

## Bungawalbin Honor Roll.

### WELCOME TO SOLDIERS.

A great crowd, gathered from all parts of the district, filled the Memorial Hall at Bungawalbin on Thursday night last on the occasion of the unveiling of the Honor Roll, and the banquet and presentation to Ptes. Harold Leeson, Jack Kirkland, and Henry Kirkland. The spectacle inside the Hall was a most inspiring one. Crossed lines of flags overhead, a huge Australian flag above the front entrance, two Union Jacks and the Commonwealth flag gracing the back of the stage, a series of tables laden with every good thing that could suggest itself to the splendid band of lady workers who have made Bungawalbin famous for its public spreads, and the floral decorations entwined with battalion colors—all these conspired to make a picture that should live in the memory of the soldier-guests of the evening for many a day to come. Mr. L. Patch, the President of the Hall Committee, occupied the chair, and besides the three returned boys previously mentioned there were also present in uniform Corporal W. H. Kirkland, Lance-Corporal Jack Leeson, Ptes. Neil Leeson, Ken Leeson, Bert Pursey (all of Bungawalbin), besides Major E. T. Sheridan, of Coraki, and about a score of other wearers of the R.S. and S.I.L. badge from surrounding centres. Altogether close upon 200 people were present. After the very excellent spread had been discussed, and the toast of "The King" honored,

The Chairman proposed "Our Guests," and in doing so said that Bungawalbin warmly welcomed back its latest arrivals from the war zone. What the feelings of the people were was well exemplified by this gathering. Their gratitude and respect went out to the boys who had maintained their Empire's honor on foreign fields, and had proved to all that our grand old flag flew over an Empire of unity and common purpose. We were a people who didn't want war, but when war was forced upon us our sons had proved their ability to maintain the cause of civilisation, uphold international law, and preserve our position in the world. There were, of course, dissenters in the Empire. It was a fact to be deplored, but the vast majority were loyal, and no one had displayed the spirit of loyalty and unselfishness more than the boys who had fought. As one of the results of this war he had hoped to see the abolition of class strife, and a determination to unite for the progress and advancement of the Commonwealth. That was something all should strive to promote.

At this stage the Secretary, Mr. H. F. Robinson, presented Ptes. Harold Leeson and H. and J. Kirkland, with cheques and gold medals as tokens of

esteem and appreciation from the residents of the district. One of the guests (Pte. Harold Leeson) had, he said, come back somewhat finer than when he went away, but he was still looking well, and doubtless glad to be back and rejoin his wife after his experiences abroad.

Pte. H. Leeson, responding, said that while away he had received reports of Bungawalbin welcome homes, and was proud of the way this little centre had shone out. He had had to break up his home, and leave his wife, to do his share. It was a bit hard, but when he got to France and saw the havoc that had been wrought he only regretted he had not gone before, even though his share in the war could only be a small one. If there was one thing the war had taught him it was this—to try and keep Australia free from war's ravages, and to regard the good old Union Jack as the best flag in the world. The flag was one that was worth fighting for, and this war had proved it so. He sincerely thanked the people of Bungawalbin for their gifts and this fine welcome home.

Pte. Harry Kirkland said he was lucky to get away to the war early, and lucky to get a fairly decent job there. Believing that a live dog was better than a dozen dead lions he stuck to that job, and so was here to-day. He thanked the people for the banquet and presentation.

Pte. J. Kirkland said that he was later on the scene over there, but he, too, had struck a good job, and was glad to be home, and to express appreciation of this welcome.

Mr. H. Robinson (Swan Bay) proposed "The Parents," and paid a warm tribute to the heads of the families of the guests as neighbors, friends and citizens.

Mr. Robt. Leeson, responding, said he took it as a great honor to see so many present. He thanked Mr. Robinson for his kind remarks. He was proud of having been represented at the front, and glad to welcome home the boys who upheld the honor of the flag. He would have been more pleased if all parents had stood in the same happy position as himself—all his sons back alive and well. The great anxieties of the past had now been left behind, and that was a relief which only parents who had sons at the war could fully appreciate. In honor of the memory of the lads who fought and fell he asked that the company stand in respectful silence for a few minutes—a request that was acceded to.

Mr. A. Kirkland also responded. If the boys were glad to be home, he said, the parents were even more so. He appreciated the honor accorded the boys for they had deserved it.

At this stage Major E. T. Sheridan unveiled the honor roll. It was, he said, a duty that was attended with mixed feelings. A fair number of

said, a duty that was attended with mixed feelings. A fair number of names on the roll were those of men he was associated with before the war, in local military circles. They were called "tin soldiers" then, but all had made good in the real thing when it developed. Some of those whose names graced the roll were with him over on the other side, and those whom he did not meet he had heard of from time to time, and he could say this of all them—that he never heard of one man from Bungawalbin who did not do credit as a soldier to his district and to his country. With respect to those who fell, if parents were not prouder of their fallen sons than the parents were of stay-at-homes who could have gone and did not, then he did not know what to think.

Major Sheridan then unveiled the roll, a piece of work of handsome design, hand carved by Mrs. J. Patch, Junr., the President of the Bungawalbin Red Cross branch. Constructed of beech, highly polished, the roll is flanked by two ornamental pillars of similar material. It bears on the top the Red Cross symbol, beneath that the Union Jack and Australian flag, crossed, in colors, then a kangaroo and emu carved in the wood, and the legends "Our Heroes," "Freedom," "Liberty," followed by two columns of names,

carved in the wood, and gold lettered. Opposite each name, and let into a heart-shaped recess, is a photo of that particular soldier, while at the base runs the phrase, "Peace with Victory." The names inscribed are—F. J. Battis, W. Battis, A. W. Brown, T. J. Haun (died prisoner of war), W. H. Kirkland, J. A. Kirkland, Hugh Lambert (killed in action), J. Leeson, A. J. Leeson, K. Leeson, N. Leeson, A. J. McInnes, A. McPhee, D. H. McPhee, R. McPhee, M. Molloy, F. S. Newby, V. R. Patch, A. J. Pursey (died wounds), A. G. Pursey, F. Robinson, E. J. Tysoe. Mrs. Patch is to be complimented on her handiwork, more especially as the carving was all done with a pocket knife, and most skilfully and faithfully carried out. Long and tedious though the undertaking was, it was clearly a labor of love on the part of a lady whose fine record in patriotic work has been equaled by few and surpassed by none in these districts.

Mr. Ken. Leeson proposed "The Ladies," and paid a well deserved compliment to the ladies of the Red Cross who had prepared and served the splendid banquet that evening.

Mrs. J. Patch, Junr. (President of the local Red Cross) briefly responded.

Mr. R. C. K. Kemp, who proposed "The District," congratulated Bungawalbin on the part it had played in the big war. Not only did it produce good soldiers in great numbers, but also produced girls as pretty as any in

good soldiers in great numbers, but also produced girls as pretty as any in Australia—a sentiment that was cheered to the echo. Just at present the producer here was going through a hard time, said Mr. Kemp, and had to exhibit all the qualities of a soldier—pluck, perseverance and endurance. And to his credit he was proving the possession of all these qualities. Still, if we were badly off, other districts were infinitely worse. So by comparison we had nothing to lose.

Mr. H. F. Robinson, in responding, gave a summary of the work performed by the Bungawalbin part of the district during the past four or five years. The local Red Cross branch alone had gathered in £450 during that period—£271 17s 7d for its own use, £46 7s for War Chest Day, £31 for Australian Red Cross Day, £100 raised by a "paddy raid" for the prisoners of war fund. In addition to that, the people had raised £105 by means of a continental in aid of the Belgian fund. Then there was an appeal made one night in aid of the Y.M.C.A., when £255 were subscribed in a few minutes. A Queen of the Day concert yielded £22. The residents had also subscribed £206 for welcome homes and presentations to returned men, and only recently a special appeal for the Hospital yielded £25. Thus in these same directions alone over £1122 had been raised. (Loud applause). Continuing, Mr. Robinson said: And mind, this does not include donations and assistance given to Coraki for Australia Day, France's Day, Australian Red Cross Day, and many other patriotic functions. Then all the War Loans have been well supported locally, and on top of all this we have built and furnished this new hall, which to-day stands us in at £400 for material alone. And the last work was undertaken just as willingly and with just the same enthusiastic spirit as the first. Thus the district could, he thought, be credited with having well kept its end of the stick up for the past five years. The hall they stood in was the result of voluntary labor, and the magnificent honor roll was the work of a leading local lady, and reflected the utmost credit on her skill and artistic instincts.

Cr. J. T. Olive (President of Woodburn Shire) proposed "The Visitors," and incidentally paid a tribute to the Red Cross ladies of Bungawalbin for their war work, and to the soldiers who had gone forth from this quarter to play their parts in the great war.

Mr. J. Sheridan, responding, complimented Bungawalbin on the way it always did things. The ladies here, as elsewhere, had done wonders, and put up marvellous efforts during the war. The hard work had fallen to their lot. All that mere man had to do was to put his hands in his pockets and pay up occasionally.

Mr. Kemp and Mr. T. J. Morgan (who taught school at Bungawalbin 30 years ago) both responded, and Mr. C.

taughts school at Bungawalbin 30 years ago) briefly responded, and Mr. C. Blackwood also came to light with a few breezy remarks that put the company in good humor.

The toasts of "The Press" and "The Chairman" terminated this part of the proceedings.

The remainder of the night was given over to dancing, the bulk of the music being supplied by Mr. and Mrs. C. Blackwood.

Mr. H. F. Robinson, who has been the moving spirit in all Bungawalbin's welcome home functions, was Secretary to Thursday night's affair; the ladies of the Red Cross served the fine spread. Messrs. J. S. Newby and W. Pestill officiated at the ticket door and door, respectively; while various members of the Hall Committee lent valuable assistance in other directions.

Well, for rare candor, does anyone know of aught to beat this, from the advertising columns of a North Queensland paper:—"Dave Lewis, late A.I.F., begs to notify that he has started business on his own account in an up-to-date restaurant, and hopes that his many friends will stop away and damn well give him a chance."

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