Today I would like to pause and pay our respects to:

4/646 Capt Antonie **Beekman.**

Antoine was living at 89 Union St Dunedin with his wife Wh iion

FATALITY AT TRENTHAM.

ENGINEER INSTRUCTOR KILLED

DURING BOMB THROWING DEMONSTRATION.

BY TELEGRAPH PKESS ASSOCIATION. WELLINGTON, June 15. When the House of Representative\* met to-night, Hon. Jas. Allen, Minister of Defence, said that it was his pain full duty to announce to the House that an unfortunate accident had happened that afternoon at Trentham. He had an official report from General Robin of the mishap which he proceeded to read to the House as follows: -

"At the class of instruction in trench warfare this afternoon, when bomb throwing with fabulite balls was in progress, one unfortunately exploded whilst still in the act of being thrown, in the hands of Captain Beekman, Chief Instructor of Engineers at the camp. Lieut. Bale, late of the Royal Engineers (assistant instructor), with Sergeant-Major-Instructor Gamage, were in the same portion of the trench. Captain Beekman and Lieut. Bale were injured, and Captain Beekman has, unfortunately, since, died of his injuries. Lieut. Bale, it is hoped, will resume duty in a few days. Sergeant-Maior Gamage was unhurt. There is no blame attachable to anybody. The bombs were in good order, and it was one of those unfortunate accidents which cannot be avoided in dealing with bombs, and is 'incidental to training as well as to active service, and it is not an uncommon occurrence m the bombing schools in France and England. Captain Beekman was second in command of the Engineer Company that was largely drawn from the New Zealand Railways, and went to the front under Lieut Colonel Barclay. Since his return to New Zealand, some five months ago, he has been Chief Instructor to the Engineer reinforcements at Trentham and was carrying out part of his duties when the unfortunate accident occurred."

The Minister added that Captain Beekman was called up for duty at Trentham. He leaves a wife (who at present is very ill), and three children, the eldest daughter being twenty years of age. Members listened to the reading of the report with marked evidence of regret.

The demonstration was arranged as part of the training of the 14th Reinforcements, who were drawn up within the vicinity for instruction purposes. Among the visitors witnessing the demonstration were his Excellency the Governor and Lady Liverpool, General Robin, Colonel Gibbon (Chief of General Staff, Major Sleeman (Assistant Director of Military Training), Captain Sir Robert Walker (Assistant Military Instructor), and a number of other staff-officers. The operations were directed by Major Sleeman, who has had experience of trench fighting and bomb throwing on in the front in Flanders, and under him were three instructors, Captain A. Beekman,Lieut. Bale, and Sergt -Major Gamage. About 3 o'clock, Captain Beekman prepared to throw a fabulite high explosive bomb, similar to those being used in the trenches at the front. It had a 15 seconds', fuse, which Captain Beekman had set and lit. Evidently, he held the bomb too long in his hand before throwing it, for it exploded (probably in his hand), and mortally wounded-him. Lieut Bale was wounded, but not seriously.

The Governor, General Robin, and Colonel Gibbon were in a traverse about 50 yards away, watching the operations. They immediately went to the assistance of the wounded instructors, and did all they could for them. Captain Beekman was attended to by the camp doctors but died about an hour later. Lieut. Bale was brought into town and taken to the general hospital.

Hawera and Normanby Star 16 June 1916.

