

No. 7.

New Zealand, No. 232.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 27th December, 1918.

With reference to my despatch, No. 227, of the 12th December, I have the honour to request Your Excellency to inform your Ministers that the United States Chartering Committee now advise that freight rates on oil from Pacific ports to New Zealand, Australia, and Far Eastern ports will no longer be controlled.

I have, &c.,

WALTER H. LONG.

Governor-General His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Liverpool,
P.C., G.C.M.G., G.B.E., M.V.O., &c.

No. 8.

New Zealand, Dominions No. 758.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 31st December, 1918.

With reference to previous correspondence, I have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency, to be laid before your Ministers, a copy of an announcement made in the House of Commons on the 14th November, as to the award of a star similar to the 1914 Star, and the conditions governing the issue of this decoration.

2. It was subsequently announced in the House of Commons, in reply to a question whether the decoration would be given to the relatives of those who fell during the operations, that the decoration would be issued to the legal representative or the next-of-kin according to whether the deceased soldier died testate or intestate.

I have, &c.,

WALTER H. LONG.

Governor-General His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Liverpool,
P.C., G.C.M.G., G.B.E., M.V.O., &c.

Enclosure.

WAR SERVICE (DECORATIONS).—STATEMENT BY MR. MACPHERSON.

Colonel LESLIE WILSON (by private notice) asked the Under-Secretary of State for War, Whether he is in a position to make any announcement with regard to the award or decoration to officers, non-commissioned officers, and men who took part in the Gallipoli operations?

Mr. MACPHERSON: I have received also a private-notice question from my honourable friend the member for South Salford (Sir M. Barlow). I hope the House will pardon my giving a somewhat long answer to the questions. As has been already stated in the House, the settlement of this matter has been complicated owing to the diversity of the interests involved, and has been delayed by the need for consultation with the Dominion authorities. I am glad to be able to say that an agreement has been reached which has received the approval of the War Cabinet and His Majesty the King, and which, I am assured, is satisfactory to those principally concerned. In the first place, the 1914 Star will be reserved for its special purposes. A star on the same model and with the same riband, but bearing distinctive marks as to date—viz., the years 1914–15—will be given to all officers and other ranks of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who prior to the 31st December, 1915, served in a ship of war at sea, and all officers and other ranks of Military and Air Forces who served in a theatre of war prior to the same date. In every case the officer or man must have served on duty and with proper authority, and no officer or man will receive the 1914–15 Star in addition to the 1914 Star. Thus, in the same way that those who first bore the brunt of the attack in France and Flanders received a special mark of recognition by the award of the 1914 Star, so those from our Dominions and colonies as well as British and Irish troops who first responded to the call of duty and served in a theatre of war will receive special recognition. The House will recollect that it has been originally proposed and sanctioned that the Governments of Australia and New Zealand should present their troops with a special medal for the operations on the Peninsula. They have now agreed to the new proposal, so that all troops, British and Indian and those from the Dominions, who shared the same dangers and hardships shall receive the same award. The date chosen—namely, the 31st December, 1915—forms a definite break in the operations, and all concerned have accepted it on the understanding that it is final. It will interest the House to know that there will be included, in addition to all those who fought on the Gallipoli Peninsula, the Canadian troops who fought at the second Battle of Ypres, the Battle of Festhubert, and subsequent operations of that year in France and Flanders; all those who fought at the Battle of Loos; the troops engaged in the defence of Egypt; the troops who conquered German South-West Africa under the command of General Botha, as well as all who were engaged in other parts of the African Continent; the Australian Force which captured the Bismarck Archipelago; and those who fought so gallantly under General Townshend at Kut.