

DESPATCHES FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

No. 574.

CIRCULAR.

DOWNING STREET,
25th October, 1919.

SIR,—With reference to my predecessor's Circular despatch of the 31st of January, 1917,* I have the honour to transmit for your information a copy of a letter from the War Office in regard to refunds being made to ex-Army officers and men who were entitled to repatriation overseas at the cost of Army funds, but who made their own arrangements for returning home and obtained passages at their own expense.

2. If there are any ex-soldiers in the territory under your government who made their own arrangements for return passages before the 1st of April last, after having unsuccessfully applied to the Repatriation Record Office at Winchester, or to some other Army Authority, the necessary applications will no doubt be submitted, accompanied by the information specified in the last paragraph of the War Office letter.

I have, &c.,

MILNER.

The Officer Administering the Government of
HONGKONG.

[Enclosure in Circular despatch of 25th October, 1919.]

WAR OFFICE,
LONDON, S.W. 1,
5th September, 1919.

SIR,—I am commanded by the Army Council to refer to your letters of the 10th April, 1919, 20th June, 1919, and 15th August, 1919, regarding refunds to officers and men, entitled to repatriation overseas at the cost of Army Funds, who made their own arrangements and obtained passages at their own expense.

As you are no doubt aware the demobilisation regulations were framed to allow those entitled to repatriation either to be kept on pay and be sent back at the earliest opportunity, or if they wished to defer passage for their own convenience to be demobilised in the United Kingdom and to apply for passage within 6 months of the date of demobilisation. In the latter case, no guarantee can be given that passage can be given at the time when the application is made, though whatever is possible is done to meet the applicant's convenience.

By the above arrangements it was hoped to meet the requirements of all classes. It would have been administratively impossible to have allowed each man to make his own arrangements and to refund the cost subsequently, and the Council are not prepared to make a general departure from the Demobilisation Regulations on this point.

It is, however, realised that in the first period of demobilisation the machinery at the Repatriation Offices at Winchester may not have been working quite smoothly, owing partly to misunderstanding on the part of some of those due for repatriation, and partly to the very heavy pressure of work at Winchester. The Council have accordingly decided that in cases in which an officer or man made his own arrangements (after applying to Winchester) owing to a mistake made by the Winchester authorities, a relaxation of the general rule may be made, and a refund granted on the basis of a round sum representing broadly what it would have cost Army Funds, had the repatriation been carried out through the usual channel. At present each case will be considered on its merits by the Inter-Departmental Repatriation Committee on which the Treasury is represented.

* Published in the *Gazette* of the 30th March, 1917, as Notification No. 117.

Since the machinery at the Repatriation Record Office, Winchester, was running quite smoothly by the 1st April last, no refund will be given in those cases in which men made their own arrangements to proceed after that date.

Applications for refund under the terms of this letter should be submitted through the Officer in Charge Repatriation Records, Morn Hill Camp, Winchester, to the War Office (S.R.L.a Repatriation) accompanied by a statement showing the circumstances under which the applicant proceeded instead of waiting for passage in the usual way, the ship by which he sailed, the date of embarkation and disembarkation, and proof of payment of passage: It must be clearly shown in all cases whether or not application for passage was made to the Repatriation Record Office, Winchester, or to any other Army authority and if so, with what result.

I am &c.,

B. B. CUBITT.

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

No. 575.—His Majesty the KING has not been advised to exercise his power of disallowance with respect to the following Ordinance:—

Ordinance No. 15 of 1919.—An Ordinance to amend the Rating (Special War Rate) Ordinance, 1917.

A. G. M. FLETCHER,
Clerk of Councils.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
16th December, 1919.

APPOINTMENTS, &c.

No. 576.—His Excellency the Governor has been pleased, with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to appoint Mr. ROBERT ANDREW DERMOT FORREST and Mr. JOHN ALEXANDER FRASER to be Cadets in the Hongkong Civil Service.

11th December, 1919.

No. 577.—With reference to Notification No. 573 of the 12th December, 1919, it is hereby notified that His Excellency the Governor has declared Mr. MOWBRAY STAFFORD NORTHCOTE to be duly elected a Member of the Licensing Board for a period of three years, with effect from the 18th December, 1919, *vice* Mr. AUGUSTUS SHELTON HOOPER, resigned, in accordance with the rules governing the election of Justices of the Peace to serve on the Board.

19th December, 1919.

NOTICES.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

To the Owner of Survey District I Lot No. 24.

No. 578.—It is hereby notified that the Governor in Council having decided that the resumption of the property registered in the District Office, South, as Survey District I Lot No. 24 is required for a public purpose and private negotiations for the pur-