

The total number of prisoners of war food parcels packed by the voluntary workers in Wellington since the inception of the scheme to its close in May, 1945, was 1,139,624. During the latter stages these food parcels contained butter, cheese, jam, golden syrup, coffee and milk, condensed milk, dried fruit, meats, tea, sugar, chocolate, cocoa, and oatmeal. Cigarettes and tobacco were sent separately in bulk. Final victory terminated the work of packing these parcels, and the Board desires to place on record its appreciation of the women's organizations who so splendidly assisted the Joint Council of the Order of St. John and New Zealand Red Cross Society day by day, throughout the years, in packing these parcels.

The sick and wounded comforts and amenities given to men in hospitals and hospital ships in New Zealand and overseas was also continued on a liberal scale.

The convalescent homes in New Zealand, mentioned in previous reports, were continued during the year, with the exception of Fairview Home, Mount Eden, which was sold in June, 1945. The patients from this home were transferred to the Evelyn Firth Home, which, during the past two and a half years, had been loaned to our American Allies.

New Zealand Navy League War Council

This Council, which co-ordinates the patriotic work of branches of the Navy League and allied organizations in the Dominion, carried on its good work during the year.

Air Force Relations

Apart from hospitality services and gift parcels and amenities provided direct by the Board and Provincial Patriotic Councils, Air Force Relations, with branches throughout New Zealand, continued to concentrate on the care of Air Force personnel, and this group knitted large quantities of woollen garments for men in this service in New Zealand and overseas.

New Zealand Lady Galway Patriotic Guild

From the inception of this Guild to the end of September, 1945, approximately 8,351 cases of clothing were despatched to the United Kingdom for relief of distress occasioned by the war.

Overseas Seamen's Gift Committee, Wellington

This Committee, together with a similar Committee in Auckland associated with the Auckland Metropolitan Patriotic Committee, continued to provide personnel on overseas merchant ships with gift parcels, woollen comforts, books, periodicals, and other ship-board amenities.

IV. SPECIAL PHASES OF PATRIOTIC WORK

Unaddressed Quarterly Gift Parcels

Undoubtedly the most popular link between servicemen and servicewomen and their home-land was the quarterly gift parcels scheme, which was continued until VJ Day. The parcels were provided and packed by the Provincial Patriotic Councils. A review of the scheme shows that many difficulties had to be surmounted. As the supply position became difficult, the aid of the bulk-buying system of the Ministry of Supply was enlisted, and through the constant efforts on the part of the Board's staff and Provincial Patriotic Councils at no stage were the parcels held up through lack of materials. In all, approximately 1,202,391 such parcels were packed and despatched from New Zealand to Service personnel overseas. The parcels for the naval personnel were packed in Auckland by the members of the Auckland Navy League from materials supplied by the Auckland Provincial Patriotic Council. The parcels for the servicewomen were packed, as previously, in Wellington by Miss Viola Kettle and her representative "Kowhai" group of ladies. These parcels included cosmetics, cake, biscuits, fruit, cream, honey, soup, and sweets.