

I have no doubt that a good man interested in farming this type of country could settle himself on an area of scrub land if he was paid a regular wage. I would suggest that he be given 500 to 700 acres, varying according to the particular type of land, with the aim of carrying 1,000 ewes when the area was finally developed. Wages to be paid would also vary according to the condition of the land, as some places would run some stock to begin with. Wages to be reduced as income improves. A wage of, say, £5 10s. weekly on present-day cost-of-living expenses is a suggestion, keeping in mind that the settler would eventually be the owner.

Sales of stock off the property for the year ended 31st March, 1948, are as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
47 sheep	78	9	9
706 lambs	982	13	3
22 bales of wool	636	6	11

It may be interesting to record the production figures for the property for the year ended 31st March, 1941, which are :—

	£	s.	d.
98 ewes, 20 hoggets	95	17	8
305 lambs	316	9	9
13 bales of wool	178	12	6

The stock on hand at 31st March, 1948, was—

200 four-tooth ewes,
135 six-tooth ewes,
125 four-year ewes,
185 five- and six-year ewes,
25 ewe lambs,
20 wether lambs,
20 rams,

710, carried on 282 acres of former scrub land ;

2 steers,
1 calf,
1 heifer,
4 dairy cows,

8 cattle, and

4 horses.

With the above production figures must be considered the facts that—

- (1) The three years preceding 1948 were droughty.
- (2) 8,000 rabbits were killed on the property during 1947–48.
- (3) Superphosphate was rationed and normal supplies were not available.
- (4) Had one bag of manure per acre been applied, and had there not been any rabbits, the property could have carried 800 breeding-ewes and 200 dry sheep.

This type of country should be made available to a suitable hard-working man, with a view to bringing the land into production to produce more, and to settle more men.

The net farming result from property for the year ended 31st March, 1948, was a profit of £816 9s. 6d.

I should also mention that of the 282 acres mentioned above approximately 200 acres only are ploughable.

We think that there are many instances where abandoned or scrub-infested lands can be reclaimed for farming in this manner. This could be done by the proposed Marginal Lands Board, although the Board will have to exercise the greatest discretion in choosing both the property and the man. In all cases we would suggest that only young men who can clear the scrub themselves without having to employ labour be put on this type of land, for the best capital which a man can invest in his property is the capital which he contributes by his own labour.