

EMPIRE FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE, 1951.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OPENING SERVICE OF DEDICATION - WEDNESDAY,
7th. November at 12.00 noon.

The Chairman of the Poppy Factory, Captain S.H. Hampson, MBE., MC., MA Major-General Sir Richard Howard-Vyse, KCMG., DSO., National Chairman of the British Legion and Mr. C.W. Howe, Organiser of the Field, together with such directors - Major Sir Brunel Cohen, KBE., Colonel G.R. Crosfield CBE., DSO., TD., Major F. Paget Hett, MBE., DL., JP and Mr. A.E. Hocking - as are able to attend, will assemble at the North Door of the Abbey not later than 11.40 am.

While awaiting the arrival of Vice-Admiral The Earl Mountbatten of Burma, KG. &c., the assembly will be joined by the following Members of the Council of the British Empire Service League attending in support of Lord Mountbatten as Grand President of the B.E.S.L. and as representatives of their respective ex-Service Organisations -

Major E.E. von Bibra, OBE...Australia.
Major N.P. Sherlock...British Guiana.
Brig. Sir R. Nesbitt-Hawes, KBE., ED....Burma.
Lord Tweedsmuir of Elsfield, OBE...Canada
Lt. Colonel W. Rae, DSO....Canada.
Major J.S.P. Armstrong.....Canada
J.L. Murphy Esq., OBE.....Canada
E.H.C. Leather, Esq., HP...Canada
Sir Harry Luke, KCMG...Fiji.
Major A.S.D. Humphries, MBE., ED...Gold Coast.
Sir Frederick James, OBE...India.
Air Vice-Marshal Sir John Cordingley, KCB., CBE...Jamaica & St. Lucia.
Captain C. Stewart...Malaya.
Major W.G. Ireland, MC...Mauritius.
O.M. Samuel Esq...New Zealand.
Brigadier H.U. Richards, CBE., DSO...Nigeria.
Major L.A.H. Dickens, TD...Pakistan.
J.B. Ross Esq., Representing the High Commr for Sn. Rhodesia...Rhodesia.
A. Hazelwood Atkins Esq.,...Shanghai, Hong Kong & China.
Brigadier N.P. Proctor, CBE., MC...Sierra Leone.
Colonel S.S. Taylor CMG., DSO...Union of South Africa.
Captain C.M. Guest..... " " " "

The Agent for Malaya, W.A. Ward Esq., CMG., MC and Mrs. Ward will accompany the above.

The under-mentioned, who are to plant Badge Crosses in their respective Memorial Spaces after the Opening Service, have been invited (if they so wish) to join those assembled at the North Door -

General Sir Hubert Gough, GCB., GCMG., KCVO Chairman Fifth Army Association.
General Sir Robert Haining, KCB., DSO. Chairman R.Artilleary Charitable Fund.
Air-Marshal Sir Richard Peck, KCB., OBE., President R.A.F. Association.
Maj.-General F.S. Clover, CB., CBE., Representative Colonel-Commandant R.A.S.C.
Maj.-General E.H. Fitzherbert CBE., DSO., MC., Chairman of Committee of Management R.A.S.C. Association.
Representatives of the High Commissioners for New Zealand, India, & Pakistan.
Lt. Col. J. Kiggell, MC., representing the Commissioner for Northern Rhodesia.
G. Ivan Smith Esq., Director of the London Office of U.N.O.

It is anticipated that Vice-Admiral The Earl Mountbatten will arrive at the gate opposite the North Door shortly before noon when he will be conducted to the site of the Service by Major E.S. Harston, OBE., Hon. Secretary of the British Empire Service League.

At 12.00 noon, or immediately on the subsequent arrival of Lord Mountbatten, those assembled will be joined by the Rev. Canon Charles Smyth, Rector of St. Margaret's (approaching from the West Door of that Church) by whose permission the Field is held in the Churchyard of St. Margaret's, and by the Very Rev. Alan C. Don. KCVO., DD., Dean of Westminster (approaching from the North Door of the Abbey).

Empire Field of Remembrance 1951. Opening Service..2.

Those assembled facing the Crosses from the graves of Unknown British Soldiers of the two Great Wars, already planted in the Field, -

Prayers will be said by the Rector of St. Margaret's and the Dean of Westminster, terminating in the Benediction pronounced by Canon Smyth.

The Chairman of the Poppy Factory, Captain S.H. Hampson, will then invite The Earl Mountbatten to plant Crosses bearing appropriate emblems in Memory of those who have fallen in

- (i) The Fighting Forces in Malaya.
- (ii) The Police of the Federation of Malaya.
- (iii) The Commonwealth Division in Korea.

As Grand President of the B.E.S.L. he will also plant the Badge Cross of the B.E.S.L. as a tribute from that Organisation.

Following a brief pause Captain Hampson will pronounce the Exhortation.

"Last Post" and "Reveille" will then be sounded by buglers of the Royal Navy (by kind permission of the Commodore, R.N. Barracks, Chatham).

After the Service Major-General Sir Richard Howard-Vyse, as Colonel of the Royal Horse Guards (Blues) will plant a Badge Cross on behalf of that Regiment in Memorial Space 210.

Members of the B.E.S.L. Empire Council and other representatives of Overseas Territories and Ex-Service Organisations will proceed to Memorial Space 301 and plant Crosses therein.

BLESMA

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940.)

PATRON : H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

Advisory Committee

Group Captain D. R. S. BADER, D.S.O., D.F.C.
Major SIR BRUNEL COHEN, K.B.E.
Major LORD WILLOUGHBY de ERESBY, LL, J.P., T.D.
RICHARD FAIREY, Esq., Major M. HAWKINS, M.V.O., M.B.E.
VISCOUNT MORPETH, M.C.
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York Street, Manchester, 2.

General Secretary : G. CHANDLEY, M.B.E., M.M., "BLESMA," 37, Anson Road, Victoria Park, MANCHESTER, 14.

Tel. : RUSholme 1054.

GC/DT

22nd October, 1951.

Mr. McConville,
News Room,
Pathe News,
133/135, Oxford Street,
London, W.1.

Dear Mr. McConville,

I was very pleased indeed to meet you on Monday last, 15th October, and to learn that Pathe News intend to feature BLESMA's Pensions Campaign.

I have been in touch with our London members who will be prepared to co-operate and give you all the help you may need. Our National Vice-President is Mr. E.V. Law, 75, Dalnally Road, Croydon, telephone number ADDiscombe 1696 (after 6 p.m.) and his colleague in this matter will be Mr. E.C. Kennett, 68, Bushgrove Road, Dagenham, telephone number Seven Kings 9983 (after 6 p.m.), but you should be able to contact Mr. Kennett during the daytime at London Wall 2700 (Engineers Section).

We have already alerted several of our London Branch Hon. Secretaries and when you let me know exactly what you require, they will produce suitable members for your feature. We have another very good member, who is the Manager of the Limbless and Disabled Ex-Servicemen's Demonstrations (Servex Jewellers Limited), 162, Dukes Road, Acton, London, W.3., telephone number Acorn 2047. He is Mr. Albert Flanagan and he has three or four badly disabled limbless members working with him in the manufacture of fancy jewellery. You would find the Directors of the firm most sympathetic and co-operative should you require to go to the factory.

We have decided to go ahead with the convening of a Press Conference to be held at the Waldorf Hotel, Aldgate, on Thursday, 1st November, at 11.30 a.m. and will do all we can to make this a success.

/We have

P.T.O.

We have amended our programme for Wednesday, 7th November, somewhat and have now decided to assemble our members at the Cenotaph in Whitehall at 2.15 p.m. on the afternoon of Wednesday, 7th November, for a wreath laying ceremony before we proceed to our meeting at Church House which will commence at 3 p.m. Small parties of badly disabled members will go, as arranged, after the Church House meeting (between 4.15 p.m. and 4.30 p.m.) to 10, Downing Street, the Treasury and the Ministry of Pensions, via Little George Street, Great George Street and Whitehall. You know that we shall be going to the House of Commons to meet M.Ps.

I will keep you informed of all developments in our programme and trust you will not hesitate to ask for any further information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

G. Chandley

General Secretary.

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GC/DT

30th October, 1951.

G.T. Cummins, Esq.,
Editor,
Pathe News,
Pathe House,
133/135, Oxford Street,
London, W.1.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find timed programmes for BLESMA's Pensions Campaign efforts to be held in Westminster on Wednesday, 7th November, 1951, together with lists of the members of parties which will be taking copies of resolutions to the Government Offices.

We do hope that you will be able to take shots of the Cenotaph ceremony, the walk to Church House and the parties going to the Government Offices after the Church House meeting.

Our National President and I, together with other Association officers and members of our Advisory Committee, will be at the Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych, on Thursday, 1st November, at 11.30 a.m., when we have convened a Press Conference to give the fullest details on all our efforts. We shall be very happy to see one of your representatives at the Waldorf Hotel should you require any further information.

With very best thanks,

Yours faithfully,

G. Chandley
General Secretary.

BLESMA PENSIONS CAMPAIGN.

PROGRAMME FOR WEDNESDAY, 7th NOVEMBER, 1951.

CENOTAPH CEREMONY.

- 2.00 p.m. Members assemble in King Charles Street. (King Charles Street is at the Westminster end of Whitehall, between Downing Street and Parliament Square.)
- 2.10 p.m. Members will proceed along Whitehall to the Home Office (opposite the Cenotaph) in four groups headed by Mr. J.V. Bell, Mr. J. Marshall, M.A., Mr. A.H. Sharman, J.P., and Lt. Cndr. F.W. Thornton, the national officers leading. The groups will form four deep facing the Cenotaph.
- 2.15 p.m. The Metropolitan Police will halt traffic for a moment. The National President, with the office bearers of the Association, will advance to the Cenotaph. The whole of the parties will remove their hats and bow their heads in a brief Silent Tribute to Fallen Comrades. The National President will place a wreath and return to the head of the groups.
- 2.20 p.m. The groups will proceed to Church House via Whitehall, Great George Street, Parliament Square across to Westminster Abbey and Dean's Yard.
(This slow walk will take approximately twenty minutes. Members who feel unequal to this, especially those who will also be walking with the deputations later in the afternoon, may await the general body at Church House and miss the Cenotaph ceremony.)
- 2.50 p.m. Assemble in Hoare Memorial Hall, Church House.

NATIONAL PROTEST AND REPROACH MEETING.

- 3.00 p.m. The National President will open the meeting in the usual BLESMA manner. Mr. Stephens will welcome the delegates and special guests, and expound the reasons for the convening of the National Meeting of delegates from the 106 branches of BLESMA, representing the 36,000 British limbless ex-Servicemen. The General Secretary will read the Resolution to be submitted to the meeting and the Chairman will ask for a Proposer and Seconder (Mr. J.C. Toft, Tyneside, and Mr. A. Park, Glasgow) who will then speak to the Resolution. There will be opportunities for other delegates, who are fortunate enough to catch the Chairman's eye, to speak, but time is limited and all speakers must be brief. They can be forcible and direct in expressing their views on war disability pensions.
- 3.50 p.m. Resolution to be put to the meeting and copies signed to be taken by the parties to Government Offices.
- 3.55 p.m. Parties leave Hall.
The meeting will continue with addresses by members of the Advisory Committee and some of the M.Ps. who are the convenors of the House of Commons meeting.
- 4.20 p.m. Close of Meeting. Light refreshments will be available in the Hoare Memorial Hall. (The cost of these will be met by the Executive Council).
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DEPUTATIONS WITH COPIES OF RESOLUTIONS.

4.00 p.m. National President and party leave for 10, Downing Street.

4.02 p.m. Honorary Treasurer and party leave for the Treasury.

4.04 p.m. Vice-President and party leave for the Cabinet Offices.

(These three parties will walk via Dean's Yard, Parliament Square and Great George Street).

4.05 p.m. Past-President and party will proceed to Great Smith Street entrance of Church House and across to Ministry of Pensions.

HOUSE OF COMMONS MEETING.

5.00 p.m. Leave Hoare Memorial Hall.

5.15 p.m. Assemble Dean's Yard.

5.20 p.m. Delegates whose Lapel Cards are written in RED ink will proceed to the House of Commons and to Committee Room No. 14, via Westminster Abbey and St. Margaret's.

5.30 p.m. Delegates whose Lapel Cards are written in BLUE ink and who are desirous of entering the House of Commons will follow. The House of Commons Police will accommodate them in the long entrance hall or pass through to the Central Lobby. Delegates must not take any action at this stage to detain M.Ps. from attending the special meeting.

6.00 p.m. Opening of Meeting of M.Ps. in Committee Room No. 14.

6.30 p.m. Close of meeting. The delegates who have attended can rejoin their co-delegates in the Central Lobby or long entrance hall. It will then be in order to send in Green Cards to local M.Ps. who have not been contacted. Green Cards can be had from the Police at the small desk in the Central Lobby. (Doubtless most of the delegates will have made prior arrangements to meet their M.Ps. either in the meeting or afterwards.)

The whole of the day's proceedings will be carried out in a most dignified and orderly manner, in a spirit of reproach rather than remonstrance; reproach that men who have given their limbs for their country should have to come publicly to Westminster to ask for justice.

BLESMA PENSIONS CAMPAIGN.

PROGRAMME FOR WEDNESDAY, 7th NOVEMBER, 1951.

PARTIES TO TAKE COPIES OF RESOLUTIONS FROM CHURCH HOUSE MEETING.

(1) PARTY TO GO TO 10, DOWNING STREET.

C.R. Stephens, M.A., F.C.A. (National President).	Leeds.	
		Amputation leg at hip.
J.C. Toft.	Tyneside.	Amputation both arms.
A. Park.	Glasgow.	Amputation right arm.
S. Walsh.	Balton.	Amputation arm and leg (on crutches).
H.L. Craft.	Oxford.	Amputation right leg and arm wounds.
C.L. Newman.	Exeter.	Amputation leg (on crutches).
J.W. Parish.	Southend.	Amputation left leg and left arm.

(2) PARTY TO GO TO CABINET OFFICES, GREAT GEORGE STREET.

E.V. Law. (National Vice-President).	Croydon.	Amputation leg above knee.
R. Sudbury.	Liverpool.	Amputation right leg at hip.
F. Williams.	Leicester.	Amputation left leg above knee.
L.N. Cheesley.	Swindon.	Amputation left leg above knee (on crutches).
T. Bosworth, D.C.M.	Darlington.	Amputation left arm below elbow.
J.B. Burns.	Stockport.	Amputation left leg above knee.
R. Milligan.	Glasgow.	Amputation right arm.

(3) PARTY TO GO TO TREASURY, GREAT GEORGE STREET.

M.B. Jones. (Honorary Treasurer).	Cardiff.	Loss of eye.
W. Linley.	Sheffield.	Amputation right leg (on crutches).
J.H. Charlesworth.	Manchester.	Amputation right arm, eye and other wounds.
E.C. Kingston.	Northampton.	Amputation leg and other wounds.
G.E. Prett, M.M.	Reading.	Amputation right leg and other wounds.
H. Ferguson.	Richmond.	Amputation right leg and wounds right arm.
C.A. Miles.	Bournemouth.	Amputation left leg above knee.

(4) PARTY TO GO TO MINISTRY OF PENSIONS, GREAT SMITH STREET.

A. Baxter, O.B.E. (Past President).	Manchester.	Amputation right leg.
C. Lowe, G.M.	Rossendale.	Amputation both legs and arm.
R. Bateman.	Harrow.	Amputation both legs.
F. Warner.	Lewisham.	Amputation both legs.
J.H. Hallas.	Derby.	Amputation left arm.
W.A. Moore.	Woolwich.	Amputation right leg above knee.
H. Downham.	Southport.	Amputation leg and arm.
C.G. Stone.	Norwich.	Amputation right leg above knee.

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THE CASE FOR INCREASED RATES OF WAR DISABILITY PENSIONS.

BLESMA is a voluntary membership association of men who have lost one or more limbs as a result of their war service, officially recognised as the body representing the 36,000 British limbless war pensioners. There are 106 branches in all parts of the United Kingdom.

Our Association is campaigning for fair compensation for all ex-Servicemen who suffer loss of sight, limbs or effects of other severe war wounds, the men who were torpedoed, who crashed in burnt out planes and gliders, were blown up by mines on land and sea, or were otherwise wounded in all parts of the world in close contact with armed enemies.

These men have no access to legal or arbitration courts or any independent body. They are entirely dependent on the goodwill of the Government of the day in regard to their rates of compensation.

The maximum 100% rate of war disability pension for totally disabled ex-Privates was fixed at 40/- a week at the end of 1919, and this amount was at that time related to the minimum wage for a labourer.

This rate of 40/- a week has been increased only once, in 1946, to 45/- a week, which is now only worth 21/8d. by comparison with 1938 purchasing values.

The pension of 27/- a week for an ex-Private's arm or leg is only 3/- more than it was in 1919, and has a purchasing value of only 13/- by 1938 standards.

War disability pensions have now lost all relation to present day higher values, wages, prices and benefits.

Past Governments have stated that they could not afford general increases for all war pensioners and they have introduced a form of needs test, with supplementary allowances for the extremely disabled and the unemployables.

Only 6% of all the 724,000 War disabled pensioners, and less than 10% of the 36,000 limbless pensioners, receive any of the supplementary allowances.

Our members strongly object to official statements that nearly all the War Disabled are working, and that their pensions are handsome tax free additions to wages.

War disability pensions are, by the terms of the Royal Warrants, compensation for physical damage without regard to earnings or lack of earnings. They are also compensation for loss of amenities and pleasures of life, for pain and mental and physical stress and strain, and the burden of wearing artificial limbs for a lifetime.

BLESMA members have grown impatient with the apparent futility of their persistent representations and deputations to the Ministry of Pensions, who are powerless to meet our requests until more money is made available.

/In their

P.T.O.

In their branches and in National Conference our limbless men have resolved not to tolerate the present position quietly any longer, and to engage in a vigorous campaign to secure just compensation.

Their demands are fair and reasonable.

THEY ASK THAT ALL RANKS BELOW THAT OF LIEUTENANT SHALL RECEIVE THE SAME PENSION FOR THE SAME DISABLEMENT ON THE GROUNDS THAT SIGHT AND LIMBS ARE EQUALLY PRECIOUS TO ALL MEN. AT PRESENT THE EX-PRIVATE RECEIVES HALF AS MUCH AS THE LIEUTENANT AND CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN A WARRANT OFFICER.

THEY ASK THAT THE 100% RATE FOR ALL TOTALLY DISABLED OTHER RANKS BE INCREASED TO MORE NEARLY CONFORM TO PRESENT DAY VALUES AND TO THE RATES PAID BY OUR DOMINIONS, AMERICA, FRANCE AND BELGIUM, WHICH ARE APPROXIMATELY DOUBLE THE BRITISH RATES, ALTHOUGH WOUNDS WERE RECEIVED ON THE SAME BATTLEFIELDS AND IN THE SAME CAUSE.

The cost of increasing the 100% rate of 45/- a week for totally disabled ex-Privates up to the 61/8d. now paid to W.O.l.s. would be approximately £10 million.

The cost of increasing the 100% rate for all totally disabled Other Ranks up to £4 a week would be approximately £22 million.

THESE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES AND COSTS ARE JUSTIFIED BECAUSE THE GAP BETWEEN WAR PENSIONS AND HIGHER PRICES, WAGES AND BENEFITS HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO GET WIDER YEAR BY YEAR. THE GAP SHOULD BE BRIDGED NOW, BEFORE ANY FURTHER CHANGES IN VALUES TAKE PLACE.

Past Governments have said that they could not afford to increase the compensation for the men disabled in the service of the State. The Government have no more right to say they cannot afford to pay than have the insurance Companies who now have to pay the much higher damages awarded by the Courts for personal injuries in the workshops and on the roads, etc.

We now have a new Government, coming into power within a few days of Remembrance Day. One of their first tasks should be to give special consideration to the needs of Britain's 700,000 men who were disabled in war and, with their 900,000 comrades who gave their lives, helped to win the victories which preserved our democratic way of life, with free elections and a free Parliament.

BLESSMA'S PENSIONS CAMPAIGN.

PROGRAMME FOR WEDNESDAY, 7th NOVEMBER, 1951.

Conotaph Ceremony - 2.15 p.m.

Church House Meeting - 3 p.m.

Platform, Agenda and Resolutions.

Composition of Parties to take Resolutions to Government Offices.

House of Commons Meeting - 6 p.m.

Convenors and Agenda.
