporary quarters were ordered, and work on reconditioning the drainage and irrigation system and clearing of land commenced early in January, 1957.

52.3 During the first half of 1957 it was not found possible to clear and level enough land to permit of holdings of the acreages referred to in paragraph 51.2(a) being allocated to 46 prospective settlers selected in January, but in order to assist them in cultivating an autumn rice crop, the area already cleared totalling 212 acres in the Mara section was allocated on a temporary basis in 5 acre plots at a nominal rental of \$5.00 per acre from which an average yield of 15.5 bags of paddy per acre was obtained.

52.4 During the latter part of 1957 additional machinery and equipment were obtained on hire from other Land Development Schemes to expedite the work of rehabilitation and development, and altogether by the end of the year approximately 750 acres throughout the North and South sections of Mara, Germania, Vryberg and a part of South Schepmoed were cleared, 13 bridges and 11 kokers were built, 48.25 miles of dams cleared and reconditioned, including the main empolder dam in the rear of Plantation Mara, cum annexis, and 41.75 miles of drainage and irrigation trenches reconditioned and dug. In addition, an area near the public road and in the centre of the frontage of the property was cleared and levelled, and a workshop, office and quarters for staff were in course of construction.

52.5 During 1958 an additional twelve families were placed on the land, making a total of fifty-eight. These were allocated at Mara approximately 2 1/2 acre homesteads, and approximately 14 1/2 to 15 acre rice plots. The forty-six settlers selected in 1957 completed the erection of their houses during 1958, while some of the remaining twelve settlers completed theirs during 1959.

52.6 For the 1958 Autumn Crop 409.25 acres of rice were cultivated, but due to the occurrence of the disease known as "Blast" the yields were very low. Some farmers lost as much as 80% of their crop. Because of this, clearing of lands reserved for rice was suspended until such time as a method of successfully combating the disease was discovered. By the end of 1958 a total of 892 acres was cleared and made available for rice and 161 acres for permanent crops.

52.7 Although spread of the disease "Blast" was arrested by spraying the 1959 rice crop with "Verdesan", it was decided that the originally proposed utilisation of the land described in paragraph 51.2 should be changed. In consultation with the Department of Agriculture the final layout proposed is as follows:-

- (a) 1365 acres divided into holdings of approximately 15 acres each for rice cultivation;
- (b) 215 acres divided into holdings of approximately 2 1/2 acres each for homesteads on which

/ rice

rice farmers allocated holdings as at (a) above will live, cultivate food crops and rear a limited number of livestock;

- (c) 1025 acres divided into holdings of approximately 15 acres each on which farmers will live, cultivate citrus, cocoa and food crops and keep a few milch cows;
- (d) 717 acres divided into holdings of approximately 12 acres each for cocoa cultivation;
- (e) 144 acres divided into holdings of approximately 3 acres each on which farmers allocated holdings as at (d) above will live, cultivate food crops and rear a limited number of livestock.

52.8 During the year under review 84 families were allocated plots in keeping with (a) and (b) and 43 families were allocated farmsteads in keeping with (c) of paragraph 52.7 above.

53. Development. Clearing of the entire area East of the Trunk Dam was completed and approximately 1365 acres were levelled for rice cultivation. The layout of the compound and the construction of the river dam were completed while bridges were erected across all irrigation trenches along the driving dam on the eastern boundary of the Scheme. Also completed were the layout of the residential area for settlers at Schepmoed, the digging of internal ditches and the levelling of 26 house plots. All streets in the residential areas, except those in the new homestead areas for the cocoa farmers were metalled.

54.1 Other Services - An artesian well has been sunk at Schepmoed for the supply of pure water to the administrative compound and farmstead area. An overhead tank (capacity 19,000 gallons) for the distribution of potable water was installed during 1958, while installation of pumps was completed in 1959. All the occupied areas in the Scheme have been provided with supply pipes.

54.2 Limited electricity for administrative buildings, bonds and workshop is provided by means of an electric lighting plant. An additional plant was purchased during 1958 for emergency purposes.

54.3 Workshop - The workshop handled most of the repairs necessary to keep agricultural machinery in the field.

55. Finance - Expenditure during the year which amounted to \$211,870.00 was financed on the basis of a two-thirds Colonial Development and Welfare Grant and one-third contribution from local funds.

56. General - Proposals are under consideration for acquiring and developing adjacent lands to the North and South totalling approximately 6,000 acres, subject to the availability of funds, in order to enlarge the area acquired at Mara so that it will become a more economic unit.

Garden of Eden Land Settlement

57. The Garden of Eden Land Settlement is situated on the East Bank of the Demerara River about fourteen miles from Georgetown and embraces an area of about 1,200 acres.

58. This abandoned estate was acquired by Government during 1955 at a cost of \$75,000: in keeping with general recommendations made in 1953 by the International Bank Mission and Mr. F.A. Brown, Land Settlement Adviser, regarding the development of riverain lands of the Colony. Mr. Brown had further recommended that a pilot land settlement scheme should be launched on the lower reaches of one of the main rivers of the Colony.

59. The land which is composed of soil types - clay, shallow pegasse, deep pegasse and burnt pegasse - is regarded as being representative of other riverain alluvial soils and, with the installation of proper drainage, suitable for pasture, forage crops, citrus, cocoa, ground provisions and most local crops.

60.1 Comprehensive proposals for the development of the area, costing altogether \$720,000: were accordingly prepared in consultation with the Departments of Agriculture and Drainage and Irrigation. These included proposals for drainage and irrigation, layout and utilisation and occupation of the land.

60.2 Work on the development of the area was commenced in 1956 when preliminary clearing of the land and preliminary drainage and irrigation works were carried out. It was anticipated that by the end of that year the main drainage and irrigation works would have been completed and that the front portion of the area which was planned to accommodate mixed, cocoa, citrus and special small farms as well as a community centre, would have been occupied. However, while the main drainage and irrigation works were virtually completed by the end of the year, it was not found possible to proceed with other development works for the reason that during the excavations, deep pegasse was discovered along the line of one of the proposed roads which made its construction impracticable from the point of view of cost. In the light of this situation it became necessary to re-examine the proposals for the layout of the area. New proposals approved provide for the settlement of 78 families as follows:-

- 54 Citrus and mixed farming of approximately 7.5 acres each
- 24 Dairy farms of approximately 25 acres each.

FINANCE

61. Recurrent expenditure on the Department as a whole for the year under review amounted to \$512,136: as compared with \$492,181: for the previous year.

62. The following statement sets out the revenue and recurrent expenditure for 1959 for the various settlements:-

Operation and Maintenance

<u>Existing Settlements</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
	\$	1959 \$
Anna Regina Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	41,959 42,396	89,332
Government Estates, West Demerara (Arrears collectable)	9,439 13,430	36,576
Vergenoegen Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	22,425 15,767	42,324
Vergenoegen Rice Factory (Arrears collectable)	8,886 105	13,498
Cane-Grove La Bonne Mere Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	71,190 9,044	92,602
Charity/Amazon Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	3,577 1,670	11,545
Onverwagt Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	35,683 8,042	42,117
<u>New Land Settlements in Process of Development</u>		
Garden of Eden Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	Nil Nil	Nil
Mara Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	18,361 2,804	48,586

Operation and Maintenance of Agricultural
Machinery

<u>Settlements</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
	\$	1959 \$
Anna Regina Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	91,834 1,473	81,191
Vergenoegen Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	33,894 62	23,121
Cane Grove-La Bonne Mere Land Settlement (Arrears collectable)	22,581 2,504	31,244

63. A comparative statement of revenue and expenditure for the years 1958 and 1959 in respect of the operation and maintenance of settlements and of agricultural machinery is provided in Appendix II.

63.1 Expenditure on the operation and maintenance of the settlements at Anna Regina, Cane Grove-La Bonne Mere, Vergenoegen, Charity/Amazon, and of Government Estates, West Demerara, exceeded revenue by \$128,401: as compared with \$116,805: in the previous year. In this connection it should be stated that the actual revenue due from these settlements for the year under review amounted to \$239,888: of which \$157,476: were collected and \$82,412: remained as arrears to be collected during the forthcoming year.

63.2 In considering the present unhealthy financial position of the existing settlements at Anna Regina, Vergenoegen, Cane Grove and Government Estates, West Demerara, account must be taken of the fact that these settlements which were abandoned estates when taken over by Government, were established mainly as social assistance schemes to provide a livelihood for persons more or less destitute who were then residing thereon, and considerable financial assistance has been essential. In addition to an increase in labour costs rentals are relatively low and credit is given for the preparation of land and other services. As a result, it is difficult to establish these settlements on a self-supporting basis except as a long term project. However, the principle that land settlements should be economically self-supporting has been accepted as the ultimate objective, and to this end stricter credit control has been introduced. This apart, rice land rents at Anna Regina, Vergenoegen and Government Estates, West Demerara (Lot 'C'), were increased during the year 1957 to the level of rentals chargeable under the Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Ordinance, 1956, and similar increases will be brought into effect during 1958 at Cane Grove Land Settlement.

64. At 1st January, 1959, loans made to settlers in previous years representing advances to tenants, agricultural machinery hire charges and loans for the construction of houses totalling \$211,405: were outstanding. Repayments during the year amounted to \$9,127:

65. Development expenditure incurred during the year amounted to \$389,978: as compared with \$582,359: in the previous year as follows:-

	1958	1959
	\$	\$
1. <u>Improvement and Expansion of Existing Land Settlement Schemes.</u>		
<u>Essequibo Estates (Anna Regina)</u>		
Extension of Rice Cultivation	Nil	20,644
Establishment of new Cattle Pasture	Nil	-
Establishment of Dairy Farm	Nil	-

/ Improvement of Drainage

	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>
	\$	\$
1. <u>Improvement and Expansion of Existing Land Settlement Schemes</u> -		
<u>Essequibo Estates (Anna Regina)</u>		
Improvement of Drainage	Nil	22,792
Layout of Residential Area	Nil	9,884
Development of Provision Farm Lands - Third Depth	Nil	5,679
Development of Second Depth - Devonshire Castle/Walton Hall	Nil	-
<u>Cane Grove-Ia Bonne Mere Land Settlement</u>		
Improvement of Dairy Farm Area	-	7,949
Improvement of Communal Pasture	-	-
Layout of Residential Area	-	-
Surveys	-	63
<u>Vergenoegen Land Settlement</u>		
Extension of Rice Cultivation - C.D.&W. Scheme No. D 2321	-	-
Extension of Cultivation Savannah Area	-	17,783
Improvement of Communal Pasture and Grazing Area	-	10,518
Metalling of Streets	-	3,204
Vergenoegen Rice Mill - Extension of Drying Floor	-	-
Improvement of Drainage - Greenwich Park	-	14,889
Extension of Dairy Farm - Barnwell	-	-
Surveys	-	5
<u>Charity/Amazon</u>		
Metalling of Streets	-	-
Extension of Market Shed	-	3,323
<u>Cane Grove and Vergenoegen Land Settlements</u>		
Purchase of Washing Machines for Agricultural Machinery	-	-
Rural Re-housing	-	-
2. <u>Equipment of Workshops on Land Settlements</u>	5,958	1,097

3. Development of Garden of Eden ...

	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>
	\$	\$
3. <u>Development of Garden of Eden East Bank Demerara (C.D.&W. Scheme)</u>	12,333	55,947
4. <u>Development of Pln. Mara cum annexis East Bank Berbice (C.D.&W. Scheme No. D. 3188)</u>	510,118	211,870
5. <u>Development of Pln. Onverwagt, West Coast Berbice.</u>	-	-
6. <u>Purchase of Land for Land Settlement purposes</u>	45,000	-
7. <u>Preliminary Investigation re Suitability, etc.</u>	215	251
8. <u>Erection of Bonds for Pure Line Seed Paddy.</u>	8,736	4,080
Total	<u>582,360</u>	<u>389,978</u>

SURVEYS AND LAYOUTS

66.1 Surveys were carried out during the year at Ver- genoegen and Anna Regina Land Development Schemes, Essequibo, and at the Lesbeholden Section of Black Bush Polder, Coren- tyne.

66.2 In addition to the above surveys, work where ne- cessary was carried out on replacement of missing paals, settlement of disputes, alignment of trenches and general inspections.

GENERAL

67. With reference to paragraph 67 of the Report for 1958, the following is the position:-

(1) Future Administration of existing and new Land Settlements

Detailed proposals submitted by the Department for the withdrawal of the Land Development Department from existing Government Land Settlements are under consideration by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

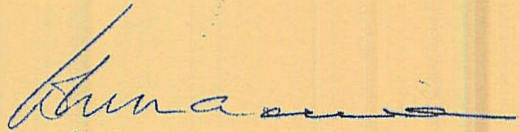
(11) Land Clearing

The question of increasing the rentals of settlers by the interest charges on the capital expenditure is still the subject of correspondence with the Ministry of Natural Resources.

(111) Tenure

In 1959 Government decided that titles to be issued should be by way of leases issued in respect of Small Holdings on Colony Lands and for Crown Lands for Agriculture and Grazing purposes at various rentals.

68. In conclusion, I desire to record my appreciation of the loyal services rendered by the office and field staffs and to state that I received full co-operation from other Government Departments with which this Department had to work in connection with the development and improvement of new and existing land settlements.



W.A. MACNIE.

Director of Land Development.

APPENDIX I

Approximate Allocation of Acreages on Settlements for Agricultural and other purposes.

Use	Anna Regina		Government Estates		Vergenoegen		Cane Grove/ La Bonne mere.		Onverwagt	
	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959	1958	1959
Rice Cultivation	3600	3754	2087	2105	1785	1785	3370	3572	4800	4800
Ground Provision	28	28	357	353	223	223	815	795	-	-
Cane Cultivation	-	-	74	74	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coconuts	20	20	-	-	-	-	273	273	-	-
House Lots	170	170	201	201	48	48	100	100	-	-
Dairy Farming	249	249	40	40	155	155	511	445	-	-
Pasturage	942	942	658	656	1334	1334	1099	1300	400	400
Miscellaneous	-	-	427	417	50	50	1065	748	800	800
Undeveloped	4532	4378	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Acreage of Settlement	9541	9541	3846	3846	3595	3595	7233	7233	6000	6000

APPENDIX II

Comparative Statement of Revenue and Expenditure for the years 1958 and 1959.

Settlement	Revenue		Recurrent Expenditure	
	1958	1959	1958	1959
<u>Operation and Maintenance of Land Settlements.</u>				
Anna Regina (Arrears collectable)	63,406 14,414	41,959 42,396	94,266	89,332
Government Estates, West Demerara (Arrears collectable)	27,492 9,012	9,439 13,430	42,443	36,576
Vergenoegen (Arrears collectable)	22,930 14,464	22,425 15,767	46,974	42,324
Vergenoegen Rice Factory (Arrears collectable)	15,485 5,046	8,886 105	22,376	13,498
Cane Grove-La Bonne Mere (Arrears collectable)	58,800 9,935	71,190 9,044	92,951	92,602
Charity/Amazon (Arrears collectable)	2,792 1,616	3,577 1,670	8,700	11,545
Onverwagt (Arrears collectable)	24,419 2,307	35,683 8,042	14,930	42,117
<u>New Settlements in Process of Development</u>				
Garden of Eden	-	-	5,032	48,586
Mara (Arrears collectable)	10,097 1,865	18,361 2,804	19,403	
<u>Operation and Maintenance of Agricultural Machinery.</u>				
Anna Regina (Arrears collectable)	110,965 5,744	91,834 1,473	79,294	81,191
Vergenoegen (Arrears collectable)	38,885 4,665	33,894 62	22,718	23,121
Cane Grove-La Bonne Mere (Arrears collectable)	39,929 5,781	22,581 2,504	42,661	31,244
	205,969	359,829	144,673	512,136