

PART IV.—VETERANS HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES*

Section 1.—The Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs administers the legislation making up the Veterans Charter, except for the Pension Act which is the responsibility of the Canadian Pension Commission. The Department was established in 1944 and its organization and scope are reported upon in the 1946 Year Book, pp. 1052-54. Subsequent editions of the Year Book report the work of the Department each year, and the following Sections bring it up to Mar. 31, 1955.

Briefly the Department is now mainly concerned with the provision of medical treatment, the payment of allowances, land settlement, welfare work and the rehabilitation of disabled veterans. A few veterans (Korean action and disability pensioners) are receiving vocational and educational training; educational assistance is being provided for children of the war dead; some re-establishment credit has not yet been claimed; and claims and applications relating to insurance for veterans are received regularly.

The work of the Department, except as regards the Veterans' Land Act, and of the Canadian Pension Commission, is decentralized through 18 district offices and two sub-district offices in Canada, and a district office in London, England. The administration of the Veterans' Land Act is carried on through eight district offices and 34 regional offices, with travelling supervisors operating from the latter to serve the veterans settled throughout Canada.

Imperial War Graves Commission.—The Commission was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1917 and was entrusted with the marking and maintenance in perpetuity of the graves of those of the British Commonwealth Armed Forces who lost their lives between Aug. 4, 1914 and Aug. 31, 1921 and between Sept. 3, 1939 and Dec. 31, 1947. The Commission erects memorials to commemorate those who have no known grave.

The official agent in Canada of the Commission is the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the area of responsibility of the Canadian Agency is the continent of North America. Office of the Secretary-General of the Canadian Agency is in the Veterans Memorial Building, Ottawa. The Canadian Agency is responsible for about 13,000 war graves in over 2,000 cemeteries. The memories of approximately 3,400 servicemen, missing in operations while based in North America, are commemorated on the memorials which have been erected at Victoria, B.C. and at Halifax, N.S. A memorial to be erected in Ottawa will commemorate the names of an additional 850 servicemen who served with the Commonwealth air forces.

Section 2.—Medical, Dental and Prosthetic Services

Medical Services.—The Department maintains a chain of 12 active treatment hospitals from coast to coast as well as two convalescent centres and three veterans homes where domiciliary care is provided. Besides the 17 institutions owned and operated by the Department, with a total operating capacity of 9,425 beds as of Mar. 31, 1955 there are 588 beds in three veterans pavilions at Ottawa, Regina and Edmonton. These pavilions are owned by the Department but are operated by the parent hospitals and partially administered by Departmental staffs. Special centres are maintained in the active treatment hospitals for the investigation and treatment of arthritis, paraplegia, tuberculosis, mental and other conditions.

Where Departmental facilities are not available entitled veterans may be treated at Departmental expense by their own doctors, in the hospitals of their choice.

Most of the hospitals are located close to medical schools and, when they are, close co-operation is maintained between the two, with the hospitals participating in medical teaching. Eleven of the active treatment hospitals have been approved by the Royal

* Contributed by the various Branches of the Department of Veterans Affairs.