



NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
ZOOM MEETING : SATURDAY 24TH JUNE 2023

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS IN NEW ZEALAND

A display by Andrew Dove



WORLD WAR I

➤ Conscription – November 1916

Category	Approximate Number
Men imprisoned for refusing all forms of military service	286
Men who made appeals to Boards and who were exempt on religious or other grounds	100
Men who would not bear arms but served in non-combatant units	350
Number of conscripts who failed to turn up or deserted	2155

➤ Troublesome, sent overseas (July 1917) – 14

- Sent to Etaples Camp in France – 10/14
- Sent to the Front – 2

At the end of the war: 273 Conscientious Objectors released in November 1920.
No voting rights for 10 years and could not work for Government



Harry and Cecil Wardell (at right of picture) in uniform with other members of the Red Cross Ambulance Unit

WORLD WAR II

➤ Conscription June 1940

- 5,000 applied for exemption with 3,000 appeals

 - 20% allowed

 - 40% allowed conditionally

 - 40% refused

- 70% of conditional exemptions refused to serve

- 803 non-exempted men refused to serve and were classified as defaulters

+ Camp at
Balmoral in North
Canterbury

Whitanui Camp

Paiaaka Camp



Strathmore Camp

Hautu Camp
Adjacent to
Turangi Prison

Defaulters Camps in the North Island



Whenuaroa (Strathmore) Detention Camp.



Some of the defaulters at Hautu Camp

INFLUENCE OF BOOKS ?

Frederick William Brett, plasterer, appealed on the grounds of conscientious objection to territorial service. Brett said he was 30 years of age. He did not base his objection on any religious principles, doctrine or creed.

"Every right thinking person agrees with your views," said Mr Reid, "but when you have a war what are you going to do?"

Appellant said that he believed that there should be no resistance to aggression. He based his views on the fate of other countries.

To Mr Reid he said that he had formed his views from books he had read which dealt with humanitarian viewpoints. He could not remember the names of any of the books or their authors. He had held his views as long as he could remember.

To Mr Champion Brett said that he might be wrong in his views; on the other hand he might be right. Circumstances and environment had brought about his views. He was only a working man and did not have much say in world affairs.

He said that he had not attended church for a number of years. He thought his parents agreed with his views. He did not believe force should ever be applied to human beings.

Cross-examined by Mr Champion he said that a war of defence might be justified.

Appellant said he was not willing to serve in the medical corps or in any non-combatant service. He admitted that helping the wounded was in line with his humanitarian outlook, but said he would not serve in the medical corps because it was under the military authorities. He would be only too glad to serve outside the military forces.

To Mr McKane he said he would rather have Germany or Italy rule the country than that innocent women and children should suffer.

Decision was reserved.

WILLIAM FREDERICK BRETT

Detained (from the correspondence) at least between 4 June 1942 and 1 April 1946

From:

The Nelson Evening Mail
Vol. 76 April 1941. Page 6

NELSON MEN FOR CAMP

SECOND N.Z.E.F.

TANK BRIGADE COMPANY
(N.Z.A.S.C.)

Sixteen men from the Nelson Military Area has been posted to the Army Tank Brigade Company (N.Z.A.S.C.) of the Second N.Z.E.F. They will report at the Drill Hall, Nelson, at 6.30 p.m. on Monday next, 1st December, and will proceed that night for Waiouru Camp for training. Their names are:

W. F. Brett, Tahunanui,
A. J. M. Gray, Motueka,
J. M. T. Guthrie, Nelson,
G. P. A. Kellor, R.M.D., Richmond,
L. F. Smith, Stoke,
R. J. E. Coleman, Atawhai,
C. S. Eyles, R.M.D., Wakefield,
J. T. Goodman, Nelson,
J. Green, Richmond,
A. E. Sussex, Nelson,
N. E. Polglase, Richmond,
T. A. Wilson, Nelson,
A. W. C. Berg, Wairau Bar,
J. Ahern, Blenheim,
H. J. Leslie, Okaramio,
G. C. McKenzie, Clarence Bridge.

From:

The Nelson Evening Mail
Vol. 76 April 1941. Page 6



DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND

Office of the Minister of Justice,

WELLINGTON. C.1.

29th January, 1943.

H. Atmore, Esq., M.P.,
"Te Maunga",
N E L S O N.

Dear Sir,

You recently forwarded me an enquiry from Mrs. A. Brett, of Rocks Road, Nelson, whether her son - now in a defaulters' detention camp - could be released to enter the Merchant Navy or other occupation. I regret, however, that this is not possible and only upon electing to undertake military service would a fit defaulter be released.

Yours faithfully,

H. P. Mason

Minister of Justice.

WILLIAM BRETT APPEALS

N.S.240

NATIONAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Registration

DEFAULTERS' DETENTION

No. 406974

P.O. Box 165, Te Aro,
WELLINGTON, C2.

29th June, 1945.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF APPLICATION FOR RELEASE ON PAROLE.

To Mr. William Fred Brett,
Defaulters' Detention Camp,
Paiaka,
P.O. Box 40,
SHANNON.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of your application dated 25th June, for release on parole from Defaulters' Detention.

This application is being forwarded to the Revision Authority for consideration.

You will be notified in due course by the Revision Authority (through the Controlling Officer of Detention) as to when your application has been set down for hearing.

H. L. Borchers
Director of National Service.

144 DIRECTION TO ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY:

Upon release on parole from detention, defaulters become liable for direction into work of the highest priority, including work as attendants in Mental Hospitals, labouring work at Karapiro Hydro-Electric Scheme, and work in the sawmilling, coalmining, farming and similar industries, but not to any employment directly related to the production of munitions or war supplies.

LEW J. GREENBERG,

Controlling Officer of Detention.

NATIONAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT.
DE. AULTERS' DETENTION. PERSONAL HISTORY REPORT.
NO. 243599 CAMP: WHENUAROA DATE: 11.4.1946

GENERAL PARTICULARS.
Surname: GROTTE Christian Names: William
Age: 29 Yrs. 10 Mths. Normal domicile: 249 Parnell Road, Parnell
Conjugal Status: S. No. Children: - Other Dependants: -
Occupation: STOREMAN Other Industrial Qualifications: -
Name of Employer before Committal: N.Z.R.
Medical Grading: I Reasons for Medical Grading below I: -

- DETENTION RECORD.
- Temperament or General Attitude: (Yes or No)
(a) Amenable to discipline YES (b) Co-operative YES
(c) Schemer or nuisance value NO
General remarks on Temperament: FAIR
 - Quality of work in Detention: (Cross out those not required)
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ GOOD ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
Is any low or inefficient quality of work due to physical disability?
 - Conduct in Detention: (Cross out those not required)
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ GOOD ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
 - Influence on other inmates: (Cross out those not required)
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ INDIFFERENT -NOT OF THE BEST.

- SUMMARY.
- Examination of Detention History:
Quality of Work: GOOD
Conduct: GOOD
Influence generally: NOT GOOD
 - Personal Circumstances:
Domestic circumstances: NONE
Medical Condition: NONE

WILLIAM GROTTE: PERSONAL REPORT AND WORK DIRECTION

AWS, MH
OFFICE COPY NATIONAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT IN.S.-136.
AK/M. 158248
DISTRICT MAN-POWER OFFICE, P.O. Box 1484, AUCKLAND C.I.
26/4/1946.
Direction of District Man-power Officer
IN PURSUANCE OF Part V of the Industrial Man-power Emergency Regulations 1944, I
hereby direct you MR. William GROTTE, 249 Parnell Rd, Parnell. (Name.) (Address.)
to report for engagement in work as follows:—
Name of employer: WAITAKERE CENTENNIAL DRIVE LAND CO. Mr. A. Petrie Proprietor.
Place and time of engagement: 314 Victoria Arcade, 29/4/46
In the capacity of LABOURER Shortland St, AUCKLAND C.I. Wage: SHILLING
and to accept employment with the above employer, and continue in his employment
subject to such special conditions and directions (if any) as are set forth hereunder:—
Directions:
The Manager,
Waitakere Centennial Drive
Land Co.,
SHORTLAND ST C.I.
ORIGINAL HANDED TO DIRECTEE
also n.s. 81 158248
FOR YOUR INFORMATION.
I hereby direct the above-named employer to employ and to continue to employ the aforesaid worker until the
permission of a Man-power Officer is obtained to terminate such employment. Please complete and return the
attached card N.S.-143.
District Man-power Officer.

THE CORRESPONDENCE:

ALL ADDRESSED TO BRETT

Number of envelopes	Dates	Addressed to
5	4/6/42 – 22/6/42	Strathmore, Whenuaroa
19	5/7/42 – 17/7/43	Paiaka
1	9/8/43	Strathmore
1	18/8/43	Paiaka
2	16/9/43 – 22/9/43	Hautu
2	?1944 – 5/6/45	Paiaka
1	1/4/46	Strathmore

(Reprinted in manner prescribed by section 7 of the Regulations Act, 1936, as amended by the Censorship and Publicity Regulations 1939, Amendment No. 1, Serial Number 1939/215).

Serial Number **1939/121.**

**THE CENSORSHIP AND PUBLICITY EMERGENCY
REGULATIONS 1939.**

GALWAY, Governor-General.

ORDER IN COUNCIL.

At the Government House at Wellington, this 1st day of
September, 1939.

Present :

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL.

PURSUANT to the Public Safety Conservation Act, 1932, and to a Proclamation of Emergency now in force under that Act, and pursuant to section 161 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1928, His Excellency the Governor-General, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, doth hereby make the following regulations.

Regulation 5

(3) The Controller of Censorship may in his discretion cause any postal packet to be opened, detained, or delayed.

(4) A postal censor may open, detain, or delay any postal packet.

(5) Except with the authority of a postal censor, it shall not be lawful for any postal officer to transmit beyond New Zealand, or to include in a mail being made up for transmission beyond New Zealand, any postal packet so addressed as by direction of the Controller of Censorship to require submission to a postal censor.

(6) Except with the authority of a postal censor, it shall not be lawful for any postal officer to deliver or to make available any postal packet so addressed as, by direction of the Controller of Censorship, to require submission to a postal censor.

Each page was censored
in many of the letters

[illegible]

And parts removed

Whitely Hall which will
be nice and central and
we hope to have quite
a successful season. We
have started off with about 20
dancing members.

Now will I find myself
falling asleep over my pen so
I had better cut it to bed

to censorship also

Mr W. Brett
Mess 3
Defaulters Camp
Paiaka
Shannon

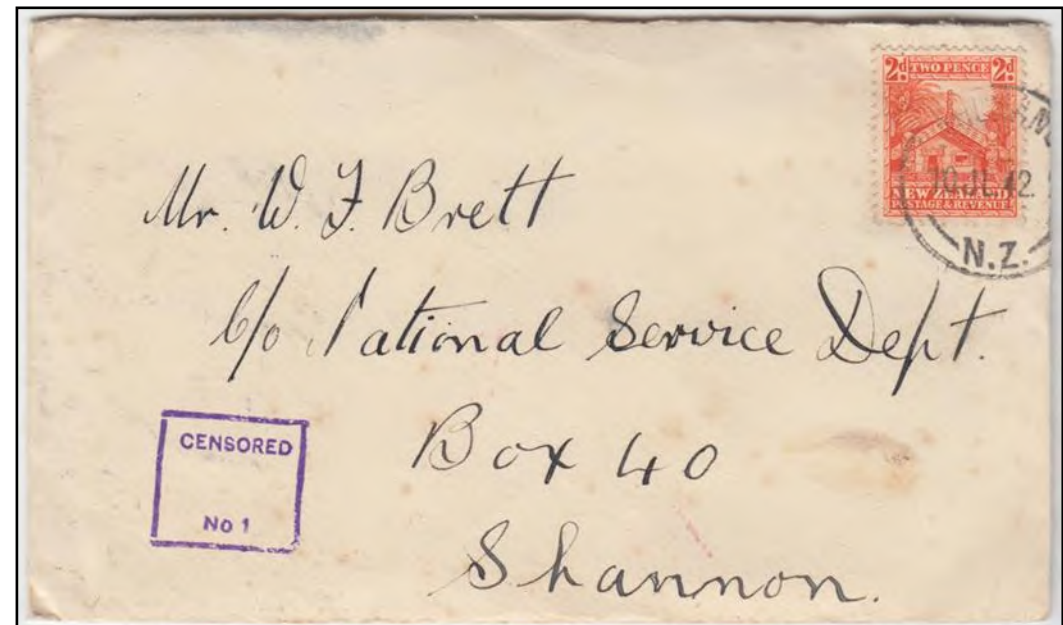
RECORDED
No. 4





TYPE 1 CENSOR CACHET
(Hautu 4/6/42 – 22/6/42)

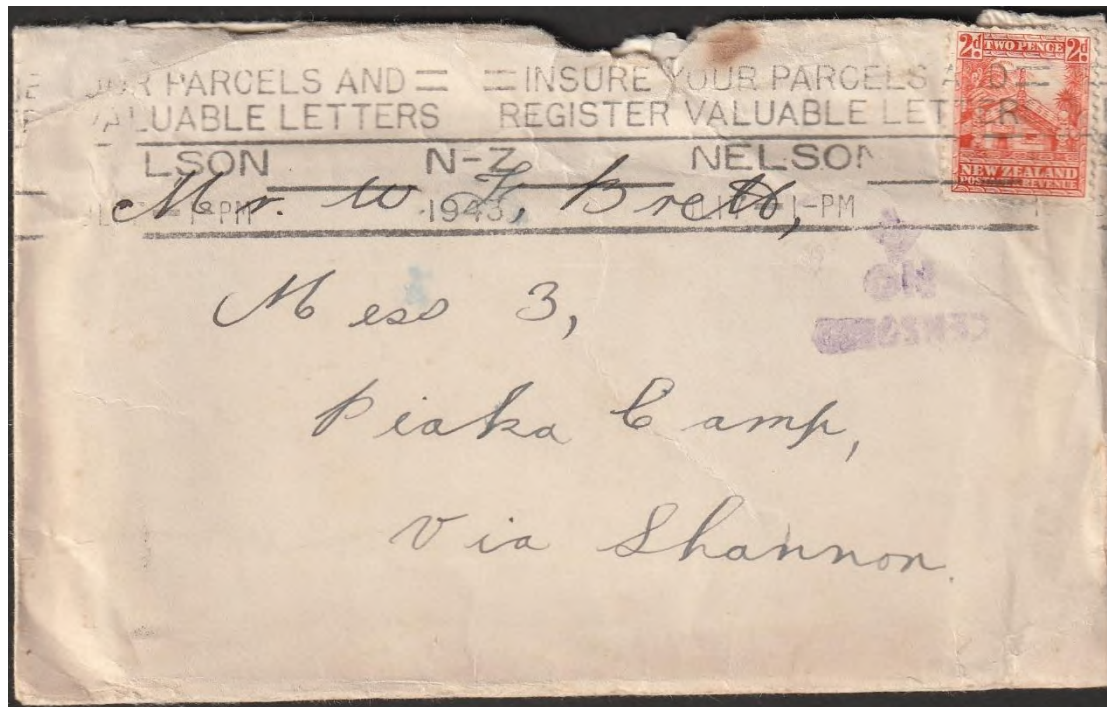
TYPE 2 CENSOR CACHET
Paiaaka (5/7/42 – 28/1/43)



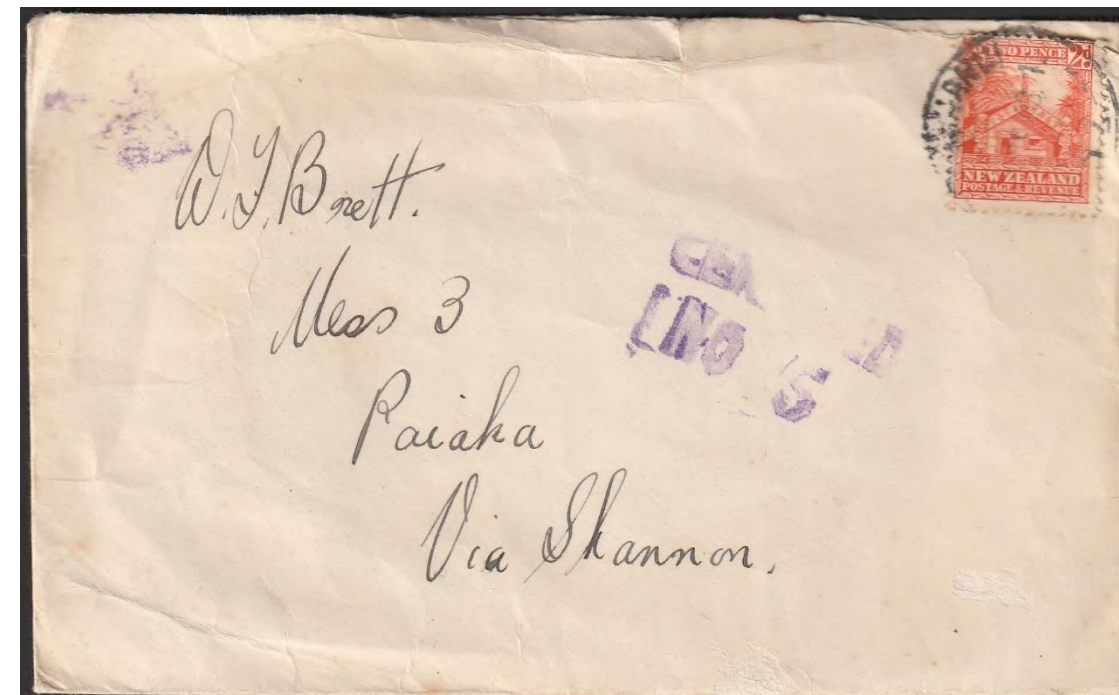
TYPE 3 CENSOR CACHET
Paiaaka 18/2/43 – 25/2/43)



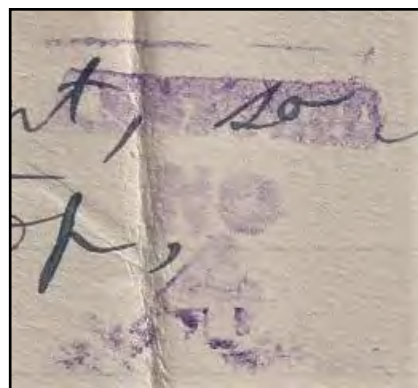
TYPE 4 CENSOR CACHET
Paiaaka 19/3/43 – 14/6/43)
Hautu 16/9/43



TYPE 6 CENSOR CACHET
Paiaka 10/6/43

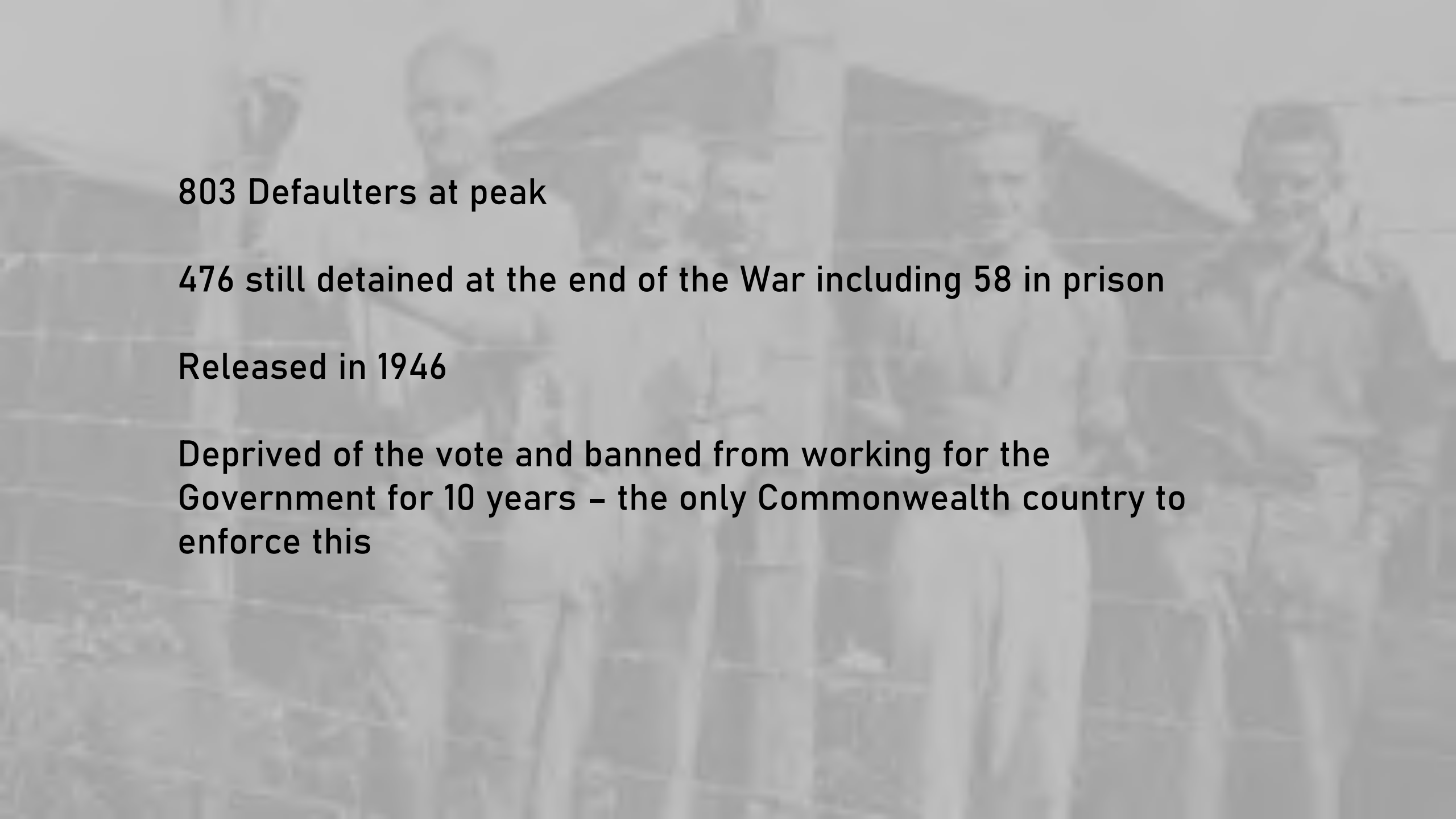


TYPE 5 CENSOR CACHET
Paiaka 17/7/43



The Correspondence: Total: 31 envelopes

Number of envelopes	Dates	Addressed to	Censor Cachet Type	Numbers
5	4/6/42 – 22/6/42	Strathmore, Whenuaroa	1	2,3,4
10	5/7/42 – 28/1/43	Paiaka	2	1,2,3
2	18/2/43 – 25/2/43	Paiaka	3	2
4	19/3/43 – 22/4/43 (+ 14/6/43)	Paiaka	4	4,6
2	9/6/43 – 17/7/43	Paiaka	5	4
1	10/6/43 (from letter)	Paiaka	6	5
7	9/8/43 – 1/4/46	Hautu (2), Paiaka (3) Strathmore (2)	None	One to Hautu with Type 4 on letter dated 22 SP 43 but no mark on envelope



803 Defaulters at peak

476 still detained at the end of the War including 58 in prison

Released in 1946

Deprived of the vote and banned from working for the Government for 10 years – the only Commonwealth country to enforce this

THE END

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS