

## SWANPOOL SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL

### The Unveiling Ceremony

The people of Swanpool and district on Tuesday last in a practical way demonstrated what, in their opinion, was due to the memory both of those soldiers who from their district made the supreme sacrifice in the late war and to those who returned after having "done their bit". This took the form of a very handsome memorial in the shape of a granite monument, which has already been described in these columns. It was the work of Messrs Talochino & Son, to whom great credit is due for their excellent workmanship. The site chosen by the committee for the memorial is one of the best that could possibly have been found. It is at the intersection of the Mansfield and Lima station roads, where there is a great deal of traffic, and the handsome obelisk must be seen by the large numbers who use the highways named. Just about the time that the great war came to an end the people of the districts around Swanpool decided to commemorate what the men from their neighborhood had done in the war, and altogether they have expended something in the neighborhood of £500 on the piece of work which was the subject of Tuesday's ceremony.

On Tuesday the weather was damp and threatening, but, notwithstanding, there was an excellent muster, numbering between 700 and 800 people. The chair was taken by Cr. Heaney, who was the chairman of the committee, and he had sitting beside him in front of the monument Lieut. Col. Thwaites, D.S.O., Mr. R. Cook, M.P., Mr. Carlisle, M.L.A., Rev. A. C. M'Connan, Rev. W. Brenton and Lieut. Col. J. I. Martin, while on the other side were ranged the children from the district schools, and on the other between 20 and 30 returned soldiers. There were also present Crs.

There were also present Crs. Cowan, T. F. Harrison and Law Smith. The unveiling ceremony commenced with the singing of the National Anthem.

The Chairman said it was hardly necessary for him to explain why they had met there that afternoon. He, however, wished to state that eighteen months ago the movement was started, and with the assistance of the public they had what they saw there that day. The people thought that something should be done to show they appreciated the efforts of the boys who went forth to fight for the liberty and freedom of the people of this nation. He concluded by asking Lieut. Col. Thwaites to perform the ceremony of unveiling that portion which contained the names of those who had made the supreme sacrifice.

Lieut. Col. Thwaites said that he very much appreciated the honor they had done him by asking him to unveil that memorial, which had been erected to the soldiers of that district. Just for the moment he was to confine his remarks to those who had made the supreme sacrifice. He was not much of a public speaker, and he really felt that he had undertaken a task which was beyond him. Speaking as one who saw a great deal of the men who did make the sacrifice, the evidences of their courage and devotion to their comrades would fill anybody who saw it with the deepest pride, and, at the same time, still deeper humility. He could not express all those things which were in his heart, and which he was sure were also in their hearts. He could only say that he was confident that those men who did lay down their lives enlisted with a pretty definite knowledge that they might very probably do so, and when their hour came they did it gladly. It was exceedingly difficult for him to speak upon this particular subject, because he could not put into words the thoughts and sentiments in his heart. Therefore he would not attempt to do so, and would proceed to unveil that portion of the memorial which bore the names of the fallen.

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Having done so, Col. Thwaites asked the assemblage to stand in silence for the space of one minute, which was done.

The Rev. A. C. M'Connan said that he felt very greatly honored in having been invited to take part in that afternoon's function. He would like to congratulate the people of the district on what they had done. They knew that it meant a great deal of love and appreciation of those who had gone from us. We could never forget those lads, and speaking as one who was so mercifully dealt with in having all his boys come back, he would like to say how deeply he sympathised with all those parents whose names appeared on the roll. Nevertheless, they had the knowledge that they died honorable deaths, and their names would be remembered for all time. They deeply honored the memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice.

Mr. M'Connan, at the request of the Chairman, asked the assemblage to engage in prayer, after which Mr. Carlson, of the Benalla High School, sounded the Last Post and Miss Brannigan laid a spray of laurel on the steps of the monument at the foot of the names. The company then sang Kipling's Recessional, after which the chairman announced there were apologies received from the Rev. A. R.

Mace, the shire President (Cr. Walker), Mr. Kay, secretary of the Benalla branch of the R.S. & S.I.L.A., also Mr. Burns, owing to illness. In regard to the latter, he said he had been a great help to the committee, and it was a matter of deep regret to him and them all that Mr. Burns was not able to be with them that day.

Lieut. Col. Thwaites then proceeded to unveil those portions of the monument which contained the names of those who had returned, and said that before he unveiled the portion which bore the names of their own men who enlisted and fought for the Empire,

enlisted and fought for the Empire, and who, fortunately, did not make the supreme sacrifice, he would like to say a few words. He was positive, as he said in his previous remarks, that all the men who enlisted for service in the late war did so knowing that they might be called upon to lay down their lives. Unfortunately, many of them found that prediction to be true. There was another aspect of this matter to which only a returned man could safely refer. Amongst the men who did return there were a number who, if they had had their own way, would have preferred to have remained on the battlefield. There were men who to his knowledge had paid a bigger price than death. It was not for him to say, but he was sure that those men paid that price gladly, and they were not going to do anything to push themselves under the notice of their fellow countrymen. The people who moved in the matter of that memorial did so not merely to keep fresh the memory of the men in their own hearts. That was not necessary, but it was with the further motive that there should be something which should be to the children of the rising generation and future generations a constant inspiration. The people who erected that memorial had in their hearts a greater memorial than anything that could be erected in stone. He belonged to the non-fighting section, and therefore he could say that the people were deeply sensible of the obligation they were under to the men who fought in the war. The thing that pleased him about the memorial was that it was one both to the living and the dead. The soldiers of all the nations which took part in the war had some outstanding feature about them, and the Australians, although they had great courage and devotion to duty, had one great outstanding quality, and it was their genius for comradeship. The devotion of a "digger" to a "cobber" was the outstanding feature of the A.I.F. In the way they had arranged their memorial that feature would remain for ever. Another thing that he would like to say was that

that he would like to say was that General Brand, the late Commandant of the Military Forces in Victoria, never tired of teaching the lesson he wished to repeat. He said that if the citizens of Australia wished to erect a memorial to the fallen they could not do better than care for the comrades of the fallen. Personally he thought that any person who did not possess personal knowledge of the trials and sufferings and temptations to which their lads were subjected had no right to criticise. The only people who had the right to do that were those who had been through the same thing, and those, they found, did not criticise. Another thing that General Brand said was "Be practical." He meant by that that a man should be restored to a position equal to that which he occupied before he enlisted, if not better. He thought that every returned man had a right to expect that. (Applause.) Lieut. Col. Thwaites then read the names appearing on the memorial, as follows:--

The names, inscribed in gold letters, on the die with verse are as follows:—Front view: "Our Honored Dead"—R. Balcombe, F. Burns, W. Dobson, G. Hall, W. Hay, J. Horsburgh, J. Kissack, J. M'Elroy, H. Nelson, W. Price, J. Price, R. Warnock. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Right side: "They played a man's part."—J. Webb, A. Gawley, R. W. Upton, E. Knight, J. B. Munson, W. J. Murray, F. Herbert, J. P. Talyer, M. M'Elroy, J. Everard, J. W. M'Elroy, D. Horsburgh, A. Backlund, C. J. Brannigan, C. Marshallsea, E. O'Callaghan, J. Fitzgibbon, J. K. O'Callaghan. Back view: "For remembrance of our men who answered the call of duty in the Great War, 1914-1919."—W. Brown, F. E. Dowell, T. H. Dowell, H. L. Dowell, G. Redding, F. Powell, J. T. Drummond, W. A. Drummond, E. Menhennitt, W. M. Murphy.

Left view:—"They knew the precious things they had to guard."—W. Dale, W. Wood, D. H. Read, W. E. Evans, G. T. Hooper, J. Wil-

W. Dale, W. Wood, D. H. Read, W. E. Evans, G. T. Hooper, J. Wilcock (died 5/8/20), S. T. A. Nelson, J. Warnock, G. W. Jensen, G. P. Burns, D. Deasey, F. Clark, W. H. Clark, J. Doyle, A. Cooper (killed in action, 17/4/18), G. T. Dennis, H. R. Allison (died 7/6/20), P. J. Farrell.

Lieut. Col. Martin, upon being called upon, said that he considered it a great honor and privilege to assist in unveiling that monument, which spoke for the loyalty and enthusiasm of the people of that district. He thought it was thoroughly fitting that it should take place on that particular day, when millions were celebrating Empire day and we proclaimed with one voice "One King, one Flag, one Empire." Did they realise properly what they owed to the men who had fought in ages past to secure the blessings which we enjoyed to-day and to the pioneers who conquered the wild bush? They were the men from whom these noble lads had sprung. These lads heard the call, and responded, and those boys who would never return were calling to us to-day to carry on. They were satisfied with the flag, and to belong to this grand old Empire, and they were calling to them all to make this country fit to live in. Those lads who returned fought the battle over there, and now they had to fight the battle here, not with arms, but against an insidious foe, who was working to wreck this grand and glorious empire for which they fought. They had to fight now against this infernal cancer which was eating into our midst. What they had to do now was to cut it out. He advised them to have nothing to do with any man who had anything to say against this Empire. In respect to any man standing for a public position, ask if he were loyal, and if he is not, have nothing to do with him. The Empire was won by our ancestors, and it was maintained by the army and navy, and our boys played no small part in that. He said, "Carry on and do your duty to your God, your King, and your country." (Applause.) He hoped they would bear with his disjointed remarks, for

bear with his disjointed remarks, for although they were disjointed they were genuine. (Applause.)

Mr. Carlisle expressed the pleasure which he felt at being present at the unveiling of that fine memorial. It showed that the men and women of Swanpool were doing their part in commemorating all those who took part in the greatest war the world has ever known. Unfortunately, it had come upon us of the present generation to defend the Empire which our forefathers handed down to us. We were up against the greatest military nation of the world, and they were a people who were very thorough in everything which they did, and if it had not been for the British fleet he thought it was very likely that at the present time matters might have been very different with us. However, with the army and navy they had come through, won the war and preserved their freedom. He thought it right and proper that every district should do what it could to erect a memorial

like that, and he was glad to see that every district recognised what it owed to those lads who had passed away and were under the sod. (Hear, hear) Up to the present Australia had not a very long history, but as time went on they hoped to find there would grow a fine national sentiment, and our heroes regarded as in the past in British history. The memorial erected there would, he thought, be a lasting one. It was a very beautiful design, and reflected great credit upon the committee who chose it. It would for all time be a memorial of what our men had done. This war was different to all other wars that had taken place, insomuch as a man was never safe. Shortly before the war came to an end a cousin of his who had been wounded was, with two others, conveyed nine miles behind the lines, where they were resting, and an aviator came along, dropped a bomb, and blew all three to pieces. He was one of those who always held that there

of those who always held that there should be equality of sacrifice, but that was a contentious matter about which they need not speak. The war had been won, and it was for us to see that those who came back were well treated. It was easy to promise things to men when they were going away, but it was a different matter when they came back. They were doing their best. They found that a much larger number than was anticipated desired to go on the land, and the task was a bigger one than they had expected. He was very pleased to see a large number of returned men present that day to take part in the ceremonial. The people in that district had shown how a British soldier should be honored. (Applause.)

Mr. R. Cook said he had very much pleasure in supporting the remarks of the previous speakers, and he then addressed a few remarks to the children, after which he said they were quite familiar with what had been said that day. There was nothing new, and it had often been said during the last five or six years. Out of the great struggle the British Empire had come stronger than ever. He wished to give them particulars of the enlistments. The United Kingdom enlistments were 25 per cent. of the population; Australia, 13 per cent.; the United States (who "won the war"), 2 per cent. The casualties were—United Kingdom, 11 per cent.; Australia, 8½ per cent.; France, 4½ per cent.; Belgium, 1 per cent.; and the United States, 1 in 400. One of the greatest achievements of our brave warriors was the landing on Gallipoli, and it was honored by the people throughout Australia. One of the greatest feats accomplished by our navy was the destruction of the Emden on Cocos Island, after it had destroyed about a million pounds' worth of our shipping in the Indian Ocean; and then our nurses were equal to any others in the world. Three of them in Wangaratta had done the right thing in marrying the men they nursed back to life. The school children in Victoria had contributed £120,000, and when the war

buted £120,000, and when the war broke out Sir Jos. Cook promised 20,000 men, but that number was increased to 417,000 soldiers, nurses and sailors. Those dear boys whose services have been recognised in such a tangible way had played their part. For those who did not admire the flag the world is wide, and there was no difficulty in getting a ship and sailing for a country under some other flag. To all those who wished to keep under our flag we offered them hospitality. He then proceeded to deal with the matter of armaments, and the present outlook in the Pacific. Great Britain was at present expending 10 per cent. of her revenue on her navy, and it was to her navy that our victory was due. The United States was also expending 10 per cent., but Japan was expending a third of her revenue. Did the Japanese do that for the fun of it? There was a huge population of 70,000,000 within a few days' sail of Australia, but before the war it was regarded by our enemies as the German prize. Our population is just a little over 5,000,000, and our territory is slightly larger than that of the United States, which has 110,000,000. He thought that those who could read between the lines could see if there were any sense in his remarks. The Defence Bill was coming on in the House of Representatives, and it was for them to give it support. The Prime Minister had gone Home to a conference in London, and one thing that was to be considered was the renewal of the Japanese treaty in a form (it was hoped) that would be favourable to England, Japan and America. In the late war the Japanese conveyed our soldiers home, and they played the game. They might have been paid for it; no doubt they were. If the treaty is favorably renewed we could carry on; if it is not, the mother country is not going to give up, and she would assess her dominions; but if, on the other hand things went right, then the money could be spent in the development of Australia. These were matters which should claim their at-

matters which should claim their attention. (Applause.)

The Rev. W. Brenton, in the name of the Methodist body which he represented, congratulated the people of Swanpool on the loyalty they displayed to their men and their Empire. Great things had been accomplished in the past, but greater things were ahead, and if we were to progress we must see that no evil power came between the fulfilment of our hopes. (Applause.)

The proceedings then terminated, and the Chairman invited the visitors to afternoon tea, which was provided by the committee.