

FEDER'AL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOU

**OCTOBER 1, 1946** 

# **Survey of Current Conditions**

August, 1946 marked the end of postwar year I for the United States. In that year physical reconversion was largely completed and the economy began to operate upon a semi-peacetime basis. The transition from wartime to peacetime economy has not been accomplished without difficulties and setbacks. Many of these were natural by-products of the process of reconverting major industries from producers of war goods to manufacturers of peacetime products. Particularly was this true of the heavy goods industries whose facilities had been geared almost exclusively to the requirements of the armed forces. In addition, the economy was shocked severely by prolonged and widespread work stoppages in the steel, coal and nonferrous metals industries whose output was vital to a smooth transition from war to peace. Labor-management friction in other industries aggravated the problem of national shortages and retarded the drive toward full production.

However, despite these interruptions to sustained production and the difficulties related to materials allocations, price controls and similar regulations under which the economy has operated, the record to date, in many respects, is impressive. Since the end of the war, total industrial production has averaged higher than in 1941 or any preceding peacetime year, and more than 60 per cent larger than in 1935-1939. Inventories have increased at all levels, although wholesalers' and retailers' stocks, when adjusted for price increases, are substantially less than in 1941-1942. Income payments to individuals, which in July were at an annual rate of \$168.7 billion, are at an all-time peak, and retail

sales have been maintained at record levels throughout the postwar period.

The outlook at the end of the third quarter, as it was a year earlier, is not free of potential difficulties. Perhaps the major domestic factor is the policy to be pursued by organized labor with respect to future wage demands based on further increases in the cost of living. Although the possibility of work stoppages based on demands for wage increases exists, there are indications that while labor, at the rank-and-file level, may become increasingly impatient with present wage rates, the leadership at top levels is aware both of the wage-cost-price relationship and the basic need for sustained full production.

The danger of extreme price advances continues to exist, although the uncertainty with respect to the future status of price control legislation, under which industry operated late in 1945, has been resolved. Every month during which full scale use of the nation's productive capacity can be maintained reduces the inflationary pressures upon the price level.

The possibility of a labor shortage, particularly in the skilled classification, is becoming increasingly important. To some extent, and possibly in substantial part, this problem may well be reduced in significance by the greater use of labor-saving machinery and the development of new production techniques.

The shortage of freight cars which in some areas has already affected distribution of goods and raw materials is expected to constitute a serious problem during the remainder of the year and may be(Continued on Page 7)

# War and Postwar Demand Deposit Trends in the Eighth District

The latest Federal Reserve survey of demand deposits of individuals, partnerships and corporations, conducted as of July 31, 1946, came nearly one year after V-J Day, and thus points up banking changes in the first postwar year. Reconversion from war to peacetime production has produced some significant changes in the trends established during the war years, the changes being especially noticeable during the last six months. Total deposits have declined somewhat, all of the decrease coming in Government balances. Both private demand and time deposits have continued to increase but the rate of growth has diminished substantially. Government financing, the primary source of deposit increase during the war period, is now the primary factor tending to decrease total deposits as the Treasury uses its excess cash balance to redeem Government securities held mostly by the banking system. Offsetting this deflationary factor the rise in private credit is resulting in appreciable deposit creation. Metropolitan banks have registered a greater increase in individual and business deposits during the last six months than rural banks and demand deposits of business firms have gained relative to personal deposits.

While the wartime trends in finance are being changed they are being changed slowly. As noted most of the change has come in the last six months; the first half of the initial postwar year resulted in relatively little change in the banking picture. The war financing program continued beyond the cessation of hostilities, the Victory Loan drive coming at the end of 1945. The level of national income has continued at or near the wartime peak and while its composition has been altered somewhat, the changes have been relatively small. The decline in Government war expenditures has been partly offset by increases in other Government expenditures, such as those for mustering-out pay-Sharply higher ments and veterans' benefits. private expenditures have replaced most of the balance, despite supply shortages continuing to retard private consumer and business expenditures for many types of goods.

Deposit Growth—The war and postwar periods provide an excellent illustration of the effects of Federal financing on the banking system. War financing resulted in a vast expansion of bank deposits despite efforts by the Treasury to prevent it. War expenditures generated a tremendous expan-

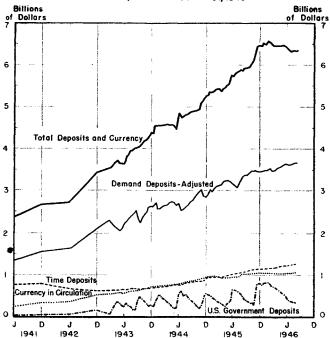
sion in income but price control and the shortage of many items, especially durable goods, prevented a proportionate increase in consumer and business expenditure. The result of this disparity between income and expenditure was an unprecedented growth in savings. If the holders of these funds had been more inclined to use them to purchase Government securities, the war could have been financed without so great an expansion of bank deposits since their purchases merely would have transferred deposits from private to Government account without increasing the total. But the fact that people chose to hold a large portion of their accumulated liquid assets in the form of bank deposits made it necessary for the banks to purchase Government securities, with the result that War Loan deposits increased without any corresponding decrease in the deposits of individuals and business firms. As the Treasury drew on these War Loan accounts to meet its expenditures they, in effect, were subsequently transferred to private account.

The sharp reduction in Federal expenditures following the end of the war, together with the continued high level of Treasury receipts, made it possible for the Government to use some of the excess cash balance built up during the Victory Loan drive to redeem a portion of the maturing issues of Government securities. Cash redemption of these securities tends to decrease bank assets and deposits although the effects vary according to the ownership of the securities redeemed. In preparation for the redemptions the Treasury transfers some of its War Loan deposits to the Federal Reserve banks. To meet these withdrawals the commercial banks must either draw on excess reserves, sell securities, or borrow. If the redeemed securities are held by the Federal Reserve banks the net effect on the commercial banks, after interbank adjustments, is a decrease in War Loan deposits and a loss of reserves, a decrease in security holdings, or an increase in borrowings. If the redeemed securities are held by the commercial banks the net result is a decrease in their holdings of Government securities and in their War Loan accounts. If, however, the securities are held by nonbank investors, the addition to their deposits tends to offset the decrease in War Loan deposits leaving total bank deposits approximately the same. Since most of the redeemed securities were held by the banking system, the cash redemption of securities has tended

to decrease total deposits. From March 1 through August 1, 1946 the Treasury redeemed for cash about \$13.5 billion of maturing issues. Of this total commercial banks held about \$7 billion, the Federal Reserve banks about \$2.5 billion and nonbank investors about \$3.7 billion.

The effects of both Treasury borrowing and cash redemption of Government securities on Eighth District banks may be readily observed in Chart I. Deposits and currency in circulation in the Eighth Federal Reserve District reached a peak of \$6,550 million at the end of February, 1946, an increase of 144 per cent from December 31, 1941. Percentagewise, War Loan accounts registered the greatest increase of any of the components, increasing 26-fold from the end of 1941 to the peak at the end of February, 1946. Federal Reserve notes in circulation increased from \$322 million to a peak of \$1,063 million at the end of 1945 and after a seasonal decline had nearly regained the all-time peak at the end of August. Both demand deposits adjusted (which are approximately the same as demand deposits of individuals and business firms) and time deposits are still increasing, although at a diminishing rate, and stood at all-time peaks on August 30, 1946. Demand deposits adjusted had increased \$2,117 million since December 31, 1941, a gain of 140 per cent, and time deposits had increased from \$774 million to \$1,251 million, an increase of 62 per cent.

CHART I
ESTIMATED DEPOSITS AND CURRENCY, 8th FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT
JUNE 30, 1941 to AUGUST 31, 1946



The effect of the Treasury's cash redemption program is reflected in the decline in total deposits and currency which began shortly after the program was inaugurated. The most pronounced effect of the redemption program which began March 1 was the drop in War Loan deposits from a high of \$828 million at the end of February to \$357 million at the end of August. This sharp decrease more than offset the continued increase in other demand and time deposits.

Another important development has been a shift in the importance of the factors determining deposit growth. The primary source of increase during the war period, both nationally and in the Eighth District, was the purchase of Government securities by the banks. From December 31, 1941 to December 31, 1945, just after the end of the Victory Loan drive, total deposits of all member banks in the United States increased \$68 billion, the increase being accounted for primarily by the addition of \$59 billion to member bank holdings of Government securities. Total loan expansion of member banks during the same period, which amounted to only \$4.8 billion, was due primarily to an increase in loans to purchase or carry Treasury securities. Total deposits in Eighth District member banks increased \$3.2 billion during the four-year period, \$2.3 billion of this amount being accounted for by an increase in Government security holdings.

In the period, December, 1941-December, 1945, public credit, that is Government security holdings and loans for purchasing or carrying United States securities, accounted for about 90 per cent of the deposit growth both nationally and in the Eighth District. Since the end of the war, however, private credit has become the primary factor tending to increase deposits. Commercial, industrial and agricultural loans of weekly reporting member banks in the United States increased about \$2.5 billion from August 15, 1945 to August 28, 1946, while Government security holdings and loans topurchase or carry Government securities decreased over \$6 billion. All loans other than those on United States securities of Eighth District weekly reporting banks increased more than \$150 million during the same period. The largest increase was in commercial, industrial and agricultural loans which were up \$76 million. Increases in real estate loans and other loans, mostly consumer loans, amounted to \$21 million and \$41 million respectively. Government security holdings, however, decreased about \$225 million, offset in part by an increase

of about \$17 million in loans to purchase or carry United States securities. Thus the expansion of business and consumer loans since V-J Day has been the primary factor tending to increase deposits while the sharp decrease in bank holdings of Government securities has tended to decrease them.

Geographical Distribution of Deposit Growth—Demand deposits\* in all Eighth District banks totaled \$3.8 billion on July 31, 1946, about \$140 million or 4 per cent more than on January 31, 1946. During the preceding six-month period Eighth District demand deposits rose \$362 million. The relatively smaller increase in the more recent period was partly seasonal, reflecting the usual low level of farm marketings during the first part of a year, but it also pointed to a diminishing rate of deposit growth. In the corresponding period last year the increase was \$204 million or nearly 7 per cent.

TABLE I

Demand Deposits\*—All Eighth District Banks—By Regions (dollar figures in millions)

		cent e from	Per cent change from 12/31/41 to
Region . 7/31/46.	1/31/46	7/31/45	7/31/45
St. Louis \$ 973	+7	+ 6 + 9	+ 64
Louisville 284	-0-	+ 9	<b>∔</b> 90
Memphis 209	+9	+21	<del>+</del> 94
Little Rock	+5 +4	+13	+123
Evansville 77	+4	— 9	+183
Total metropolitan			
areas 1,620	-1-6	+ 8	+ 78
St. Louis Outlying 383	+3	+20	+155
Louisville Outlying 105	6	+21	+135
North Missouri 304	<b>+</b> 5	+25	+162
Ozark 249	-+9	<b>+28</b>	+236
South Arkansas 234	+5 +9 +5	<del>+</del> 19	+188
Delta 322	4	<del>+</del> 18	+105
East Mississippi-			
Tennessee 160	$^{+5}_{+2}$	+29	+226
Kentucky-Indiana 441	+2	<del>+</del> 17	+219
Total Rural 2,197	+3_	_+21_	<u>+171</u>
Total District 3,817	+4	+15	+119

<sup>\*</sup>Demand deposits of individuals, partnerships and corporations. Note: Figures do not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.

The most significant change in the geographic distribution of demand deposit growth in the Eighth District during the last six months was the relatively larger increase in metropolitan than in rural banks. Demand deposits in the five metropolitan centers increased from \$1,533 million to \$1,620 million, an increase of \$87 million or 6 per cent as compared to an increase of \$55 million or 3 per cent for the rural banks. The small increase for rural banks is only partly due to seasonal factors, the increase for the corresponding period last year being \$113 million or nearly 7 per cent.

This relatively small increase of demand deposits in rural banks is in sharp contrast to the trend during the war period. From December 31, 1941 to July 31, 1945 demand deposits in all banks in the five metropolitan areas increased from \$845 million

to \$1,500 million, an increase of 78 per cent, while the increase in rural banks was from \$668 million to \$1,813 million, a gain of 171 per cent.

Among the metropolitan areas the banks in Louisville showed no change in demand deposit totals during the period January 31 to July 31, 1946, and those in Little Rock and Evansville registered increases below the average for all metropolitan centers combined. Banks in the two latter cities had above average increases during the war period. Memphis and St. Louis banks in the last six months had increases of 9 and 7 per cent respectively, above the average for the combined metropolitan areas.

The change in demand deposits in the rural regions during the last six months ranged from an increase of 9 per cent in the Ozark region to a decrease of 6 per cent in the Louisville outlying district. The deposit decreases in the Louisville outlying and Delta regions were largely seasonal; these banks suffered losses in the corresponding period last year. Expenditures incurred in preparing for the tobacco and cotton crops, primary income sources for these regions, draw down deposit balances and receipts from farm marketings do not come in until later in the year.

The smaller gain in rural bank deposits reflected largely the seasonal movement in farm deposits. In this district agriculture is a major income source. A second factor, however, was the decrease in income payments growing out of military establishments and wartime-operated industries which had added substantially to income in many rural areas. A third factor has been the increase in the available supply of consumers' durable goods and farm equipment. Purchases of these products, although still limited by inadequate supplies, are increasing and tend to shift deposits from the rural centers to the points of production, the metropolitan areas. As more adequate supplies become available and consumer purchases increase, banks in metropolitan areas should show even greater deposit gains relative to rural banks. Note, however, that rural banks will not necessarily lose deposits; their gains merely may be smaller than those of city banks.

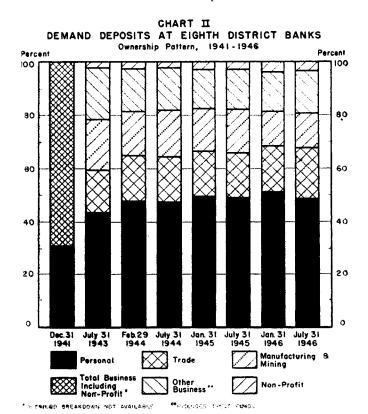
Ownership of Demand Deposits—Some of the shifts in deposit ownership which were anticipated in connection with reconversion from a war to a peacetime economy have begun to emerge. During wartime consumer incomes expanded sharply without an attendant increase in the supply of consumer goods. This relative goods shortage, under price control and rationing, widened the gap between consumer income and expenditure, and re-

<sup>\*</sup>Demand deposits is used hereafter in this article to denote demand-deposits of individuals, partnerships and corporations.

sulted in large acquisitions of liquid assets. Individuals generally are less inclined to invest their accumulated funds than are business concerns; consequently, they held a large proportion of them in the form of bank deposits and currency. Personal deposits thus increased relatively more than business deposits and small banks, which have proportionaly more personal than business deposits, tended to gain funds relative to the large banks in metropolitan centers.

The current demand deposit survey reveals what appears to be a reversal of some of these wartime trends. In the six months, January 31-July 31, 1946, personal deposits declined both in dollars and relative importance in the total demand deposit structure. Business deposits grew in dollar amount and in proportion to the total. The increase in business deposits, both absolute and relative, was concentrated mainly in the accounts of financial and trading establishments, but manufacturing and mining concerns also regained some of the loss experienced during the preceding six-month period.

Two significant trends in the ownership pattern of demand deposits in the Eighth District are shown in Chart II. Personal deposits increased both absolutely and relatively throughout the war period, the gain being greatest in the latter part of most years because of the importance of agricultural income in this district. Deposits of individuals



increased from \$469 million on December 31, 1941 to \$1,622 million on July 31, 1945. The proportion of personal deposits to total demand deposits increased from 31 per cent on December 31, 1941 to 49 per cent on July 31, 1945. Business deposits, on the other hand, while growing in actual dollar amount, decreased from about 68 per cent of the total at the end of 1941 to 48 per cent near the end of the war on July 31, 1945. The dollar amount of business deposits increased from \$1,023 million to \$1,599 million during this period. A substantial part of this gain was accounted for by deposits of trade concerns which increased from \$365 millon on July 31, 1943 to \$557 million on July 31, 1945, and deposits of manufacturing and mining concerns which increased from \$447 million to \$549 million.

The period since July 31, 1945 corresponds rather closely to the postwar period to date as actual hostilities ceased in August, 1945. The only significant change in deposit trends in this district during the first six months following July 31, 1945 was a \$79 million decrease in manufacturing and mining deposits as the changeover from war to peacetime production in many instances entailed heavy outlays and reduced receipts. Deposits of public utilities and transportation firms also decreased slightly. Personal deposits continued to gain, reflecting the high level of postwar income and the relatively low level of consumer expenditures due to the continued shortage of many consumer goods.

The second six-month postwar period, from January 31 to July 31, 1946, reflected more changes. Personal deposits, which previously had gained both absolutely and relatively, decreased. The dollar decline was nominal, only \$3 million, but the relative importance of such deposits decreased also, from 51 per cent at the end of January to 49 per cent at the close of July, 1946. On the other hand, business deposits which had been rising more slowly than personal deposits increased their proportion of total deposits from 45 per cent at the close of January to 47 per cent at the end of July. Manufacturing and mining deposits which dropped sharply during the preceding period increased \$20 million. The deposits of trade concerns showed the largest relative gain for any six-month period since the deposit surveys began in July, 1943.

The wartime growth in personal deposits relative to business deposits reflected the shifts which occurred under a war economy. The trends in the deposit ownership pattern now emerging reflect shifts characteristic of a reconversion era. The loss in manufacturing and mining deposits due to heavy

expenditures in the early reconversion period is now being recouped as production and income of such concerns increase. The decrease in personal deposits reflects higher consumer expenditures due primarily to increasing availability of consumer goods and rising prices. This peak level of consumer expenditure has resulted in heavy receipts for trading establishments, most of which have not yet been able to build up inventories to what might be called a more normal relationship to sales and are therefore accumulating deposit balances. larger trading concerns do not show the deposit gains characteristic of trade balances in general. Some of the larger firms apparently have been more successful in building up inventories than have most units in this field.

TABLE II

DEMAND DEPOSITS OF ALL EIGHTH DISTRICT BANKS

Ownership Pattern, July 31, 1946
(Amounts in millions of dollars)

	Change from			
	January 3	1, 1946	July 31	l, 1945
July 31, '46	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Nonfinancial business\$1,570 Manufacturing and	+123	+ 9	+154	+11
mining	+ 20	+ 4	- 59	11
Utilities	<b>+</b> 2	+ 1	-0-	-0-
Trade	+ 85	+13	+162	+29
Business 205	+ 17 + 29	+ 9 +14	+ 51 + 56	$^{+33}_{+31}$
Financial Business			•	•
farmers)	$\frac{-3}{7}$	-0- - 5	+249 + 46	$+15 \\ +49 \\ +15$
Total	+142	+ 4 because	+504	415
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The end of the War Loan drives has resulted in proportionately smaller investments in Government securities. The relative scarcity of private investment opportunities and the lack of new issues of Government bonds are probably the main reasons for the increase in the deposits of insurance companies and other financial concerns.

The ownership pattern for four different size groups of Eighth District banks as of July 31, 1946 is given in Chart III. Banks with deposits of \$1 million to \$10 million held the largest amount of deposits, \$2,036 million. This represents an increase of \$58 million since January 31, 1946. Each size group registered a deposit gain during the last six months. There was no significant change in the proportion of the district deposit total held by each size group.

Individuals hold the major portion of demand deposits in the small banks, the proportion decreasing as the size of bank increases. In the large banks, however, business balances are most important with the proportion of the total declining steadily as the size of bank decreases. A large part of the demand balances in the large metropolitan banks is held by industrial and financial concerns. Whole-

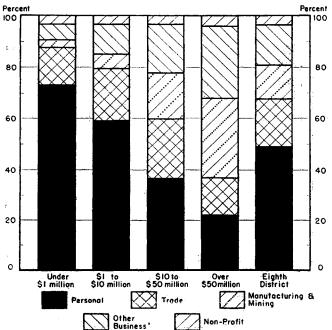
sale and retail trade deposits account for about 15 per cent of total demand deposits in the smallest and largest size groups as compared to over 20 per cent in the two medium size groups.

There were some minor changes in the ownership pattern in the different size classifications. Deposits of individuals accounted for a smaller proportion of total demand deposits in each size group except the largest in which there was a slight increase. Trade balances were up in all size groups except banks with deposits of over \$100 million, the decline in these large banks probably being due to the ability of the large stores to increase their inventory-to-sales ratio and to an increase in their credit sales.

In the past six months corporate deposits resumed the increase which prevailed during most of the war period although they declined somewhat in the July, 1945 to January, 1946 period. Total corporate deposits in district banks increased from \$933 million to \$1,067 million, the latter representing 61 per cent of total business deposits as compared to 58 per cent on January 31, 1946. Industrial corporation balances increased nearly \$30 million and those in wholesale and retail trade \$74 million, these two accounting for most of the increase in corporate deposits.

Outlook—the use of War Loan deposits to redeem Government securities has been the primary cause of the slight decline in total deposits during

CHART III
DEMAND DEPOSITS AT EIGHTH DISTRICT BANKS
Ownership Pattern By Size of Bonk, July 31, 1946
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PINCLUDES TRUST FUNDS

the last few months. The future trend in deposits will also be influenced substantially by the Treasury's debt retirement policy. The cash redemption of \$2 billion of the certificates of indebtedness maturing October 1 will bring the Treasury's cash balance below \$7 billion and if the redemption program continues as now anticipated, it will be down to the amount required for a normal working balance by the end of the year. Thereafter further debt retirement will be limited by the excess of Treasury receipts over expenditures and downward pressure on the deposit level from this source is not likely to be as heavy. On the other hand, forces tending to increase the level of deposits seem likely to gain in strength. Commercial, industrial and agricultural loans, real estate, and consumer loans have been rising steadily. Rising prices, wages, and increasing production should accentuate loan expansion. It appears now that the forces tending to increase deposits soon may be stronger than

those tending to decrease them so that the present decline may level off and perhaps turn upward within the next few months.

The shift of deposits from personal to business accounts and from smaller to larger banks is as yet quite small. It is significant, however, in that it indicates that individuals in general are spending most of their current income and in addition are using some of their deposit balances. This is the first time since the deposit surveys began in 1943 that individuals as a group did not hold aggregate expenditures well below aggregate receipts and thereby add to their deposit balances. Unless factors not now evident intervene, this trend is likely to be accentuated as goods become more plentiful. However, as long as the level of deposits stays up and farm income remains high an above average gain of deposits by metropolitan banks is not likely to occasion any substantial loss of deposits by rural banks.

# CURRENT CONDITIONS

(Continued from Page 1)

come a limiting factor on production when seasonal traffic reaches its peak.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

An indicated increase in Eighth District industrial activity during August was not reflected in a corresponding increase in the number of persons employed in this area. Preliminary reports indicate little change in total employment during the month. Manufacturing and construction workers remained at about the July level while some increase occurred in the trades and service industries. The number of persons in the district drawing unemployment compensation in August was relatively unchanged from July, but the decline in Servicemens' Readjustment Allowance claims continued through August.

The trend in employment in the Eighth District since the end of World War II has been generally upward throughout most of the period, and available estimates of anticipated employment indicate a continuation of the trend through the final quarter of 1946. Estimated non-agricultural employment in July was 5 to 10 per cent greater than in September, 1945 which was the first full month of peacetime industrial operations.

# INDUSTRY

Total industrial activity in the Eighth District in August continued to increase, although the gain was less pronounced than the increase registered in July. In some industries activity was at the highest level since the end of the war. Immediately following the end of World War II, industrial activity in this area reacted sharply to the cancellation of war contracts and the reconversion problems incidental to the shift from war to peacetime production. However, over-all production here was affected less seriously by the change-over to civilian goods production than in industrial areas in other parts of the country. The immediate postwar decline reached its low point in December and since the beginning of the year, total activity has experienced a generally uninterrupted upward trend which has continued through August.

Industrial power consumption in the major district cities in August was at the highest level since the end of the war. Consumption was 2 per cent higher than in July and less than 4 per cent below that in August, 1945. Except in May and June, when manufacturers' operating schedules were curtailed due to shortages resulting from the coal strike, the amount of electric power consumed by industrial users has increased each month during 1946.

Manufacturing—The production of manufactured goods in August was somewhat larger than in July with increases indicated in many of the district's major industries. Output of iron and steel products, electrical equipment, automobiles and accessories, and textiles increased during the month, while the food processing industry, except meat packing, and nonferrous metals industry held at about the same level as in July. Manufacturing

throughout the district was generally higher than in September, 1945, the notable exception being the primary steel industry.

In the St. Louis area the steel industry operated at about 36 per cent of capacity during August as compared with 29 per cent in July and 49 per cent in August, 1945. Throughout a large part of the year to date the industry in this area has been able to utilize only a relatively small part of its capacity due chiefly to a prolonged shutdown in one plant because of a labor dispute. Settlement of this strike and resumption of production in August resulted in a substantial increase in district steel output and the current outlook indicates that production shortly will be at a rate equal to that of the last half of 1945.

Preliminary estimates indicate that lumber production in the district during August was slightly higher than in July or in August, 1945. Despite equipment shortages, scarcity of skilled labor and adverse weather conditions which prevailed during most of the early months following the end of the war, lumber output in district states during the first ten months since V-J Day has totaled 3.8 billion board feet. In the post-war period through June, district output averaged about 10 per cent larger than in 1945, but was 16 per cent less than monthly average production in the peak year of 1943.

At the end of August, 34 whisky distilleries were in operation in Kentucky as compared with 26 at the end of July. Actual production of whisky during the year since VJ-Day has been held to a relatively low level as a result of the scarcity of grains and the strict allocation of materials to the industry. In the immediate post-war months, allocations of corn were negligible and production of bourbon whisky was either halted or restricted to a very small quantity per month. Some temporary improvement occurred in subsequent months but national grain commitments abroad plus a large domestic demand for grains has resulted in substantially less than capacity operations.

Preliminary estimates of shoe production in July indicate a sharp decline from the previous month. During most of the postwar period, and particularly in recent months, the shoe manufacturing industry has experienced extreme difficulties due to the scarcity of adequate hide and leather inventories. Abandonment of international controls on hide and skin allocations, coupled with a confused domestic situation resulting from illegal marketing of livestock and pricing problems throughout the

industry, seriously curtailed the supply of leather available to the shoe manufacturers.

In this district, however, postwar production through June has averaged 7.1 million pairs of shoes per month, or about the same as in 1941 and slightly higher than the monthly average in 1945. Production fell off sharply late in 1945 and in January, 1946, but through June output each month since January has been larger than in the corresponding month of 1945 and in May production was at an all-time peak of 8.7 million pairs.

Meat packing operations in August were sharply lower than in July as receipts of livestock in district stockyards fell off considerably following the heavy runs during July. The number of animals slaughtered under Federal inspection at St. Louis was 29 per cent less than in July. Cattle slaughter was off from July only 3 per cent and was considerably larger than in any previous month this year, while the number of hogs and sheep killed was 34 and 41 per cent less, respectively, than in July.

Mining and Oil—Total output of coal in the district in August was somewhat higher than in July, but the increase was due entirely to the longer work month. Daily average output declined 8 per cent in August but was 10 per cent greater than in August, 1945. Because of the long work month, however, total production in August amounted to 16.8 million tons and except for March, when output was expanded in anticipation of the impending coal strike, was the largest since the first quarter of 1945. The decline in daily average output in this district in August was substantially greater than that for the nation as a whole. Total United States production in August averaged about 2 per cent less than in July when adjusted for the number of working days.

Crude oil production in the district averaged 336,000 barrels per day in August as compared with 339,000 barrels in July and 324,000 barrels in August, 1945. The industry has maintained production at a steady rate since the early part of the year. Since January output has averaged about 5 per cent higher than in the first postwar month.

Construction—The value of building permits awarded in the five major district cities in August totaled \$6.5 million or 6 per cent less than in the preceding month. Although the value of permits increased in Evansville, Little Rock and St. Louis, the gains were not sufficient to offset the month-tomonth declines in Memphis and Louisville. Residential awards generally were in larger volume in

August in reflection of the increasingly stringent controls on non-residential construction.

During the first seven months of 1946, total construction contracts awarded in the amounted to \$275 million, of which \$91 million represented residential contracts and \$184 million was for commercial building. In 1942, the wartime peak year for both residential and commercial building, the value of residential contracts totaled \$67 million during the first seven months and commercial construction contracts amounted to \$368 million. During the first eleven months since the end of World War II, residential construction has averaged \$9.4 million per month as compared with almost \$11.0 million in 1942 and \$8.0 million in 1929 when contracts reached the previous peacetime peak. Commercial construction since the war has averaged \$25 million per month as compared with \$51 million in 1942 and \$24 million in 1929. The volume of residential construction has tended to increase in terms of total construction during recent months as materials allocations for commercial building were tightened, but considerable delay in completing residences continues to exist due to materials shortages.

While the postwar construction program is impressive in terms of dollar value, the actual physical volume of construction is somewhat less than is indicated by value figures due to the inflated costs of current building.

Transportation—The number of freight cars interchanged among railroads at the St. Louis terminal in August increased more than seasonally,

# PRICES

CONSUMERS' PRICE INDEX								
Bureau of Labor Statistics Aug. 15, (1935-39—100) 1946	July 15, 1946	Aug. 15, 1945	Ang. 15, 194 July 15, '46	6 comp. with Aug. 15, '45				
United States 143.7 St. Louis 142.3 Memphis * *Not available.	141.0 139.5 *	129. <b>2</b> 127.5	+ 1.9% + 2.0	+11.2% +11.6				
RETAIL FOOD PRICES								
Bureau of Labor Statistics Aug. 15, (1935-39—100) 1946	July 15, 1946	Aug. 15,		6 comp. with Aug. 15, '45				
U. S. (51 cities) 171.2 St. Louis 175.5 Little Rock 167.8 Louisville 163.1 Memphis 187.5	165.7 169.7 159.3 155.2 174.6	140.9 144.0 140.4 135.0 150.9	+ 3.3% + 3.4 + 5.3 + 5.1 + 7.4	+21.5% +21.9 +19.5 +20.8 +24.3				
WHOLESALE PRICES IN THE UNITED STATES								
Bureau of Labor Statistics (1926=100) Aug.,	46 July,'	46 Aug.,'4		946 comp. with Aug.,'45				
All Commodities 129.  Farm Products 161.  Foods	1 124.3 0 157.0 0 140.2	3 105.7 126.9 106.4	+ 3.9% + 2.5	+22.1% +26.9 +40.0 +11.7				

amounting to 134,000 or 6 per cent more than in July. Despite the increasing shortage of rolling stock in terms of demand for cars, the number of cars interchanged in August was the largest since July, 1945 and, except for the war years, was substantially larger than for any corresponding month since the late 1920's.

#### RETAIL TRADE

During August, the dollar amount of sales at retail trade lines reporting to this bank was substantially larger than in July, and up even more relative to August, 1945. Part of the gain from both a month and a year earlier represented price increases which have been fairly marked since midyear. The Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index (formerly called cost of living index) rose 6 per cent from June 15 to July 15 and another 2 per cent in the succeeding month, by far the sharpest gains for any similar period since the beginning of the war. Much of the sales gain, however, reflected an increasing supply of goods available for consumers. Continued high consumer income, however, has maintained demand above supply.

The dollar value of inventories is considerably higher at the present time than at the like date last year, but price increases tend to overstate the gain in unit volume. In addition the over-all increase in terms of dollars has tended to obscure the serious lack of balance among the various lines of merchandise held by retail outlets. Percentagewise, stocks of durable goods have shown greater gains than have nondurables, but durables can build up much

# INDUSTRY

CON	SUMPTI	ON OF E	LECTRIC	ITY	
No. of	August	July	August	Augus	t, 1946
(K.W.H. Cus-	1946	1946	1945		ed with
in thous.) tomers*	K.W.H.	K.W.H.	K.W.H.	July, '46	Aug., '45
Evansville 40	7.076	7.250	0.004	. 00	
Little Rock 35	7,976	7,359	8,084	+ 8%	- 1%
Louisville 82	3,679	3,442	3,524	+.7	+,4
	22,086	20,167	19,205	+10	+15 9
Memphis 31 Pine Bluff 19	5,144	4,195	5,629	+23	
	1,218	1,382	6,426	12	81
St. Louis 96	62,894	64,173	64,393 <b>R</b>	— 2	<u> </u>
Totals 303	02,997	100,718	107,261R	+ 2	4
*Selected industrial co		100,710	107,20110	T- ~	- 4
R—Revised					
LOADS INTERCH	ANGED	FOR 25 F	RAILROAI	S AT ST	LOUIS
		First nin	e days		
\ \Aug., '46 July, '46 A	lug., '45	Sept., 46	Sept., '45	8 mos. '46	8 mos. '45
133.703 125.825	130.813	31,920	33,986	977,495	1.250.088
Source: Terminal			n of St. 1	Louis.	1,230,000
				4011101	
	COAL	PRODUC	CTION		
(In thousands				Aug. '46 c	omp, with
of tons)	Aug., 46	July, '46	Aug., '45		Aug., '45
Illinois	6,052	5,816	5,591	+ 4%	+ 8%
Indiana	2,000	2,062	2,111	3	<del>-</del> 5 %
Kentucky		6,216	5,316	<b>+</b> 16	+35
Other Dist. States		1,261	1,486	-1-26	T 37
l		. <u> </u>			
Totals	16,834	15,355	14,504	+10	+16

#### RETAIL TRADE

DEP	ARTMEN	T STOR	ES		
	Net Sales		Stocks on Hand		ock nover
compar	, 1946 ed with Aug., 1945	8 mos. 1946 to same period 1945	Aug. 31,	Jan.	. 31,
Ft. Smith, Ark+32% Little Rock, Ark. +25	$^{+19\%}_{+32}$	+20% +24	+42% +34	3.26 3.80	2.85 3.47
Quincy, Ill	+45 +54 +52	$^{+28}_{+27}_{+30}$	+33 + 1 + 32	3.55 2.71 4.16	3.25 2.28 3.91
St. Louis Area1+28 St. Louis, Mo+28 E. St. Louis, III.+10	+50 +50 +70	∔32 +32 +44	+36 +37	3.37 3.37	3.10 3.10
Springfield, Mo+22 Memphis, Tenn+32	+57 +53	$^{+41}_{+31}$	+25 +33	3.73	2.77 3.47
*All other cities+17 8th F. R. District+27	+52 +49	+39 +31	+27 +34	3.55 3.55	3.06 3.25

\* El Dorado, Fayetteville, Pine Bluff, Ark.; Alton, Harrisburg, Jackschville, Mt. Vernon, Ill.; New Albany, Vincennes, Ind.; Danville, Hopkinsville, Mayfield, Paducah, Ky.; Chillicothe, Mo.; and Jackson, Tenn. 1 Includes St. Louis, Mo., East St. Louis and Belleville, Ill. Trading days August, 1946—27; July, 1946—26; August, 1945—27. Outstanding orders of reporting stores at the end of August, 1946, were

54 per cent greater than on the corresponding date a year ago. Percentage of accounts and notes receivable outstanding August 1, 1946, collected during August, by cities

		Excl. Instal Accounts			Excl. Instal. Accounts
Fort Smith	%	62%	Quincy	33%	77%
Little Rock	32		St. Louis		70
Louisville	49	62	Other Cities	34	62
Memphis	45	59	8th F.R. Dist	42	<b>6</b> 6

#### INDEXES OF DEPARTMENT STORE SALES AND STOCKS 8th Federal Reserve District

	Aug., 1946		June, 1946		
Sales (daily average), Unadjusted <sup>2</sup>	330 255	234 300 240 231	274 305 222 222	194 225 181 166	•

 $^{2}$  Daily Average 1935-39 = 100.

<sup>3</sup> End of Month Average 1935-39 = 100.

#### SPECIALTY STORES

	N	et Sales		Stocks on Hand		ock 10ver
:	Aug., 19 Compared July, 1946	46 with	to same period	Aug. 31, '46 comp. with Aug. 31, 1945	Jan.	1, to . 31, 1945
Men Furnishings Boots and Shoes Percentage of a 1946 collected du	.∔16 .ccounts an		+40% +24 receivable	+ 7% +102 outstanding	6.96	7.16
Men's Furnishings Trading days - A		68%				

# RETAIL FURNITURE STORES

Net	Sales	Invent	ories		
	ust, 1946 ared with		31, 1946 red with		o of ctions
July, 1946	Aug., 1945	July 31, 1946			Aug., 1945
St. Louis Area + 10% St. Louis + 11	+ 48% + 49	- 3% - 3	+39% +39	63% 65	48% 51
Louisville Area2-20	÷ 70	+20	<b>∔5</b> 5	37	31
Louisville+15	+ 73	+20	<del>+</del> 56	36	29
Memphis 1	+ 40	+ 7	4-51	31	28
Little Rock 4	+ 46	+11	<del>1</del> 76	35	31
Springfield 4	+ 32	, *	' *	*	*
Fort Smith+15	-i- 95	45	*	*	*
8th Dist. Total3+ 9	<b>1</b> 53	+ 9	+58	46	38
*Not shown senarat	de due to	incullicient	countrage	but inch	ided in

\*Not shown separately due to insufficient coverage, but included in Eighth District totals.

¹Includes St. Louis, Missouri; East St. Louis and Alton, Illinois.

²Includes Louisville, Kentucky; and New Albany, Indiana.

³In addition to above cities, includes stores in Blytheville, Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Henderson, Hopkinsville, Owensboro, Kentucky; Columbus, Greenville, Greenwood, Mississippi; Hannibal, Missouri; and Evansville, Ind

#### PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FURNITURE SALES

_	Aug., '46	July, '46	Aug., '45
Cash Sales	26%	25%	21%
Credit Sales	74	75	79
Total Sales	100	100	100

further before prewar stock-sales relationships are reestablished. In the future, stock-sales ratios may not be as large as in the prewar period since the war saw development of more efficient merchandising methods, but according to rather widespread trade opinion some substantial increase in the ratios from present levels will be forthcoming. The volume of outstanding orders is now more than four times larger than in the prewar period, and is about onefourth greater than in August, 1945.

At reporting district department stores the volume of sales during August increased more than seasonally and was 27 per cent more than in July. 1946 and 49 per cent greater than in August, 1945. Preliminary reports during the first part of September indicate that the sales gain of 31 per cent for the first eight months of this year over the like period last year is being maintained in this month. This is particularly noteworthy since the current boom in sales began after war ended and the increases over comparable 1945 months in the first part of 1946 came from a lower base than those now being registered. The dollar value of department store inventories in this district was up 6 per cent at the end of August in comparison with the end of the previous month and was 34 per cent greater than at the end of the comparable month last year. The lack of balanced inventories is still marked at department stores. August volume of outstanding orders at these stores continues very high, approximately six times larger than in the like period during prewar years.

Increasing supplies of merchandise are chiefly responsible for the increased sales volume in both men's and women's apparel stores during August. At men's stores, sales volume during August was 46 per cent and 75 per cent greater, respectively. than in July, 1946, and August, 1945. Women's apparel stores recorded increases in volume of sales of 61 per cent and 31 per cent over the previous month and comparable period last year. The dollar value of inventories at men's apparel stores was 15 per cent and 6 per cent greater at the end of August than at the end of July, 1946, and August, 1945, while at women's apparel stores, gains of 5 per cent and 24 per cent for the same periods were registered.

Sales volume at furniture stores during August rose 9 per cent over the previous month and were 53 per cent more than in the same month last year. The dollar value of stocks at the end of August, 1946, was 58 per cent more than at the end of August, 1945. An increasing supply of major durables is filtering through to the consumer even

though output is still low relative to demand, especially in lower-priced furniture.

# AGRICULTURE

Throughout the nation crop conditions continued generally favorable during August and an all-time record volume of crops remains in prospect for 1946. In some areas of the Corn Belt, however, dry spots developed last month and in others there was too much rain and cool weather which tended to retard maturity of the crop. As a result corn prospects diminished slightly. The September 1 estimate of the U.S. Department of Agriculture was 3,372,707,-000 bushels, down about 125 million bushels from a month earlier, but 12 per cent more than was harvested last year and 29 per cent more than was produced on the average in the 1935-44 period. Some localities report corn fields that normally would be brown and mature are still green and hence more subject to early frost damage. These areas need one or two weeks of drying weather. September 1 estimates for wheat and oats were slightly higher than August 1 indications and these developments partly offset, in the total grain outlook, the reduction in corn crop prospects.

The table below shows for the United States and for Eighth District states estimated (as of September 1) 1946 production of principal crops together with comparisons with 1945 actual output and that of the long-term average.

# PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS (in thousands of units)

_	Unite	ed Sta	ites	Eighth I	Distric	States
Crop	Esti- mated 1946	1945	1946 as per cent of 1935-44 average	Esti- mated 1946	1945	1940 as per cent of 1935-44 average
Corn (bushels)3		112	129	1,184,055	123	135
Wheat-(all bushels) *1		104	138	85,078	89	88
Oats (bushels)1	.519.592	98	13 <b>5</b>	325.946	118	145
Rice (bushels)	69,629	99	126	15.360	105	149
Soybeans—for beans	•			,		2.,,
(bushels)	183,393	96:	177	113.988	97	174
Apples (bushels)	116,697	172	96	7.594	144	102
Peaches (bushels)	83,135	102	139	8,511	78	124
Tobacco (pounds)2	,220,637	111	150	650,955	109	150
Cotton (bales)	9,171	102	73	3,380	104	84

Source: U. S. Department of Agriculture. \* For district states, only winter wheat is given.

# NEW MEMBER BANK

On September 13, 1946, the First State Bank of Campbell Hill, Campbell Hill, Illinois, became a member of the Federal Reserve System. This brings the total membership of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis to 496.

The First State Bank of Campbell Hill was chartered in December, 1921. It has a capital of \$25,000, surplus of \$5,500 and total resources of \$974,000. Its officers are: William Tegtmeyer, President; H. F. Busse, Vice-President, and Edward C. Knop, Cashier.

#### WHOLESALING

Stocks		
Aug. 31, 1946 compared with Aug. 31, 1945		
%		
+79		
·····••		
÷87		
+49		
<del>-</del> -64		
<del>1</del> 73		
- <u>∔</u> -65		

#### CONSTRUCTION

		New C	onstructi	on		Rep	airs, etc.	
(Cost in thousands)	Nur 1946	nber 1945	1 <b>9</b> 46	ost 1945	Nun 1946	1945	C 1946	ost 1945
Evansville		450	\$ 146	\$ 137	162	151	\$ 209	\$ 65
Little Rock		58	778	108	152	133	151	43
Louisville		73	784	714	76	33	46	20
Memphis	. 754	338	1,289	832	197	206	134	119
St. Louis		146	2,042	1,432	302	246	906	501
Aug. Totals		1,065	5,039	3,223	889	769	1,446	748
July Totals		707	6,018	1,704	914	362	906	693

#### BANKING

CHANGES IN PRINCIPAL FEDERAL RESERVE	ASSETS AND BANK OF ST.	LIABILITIES LOUIS
		Change from

(In thousands of dollars)	Sept. 18 1946	Aug. 21 1946	Sept. 19 1945
Industrial advances under Sec. 13b\$ Other advances and rediscounts U. S. securities		+ 10,215 - 26,471	
Total earning assets	1,071,481	- 16,256	<b>- 4,9</b> 13
Total reserves Total deposits	606,778	- 14,769 - 38,698 + 3,487	+ 33,548 - 36,996 + 53,464
Industrial commitments under Sec. 13b	4,040	.0 .	4,040

# PRINCIPAL RESOURCE AND LIABILITY ITEMS OF REPORTING MEMBER BANKS Change from

(In thousands of dollars)	Sept. 18, 1946	Aug. 21, 1946	Sept. 19, 1945
Total loans and investments	1,908,457	- 12,457	<u>- 20,696</u>
Commercial, industrial, and agricultural loans*	323,783	- 5,616	+ 79,210
Loans to brokers and dealers in securities	10,317	159	+ 1,926
Other loans to purchase and carry securities	59,248	- 5,546	+ 14,644
Real estate loans	90,680 2,742	- 2,665 $+$ 1,227	+ 23,433 + 147
Other loans	128,839 615,609	+ 1,444 $+$ 6,247	+40,645 $+160,005$
Treasury bills	41,429 131,979	+23,137 $-22,989$	+ 8,275 $-$ 115,064
Treasury notes	186,485 796,129	- 14,400 - 354	-142,027 + 66,439
Obligations guaranteed by U. S.	366	- 0 -	- 158
Other securities	136,460 1,292,848	- 4,806 - 18,704	+1.834 $-180.701$
Balances with domestic banks	109,545 1.132,379	+ 7,002 + 19,979	- 2,819 - 33,648
Demand deposits—adjusted **	369,484 177,116	+ 306 - 38,297	+ 41,398 - 70,774
Interbank deposits	526,981 20,500	- 7,004 - 8,700	- 59,678 - 8,200
*Includes open market paper.	,	+ 0,700	•

\*\*Other than interbank and Government deposits, less cash items on hand or in process of collection.

Above figures are for selected member banks in St. Louis, Louisville, Memphis, Little Rock and Evansville.

In the Eighth District developments in agriculture during August were very favorable and farm production prospects continued high. The major exception to this statement is found in large parts of Mississippi where almost continuously unfavorable weather has held crop prospects appreciably below last year's output and that of the long-term average.

Relative to 1945 output, prospects for district crops of oats, rice and soybeans are all better than the national average. The district oats crop is expected to be 18 per cent larger than the 1945 harvest and 45 per cent larger than ten-year average production in contrast to a 2 per cent decline from last year in nationwide prospects which in turn are 35 per cent above the long-term average production. District rice production, concentrated in Arkansas, is indicated at 5 per cent more than was produced in 1945 as compared with national prospects which are slightly below last year's production. Compared with the 1935-44 average, district rice production in 1946 is expected to be 49 per cent larger in contrast to an increase of 26 per cent for the country as a whole. Soybeans, grown for beans, in this region in 1946 are expected to be in somewhat less volume (down 3 per cent) than in 1945, but 74 per cent more than was produced on the average in the vears, 1935-44.

The commercial apple crop in district states this year is indicated at 44 per cent larger than last year and 2 per cent above the ten-year average. For the United States the harvest in 1946 is estimated to be 72 per cent more than in 1945 but 4 per cent below the long-term average. Both district and national peach crops in 1946 are expected to be well above the 1935-44 average pick, but the

# DEBITS TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS

(In thousands of dollars)	Aug., 1946	July, 1946	Aug., 1945		com. with Aug., '45
El Dorado, Ark	14,906 5 32,909 4,548 88,807 17,370 8,716 18,363 86,857 20,517 79,546 11,1475 11,188 8,490 6,214 34,348 8,355 50,873 12,598 316,318	\$ 15,249 30,610 4,363 93,179 18,099 8,722 18,211 87,363 20,736 85,181 398,948 23,971 11,464 12,925 8,353 6,359 42,575 1,261,606 8,709 52,759 13,095 361,632	\$ 11,004 22,520 5,183 79,415 13,702 8,041 14,239 73,097 17,777 88,986 363,233 18,299 8,011 6,496 4,914 20,752 991,613 5,879 33,541 7,993 211,408		+35% +46 -12 +12 +27 +8 +29 +19 +15 -11 +9 +43 +72 +62 +62 +64 +68 +15 +45 +58 +50
Totals2,	388,347	2,583,209	2,011,351	8	+19

district harvest will be far below last year's bumper yield while for the country as a whole the current crop slightly exceeds that of 1945.

Cotton prospects, both nationally and districtwide, are somewhat better than last year with an expected crop for the country of 9,171,000 bales in contrast to 9,015,000 bales picked last year. In district states the 1946 estimate is for 3,380,000 bales as compared with 3,248,000 bales produced in 1945. In some areas of the district, particularly in Arkansas, progress of the crop has exceeded earlier appraisals, but in many sections it is in extremely poor condition. While 1946 output is expected to be above 1945, it should be remembered that last year was a very poor cotton production year. Compared with the ten-year (1935-44) average, the 1946 district cotton crop will be 16 per cent smaller, and the national crop 27 per cent smaller. The cotton picking season is now at hand and the final outcome this year will depend to a great extent upon the amount of good picking weather.

This year's tobacco crop in both nation and district is at an all-time record, about 50 per cent over ten-year average output, and about one-tenth more than was produced in the exceptional harvest of 1945. The burley crop, most important in this district, is, however, but slightly higher than 1945 production and was exceeded in volume in 1944. This crop has made good progress throughout the season, especially in Kentucky and Tennessee. It has had almost perfect stands and is very uniform. A large percentage of the crop has been housed. The dark-fired crop is indicated at 64 per cent larger than in 1945.

# AGRICULTURE

(In thousands	$J_1$	uly	Cum	ulative f	or 7 mon	ths
of dollars)	1946	1945	194	6	1945	1944
Indiana Kentucky Mississippi Missouri	26,015 140,929 84,710 33,449 14,568 88,419 33,975	\$ 20,879 103,338 66,133 24,281 10,014 70,484 25,331	\$ 137,2 673,2 373,5 222,4 111,8 357,5 179,4	277 6 562 3 146 2 312 1 934 3	25,578 \$ 42,250 61,632 56,979 14,114 65,494 68,002	119,079 682,308 379,810 210,022 96,752 374,053 166,280
Tennessee	33,973				<u> </u>	
Totals\$	422,065	\$320,460 MENTS A	\$2,055,6 AT NAT	IONAL		\$2,028,304 YARDS
Totals\$	422,065	\$320,460 MENTS A		IONAL	STOCK	YARDS
Totals	Aug., 1946 195,848 128,326	\$320,460 MENTS A Receipts July,	AT NAT	IONAL	STOCK Shipment	Aug., 1945 123,404 30,072 1,870