

Exeter Soldiers' Memorial.

OPENING CEREMONY.

The Exeter Soldiers' Memorial Hall was opened by Mrs K R Dangar on Wednesday afternoon.

Situated within the picturesque grounds of St Aidan's Church, the hall is constructed of dark red faced bricks on concrete foundations, being roofed with terra-cotta tiles. A reinforced concrete portico at the main entrance provides a handsome feature, a pair of internal glass doors giving access to the hall. Inside is a raised platform, and on the western wall is fixed a neatly designed honour board. Above is an artistic stained glass window of great beauty designed by Mr F McLeod. The building, which has been constructed on the most simple and modern lines should accommodate from 80 to 100 persons.

Evidence of the district's wholehearted response in paying tribute to their fallen was to be seen in the host of dust-covered visitors throughout the township, many families having driven over 40 miles to be present at the ceremony. All honours, however, did not lie with the ordinary residents, the townspeople having done their utmost to make the occasion an auspicious one.

Mr F N Yarwood, of Apolima, in introducing Mrs Dangar, said that the building of a memorial had long been the wish of people in the district. At first it had been suggested that a wooden building be erected, but such had been the enthusiasm shown that the present picturesque little hall had been built.

Continuing, Mr Yarwood said that in other places much money was spent on monuments, but he considered a memorial of this nature was far more suitable. The hall, as it now stood, had cost £1421. Of this amount £1209 had already been collected, and he thought that for a sparsely populated district this was a magnificent response. The hall would be used for guild meetings and also for Sunday school purposes. He expressed the hope that the erection of the hall might in some way help to encourage a civic spirit, and also the realisation of the value of a rural population. He considered the growing desire of young people in the country to-day to live in the city was a serious menace to Australia's progress. Country people should realise that not only from a health standpoint, but from nearly every other aspect they were better off in the country. Australia's future depended upon the opening up of the land, and not on the over-population of the cities. Mr Yarwood expressed keen appreciation of the assistance given by Mr Arthur Ystee, of Headland, Exeter, and Mr Fred White, of Mitta-bar, Exeter, whose services and generosity had proved invaluable to the realisation of the memorial. Thanks should also be tendered to the honorary designer, Col. Alfred Spain, of Sydney, and to the builder, Mr A L Ripby, of Burwood.

Among a number of active helpers present at the ceremony were Mr and Mrs Fred White, Mrs Frank Badgery, Miss Sybil Badgery, Mr C Auloe (schoolmaster), Misses Mary and Joyce Yarwood, Mr and Mrs Fred Stacey, Mr and Mrs P Barker, and Mr E E Row. Addresses were given by Canon Carver, of Sutton Forest, and the Rev A C Corlett, until recently rector of Exeter parish.

After the ceremony tea was provided in the School of Arts. It was followed later in the evening by a concert, at which Mrs Venour Nathan gave valuable assistance.