

PARRAMATTA'S MEMORIAL.

Foundation Stone Laid.

"Our Debt to These Men."

Parramatta's war memorial is to be erected in Prince Alfred Park.

In the presence of a large crowd, the Mayor of Parramatta laid the foundation stone, on Saturday afternoon.

The local Boy Scouts (1st Parramatta Troop), under Scoutmaster Pickering, marched to the scene of the ceremony. Then followed the Citizens' Artillery, headed by the Lancers' Band.

Conspicuous among the khaki-clad men in attendance was Warrant-Officer Cawood, the well-known local veteran.

The assemblage included many representative persons.

Ald. H. C. G. Moss (secretary of the Memorial Committee) presided. On the platform were the Mayor (Ald. L. A. Simpson), Major-General and Mrs. C. Cox, Mr. F. C. Cox, Miss Cox, Rev. Hillhouse Taylor, Rev. K. W. Pain, Rev. H. E. Andrews, Ald. W. P. Noller, Warrant-Officer Cawood, and Mr. F. C. Dunn.

Proceedings opened with a hymn ("O God, our help in ages past"), followed by a prayer.

Having read a number of apologies from those unable to attend, the chairman gave a brief resume of the Memorial movement, mentioning the various sources from which the money had been subscribed. On behalf of the sub-committee, he then presented the Mayor with a silver trowel, suitably inscribed, as a memento of the occasion. "A great deal of success of this movement," said the chairman, "is due to our Mayor." (Hear, hear.)

"I feel highly honored," said the Mayor, "at being given the privilege of laying the foundation stone of this memorial, which is being erected by the people of Parramatta, to commemorate the gallant deeds of our soldiers. The erection of this obelisk is not for the purpose of stimulating the spirit of war, but to instil into the present and future generations that sense of loyalty and patriotism that has made the Empire so great. It will also act as an incentive for those yet to come, to act as their forefathers did, should the necessity arise; but we all hope and trust that the Almighty will so guide our statesmen, so as to prevent the world from being plunged into another disastrous and appalling calamity like the one we have recently and sadly experienced, and which has left broken lives and sorrowing hearts in almost every corner of the earth.

"When our men left these shores to uphold the honor of our traditions," the Mayor continued, "it was impressed upon them that the slogan was 'England expects every man to do his duty.' But where lies the duty now? The men have done their duty, and it is now for us to do ours. I am afraid we are apt to forget. We are apt to look upon those deeds as past history, and treat them as past history. We should never forget the men who have died—the men who have endured suffering, hardship, and sickness, so that we might live in peace and security.

"I know I am voicing the feelings of all when I say our hearts go out in deep sympathy to those who have lost their dear ones. But they have the satisfaction of knowing that their dear ones died the noblest death a man can die—fighting for his King and country, and for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. They gained undying glory for Australia, and

a tomb of imperishable fame. And now, with feelings of regret, pride, and gratitude, I will lay the foundation stone of this memorial."

The Mayor then declared the stone "well and truly laid," and thanked the sub-committee for its presentation.

The Lancers' Band then played the Funeral March (Chopin).

Major-General Cox said he was proud to attend the function. It was the second of its kind he had attended in Parramatta within the last twenty years. Although the people of Parramatta were late getting a start on, he understood they were going to erect a very fine monument. Parramatta was the cradle of Australia, and should have the best monument possible. (Hear, hear). The park in which they were assembled was one of the most historic parks in the Commonwealth.

"They saved Australia for you, and don't forget it," he said, referring to the soldiers. "They were the finest fighting men that ever the world has seen. Had it not been for these men, you would have been under the control of the Germans to-day, and would have had no Parramatta; it is just as well for you to remember that. I understand that the citizens of Parramatta took this job on, and collected over £2000 for it. When I came through Parramatta some months ago, I saw the Honor Board, with the name of every soldier who left this town. I came through to-day, and it's gone."

"I am told no names are to be put on this monument. I appeal to you, one and all, to see that the name of every man who left here is put on this monument. (Hear, hear.)

"If you require any more money," proceeded the General, "I will come up here and give a lecture on the war, to the best of my ability, if you people will promise me to see that those names are put on the monument. It's the only thing I ask you to do. I appeal to you, to see that this is done. If the mothers take this in hand, I'm sure they'll see it through." (Applause).

The chairman explained that the subscribers had decided to put the names on the monument. This proposal, however, had not been favored by the soldiers themselves. The names, though, would be inscribed on vellum, and placed in a casket in the monument, where they would remain for all time.

The Mayor endorsed this statement, and also pointed out that arrangements were being made to have the honor rolls in the vestibule of the Town Hall.

Major-General Cox: Notwithstanding the explanation the Mayor has given you, I do appeal to you now to see that the names go on this monument. This is the place where the public will come—not in the back of the Town Hall.

Rev. H. E. Andrews then addressed the gathering. "I am wondering," he said, "how it comes that this opportunity to address this meeting is given to me. I am not one of the fighting men. I offered my services in any capacity they could be used, but was deemed to be ineligible. I am one of those who stayed at home and did something to keep the home fires burning, while our brothers and our sons nobly kept the camp fires burning. And those who kept the home fires burning undoubtedly did something to inspire the hearts of those who kept the camp fires burning.

"I come as a plain lover of peace. I come to say that we in Parramatta are very glad, indeed, proud and honored, that this old town is erecting some suitable memorial for those who went out

and did their duty. Parramatta is the cradle of Australia. We remember also that Parramatta was a great military depot. And I suppose the old military spirit that imbued the early inhabitants of this town, still lives; and that the men who live in the salubrious district of Parramatta have that spirit, which has always answered, and answered promptly, the call of the Empire."

The speaker went on to say that in Australia the aristocracy and the democracy vied with one another where duty and danger called. The monument to be erected would stand as a great, silent, splendid memorial to those who were lying in honored graves on the sunlit sands of Gallipoli, amid the waving poppies of France, and on the storm-swept plains of Belgium and other countries. In the memory of those from whom they went, their spirit still lived.

After referring to the noblest pageant and most wonderful procession in England's history—when the body of an unknown soldier was borne to the honored dust at Westminster, Rev. Andrews said the monument to be erected would stand as a memorial to everyone, known or unnamed, who went out from this old town of Parramatta. To this cenotaph, men and women would come. They would stand as silent as circumstances would permit, and they would remember that it stood to the memory of their boys. This cenotaph was to take its place among the shrines of the British Empire.

"The greatest shrine of all—Westminster Abbey—stands as a temple of forgiveness and forgetfulness," he proceeded, "and I hope this cenotaph will stand as a symbol of forgiveness and forgetfulness. Do not let us cherish the unholy hate of the past. Let this stand as a splendid shrine, binding the men and women, not only of this generation, but of generations to come, in an unswerving and undying allegiance to the great Empire under whose King our men have ever been proud to serve. If it achieves that, it achieves a noble mission. I hope this monument will fulfil its splendid purpose, and will be a reminder of those who fell, and of all who went from this old town in which it is our pride to live."

Ald. Noller said he was glad that some finality had been reached in connection with the memorial. The monument would be a credit to the people of Parramatta, and he hoped they would be proud of it. After referring to the dimensions and cost of the monument, he said they were trying to arrange the unveiling ceremony for Empire Day, if possible.

"Men are suffering to-day through this great war," he continued. "To me, it is a blot on our Government here, when day after day I see men without arms, men without legs, men who have lost their sight, begging for food."

Concluding, Ald. Noller said the Mayor had worked very hard for the memorial, during the last two or three years. As the monument was being erected by the citizens of Parramatta, the Mayor, who was the chief magistrate of the town, was the right person to lay the foundation stone.

Major-General Cox took exception to Ald. Noller's statement in reference to the soldiers. "The president of the Emblemless Soldiers' Association," he exclaimed "not before Parliament what was considered adequate for every Emblemless soldier in Australia, and Parliament passed it without a word."

An appeal for further subscriptions was then made by the Mayor.

Proceedings terminated with the singing of the "Old Hundredth," and the National Anthem.

First Sailor: "On my last voyage I saw waves one hundred feet high."

Old Salt: "I was a sailor forty years and never saw 'em over forty."

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First sailor: "I'raps not; but every-thing is higher now than it used to be, mate."