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The sixteenth meeting of the Imperial War Graves Commission was held on Tuesday, 21st October, 1919 at 5 p.m. at the War Office.

There were present :-

Lieut.-General Cobbe, representing the Secretary of State for India,
G.H. Mitchell Esq., representing the High Commissioner for Canada,
The Hon. Sir Thos. Mackenzie, K.C.M.G., High Commissioner for New Zealand,
E.A. Cox, Esq., representing the High Commissioner for Australia,
Sir William Garstin, G.C.M.G., G.B.E.
Harry Gosling Esq., C.H., J.P.
Rudyard Kipling, Esq.,
Admiral Sir Edmund S. Poe, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Major-General Fabian Ware, C.B., C.M.G. (Vice-Chairman.)

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Frederic Kenyon, K.C.B.
J.E. Talbot, Esq., Principal Assistant Secretary.

In the absence of the Chairman, the chair was taken by the Vice-Chairman.

1. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed, and signed by the Vice-Chairman.
2. The Report of the eighth meeting of the Finance Committee was submitted to the Commission.

The Vice-Chairman drew attention to the fact that this meeting of the Finance Committee was the first at which a representative of the Treasury was present, and he thought the Committee agreed that the experiment had so far been successful. With regard to the recommendation that a letter should be written to the Treasury as to making payments on contracts in Italy at the current rate of exchange as and when they fell due, this was a complicated financial question which was still being discussed with the Treasury.

On the motion of Sir William Garstin, seconded by Admiral Poe, it was resolved that the Report of the eighth meeting of the Finance Committee be adopted.

3. The Vice-Chairman read to the meeting some further correspondence which had passed between Lord Balfour of Burleigh and the Principal Assistant Secretary on the subject of the proposed alternative cruciform headstone. He said that if Lady Florence Cecil and her supporters were prepared to accept a cruciform headstone as the alternative to that adopted by the Commission, it would then be open to the Commission to consider whether a satisfactory design for such a headstone could be made; it was recognized by all the experts that the design submitted by Lord Balfour was altogether unsuitable. He wanted the Commission to know that their wishes were being carried out, namely that all available information should be given to Lord Balfour and his friends, so that they might see whether it was possible for them to agree on an alternative design of headstone.

In answer to a question from Sir William Garstin the Vice-Chairman said that Lord Balfour estimated that his proposed design would cost 7 per cent more than the Commission headstone, but the opinion of the Director of Works was that the excess cost

would be something between 10 and 20 per cent.

4. The Commission had under consideration a memorandum from Sir Frederic Kenyon on the reports of Sir John Burnet on Gallipoli and Palestine, which had been circulated to members.

Sir Frederic Kenyon pointed out that Sir John Burnet proposed that in these areas, instead of the ordinary vertical headstones, there should be small sloping concrete blocks, on which there would be room for all the material that was inscribed on the standard headstone. (A cardboard model of the block was produced and inspected by the Commissioners.) This type of headstone was not particularly applicable to the Mediterranean Theatres of War, except that in the more inaccessible districts it would cost less to supply than the ordinary headstone. A high wall round the Cemeteries was suggested, in order that the War Crosses might be less conspicuous, and there would then be less risk of desecration by the Turks.

On the motion of the Vice-Chairman, seconded by Mr. Kipling, it was resolved that consideration of Sir Frederic Kenyon's memorandum should be adjourned while the matter was being enquired into by the Works and Finance departments.

5. Sir Frederic Kenyon submitted to the Commission a report on headstones in inaccessible Cemeteries. He said that this was the outcome of a conference with the principal architects for the eastern area, Sir Robert Lorimer for Macedonia, Sir John Burnet for Gallipoli and Palestine, and Mr. Warren who was going out to Mesopotamia. There were certain remote Cemeteries, particularly in Macedonia, over which it would be impossible to maintain a permanent watch, and if the standard headstones were put up in them they would offer irresistible attraction to the natives as building material. Sir Robert Lorimer therefore proposed that the graves in these Cemeteries should be marked with small concrete blocks (drawings of which were produced) containing only the cross and a number corresponding to that in the Cemetery register, which would be kept at Salonika. These blocks could be put up at once without waiting for the verification of details required for the ordinary headstones.

Sir Thomas Mackenzie, Mr. Box, Mr. Gosling, and Sir William Garstin expressed the view that the relatives would be much dissatisfied if the name were not put on the stone.

After some discussion it was agreed that the report should be referred back for consideration by the Works and Finance Departments, with an instruction that the names should be placed on the gravestones, and that it should be considered whether anything could be done to distinguish the graves of Dominion soldiers, if there were any of these in the Cemeteries concerned.

6. The Commission considered a report from Sir Frederic Kenyon and Sir Robert Lorimer on Cemeteries in the Asiago Plateau. The plans for constructing these five Cemeteries (containing 596 graves in all) had been simplified as far as possible, but even so the cost of construction would exceed the £10 limit owing to the difficulty of transport and the higher cost of living in mountainous districts. The estimated excess was £3.6.0. per grave.

The following resolution moved by Sir William Garstin and seconded by Mr. Gosling was carried unanimously:

"That the Commission hereby authorise the excess expenditure out of their funds of £2400, due to the difficulties of transport and construction in mountainous districts, in respect of the five Cemeteries on the Asiago Plateau - Magna Boschi, Boscon, Barenthal, Cavalletto and Granezza - in accordance with the reports of Sir Frederic Kenyon and Sir Robert Lorimer."

The Vice-Chairman said he took it that it was to be understood that if further economy could be effected, it was the Commission's wish that this should be done.

7. The Commission considered a further report from Sir Frederic Kenyon on inscriptions on headstones of the unidentified dead.

Sir Frederic Kenyon said that this was a very difficult question, and it had been impossible to arrive at a complete agreement among those he had consulted. The inscription that he suggested originally was objected to strongly by some non-conformist representatives, and he had had to fall back on another text which he admitted was less satisfactory.

Mr. Kipling thought that Sir Frederic Kenyon's decision in this matter should be final, and after some further discussion he moved that the inscription on the headstones of unidentified soldiers should be as follows:-

"A Soldier of the Great War"
The Cross
"Known unto God",

it being understood that the name and badge of the regiment should be included, if it was known.

This was seconded by Mr. Bex and agreed to.

8. The Vice-Chairman said that applications had been received from a few people for a contribution by the Commission to the cost of engraving an inscription on a family headstone for a soldier buried in a family grave in this country.

It was decided that such applications could not be entertained.

9. The Commission considered what method should be adopted for collecting payments for personal inscriptions from the next-of-kin.

The Vice-Chairman said that the method suggested which had the approval of the Financial Adviser was to charge a fixed rate per letter, and to request a remittance directly the inscription was received from the next-of-kin, regardless of when the Cemetery concerned might be constructed. An objection to this was that the actual price of lettering differed widely according to the contractor employed.

Mr. Gosling said that he was entirely opposed to the idea of making relatives pay for these inscriptions, as it was contrary to the principle of equality of treatment. He had not realised that the Commission had decided on this, or he would have protested against it at the time.

The Vice-Chairman pointed out that this was a small concession to those who wanted to take a personal share in the memorials put up on the graves of their dead; it was made in response to a widespread request, and it had undoubtedly given comfort to many people.

Mr. Box said he thought the Commission should treat this matter on a business basis; it was no part of their duty to forego a revenue which they had quite legitimately and with their eyes open, decided to obtain. He suggested that each country represented on the Commission should make good the deficit caused by those of its own people not being able to pay the cost of inscriptions,

It was generally agreed that the Commission could not go back on their original decision that personal inscriptions should be paid for by relatives, but it was felt that if the money was not received it should not be pressed for but would have to be treated as a bad debt.

On the motion of Sir William Garstin, seconded by Sir Thomas Mackenzie, it was resolved that on an inscription being accepted, a statement should be sent to the next-of-kin of the amount payable, with a request for a remittance.

It was to be understood that the inscription was to be proceeded with whether the money was sent in or not, but this should not be publicly stated.

10. The following resolutions moved by Sir William Garstin, and seconded by Mr. Box were carried unanimously:-

- (a) "That the Commission hereby approve of the appointments and promotions of the Officers mentioned on the attached lists and of the payment to them out of the funds of the Commission of the approved salaries as from the dates set out against their names."
- () "That the Commission accept the resignations of the under-mentioned Officers as from the dates set out against their names."

Capt. H.J. West, Contracts Office, France.	RESIGNED. 20.10.19.
Mr. A. Bartlett, Architect, France.	31.10.19.
Mr. G.F. Allsop, Senior Mechanic, France.	31. 8.19.

11. Mr. Box pointed out that the original Gallipoli establishment provided for the post of deputy architect, but no appointment to that position had yet been made; the salary was provisionally fixed at £750. With a fixed remuneration it had been a matter of some difficulty to get an adequate man for the job; it was desirable that some discretion should be given and they should be authorised to negotiate with a man on the basis of a salary ranging from £750 to £900. He begged to move the following resolution:-

"That owing to the special difficulties with regard to obtaining a suitable Architect in Gallipoli, the Finance Committee be asked to consider whether the salary of the Architect in Gallipoli should be increased."

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12. The following resolution moved by Mr. Box and seconded by Sir Thomas Mackenzie was passed unanimously:-

"That the following additional establishment for Gallipoli be approved at the salaries set out against the appointments in addition to billets and rations in kind or subsistence allowance in lieu thereof at the current rates" -

1 Storeman	£4. 0. 0.	per week.		
1 N.C.O. Transport	£4. 0. 0.	" "		
2 Mechanics	£4. 0. 0.	" "	each.	
2 Despatch Riders	£2. 10. 0.	" "	"	
2 Cooks	£1. 10. 0.	" "	"	
4 Horse Transport Drivers	£1. 10. 0.	" "	"	
1 Boatswain Lighter	£3. 10. 0.	" "	"	
1 Engineer Lighter	£3. 10. 0.	" "	"	
4 Caretakers and Messengers ..	£1. 10. 0.	" "	each.	

13. Sir Thomas Mackenzie raised the question of assistance being given to people going over to France to find the graves of their relatives.

The Vice-Chairman said that within the last fortnight the Directorate had opened offices for this purpose at Ypres, Meault and Ecuris, near Arras, and there was to be an announcement in the Press to this effect in a day or two. He did not, however, think that this was nearly enough, and it would clearly be necessary to have an office at Boulogne. The proposal that financial assistance should be given to poor people visiting graves had been definitely turned down by the Secretary of State.

Mr. Box said that Sir Thomas Mackenzie's suggestion should be very seriously considered. In the case of Australia they had taken distinctive action, and they had two Inspectors, one at St. Omer and one at Amiens, each with an office to which enquirers were referred. The battle-fronts should be divided into areas, in each of which there should be an Enquiry Office.

Mr. Gosling suggested that one of the big agencies, such as Cook's, should be asked to assist in this matter.

The Vice-Chairman said they had already been in touch with Cook's, but some more definite arrangement might be made. He was just about to see the officer in charge of Canadian Headquarters who had a proposal to make with regard to a Canadian Enquiry Office in France, and after this interview he might be able to make some proposal or suggestion.

Mr. Gosling thought that the matter should be put to Cook's as a business proposition, and they should be asked whether they would not undertake the whole work; they would very likely form a special department for the purpose.

The Vice-Chairman asked whether Mr. Gosling's proposal might be taken as an instruction, and the Commission assented.

APPOINTMENTS.

<u>NAME.</u>	<u>APPOINTMENT.</u>	<u>DATE OF APPT.</u>	<u>SALARY.</u>
Hughes, C.E.	Lt.-Col. I.Of Works, Gallipoli.	11.8.19.	£900.
Hawkins, G.O.	Surveyor, Gallipoli.	29.8.19.	£600.
Turner, I.K.	Draughtsman, Gallipoli.	18.8.19.	£350.
Watson Thomas, B.E.	Lt. Clerk of Works, Gallipoli.	25.8.19.	£350.
Truelove, J.R.	Capt. Architect, France.	18.8.19.	£500.
Hutton, A.J.S.	Capt. Architect, France.	5.9.19.	£500.
Cover, G.W.	Surveyor, France.	30.3.19.	£350.
Wilson, E.H.	Accounting Clerk, London.	23.9.19.	£250.
Parker, R.	Capt. Accountant, France.	17.9.19.	£300.
Goode, A.W.	Surveyor's Draughtsman, France.	24.9.19.	£250.
Dematens, L.H.P.	Mason Officer, France.	18.9.19.	£350.
Ready, O.G.	Asst. Financial Adviser, London.	6.10.19.	£600-20- £700
Browne, L.H.	Architect's Draughtsman, France.	15.7.19.	£250.
Wood, W.R.	Capt. Quantity Surveyor, Palestine.	4.10.19.	£400.

PROMOTIONS.

<u>NAME.</u>	<u>APPOINTMENT.</u>	<u>DATE OF APPT.</u>	<u>SALARY.</u>
Major A.L. Ingpen	From Land & Legal Adviser to Sec.Gen. to Anglo-Belgian Mixed Committee.	23.6.19.	£650.
Abbott, C.H.B.	From Accountant at £250 to Accountant, France.	1.10.19.	£300.