**THE ROUTE MARCH**

**Giligandra to the Coast**

**TRIUMPHANT SEND-OFF BY THE PEOPLE.**

Giligandra's greeting of all events, the start of the route march, became a fact of history on Sunday last, when the column moved off on its long march to the coast.

On Saturday, when the "Farmer and Settler" special reporter, who will march to Sydney, arrived at Gilgandra, he met Captain Nicholas and Mr. Marten and Cooper, of Dubbo, on the ground. Captain Nicholas has been appointed to take charge of the contingent, and he will be their leader and instructor all the way through to Sydney.

On Saturday afternoon twenty-five recruits were sworn in. Two failed to pass the doctor, but they will march through to the coast nevertheless. The number of recruits would have been double if the recruiting association had not been compelled to wait so long for the permission of the military authorities, the result being that many men grew tired of waiting and went into camp. The doctor said that the Gilgandra men were as big a body of recruits as he had seen, with good feet and sound constitutions.

On Saturday night a torchlight procession paraded the town, followed by the bands. The recruits were followed by the ride and the boy scouts. In the interval of a picture show, Major Whit, of Sydney, and Palace Leu, the clergyman recruit, made special appeals to the young men to volunteer.

There were thirty-three persons, almost the whole population of the district, at the open-air evensong service on Sunday morning, when the Rev. W. Jenkins commenced the men to their Colonel.

The shire president, Mr. Parson, said he was sure that the twenty-five starting would be five hundred at the end of the long march. Almost the whole of the people, the largest gathering ever seen at Gilgandra, accompanied the march to the church, where a general program of hand-shaking took place. A guard of honor of young loggers were at the head of the procession, and the local recruiting association and shire councillors took part. Captain Nicholas formed up his late-born, grown-already to thirty-three men, and Mr. W. T. Hitchen had the honor of giving the first words of command—"Quick march." Amid resounding cheers the route march had begun, and it was followed for several miles of its long journey by a great cavalcade of horses and vehicles. Then there was a hush, with more goodbyes, more cheers, and the rifle club fired a parting volley.

The heat was intense, and the dust hung over the troops like a pillar of cloud—a fiery cloud, so that when the next stop, Narrandera, was reached, all were grateful for the lunch provided by the residents, and not less for the facilities provided for a wash and a fresh up. At Narrandra one new recruit fell in. Many of the Gilgandra folk still followed the column. The young daughter of a prominent citizen left her car and marched beside the men for some distance, the driver accompanied her in the interest of being present at Narrandra Place at the finish, and declared that if she had been a boy she would have marched all the way, and gone to the front with the contingent. It is a pity that some of the boys have not the spirit of the girls.

At Bullocky the townpeople met the column a mile out of town and entered them to their camps with bananas, and gave them a hearty welcome. The column was reached at five o'clock, and here another recruit joined the column.

Following are the names of the first twenty-five to enroll: