

## LATE TROOPER HERBY WADDELL

### Unveiling a Memorial

ON Sunday afternoon, the ceremony of unveiling a memorial to the memory of Trooper Herby Waddell, who fell in the South African campaign, took place in Burdekin Park. The day, unfortunately, in some respects, though not in others, was ushered in with showers of rain, which continued, with but slight intermission, during the progress of the ceremony. Consequently, and most probably for this as a principal reason, the attendance was not so large as anticipated, and numbered about 250, while the marked absence of the military element was also commented upon. However, the absence of the military was not due to any feeling inimical to the young hero who fought and fell for Empire, but arose from an *esprit de corps* existing in local military circles concerning certain issues. The Singleton Band was present, and played several appropriate airs during the afternoon, and the members of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Choir sang, very pathetically, the hymn arranged for the occasion. Owing to the rain and the sloppy condition of the park, the speakers addressed the gathering from the covered portion of the exterior of the Council Chambers facing the memorial, which was draped in purple, and displayed the Union Jack.

The Mayor of Singleton, prior to the proceedings commencing, read apologies from the following gentlemen who had been invited, but were unable to attend:—Major General Sir Edward Hutton, General Fian, Sir Edmund Barton, Sir John See, Colonel Ranclaud, Captain Markwell, Bishop of Newcastle, Rev. Father Kilgallin, Very Rev. Father Meagher, Lieut. A. J. Prentice, Mr J. A. K. Shaw, and Mr F. D. Taylor.

The Mayor, in addressing those assembled, said that all present were doubtless aware of the purpose for which they had gathered together that afternoon. It was to be regretted, in one sense, that the rain that had fallen, and was still falling, had prevented a larger attendance, but still there was the reflection that this rain was doing good to the district. They had assembled that afternoon to do honour to one who fell in the South African campaign, and though his bones reposed in the far off foreign soil, still his memory lived, and to that memory of one who was so beloved by his comrades and friends this memorial had been erected. The speaker went on to say that they had

memorial had been erected. The speaker went on to say that they had assembled that afternoon to do honour to the name of an Australian, a native of this district and a brave soldier, and the inscriptions upon the memorial to be unveiled were intended to honour the memory of the deceased. This memorial had been erected by shilling subscriptions raised by the proprietor of the *Budget* newspaper. A soldiers' demonstration had also been held some time ago, and some correspondence ensued between Captain Addison, then in command of the Singleton Volunteer Infantry, and Mr Morrison, the proprietor of the *Budget*, respecting this matter, but no decision had been arrived at, though it was thought the two funds might have been amalgamated. However, the funds from the soldiers' demonstration had been devoted to the erection of a memorial tablet in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and the speaker considered it only fair that this explanation should be made. He should not detain them longer, as other addresses were to follow, and the rain was still falling, but he would remind them that on this very date three years ago Trooper Herby Waddell fell in South Africa. He would ask the Singleton Band to play a selection as the next item on the programme that afternoon.

The band having complied with this request, Mr C. H. Dight, M.P. for Singleton, next addressed the audience.

Mr Dight, addressing those assembled as "The Mayor, fellow citizens, and subjects of the King," said that they had all met on this solemn occasion to do honor to a native of the district, whose mortal remains filled a grave in a far off land while fighting for his Sovereign and country. The South African war was now a matter of history, and though he should like to refer to this and the other matters before them more fully, he realised that he must of necessity be brief, so as not to keep them too long in the rain. The Mayor had truly remarked that the attendance would have been greater, and there would have been more from the surrounding districts but for the wet. However, though this was unfortunate, so far as this gathering was concerned, we must not grumble, as the rain was doing good. They were, no doubt, pretty well all acquainted with the history of the South African war. This war was forced upon the British, owing to the invasion of their territory in South Africa by the Boers. At the opening of the campaign the British forces

of the campaign the British forces received serious reverses, and a wave of sympathetic feeling swept through the Empire, and it was determined to prevent British prestige from going down. This South African war was fought under difficult circumstances. The British forces had to encounter in the field an enemy that was hardly ever seen in the open and to whom the country was familiar, so volunteer contingents from British dependencies gave their services freely for the Empire. Arrangements were made for colonial contingents, and among these contingents was one from Singleton district, a very respectable portion in number and bravery. New South Wales soldiers who had volunteered had, up to this time, distinguished themselves, and it was decided to augment these forces by forming what was known as the "Bushmen's Contingent," mostly formed of good riders, good bushmen, and good shots, well adapted for the methods of fighting in South Africa. Of this Bushmen's Contingent, Trooper Herby Waddell was a member, and this contingent, together with the other Australian forces, specially distinguished themselves, and were eulogised by Lord Roberts, who was in command, and the Australian soldiers were spoken of as being equal to the pick of the British army. After being in several engagements, Trooper Waddell fell, mortally wounded, in an encounter with the enemy at Piensar's River, and he fell as a man and a soldier. He had been suffering from illness, and that day was invalided. He was advised not to go out with his comrades, but he persisted, and they knew the result. He fell. Singleton had furnished some twenty or thirty volunteers for the war, and all had returned but poor Herby Waddell. Instead of welcoming him home, they had that day a sadder duty to perform in unveiling a memorial to his memory, and this ceremony would shortly be performed by Mrs Bennett, the wife of the Mayor of Singleton. This monument now erected in the park, it was to be hoped, would perpetuate the memory of Herby Waddell, long after those present had passed away. It was to be believed also, that the erection of this memorial would institute a spirit of patriotism in the present and future generations. It was just three years since Trooper Waddell had fallen, and the Rev. Auld, Chaplain to the Bushmen's Contingent, had borne testimony to the deceased as a good man and brave soldier as ever fell on the field of battle. Those who

a good man and brave soldier as ever fell on the field of battle. Those who had known him, as a child and afterwards as a man, in this district, also bore testimony to his worth, and his memory was consecrated by his exemplary conduct as a member of the community. If anything were required to perfect this young life, it occurred in its closing chapter when he fell doing a soldier's duty. There was a lesson to be learned from the history of this South African war. One man in South Africa, Kruger, had deceived his people, and had professed to appeal to God to assist his cause, but he would leave any further remarks upon this subject to the Rev. Mr Wallace and others. Touching the memorial now erected, the Mayor had mentioned another that had been placed in the Presbyterian Church. It appeared that subscriptions had been raised for both about the same time. This memorial, however, shortly to be unveiled, was erected by shilling subscriptions raised by Mr Morrison. These subscriptions were started, and then lists were called in in 1902. After these lists were called, in Mr Morrison was seized with a severe illness, and as the anniversary of Trooper Waddell's death was then close, it was thought better to defer the erection of the memorial to this anniversary. All who saw this memorial must admit that the work had been well carried out. The speaker understood that the amount subscribed was £45 14s and all this had been paid to the sculptor, the Railway Commissioners deducting nothing for freight. Other expenses in connection with the erection of the memorial had been borne by Mr Morrison himself. The actual cost of this memorial was £45 14s, and there was a receipt for this amount to be seen by anyone who wished, given by the sculptor. He felt sure he was justified in saying, on behalf of those assembled, that all joined in sympathising with the sorrows of the bereaved relatives of Trooper Waddell. It was to be hoped this memorial would stand for ages, and would serve to instil a spirit of patriotism in this and future generations. Trooper Waddell had fallen in defence of his country, and there were others who would be prepared to do likewise.

The Rev. R. J. Wallace, who next briefly addressed the meeting, stated how much pleasure it afforded him to be present that afternoon, to assist in the ceremony of unveiling this very substantial monument to the memory of Trooper Waddell. It was another evidence of what could be done in collecting a good round sum by small

evidence of what could be done in collecting a good round sum by small subscriptions. Yet, apart from its monetary value, this monument was splendid evidence of the esteem in which the late Trooper Waddell was held. There had been some delay in putting the money into a substantial form, yet sometimes it was a wise thing to observe the ancient motto, "Hasten slowly!" The speaker felt sure that the erection of this splendid memorial would give pleasure to the relatives of the deceased, and also to the residents of the town and district, and be a splendid evidence, also of esteem, the deceased was held in by all classes of the community. Virtuous deeds were not only performed to die, and there was abundant evidence of this shown in the late war, while "honour and praise from no condition rise." In referring to those who fell in the South African war he need not remind them how blessed were the dead who were in God's keeping. When these rose from the tomb, every man would be rewarded for the deeds done in the body, and the rewards for the patriotism of a soldier would not be among the least. He who had acted most nobly would be judged in accordance with the years of his life upon earth, though now

"The mossy marble rest  
on the lips that we have pressed."

In conclusion, he was certain that while this monument lasted, the memory of Trooper Waddell would not fade in this district.

The addresses having concluded, those present gathered round the memorial about to be unveiled.

Mrs Bennett, the wife of the Mayor of Singleton, unveiled the memorial, and as she drew aside the drapings that concealed it, said that she did so on behalf of the Singleton people in memory of one who fought and fell while loyally performing his duty as a soldier of the Empire.

The drapings drawn aside revealed the figure of a bushman in the South African war, and the following inscriptions also appeared near the base of the memorial:—"Erected to the memory of Trooper H. W. Waddell, member of the Bushmen's Contingent. A native of Singleton who fell in active service at Piennar's River, South African War, September 27th, 1900. The funds for this Memorial were collected by Shilling Subscriptions inaugurated by the Proprietor of the Singleton *Budget*. Unveiled 27th September, 1903, by Mrs F. A. Bennett, Mayoress of Singleton."

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The band, while the ceremony was being performed, played the "Dead March In Saul," and then Mr Morrison formally handed over to the Mayor the memorial, the Mayor stating that it afforded him much pleasure to receive it for the trustees of Burdellin Park.

Mr Morrison then presented the Mayoress with a souvenir in memory of the occasion in the shape of a gold medallion with a suitable inscription.

The Mayor, in replying, remarked that it was only justice to say that Mr Morrison deserved the thanks of the community for the manner in which he had carried out this matter. Funds might be raised, and matters stop there, but Mr Morrison had carried this to a conclusion. He trusted this memorial would be appreciated and respected by the Singleton people as a tribute to the dead and as a worthy monument to a worthy man.

The band then played the National Anthem, and the assemblage dispersed while a light rain was still falling.