

Exhibit

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
at the
151ST. MEETING
of the
IMPERIAL WAR GRAVES COMMISSION
held at
32, GROSVENOR GARDENS, S.W.1.
on
WEDNESDAY, 11TH MAY, 1932.

PRESENT:

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR FABIAN WARE, K.C.V.O., K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G.,
Vice-Chairman, in the Chair.

COLONEL W.W. CHITTY, C.M.G., C.I.E.,
Representing the Secretary of State for India.

LIEUT.-COLONEL G.P. VANIER, D.S.O., M.C.,
Representing the High Commissioner for Canada.

V.G. HOUSDEN, Esq.,
Representing the High Commissioner for New Zealand.

R. WEBSTER, Esq.,
Representing the High Commissioner for South Africa.

J.L. MURPHY, Esq.,
Representing the High Commissioner for Newfoundland.

ADMIRAL SIR MORGAN SINGER, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.,

J.J. LAWSON, Esq., M.P.,

GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD MONTGOMERY-MASSINGBERD, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.,

W.P. SPENS, Esq., O.B.E., K.C.

THERE WERE ALSO PRESENT:

Colonel Sir George W. Badgerow, CMG, CVO., MD., FRCS., (Canada).
Lieut-Colonel C.P. Oswald, O.B.E., (Assistant Secretary, Finance).
Lieut-Colonel H.F. Robinson, C.M.G., (Director of Works),
Major H.F. Chettle, C.M.G., O.B.E., (Director of Records),
Major H. le M. Fellowes,
Captain H.P.R. Foster,
Captain E.J. King, M.C.,
F.C. Sillar, Esq.,
B.S. Conyngham Greene, Esq.,
E. Tyrrell, Esq.,

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that he had received a note from Lord Stanley regretting that he was unable to be present, as he had to answer questions in the House of Commons. Sir Granville Ryrie had also written apologising for his absence owing to unforeseen circumstances.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN then referred to the notice which had been issued to the Press announcing the cancellation of the unveiling ceremonies at Arras and Thiepval. He said that a decision had to be taken immediately, and, as it was not possible to call a meeting of the Commission, he had consulted the President of the Commission (the Prince of Wales) and the Chairman. The decision was not an easy one to take as there was a good deal to be said on both sides. As soon as the news of the French President's assassination was received, telephonic communication was established with the British Embassy in Paris and the Embassy got in touch with Monsieur Tardieu. Monsieur Tardieu stated that so far as the French Government were concerned they were willing that the ceremonies should be carried out, but he was, of course, unable to say whether the President who might be elected would be able to attend. They would realise that, as a result of the French elections, Monsieur Tardieu was not likely to remain French Prime Minister.

At home, in the highest quarters, there was a definite feeling that at a time when France was in national mourning the ceremonies should be postponed. Eventually, after all available shades of opinion in England and France had been consulted, it was decided, after Lord Tyrrell had been consulted by the Prince of Wales, to postpone

the ceremonies. This decision was warmly welcomed by the French, who appreciated particularly the terms in which the announcement was made, but it had occasioned a certain amount of distress among the relatives. He (the Vice-Chairman) had particularly represented the views of the relatives in the discussion of the difficulty, as he considered that their interests must always be of paramount importance in such a case. A certain number of letters expressing disappointment had been received and probably others would follow, since some 2,000 relatives had made arrangements to attend. It was proposed to deal with this rather difficult situation by answering the letters of complaint individually, and endeavouring to allay any dissatisfaction. A point which would be emphasised in replying to letters of complaint was that, owing to national mourning, no French official representatives, nor any French troops could attend the ceremony, and, owing to the joint nature of the Somme Memorial and the situation there of the only Anglo-French Cemetery deliberately created, it was felt that French representation was essential.

As it was understood that notwithstanding the cancellation of the ceremony a good many relatives would visit the memorials at Whitsuntide, arrangements had been made for officials of the Commission to attend at the memorials and to assist relatives in finding the names in which they were interested, and in other ways.

With regard to the date on which the ceremonies would now be held, August Bank Holiday had been suggested, but nothing could be definitely settled until a reply

was received from the French as to the date which would suit the new President.

MR. LAWSON asked if it was the clearly expressed desire of the French officials that the ceremony should not take place.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that it was the opinion of the Prefects of the Pas-de-Calais and the Somme that the ceremonies should be postponed, but it was not possible to say definitely that the French Government were opposed to the ceremonies taking place, since Monsieur Tardieu had not objected.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that there were one or two other matters to which he would like to invite the attention of the meeting. From time to time applications from Churches and branches of the British Legion were received for permission to have a cross from an unknown soldier's grave. A certain number of crosses were still available, and they were given to those who undertook to honour them suitably and to preserve them in appropriate places. An application of this nature had just been received from the Long Sutton (Lincolnshire) Branch of the British Legion. The cross had been given on the understanding that it would be placed in a niche at the East end of the Lady Chapel in the Parish Church at Long Sutton, and a service in this connection was being held on the 22nd May. It was not possible to refer all these cases to the Commission, but it was hoped that the granting of the crosses, with proper safeguards, was approved. This action was agreed to.

A recent communication from the Foreign Office showed that, thanks to Colonel Hughes and the British

Embassy at Constantinople, it had been possible once more to arrange with the Turkish Government for the free importation of tablets for British graves in Gallipoli. Recently a consignment of tablets had been held up owing to changes in the Turkish import quota system, but matters were now satisfactorily arranged.

Referring again to the unveiling ceremonies, and their sudden postponement,

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that he could not speak too highly of the work of the staff in London in the great pressure of work caused by the ceremonies and their postponement. Mr. Tyrrell, Captain King and Mr. Greene, who had been assisted temporarily by Lord Stopford, had in particular done very valuable work. They had been admirably supported by Colonel Higginson and the staff in France.

REPORT OF THE 209TH MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN asked Colonel Oswald if there were any matters to which he desired to draw attention.

COLONEL OSWALD said that there were two items of importance namely, numbers 10 and 11, in the Report. These dealt with the settlement of Contractors' claims. After a thorough investigation, the Finance Committee had agreed to make offers in final settlement. The sums in question were left blank in the papers before the meeting, because, until the discussions were completed, the figures must be regarded as confidential.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN explained in this connection that the decisions reached had the full concurrence of the Treasury representative.

MR. WEBSTER asked for some enlightenment with regard to Item 7 which was the Commission's contribution to the Hertford British Hospital in Paris.

COLONEL OSWALD explained that the Commission took every opportunity of sending members of their staff requiring surgical treatment to the Hertford British Hospital rather than leaving them to be treated by the local French and Belgian doctors. The treatment given by the Hertford British Hospital had, up to the present, been given free, although now, owing to financial difficulties, a small charge was made for the patient's keep. There was however still no charge for medical treatment or operations, and, in view of this, the subscription made to the Hospital funds by the Commission was fully justified.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN, in further explanation, said that the Hospital was a free hospital, supported entirely by endowment and public subscriptions, and that it was of the greatest advantage to the Commission to be able to get expert treatment there for their staff whenever necessary.

SIR MORGAN SINGER and MR. LAWSON both emphasised the good work which the Hospital was doing, and said that they fully agreed to the Commission subscribing to the greatest extent possible.

In reply to a question as to whether the subscription was adequate or not

COLONEL OSWALD said that the Hospital was pleased with the Commission's contribution which had a relationship to the number of their cases which were dealt with.

The following resolution was proposed by
Mr. Webster, seconded by Mr. Lawson and agreed:-

"That the Report of the 209th Meeting
of the Finance Committee be adopted".

REPORTS OF THE 14TH AND 15TH MEETINGS
OF THE STAFF COMMITTEE.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that the most important matter in these Reports was the procedure to be adopted with regard to appeals to the Staff Committee by members of the staff. The matter was a difficult and complicated one which had originally been taken up by Sir Henry Maddocks, but not completed before his death. Mr. Spens had taken on this work and had been of the greatest possible assistance. He asked Mr. Spens briefly to explain the position.

MR. SPENS said that although the Appeal Rules were complicated and formal the idea was perfectly simple. In all cases where the Chief Administrative Officer recommended, or was likely to recommend, either Summary Dismissal, Discharge with Notice, or Loss of Grade, a certain procedure had to be gone through, which consisted of (a) holding an enquiry, (b) interviewing the accused person and giving him an opportunity of hearing what was said against him, and (c) giving the accused person an opportunity of sending written representations to the Staff Committee. These steps would be taken before the matter came before the Staff Committee at all. The meaning of this was that the Chief Administrative Officer could not punish a man in any of the ways referred to above, unless, and until, the matter had been before the Staff Committee. All other matters were left to the Chief Administrative Officer to deal with in his own way.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said he thought he would be correct in saying that the Rules were compiled on a civilian rather than on a military basis.

MR. SPENS agreed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that the Rules had been very carefully drafted, and that the Committee responsible was an exceedingly able one. He thought that the existence of these rules added to the security of tenure of all the Commission's staff on the permanent establishment. Any man would now know that he could not be dismissed without an appeal to the Staff Committee, who might take a wider view, without in any way detracting from the authority of the man on the spot.

COLONEL OSWALD referred to one of the items in the Report which dealt with the special allowance of 10/- a week paid to the Commission's staff in France and Belgium. On the recommendation of the Chief Administrative Officer, it had now been decided that these members of the staff who were away from their work and living at home as a result of sickness should not receive this 10/- a week after they had been absent for more than 15 days, since their expenses while living at home would be correspondingly less, and in view of the fact that they received free medical attention.

The following resolution was proposed by General Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, seconded by Colonel Vanier, and agreed:-

"That the Reports of the 14th and 15th Meetings of the Staff Committee be adopted".

MAINTENANCE OF BRITISH GRAVES IN ZEEBRUGGE CHURCHYARD.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that in the Churchyards at Zeebrugge there were 174 German graves and 28 British. Up till recently the graves had been looked after by the Belgian association "Nos Tombes", but recently the "German War Graves Commission" had taken over the care of the German graves and had asked to be allowed also to care for the British graves as an act of reciprocity. The Commission would remember that German graves in British War Cemeteries in France and Belgium were being looked after by the Commission. It would be realised that the question was a difficult one, since up to the present the Germans had not been responsible for maintaining any British graves. So far as could be judged by private enquiries, it seemed that some people definitely took the view that the Germans should on no account look after the British graves, whereas other people, one of whom was Sir Roger Keyes to whom the proposal had been mentioned, were quite content to leave the upkeep of the graves in German hands.

MR. HOUSDEN asked if the standard of maintenance offered by the Germans was approximately equivalent to that to which the Commission were accustomed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that he thought there would be no difficulty in ensuring a suitable standard of maintenance.

MR. SPENS asked if the "German War Graves Commission" was the same sort of permanent body as the Imperial War Graves Commission, and if it was likely to continue in existence. He felt that otherwise, after a short time, the maintenance offered by the Germans might cease.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that this was an important matter which would have to be settled definitely if the offer was accepted.

MR. LAWSON said that in his opinion the fact that the Germans themselves had made this offer would be well received by the public who would raise no objection.

COLONEL CHITTY asked if it was intended to consult the relatives of those concerned.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that it was intended to consult the relatives, but the difficulty in cases of this sort was that it was almost impossible to get a unanimous reply.

GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD MONTGOMERY-MASSINGBERD said that provided proper provision was made for periodical inspection, he did not see any objection to giving the proposal a trial, at any rate temporarily.

MR. LAWSON said that if, as he understood, a prominent Member of Parliament had expressed an opinion against granting the request, he thought that questions would be asked in the House of Commons if it was granted. In his opinion the Commission would be on strong ground if they made it known that the request had been made spontaneously by the German Government.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN reminded the meeting that not even in Germany did the Germans look after the British graves, but that one of the conditions on which the graves had been left in the larger concentration cemeteries in Germany was that they should be looked after by British personnel.

MR. SPENS said that he was not clear, from the legal point of view, whether the Commission had any right to delegate to anyone else the responsibility for maintaining British war graves.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said he thought that they had a right under the Charter to use any agencies they considered suitable, and this, in fact, was done particularly in the case of war graves in the United Kingdom.

COLONEL VANIER said that he considered the matter was a very delicate one and that in any case the relatives should be consulted.

After further discussion it was agreed that the Vice-Chairman should write a letter to the Admiralty explaining the position and saying that it was proposed to consult the relatives, but that before doing so an expression of the Admiralty's views would be appreciated.

STAFF OF THE COMMISSION.

The following resolution was proposed by Mr. Spens, seconded by Sir Morgan Singer, and agreed:-

TERMINATIONS.

THAT the Commission hereby approve the termination of the appointment of the undermentioned Officer as from the date set out against his name.

MAY, 1932.

<u>NAME.</u>	<u>APPOINTMENT.</u>	<u>SALARY.</u>	<u>DATE</u>
ROBERTS, C.G.	Draughtsman, U.K.	@ £300 per annum.	21. 4. 32.

CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL REGISTERS.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN said that the only Register before the Commission was one dealing with Cemeteries in Bermuda, Central and South America and the West Indies.

This concluded the business.