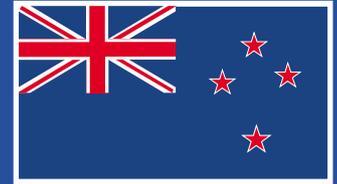




# Commonwealth War Graves Commission



## NEW ZEALAND'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

The Commission is responsible for commemorating members of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth who died during the World Wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45 and for the care of their graves throughout the world. New Zealand is one of six Commonwealth or former Commonwealth countries which participate in the work of the Commission, the others being the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, South Africa and India.

The New Zealand High Commissioner in London is customarily appointed by the New Zealand Government to be its representative on the Commission and he either attends, or is represented at, quarterly Commission meetings. New Zealand is also represented on the Commission's Committees, including the Finance Committee and on a number of the Commission's international committees.

The cost of the Commission's work throughout the world is met by the participating countries in proportion to the number of their war graves in the Commission's care, the New Zealand contribution being 2.14%.



## THE WAR DEAD OF NEW ZEALAND

The total number of New Zealand war dead of the two world wars commemorated throughout the world by the Commission is:

1914-1918 War	18,042
1939-1945 War	11,925
	<hr/>
	29,967

The countries in which the largest number of New Zealand war dead are commemorated are France (7,778), Belgium (4,711) and Gallipoli (2,358) mainly from the 1914-1918 War, and Egypt (2,924), Greece (1,148), Italy (2,157) and New Caledonia (515) from the 1939-1945 War.

## NEW ZEALAND IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

New Zealand was involved in the First World War by the King's declaration of war. Despite its geographic isolation and small population, it immediately pledged its support for the British cause.

As early as October 1914 the New Zealand Expeditionary Force sailed from Wellington. Diverted from their original destination in Europe, the New Zealanders were landed in Egypt, where they helped repulse a Turkish attack on the Suez Canal in February 1915.

On the fateful day of 25 April 1915, as part of the New Zealand and Australian Division, the New Zealanders landed at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli. They fought valiantly throughout the campaign until evacuated with the rest of the Allied forces at the end of the year.

Back in Egypt, the NZEF was reorganised. Reinforcements from New Zealand replaced the Australian component of the Division, which embarked for France in April 1916. The New Zealand Mounted Brigade remained in Egypt. As part of the Anzac Mounted Division, it took part in the ultimately successful Sinai-Palestine campaign against the Turks.

The New Zealand Division's first major trial on the Western Front was during the Battle of the Somme. It took part in the Fourth Army's attack on 15 September. By the time they were relieved on 4 October, the New Zealanders had advanced three kilometres and captured eight kilometres of enemy front line. More than 7000 had become casualties, of whom 1,560 were killed.

In June 1917 the New Zealand Division further distinguished itself in the storming of Messines ridge. During the Third Battle of Ypres in the following October, however, it was bloodily repulsed in its second attack at Passchendaele; with 850 dead, this remains the worst disaster in New Zealand's history in terms of lives lost in a single day.

The New Zealanders performed valiant deeds at the Somme in helping to halt the great German offensive of March 1918. Later in the year they excelled in the open country fighting that was brought about by the Allied counter-offensive. In their last action, they captured the ancient fortress town of Le Quesnoy in a daring assault.

Maori played their part in the war. A contingent took part in the Gallipoli campaign, and later served with distinction on the Western Front as part of the New Zealand (Maori) Pioneer Battalion.

The total number of New Zealand troops and nurses to serve overseas in 1914-18, excluding those in British and other Dominion forces, was more than 100,000, from a population of just under a million. Forty-two per cent of men of military age served in the NZEF.

New Zealand also played its part in the war at sea. Just after its outbreak, the cruiser HMS *Philomel*, loaned to New Zealand as a training ship, sailed with two Royal Navy cruisers to escort the New Zealand troops sent to occupy German Samoa. Later in 1914 these three ships escorted the New Zealand Expeditionary Force to Egypt.

From January 1915 *Philomel* patrolled the Gulf of Alexandretta in the Eastern Mediterranean, supporting several landings and sustaining three fatal casualties, one being the first New Zealander killed in action in the war. She also took part in the defence of the Suez Canal, operations in the Gulf of Aden and patrols in the Persian Gulf.

New Zealand had no air force of her own during the First World War but several hundred New Zealanders served with the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Air Force.

The principal sites of New Zealand interest maintained by the Commission are:

### ***GALLIPOLI 1914-1918***

The 31 war cemeteries on the Gallipoli Peninsula contain 22,000 graves, of which only 9,000 could be identified after the war. Twenty-six of these cemeteries contain a total of 520 burials identified as New Zealanders.

The 13,000 casualties who rest in unidentified graves, together with a further 14,000 whose remains were never found, are commemorated individually by name on memorials to the missing. Among these are 1,922 New Zealanders, whose names are recorded on the following memorials:

**CHUNUK BAIR MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING.** On the north-west side of Chunuk Bair Cemetery, on the ridge which runs north-east from Brighton Beach, is a road leading to Battleship Hill on one side and Koja Dere on the other. On the further side of the road is a bank surmounted by a long screen wall with a cross engraved on its raised centre. On panels of Hopton Wood Stone set in this wall the names of 852 New Zealanders are commemorated. They lost their lives in the heroic assault on the heights of Sari Bair, 6-10 August 1915, in the capture of Chunuk Bair, and in subsequent battles and operations from August to December 1915.

A little further north-west is the **NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL MEMORIAL, CHUNUK BAIR**, which bears the words: "In honour of the soldiers of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. 8th August, 1915. From the uttermost ends of the earth."



*New Zealand National Memorial, Chunuk Bair*

**HILL 60 MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING.** The Hill 60 Memorial takes the form of an obelisk some 7 metres high, rising from a stone platform placed in the centre of Hill 60 Cemetery. It commemorates the names of 182 men of New Zealand who fell in the actions of Hill 60 in August and September 1915. Hill 60 Cemetery is situated in the northern part of the Anzac area of the Peninsula, bordering on the Suvla area.

**LONE PINE MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING.** This memorial stands at the east end of the Lone Pine Cemetery. Built of limestone from the Ulgar Dere quarries, it is a massive pylon in plain ashlar, about 14 metres square and 14 metres high. Panels of Hopton Wood stone fixed to the memorial record the names of 709 New Zealand casualties who fell in the Anzac area, but have no known grave, or, fighting elsewhere on Gallipoli in 1915, died from wounds or sickness and found burial at sea. Lone Pine Cemetery stands on the plateau at the top of Victoria Gully, on the road from Gaba Tepe to Chunuk Bair.



*Lone Pine Cemetery, with the Memorial at the rear*

**TWELVE TREE COPSE MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING.** The New Zealanders commemorated here, numbering 179, fell in the Second Battle of Krithia, in early May 1915, or elsewhere on Gallipoli in July 1915. The memorial takes the form of panels placed in the wall flanking the Cross of Sacrifice, standing at the centre of the north-west side of the cemetery of the same name. This is situated in the Helles area, nearly one kilometre south-west of the village of Krithia.

### *THE WESTERN FRONT 1914-1918*

**BUTTES NEW BRITISH CEMETERY (N.Z.) MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING, BELGIUM.** This memorial, which is composed of two shelter buildings of Euville Marbrier stone linked by a colonnade, stands at the south-west end of the cemetery after which it is named, situated in Polygon Wood, Zonnebeke. It commemorates 378 officers and men of New Zealand who fell in the Polygon Wood Sector between September 1917 and May 1918 and have no known grave. The cemetery contains the graves of 162 New Zealanders.

**NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL MEMORIAL, s'GRAVEN-STAFEL, BELGIUM.** The memorial commemorates the New Zealand Division's participation in the Battle of Broodseinde on 4 October 1917. Its design is similar to that of the Messines Ridge Memorial (see below) and it is situated off the road from Zonnebeke to Langemark, one kilometre down the turning to the right leading to Passendale.

**MESSINES RIDGE MEMORIALS, BELGIUM.** The New Zealand Division is commemorated at Messines by a national memorial, erected to bear witness to its share in the Battle of Messines, in June 1917. Erected by the New Zealand Government, it is a white stone obelisk surrounded by a small terrace and garden in a woodland setting. It stands on the south-western outskirts of the village of Messines.

A memorial to the missing records the names of the dead of the New Zealand Division whose graves are not known. It is



*New Zealand National Memorial, Messines*

immediately within the entrance of Messines Ridge British Cemetery, a little further north. It consists of a circular rubble wall, nearly two metres high, built round a mound on which the Cross of Sacrifice stands. The names of 828 soldiers of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force who fell in or near Messines in 1917 and 1918 are recorded on the Portland stone panels let into the circular wall.

128 New Zealand casualties are buried in the cemetery.

In addition, the **TYNE COT MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING**, in Tyne Cot Cemetery, Passchendaele (Passendale), Belgium, includes the names of 1,166 New Zealanders on the central New Zealand apse among the 34,857 missing Commonwealth casualties it records, while the cemetery itself contains 520 New Zealand graves.

### **CATERPILLAR VALLEY MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING, FRANCE.**

About half a mile north-west of the village of Montauban, in the Department of the Somme, is a long, narrow wood twisting like a caterpillar and known to the army as Caterpillar Wood. A deep valley runs to the east as far as Guillemont, and on the high ground on the northern edge of this valley, about 450 metres west of Longueval village, is Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, with 125 New Zealand graves.



*Caterpillar Valley Cemetery and Memorial*

This cemetery contains the memorial to those missing men of the New Zealand Division, 1,205 in all, who fell in the Battles of the Somme in 1916. The memorial stands on a terrace behind the Stone of Remembrance and takes the form of a screen wall bearing eleven Portland stone panels on which the names of the missing are inscribed.

To the north-east, away on a rise between High Wood on the left and Delville Wood on the right, is the **NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL MEMORIAL, LONGUEVAL**, which can be reached from the Longueval to Flers road. It is similar in design to the national memorial at Messines and marks the position which the New Zealand Division gained as their original objective in the first Battle of the Somme, and from which they launched the successful attack on Flers on 15 September 1916.

**CITÉ BONJEAN MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING, FRANCE.** This memorial, erected in Cité Bonjean Military Cemetery, consists of a semi-circular screen wall to which are fixed panels bearing 47 names of casualties of the New Zealand Division lost in 1916-17 in the neighbourhood of Armentieres and who have no known grave. The cemetery itself is west of the town of Armentieres, in an industrial suburb on the north-west side of the Estaires road. It contains 452 New Zealand graves.



*Grévillers Memorial*

**GRÉVILLERS MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING, FRANCE.** The memorial in Grévillers British Cemetery relates to the defensive fighting of the New Zealand Division in the Battles of the Somme from March to August 1918, and their share in the advance to victory between 8 August and 11 November. 446 casualties who have no known grave are named on the memorial, carved on stone panels fixed to a stone screen wall behind the Cross of Sacrifice at the north end of the cemetery. There are 151 New Zealand graves in the cemetery, situated north of the Grévillers-Bapaume road.

Le Quesnoy, in France, 18 kilometres south-east of Valenciennes, was for four years a German garrison town. On 5 November 1918 it was attacked by men of the New Zealand Division who scaled the high walls of the outer ramparts and seized the German commander and his garrison of over 1,000 men. On the face of the walls scaled by the New Zealanders is **LE QUESNOY NATIONAL MEMORIAL**, commemorating their success.

**MARFAUX MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING, FRANCE.** Marfaux is a village in the Department of the Marne, on the right or north-east bank of the small river Ardre, 18 kilometres from Reims and 16 kilometres from Epernay. Marfaux British Cemetery, containing 15 New Zealand graves, is nearly a kilometre south-east of the village. The memorial which it contains takes the form of a panel in the stone shelter, recording the names of one sergeant and nine privates of the New Zealand Cyclist Battalion who fell in July 1918 and whose graves are lost.

### **ELSEWHERE**

Memorials to the missing of the First World War not exclusively devoted to the dead of New Zealand but bearing significant numbers of New Zealand names are situated in Mikra, northern Greece (31 New Zealanders), and Jerusalem (60 New Zealanders).

## **NEW ZEALAND IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

At the outbreak of war in 1939 it was decided that New Zealand should provide an Expeditionary Force of one division. This force became known as 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force and the division as 2nd New Zealand Division. The first echelon of 2 NZEF Headquarters and a Brigade Group landed in Egypt in February 1940. The second echelon, also a Brigade Group, was diverted to Britain on Italy's entry into the War and did not reach Egypt until March 1941. The third echelon arrived in Egypt in September 1940 and concentration of the division was completed just before it was deployed to northern Greece in March 1941. In the meantime transport and signals units had taken part in the First Libyan campaign and the destruction of the Italian Army in Libya and Cyrenaica.

When powerful German forces invaded Greece in early April, the Greek Army collapsed and the British Expeditionary Force was obliged to retreat to embarkation beaches in the south. The New Zealand Division fought a series of sharp and successful rearguard actions before embarking by brigades in good order in the last days of April. Two brigades and some divisional units were evacuated to Crete, where the Germans began their airborne attack on 20 May. After six days of very heavy fighting the defenders retreated, most being evacuated to Egypt. Many remained, however, and were taken prisoner.

The reorganised and reinforced division was next engaged in Operation Crusader in Libya in November-December 1941, taking part in very severe actions there and suffering heavy casualties.

After spending a few months in Syria, the division returned to Egypt in June 1942 after the fall of Tobruk, and was continuously in the field until the North African campaign ended with the surrender of the Axis forces in Tunisia in May 1943. It was engaged in the battles of Matruh, on the Alamein line, Alam Halfa, El Alamein, the Mareth line and Enfidaville.

Moving to Italy in October 1943, the New Zealanders were engaged there almost continuously until the end of the war. They took part in the battles of Sangro River and Cassino, the advance to Florence, the battles for the Gothic line and the series of battles which ended in the capture of Trieste in May 1945.

The 28th (Maori) Battalion served with great distinction throughout the Middle East campaigns and in North Africa and the Mediterranean.

Before Japan entered the war New Zealand had mobilised her Territorial Army, commenced the formation of a Home Guard and had provided garrisons for Fiji and Fanning Island and later for Tonga and Norfolk Island. The Fiji force (which became 3rd Division) was relieved by American troops in July 1942 and moved to New Caledonia at the end of the year. The 3rd Division carried out three important island operations to capture Vella Lavella, Treasury Island and the Green Islands.

The New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy was soon active in the Second World War. The cruiser HMS *Achilles* fought bravely in the Battle of the River Plate in December 1939, losing four of her crew. Her sister ship HMS *Leander* undertook escort duties in New Zealand waters and in the Red Sea, hunted German raiders in the Indian Ocean and helped in the invasion of Syria.

In September 1941 the division was redesignated The Royal New Zealand Navy. Following Japan's entry into the war, both *Achilles* and *Leander* protected convoys between the USA and the South Pacific. In 1942 *Achilles* was involved in the operations at Guadalcanal, and in July of the following year *Leander* was badly damaged by a Japanese torpedo in the Solomon Islands.

HMNZS *Gambia*, transferred from the Royal Navy, took part in actions against the Japanese off Ceylon and at Okinawa, and *Achilles* rejoined the Fleet for the final operations against the Japanese.

New Zealand minesweepers saw continuous service in tropical waters from December 1941 to mid 1945. Their most notable action was the sinking of the much more heavily armed Japanese submarine I-1 by the *Moa* and *Kiwi* after fierce action off Guadalcanal in January 1943.

About 7,000 New Zealanders served in the Royal Navy during this war, seeing active service from Spitzbergen to Cape Horn and from Iceland to Japan, taking part in every major naval operation as well as the routine daily tasks of the Royal Navy.

At the outbreak of war the Royal New Zealand Air Force had a total strength of 1,160 all ranks and was poorly equipped. A large expansion programme was planned and carried through. At the peak, in June 1944, the RNZAF had a strength of nearly 42,000.

Five hundred New Zealanders were serving in the RAF in September 1939. During the course of the war a further 11,000 would be attached to the RAF. They were represented in almost every important operation of the air war, serving in all commands and theatres.

RNZAF squadrons served in the Pacific War almost from the beginning. Strength was built up to a maximum of 15 fighter, bomber and transport squadrons. They were actively engaged throughout the South-West Pacific campaigns.

### ***THE PACIFIC 1939-1945***

**BOURAIL CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL, NEW CALEDONIA.** New Caledonia lies about 1,600 kilometres north of New Zealand. Bourail, on the west coast of the island, was the headquarters of the 3rd New Zealand Division in the Second World War. In 1943 the New Zealand authorities established a war cemetery about 8 kilometres south-east of Bourail for the burial of those who had died in the area. After the war, the remains of New Zealanders who had died in other islands in the South Pacific were brought here for reburial and the cemetery now contains 235 New Zealand graves.

Situated in the war cemetery, the memorial commemorates 280 men of the New Zealand Armed Forces and Merchant Navy who lost their lives during the 1942-44 campaign in the Solomon Islands and New Britain or on operations conducted from bases in New Caledonia, Fiji, the Ellice Islands and elsewhere in the South Pacific theatre of war. It takes the form of a curved screen wall with pierced wing walls of brick, erected on a circular platform behind the Cross of Sacrifice at the northern end of the cemetery.



*Bourail Cemetery and Memorial*

### ***ELSEWHERE***

Second World War memorials to the missing not exclusively devoted to the dead of New Zealand but bearing significant numbers of New Zealand names are situated in El Alamein, Egypt (859 New Zealanders), Athens, Greece (480), Cassino, Italy (55), Malta GC (85), Singapore (61) and Runnymede, England (576).

In addition to those mentioned in this leaflet, there are New Zealand casualties of both world wars buried in cemeteries or commemorated on memorials in a further 57 countries, whose sites are too numerous to include here.

### **COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES IN NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand casualties of the two World Wars buried in New Zealand number 2,908 in a total of 433 sites throughout the country. In addition, a total of 570 casualties of both World Wars with no known grave are commemorated on the Auckland Memorial in Devonport and on provincial memorials in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington.

The war graves and memorials in New Zealand are cared for by and at the expense of the New Zealand Government through its Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Most of the casualties buried in their home country died while on garrison or training duties or in hospitals, from injury or illness, after returning from overseas duty.



*Andersons Bay Cemetery, Dunedin*

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## SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

### LOCATIONS

Records are held at the Commission's Head Office in Maidenhead, England, which enable the staff to help enquirers locate a particular grave or a name on a memorial. Traces are carried out free of charge for relatives, but a charge is made to other enquirers for this service.

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage, New Zealand, holds a complete set of cemetery and memorial registers and can carry out traces in respect of all members of Commonwealth Forces.

### DIRECTIONS TO VISITORS

The Commission can provide directions to all Commonwealth war cemeteries and memorials around the world. Requests should be made well before departure.

### PUBLICATIONS

Publications relating to the Commission's work can be supplied upon request.

Further information may be obtained from Enquiries Section:

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