

1233140

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE STANLEY BALDWIN, M.P.

In 1917, my eldest brother as Prince of Wales addressed a Minute to the Imperial War Conference enclosing a memorandum by Sir Fabian Ware, then Director-General of Graves Registration and Enquiries. In this memorandum he proposed the creation of an Imperial Organisation to care for and maintain in perpetuity the graves of those who had fallen in the War. On the suggestion of the Prince of Wales the memorandum was submitted to the representatives of the Governments of the Empire then assembled in London for that Conference. On April 13th, 1917, its terms were approved by a resolution of the Conference, and the body now known throughout the world as the Imperial War Graves Commission was thus called into being.

That was twenty years ago. In the interval a great work has been performed ; and I now have the honour, as President of the Commission, to enclose a further memorandum from Sir Fabian Ware (who has been Vice-Chairman of the Commission since its foundation) in the form of a Report on what has been accomplished.

I have read this Report with keen satisfaction, and, in the belief that it will be read with equal satisfaction by the members of the coming Imperial Conference, I would invite you, as their Chairman, to commend it to their notice.

Since I assumed the Presidency of the Commission, two aspects of its work have struck me as of particular interest, quite apart from the admirable way in which, as all know, the graves are cared for. They are aspects which I think will appeal particularly to the members of the Conference.

In the first place, the Governments of the Commonwealth represented on the Commission have co-operated freely in a great piece of constructive work. Owing to their joint efforts they have produced something which has been an example to the rest of the world.

Secondly, the sympathy which has united them in honouring our dead of the Great War has not remained self-centred, but has linked them to other nations who suffered similarly on the world's battlefields, whether as our friends or as our enemies. This has led to the formation of bonds of common remembrance between former friends and foes, bonds not only of sentiment, but of a practical kind for they have led to the creation of Joint International Committees for the guardianship of the graves.

(Sd.) HENRY,
President.

Imperial War Graves Commission,
32, Grosvenor Gardens,
London, S.W.1.

(C25251-20) 300 5/37

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939
(M.G. 26, J 4, volume 174, pages C123201-C124159)

PUBLIC ARCHIVES
ARCHIVES PUBLIQUES
CANADA