

THE GOVERNOR AT MOUNT BARKER. SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL UNVEILED.

Mount Barker, December 24.

His Excellency the Governor (Sir Tom Bridges) visited Mount Barker this afternoon for the purpose of unveiling the Soldiers' Memorial Monument, which has just been erected by the people of Mount Barker and district, in honor of those who laid down their lives in the Great War. The ceremony was performed in the presence of about 1,000 people, among whom were parents and relatives of many of the fallen soldiers. A platform had been erected in front of the monument for the choir, which led the singing. On the stage were chairs for his Excellency, the chairman of the District Council (Mr. W. L. McDonald), the chairman of the monument committee (Mr. A. C. Daw), clergy, and members of Parliament. Mr. H. S. Hudd was the only Parliamentarian present. Apologies were received from the Hon. G. R. Laffer and Brigadier-General Weir. A guard of honor, consisting of about 30 returned soldiers, under Lieutenant E. O. Hughes, was formed up at the front of the monument. After inspecting the men, his Excellency, who was attended by Captain Hambleton, A.D.C., took his seat.

An address of welcome was presented to the Governor by Mr. W. L. McDonald, who said Mount Barker had been greatly honored, as it was generally understood that that was his Excellency's first official visit to any country town. He hoped the journey by road from Adelaide would make a pleasant and lasting impression on his Excellency's memory, as they were very proud of the hills and the rich, fertile land contained therein. It was appropriate that Mount Barker should have the honor of welcoming him first in the country, as it was known by many as the old English town of South Australia. Its climate, park lands, and paddocks gave it quite an English appearance. They extended to his Excellency a hearty Australian welcome, not only because he was the representative of the King, but because he was a soldier, whose name and deeds in the great war were known to them all. (Applause.)

In presenting an address of welcome from the people, Mr. McDonald said it was in some respects unique in that the animal supplying the skin from which the address case was made was grown in the district, and the hide was prepared in the local tannery. The wording on the parchment was:—"To his Excellency the Governor (Sir George Tom Molesworth Bridges, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.). Your Excellency—On the occasion of your first official visit to a district outside the metropolitan area, we, the chairman and members of the District Council of Mount Barker, on behalf of the residents of the district, extend to your Excellency and Lady Bridges a very hearty welcome. We assure your Excellency of our unswerving loyalty to the throne and person of his Majesty the King. This is well exemplified by the object

of his Majesty the King. This is well exemplified by the object of your visit, which is to unveil a memorial to these gallant dead who enlisted from this district and fell in the Great War. No fewer than 380 men volunteered from this district, and we grieve that 40 of them paid the supreme sacrifice. Depending so much as does this district on the primary products of the soil agriculture is to it of first importance, and it is the oldest agricultural centre in the State. As early as 1851 wheat grown in this district was awarded the champion gold medal at the world's great exhibition in London, and ever since it has worthily upheld its reputation. We trust that the sojourn in this State of your Excellency and the members of your family may be a happy and contented one, and we assure you of our loyal support and co-operation in all matters affecting the welfare of the State." The address was signed on behalf of the district council by Messrs. W. L. McDonald (chairman) and C. M. Adey (district clerk).

His Excellency replied:—"As his Majesty's representative I thank you most heartily for the expressions of loyalty and devotion to the throne and person of his Majesty the King. On behalf of my family and myself I thank you for your hearty welcome, and for your good wishes for our stay in this country. It is gratifying to learn that the present generation worthily follow the proud traditions of this important centre of production. I am pleased to hear of the part taken by your district in the Great War. I can assure you of my interest in your community, and my support in your endeavors towards development and progress.

Mr. A. C. Daw, chairman of the Memorial Committee, then asked his Excellency to unveil the memorial, and this was done amidst an intense silence. The Governor formed a striking figure as he saluted the monument, paying a silent tribute to the gallant dead.

The Rev. A. H. Reynolds conducted a short service of dedication.

His Excellency in addressing the assembly, said:—"We are met here to-day to pay a tribute to the memory of the men of Mount Barker and district who died for liberty and love of country during the world war. They were men of spirit and enterprise, and worthy followers of the trail blazed by Captain Collett Barker, of the British Army, who discovered the fertile plains where your wheat grows to-day, and who, like these men, gave up his life in an act of daring and devotion to duty. The monument that I have had the honor to unveil to the memory of these heroes has been erected at this spot in order that it may arrest attention, and tell those who pass by to pause and think of the dead, who died that we might live. If ever you are disposed to cavil and complain of the world as you find it since the war, remember that had it not been for these men and their like, who volunteered at the call of danger, the British Empire would have ceased to exist, and Australia herself would have been to-day under the thrall of a foreign Power. Let, therefore, the true memorial of these brave men repose in the hearts, and be shown in the lives of those who remain. It is for them to prove that this sacrifice is not forgotten, and that the dead died not in vain.

The National Anthem was sung by the assemblage, and the Rev. H. E. Dwyer delivered an address. Remembrance was

assessments, and the rev. H. S. Hudd delivered an address. Remembrance was made of all who offered their lives in the service of their country by the Rev. R. Bowering, followed by a special remembrance of those whose names appeared on the monument by the Rev. C. Doley. After the Benediction had been pronounced wreaths were placed at the foot of the monument. One which stood out conspicuously was of laurel, made by Mrs. Choat, who had five sons at the front.

His Excellency chatted for a few moments with residents before returning to Adelaide.

Mr. H. S. Hudd, M.P., remarked that the ceremony was particularly impressive, and one of the best conducted he had yet had the pleasure of attending. The monument is a striking one, erected at the top end of Gawler-street, on the Adelaide-road. The figure is that of an infantryman, cut of of Italian marble, and stands 15 ft. high. The base is of granite, with sets of white. The cost was £350, all of which was raised by public subscription. The committee are to be congratulated on the efficient manner in which the arrangements were carried out.