



In lending us your sons, you have given us a source of great strength and courage all through the years of war. We have been proud to have them in our midst, proud to know they were manning our ships, proud to follow their magnificent exploits on land and most proud and comforted to see them day and night spreading their protective wings above us. We have glowed with pride, too, to read their names in the Lists of Awards and bowed our heads in sorrow when they appeared, alas, so often, in the Roll of Honour.

We who have come through the hard years with a smile will never forget their unflinching courage nor the suffering they bore for our sake to win the peace. They brought us food and the "tools to finish the jobs"; they battled their way through Africa and Europe. They braved all weathers and all perils to combat enemy bombers and to beat off V weapons. None knows better than the London mother how much we owe them.

You know, I, for one, feel just a bit ashamed to read the many letters I have had from New Zealand mothers. True there were times when it wasn't easy to put a good meal before them - but they accepted them as banquets. And they so often brought the parcels you had sent for their enjoyment. True, there were times when it was a happy problem where to put them to sleep, but they laughed as they spread mattresses on the floor in a "safe place" because they were "scared." It always seemed to me their chief "scare" was lest they embarrassed us.

Yes, they were happy days which none of us will ever forget, for there are no lads quite like the Kiwis for getting right into your heart. And so, you dear mothers down under, please don't insist that we have done "so much" for your lads, Without them we should never have come through, either as individuals or as a nation. What happiness they had from sharing our homes and discomforts and in winning our hearts is little compared with all the joy and gaiety and affection they brought to us.

Already we miss them more than words can say. As we say "au revoir" to the last of the p.o.w.'s who have made London so gay and happy for the past three months, we bite our lips and swallow lumps in our throats and come back to our lonely homes resolved that nothing shall stand in the way of our meeting them again in your great little Dominion.

If I have left them to the last, it is because they are the dearest and most poignant memory - those who remain here for ever. How we grieve with those whose sons will not return, we shall never forget them; their memory is for ever sacred; we shall ever share your heartbreak. If the others go they remain always in our homes and hearts; we see them always in our midst and hear their gay young voices.

" At the going down of the sun and in the morning we shall remember them"