

ELTHAM WAR MEMORIAL

NAME PLAQUES AT SCHOOL GATES

The first move to commemorate the Second World War service of district men will be the placing of name plaques on the gates at the public school at Eltham, a public meeting called to consider establishing a war memorial decided. This work will be done immediately. The meeting left undecided the question of another war memorial.

Should the Soldiers' Memorial Park be proceeded with or should a new scheme be adopted? was the question the Mayor, Dr. D. H. Saunders, posed to the meeting. In 1947 a public meeting had decided the park would form a suitable memorial, he said. The project had gone a certain distance but it was found greater expenditure would be involved than originally estimated. It had then been left in abeyance until the Government subsidy question was settled, but a decision on the memorial could not wait indefinitely and it was for the public to make a decision.

The question had been deferred long enough in the opinion of the Returned Services Association, said Mr. M. Ritter, president of the Eltham branch. All that the association asked for was that plaques bearing the names of the men who fought in the war should be placed on the gates. Whether they stayed at the school or were removed to the park was immaterial. The names of those who fought in the two wars should not be separated. There would be between 400 and 500 names and there was space available on the gates.

The estimated cost would be £400, said Dr. Saunders. No alteration to the gates would be necessary. It was proposed that the names of the men of the second war should be on granite of a different colour.

On the motion of Mr. J. H. Fake, it was unanimously decided that the erection of the plaques be proceeded with.

MEMORIAL PARK.

The question of proceeding with the Soldiers' Memorial Park or of embarking on a new project was debated at length.

A lot of money had been spent on the park so far, said Mr. J. P. Marx, chairman of the Eltham County Council. More would be required to finish it and then there was the question of upkeep and maintenance of the park on its completion.

Replying to a question, Dr. Saunders said that it was understood there would be a £1 for £1 subsidy, but whether it would be granted on money expended before the scheme was recognised by the Government was doubtful. The park scheme was not yet recognised officially, but only in principle. The estimated cost was £8000 to complete, and of that £4000 would have to be raised by the people.

Other suggestions for a memorial included one from Mr. C. O. Burton of an up-to-date grandstand at Taumata Park, while Mr. A. L. Picard spoke in favour of developing the recently-purchased ground from the Wilson Estate as new playing areas.

Mr. C. C. Willis stated that before anything different could be done, the motion passed at the 1947 meeting concerning the Soldiers' Memorial Park would have to be rescinded. He suggested that a public appeal for funds be made, the form of memorial to be decided later.

Mr. A. J. Bennett moved that the scheme as decided in 1947 be proceeded with and provision be made for removing the plaques from the school gates and placing them on gates at the park. The motion was lost and the 1947 decision was rescinded.

A committee comprising Dr. Saunders, Messrs. H. Taylor, A. Richards, E. R. Knuckey and F. S. Bush was appointed to inquire from the Department of Internal Affairs which of the proposed schemes would qualify for a subsidy, and to report back to a further meeting. Mr. W. A. Tiplady was appointed secretary.