

## SISTER L. RIGGALL.

### Dedication of Memorial Plaque.

At the celebrations in Maffra in connection with Anzac the dedication of the memorial plaque in memory of the late Sister Riggall, at the entrance to the Memorial Hall, was the first of the impressive ceremonies during the afternoon.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. A. McAdam, president of the Maffra Repatriation Committee, pointed out that the plaque had been erected by the committee to perpetuate the memory of Sister Riggall, who had not only paid the supreme sacrifice for the soldiers overseas, but had also bequeathed the sum of £500 for the relief of incapacitated soldiers in Gippsland. That donation it had been the privilege of his committee to distribute.

Archdeacon Weir, prior to the dedication ceremony, said that in the year 1914 an Australian woman stood in the streets of Melbourne and watched the troops marching to the troopships. The scene had made a great impression on her and she had written a hymn dedicated to the men of Anzac.

There were Anzac women, too, added Archdeacon Weir. There was no beat of the drums for them; no stirring of martial music. Yet the women had answered the call of duty and had gone out to do that work which only women could. Sister Riggall was such a woman. One could imagine this land of ours subdued by a foreign foe, and its people reduced to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water, but it would never be conquered nor enslaved while it produced women of the stamp and with the spirit which had animated Sister Riggall.

Sister Riggall.

He could do no better than repeat the words of the Bishop of Gippsland (Dr. Cranswick) at the dedication of memorial windows at St. John's church many years ago, for a copy of which he was indebted to Miss Ashton.

On that occasion the Bishop had taken the thoughts of his hearers to a military funeral outside Rouen, where a woman gave her life just as truly as any soldier. "They could picture," said Bishop Cranswick, on that occasion, "six strong officers carrying a burden covered by the Union Jack, while orderlies followed with wreaths. Then came a large following of men who loved Louie B. Riggall and wanted the world to know it. Following these was a mass of mourners who did not know her, but knew her work. The Last Post was sounded, and a volley was fired over the graveside in the country. Every honor was given her. Who was she? She was one of their Gippsland girls who had given her service and her life freely for the Empire. Firstly in the Broadmeadows camp; then in Egypt in October, 1915, where she served in the 14th A.G.H. for nine months; then to England and France, where she was placed in charge of a hospital at Rouen. She was also appointed British Red Cross representative in that part, and was mentioned in despatches, Lieut.-Colonel Murdoch officially recording the splendid success of her work. Both in Egypt and France she was whole-hearted and thorough in her work, and it was characteristic of her life to do all things well. She was like the girls on our farms and stations, where hard work was necessary if things were to be successful. Miss Riggall had 12 hospitals to visit as well as taking charge of the comforts for the men and performing Red Cross work. She also organised entertainments for convalescents and furnished com-

convalescents and furnished completely the Red Cross hall at Rouen. In addition, she made curtains for the sisters' rooms, and accessories for the church she visited. Knowing Paris as she did, having been educated there, she was requisitioned by the boys to purchase presents to send home to relatives and friends. Most of the knowledge of her splendid work came from complete strangers. It was said she had an indomitable spirit and performed three women's work. She died in the teeth of struggle—in those dark hours when the fate of the Empire hung in the balance. She refused to accept the possibility of defeat, and had always a cheery influence over the men during those dread and darkest days. She had but two holidays of a fortnight each during her long period of service and sacrifice. The chaplains had said she possessed strong religious views; had deep religious principles, and was an earnest believer in prayer. At the end she seemed to have found special favor with God through the way He called her Home. She was bright to the last; knew no illness, but died suddenly at the post of duty; honored as soldiers can honor a true and holy woman. Her last act before leaving home was to leave a cheque for £500 to be expended in the relief of crippled and otherwise incapacitated soldiers.

"In memory of a true and noble woman," said Archbishop Weir, in conclusion, "and through her to do honor to all true and noble women of this great and of Australia, I unveil this monument in memory of the late Sister Riggall."

Cr. D. R. Manson (chair president) said it gave him the greatest pleasure to participate in the ceremony of perpetuating the memory of one who had given her life for her country. It was a pleasing gesture on the part of the

Repatriation Committee to take this them.

The plaque, which is a beautiful piece of craftsmanship, representing the late Miss Riggall in full nursing uniform, bears the following simple inscription:—

"Louie B. Riggall, V.A.D., who gave her life for the sick and wounded at Rouen, August 31, 1918."

means of commemorating the fine work of Sister Riggall.

Mr. A. J. Akam, representing the State executive of the R.S.L., said it was pleasing to hear, in the course of the previous speakers' remarks, the emphasis laid on the fine work of the beloved army sisters during the war period. The Anzacs and all others who had the great traditions of the British race at heart believed that behind their service and sacrifice were the great principles of Christian faith. And that day, with the autumn leaves falling around them, they were doing honor to the memory of a woman from the district who had given her life and her all to the same great principles. He had felt that in the past the sisters of the A.I.F. had not been given sufficient recognition except in the memory of their relatives and of the men who knew their sterling worth.

Cr. S. H. Riggall, returning thanks on behalf of the late Sister Riggall's family, said that they deeply appreciated what had been said and done that day to perpetuate the memory of one who had been very dear to