

(ii) Casualties

60. From the outbreak of war in September, 1939, up to VJ Day (15th August, 1945), 10,130 New-Zealanders were killed overseas as a result of enemy action, or died as a result of accident or sickness while on active service. This excludes death due to natural causes or suicide, and represents a death-rate of 72 per thousand embarkations (excluding duplicate embarkations). The death-rate in the Army was 61 per thousand embarkations, as compared with 175 (almost three times as many) in the 1914-18 war. In the recent war the death-rate for the Air Force was by far the highest of the three Service Arms, standing at 111 per thousand embarkations. The Navy death-rate, too, was well above Army, with 73 deaths for every thousand men embarked. The figures quoted for the recent war only include amendments notified up to the end of September, 1945. More recent figures in respect of Army casualties, including amendments up to the 31st March, 1946, show a total death-rate of 65 per thousand embarkations. Of the 6,827 deaths then notified, 6,089 (89 per cent.) were battle deaths (killed in action or died of wounds) and 557 (8 per cent.) were non-battle deaths, 347 being accidental and 210 being deaths from sickness. A further 181 deaths were unclassified. The total of 210 deaths from sickness compares with over 1,600 such deaths in the 1914-18 war, and provides a striking commentary on the progress of medical science.

61. The annual death-rate for the three Service arms was 1,700. The annual Army death-rate (amended to the 31st March, 1946) was 1,145, as compared with 3,186 in the 1914-18 war. In all, 9,560 deaths were notified in the European war zone and 570 in the Pacific.

62. At the 30th September, 1945, 634 servicemen were still posted as missing, 443 being in the European war zone. A further 1,463 men previously posted as missing had by this time been reclassified as safe.

63. At the 30th September, 1945, 24 men were still posted as prisoners, 11 being in the Pacific war zone. A further 8,420 Service personnel had been released or had escaped from prisoner-of-war camps. Of the total repatriated or escaped, 7,819 were Army personnel, 546 Air Force, and 55 Navy. A total of 8,342 had escaped or had been released from prisoner-of-war camps in the European war zone.

64. The total number wounded in the three Service arms (including amendments up to the 30th September, 1945) was 19,345, including those subsequently reclassified as having died of wounds and those suffering accidental injuries while on active service. The figure quoted is a cumulative total and includes more than once any serviceman wounded on more than one occasion. By far the largest number of wounded, 18,376, was notified in respect of Army personnel. This represents a wounded rate of 175 per thousand embarkations, as compared with 28 in respect of Air Force personnel and 23 in the case of the Navy. The number of Army personnel wounded overseas as notified up to the 31st March, 1946, was 18,652, showing a slightly higher rate, 178 per thousand embarkations. This compares with 440 wounded for every thousand men embarked in the previous war. Of the total wounded in all Service arms, 18,966, or 98 per cent., were casualties incurred in the European war zone.

65. The following table illustrates the sacrifices made by New-Zealanders in the recent war. The figures in parentheses show casualties per million of population:—

Country.	Population.	Casualties.	
		Killed.	Wounded.
United Kingdom	47,770,000	244,723 (5,123)	277,090 (5,801)
Canada	11,812,000	37,476 (3,173)	53,174 (4,502)
Australia	7,230,000	23,365 (3,232)	39,803 (5,505)
South Africa	9,600,000	6,840 (713)	14,363 (1,496)
India	389,000,000	24,338 (63)	64,354 (165)
New Zealand	1,746,000	10,130 (5,802)	19,345 (11,080)

Table 6 of the Appendix analyses the progressive number of casualties incurred by the New Zealand Forces on active service, while Table 7 analyses the total casualties incurred up to VJ Day (15th August, 1945).