

**UNWEILING SCHOOL HONOR ROLL.**

A large number of parents and friends witnessed the unveiling of the Violet Town State School Honor Roll on Wednesday afternoon.

Mr C. Croxford, chairman of the school committee, presided, and stated the object of the gathering. The roll contained the names of scholars of the Violet Town State school who had enlisted and gone to the war. Some may have been overlooked, and he asked anyone present who knew of any names that had been omitted to advise the committee. The board was quite full, but it was to be enlarged and he would make an appeal for funds to help committee to do so. He had much pleasure in introducing Mr Fussell, Chief Inspector of Education Department.

Mr Fussell regarded it as a privilege to address a gathering met to do honor to brave men. He could not help thinking how these men were in better luck than playing round this building, and were now doing a man's part in a way that makes us hold our heads higher at being Australians. If also going, they had been asked their motive, they would very likely have said they were going to "do their bit," or perhaps there was a spirit of dangerous adventure, but underneath all was the deepest feeling that they were going to fight for freedom, fight to defend Australia, fight for preservation of right, fight for love of Australia, and the dear old motherland, and they loved this love by taking their lives in their two hands. President Lincoln was once asked if God Almighty was on his side. He replied that it was much more important to be on God Almighty's side. There was no doubt that we were fighting on the side of our Creator for justice, righteousness and truth. Our soldiers were doing a dirty work, and would gain abundant reward. We should try to live to be more worthy of these men and the heroism they were making for us. Think of the comforts and pleasures we enjoy!—they have placed themselves between us and a relentless foe, and see nobly enduring sufferings and hardships and death itself to save us. We know that Germany intended to live Australia, and it is our duty to fight, work, and pay. Many of us are too old to fight, or are of the wrong sex, but some women make great sacrifices. One widow's son he knew said "Mother, I am going to enlist." She said "Jack, if I lose you it will leave me with a sore heart, but if you don't I'll be ashamed of you." Women in England are working harder than a servant or factory girl at war work, and retired business men are working harder than when they had to earn their living—giving every spare hour to war relief work, but this is nothing to the sacrifice the soldiers are making. We cannot do too much. We are urging the young to help. The Education Department Patriotic Fund has now reached £275,000, and besides this the children are sending £600 mostly in comforts to hospitals. The patriotic work takes many forms. Every child of 10 years old and upwards is asked to get people to invest in War Savings Certificates. London 'Puck' had a picture of a woman preparing to jump from the third storey of a burning building. The crowd tells her to wait until the fire-escape comes, she says, "well, throw me up my knitting" (laughter). Personally he had two boys at the war, and in their last letters they said how they had enjoyed having a decent smoke with some tobacco sent to them, when it was divided up among mates they had two cokes. The tobacco over there was like a gas attack. (laughter). British and Australian prisoners would be in a state of starvation if it were not for the Red Cross. All honor to the brave young soldiers on the honor roll, and to their mothers and fathers who reared them. He then recited the poem composed by Corp J. D. Burns, of Lilydale, who was killed in action when 20 years of age.

The bugles of England were blowing o'er the sea,  
As they had called a thousand years, calling now to me;  
They woke me from dreaming in the dawn of the day,  
The bugles of England—and how could I stay?

The banners of England, unfurled across the sea,  
Floating out upon the wind, were beckoning to me.  
Stained and battle-torn, smoke-stained and grey,  
The banners of England—how could I stay?

O England, I heard the cry of those that died for thee,  
Sounding like an organ-voice across the winter sea:  
They lived and died for England, and gladly went their way,  
England, O, England, how could I stay?

The speaker then unveiled the roll amidst applause, asked Mr Johnston to read out the names (73 in number, which will appear in our next issue.) "God Save Our Splendid Men" was sung, after which Mr Croxford called on Cr. Johnson Wilson to speak.

Cr. Wilson said he remembered the first time he set foot in the school some 40 years ago as a scholar. Many boys whose names were on the board attended since he did. It used to be a standing joke to ask our trained soldiers what would they do if war broke out?—and the joking answer was—"they would be the first to go off to the hills," but what did we find when the South African war broke out?—they were the first to volunteer, as well as when brought face to face with the greatest war the world has ever known. He had had the privilege of attending a send-off to some of them in the Mechanics', and hoped to be alive to welcome them back, but, unfortunately, some could never be welcomed back, and our hearts go out in sympathy. We have to do our share—work and pay.

Rev. T. Roberts stated that he thought that the roll stood for a united Empire. Britain was 10,000 miles away. There was little practical connection with England, but the bond of union drew our lads to fight away in France. He remembered a Life Insurance picture which represented a man trying to break a bundle of sticks, underneath were the words "united we stand and divided we fall." Unless the British Empire is united it must go down. We have it on good authority that every house divided against itself must fall. British blood must count. Speech was one of the greatest forces in language, and God grant all may have the mother tongue and loyalty! In our common interests we are united with Britain. If one member suffers, all suffer. Every man is wanted. Looking at those names we hear voices, though passed away, still speaking by their deeds, "follow your leader, follow a good example!" (Applause.)

Rev W. A. Williams expressed the pleasure it gave him to see so many names of brave men fighting for King and Country. Why did they go? They were not compelled to, but they recognised that the motherland was in danger and they went to defend Australia. They were fighting for all the flag stands for. The crosses in the flag are emblems of christianity, and they are fighting to defend our homes and little ones. We should be deeply grateful to them for their unselfish example. It is a recognised fact that if Britain falls we in Australia will become a dependency of the German Empire, and be hewers of wood, etc.

Some have laid down their lives. We can well say "they died for me," following the greatest precept, "Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends."

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Rev. Miles said that the honor roll was one of hundreds now hanging throughout the State. We cannot get underneath the weight these names indicate,—gallant young fellows who have done their share to defend all they hold dear. By the papers we see these men have often been the pivot, or turning point, in this great war. As one German officer said, "they were more than brave, men they didn't give way one single foot." Over 300,000 Australians have voluntarily enlisted. Some have been wounded three times, and returned to fight our battles. One widow lady he knew of, who was not strong, her five sons enlisted and three had fallen. One thing that surprised him was that there was an eligible young man left in Australia who could go and wouldn't, while his mates were suffering and dying for him.

Mr Macdonald said he was proud to witness the unveiling. When he saw the names he recognised that he knew most of the lads. To tell their praises was something words cannot express. If we say the most we know we cannot say enough. Australia's shores extend to every portion of the British Empire, and they have gone to defend Australia as much as if they were fighting on this land. We are too old to fight, but hardly any of us are too old to work, and every little helps. Every child can help by putting money for sweets, etc. in war stamps. This moment is a critical period. Suppose, through our neglect, through our not helping in every way, we have to make a compromise peace, what is the freedom of this country worth? Every island would be a German submarine base. Australia would have to become a military power for all time. Our liberty only lasts as long as England is mistress of the sea. Everyone should go. These noble boys have set an example, and any one who doesn't honor them should go down to the dust, dishonored in the estimation of every individual in the world.

Song, "Lest We Forget," by school-children.

Mr Carter, on behalf of the school committee, moved a vote of thanks to those who had placed their opinions so ably before them, and to the public for attending to do honor to brave soldiers.

Mr G. Neil seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation, and the proceedings terminated with the singing of the "National Anthem."