

- (7.) *"The return of the sick and the wounded to New Zealand; the selection of the men to be returned, and especially the sending of due notice to the Defence Department as to the number being returned and the nature of their wounds."*

The Cairo Board for returning men consists of Colonel Parkes, D.D.M.S., and two senior medical officers selected by him; but at Alexandria and Malta, where the number of New-Zealanders is now small, the cases are dealt with locally. Embarkation lists are always cabled.

- (8.) *"The outfits and clothing of wounded soldiers."*

Men leaving the New Zealand General Hospital and the base at Cairo are plentifully supplied with uniforms and clothing, and are in every way well equipped for the home voyage. At other hospitals regular issues are made, and a medical embarkation officer is always in attendance at Suez to rectify shortages. Both of our hospital ships carry heavy Red Cross supplies, and the Quartermasters on transports have supplies of uniforms and ordnance clothing.

Mr. Norman Brookes, head of the Red Cross Society of Australia in Egypt, informed me that they prepared a kit for each man, which was served out to him after he had been allotted his quarters on hospital ship or transport, and that a receipt was taken from the officer in charge for every kit.

- (9.) *"Information giving particulars of death, burial, and place of interment of men who have died in battle or from other causes, with the view of supplying such information to their relatives."*

As stated in paragraph (1), reports of all men killed in action, of deaths in hospital, also reports of the wounded and the missing, are cabled to your Department from the New Zealand Records Office at Alexandria.

Having received, before leaving the Dominion, many inquiries from anxious relatives and friends of men reported as missing, I did my best immediately on arrival in Egypt to clear up the mystery surrounding these cases. After making the fullest possible inquiries it was with regret that I cabled you on the 9th October to the effect that there was little prospect of finding any of the missing men. It was hoped that of the large number so posted many would be found to be prisoners of war, but this proved to be a vain hope, as up to the 7th December the names of only twenty-two New-Zealanders were on the lists of prisoners of war supplied by the Foreign Consuls at Constantinople. I understand that you published the lists as they came to hand from time to time.

Since the evacuation Courts of Inquiry have been held by the different units in the hope of clearing up the outstanding cases, in most of which the decision has been "Missing: believed to be dead." One had only to visit Gallipoli to appreciate the difficulties of the units in arriving at decisions in such cases, and to understand why no more definite pronouncement than this could be given.

Wherever possible particulars of the death, the burial, and the place of interment of deceased soldiers are sent on forms A.F.B103 and A.F.2090A. Metal crosses are being erected on the graves of those buried in Egypt, and until these are erected broad concrete blocks are placed at the head of each grave, as is shown in the accompanying photograph.

I arranged with the Commandant at the base to have photographs taken of the graves of our men that had fallen as soon as the crosses were in position, and to send the photographs to the next-of-kin. Plans of the cemeteries are in the custody of the military officials having charge of the cemeteries, and I satisfied myself that there would be no difficulty in identifying the graves.

At Malta, owing to land being limited, the cemeteries are small, and except in the case of officers three men are buried in each grave. New-Zealanders were thus sometimes buried with British and Australian comrades. Notwithstanding this, I had arranged with the authorities in Malta that a separate memorial was to mark the burial-place of each of our men that had died there. After my return to Egypt, however, I was informed by Chaplain Tobin that the authorities had decided that the graves were to be left as they are at present, but that in a year or two hence the stone slabs sealing the graves were to be removed, the graves mounded up and planted with flowers, and the question of suitable memorials considered. This, of course, will involve a different form of memorial, probably one memorial for each grave in which three burials have taken place, as was suggested by His Excellency the Governor, Lord Methuen, when I discussed the matter with him.

At Gallipoli I found that many of the solitary graves which are to be met with throughout the Anzac area, as well as those in cemeteries, had been marked by comrades of the fallen soldiers with inscribed wooden crosses, and in some cases with sandstone boulders. There is a danger, however, in the event of the scrub catching fire, of the wooden crosses being destroyed; but in all cases the Chaplains, I think, kept records of the graves, and also made plans of the positions, as desired by me on the occasion of my visit to the peninsula. I attach photographs of two cemeteries showing memorials already erected—one of a general cemetery in Shrapnel Gully, and the other of graves of New-Zealanders on Plugge's Plateau, Anzac.

I also attach plans which I made of two small cemeteries at Gallipoli. Plan No. 1 shows the graves of New-Zealanders, with one or two exceptions, while about half of the graves shown in No. 2 are also of New-Zealanders.

In Mudros East Cemetery the majority of the graves had already been marked by wooden crosses, and on the 6th November, when my secretary, Mr. Crow, visited it, he made a record of all the graves of New-Zealanders on which crosses had been placed. As you will see from the record, New-Zealanders are in two instances buried in the same graves with comrades from other parts of the Empire, but in most cases they are buried in separate graves. This was a combined British and French military cemetery, and was exceptionally well kept.