

GEN. BIRDWOOD AT BIRDWOOD.

SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL GATHERING

BIRDWOOD, March 15.

This pretty village, named after Gen. Birdwood, was gay with bunting and bristling with excitement on Monday, when Gen. Sir William Birdwood and staff visited the town to lay the foundation stone of a war memorial arch paid for by public subscription and local patriotic effort. The pedestals are of granite, the columns of marble, the arch of reinforced concrete inlaid with marble panels. The height is about 20 feet, over all, and the cost about £500. Seven local soldiers made the supreme sacrifice during the war overseas—M. and W. M. McGough, J. Brenka, T. and R. Pflaum, T. Constable, and F. Jeffrey. The distinguished visitor and party were entertained at afternoon tea in the hall, which was tastefully decorated by the women of Birdwood. The ladies' committee consisted of Miss Foote (convener), Mesdames W. J. Foote, J. Guthrie, J. Formby, and Harvey, and Misses Pflaum, McBain, Rathjen, McCormick, Collins, Houlahan, Heuzenroeder, and M. and F. Guthrie. The building committee, which had charge of the general arrangements for the afternoon, comprised Messrs. A. Stevens (President), T. Pflaum, A. Harvey, J. E. Bleeze, and A. Fopp.

The general, having been introduced by Mr. Stevens, was presented with the following address (read by Mr. Angus Parsons, M.P.):—

We, the residents of Birdwood and surrounding district, desire to heartily welcome you to our town which, in its renaming, has been honoured with your name, made especially illustrious by your generalship during the great world war. We are grateful to you for the favour of your personal visit to this town, and for so courteously consenting to lay the foundation stone of the Birdwood Soldiers' Memorial Arch, which we are erecting in ever-grateful memory of our dear, noble men who have made the supreme sacrifice for their King and country, and our freedom and our homes; and in perpetual honour of our heroes

our homes; and in perpetual honour of our heroes who enlisted, endured great hardship in defence of the Empire, and whom we are thankful to receive back into our midst on their return to their peaceful avocations in civil life. Under the protection, privilege, and freedom of the British flag, our country has proved good to live in, and by industry and Divine Providence we had prospered and made happy homes worth fighting for. When the dark war cloud rose over Great Britain our men worthily responded to the call. Led in battle by you, and inspired by your comradeship as a great leader, they fought with effective unity and prowess for the final victory, which has brought peace to us. Every word concerning you which has come to us from our "diggers" has revealed not only their respect, but more, their responsive love for you, who are rightly named by them, and known to us as "General Birdwood, the diggers' friend." The prayer of all is that Divine blessing may rest upon you, our country, and Empire, and that peace may be preserved to the world.

After the presentation of the address a trowel was handed Gen. Birdwood by Mr. Pflaum, and the visitor then proceeded to lay the stone of the memorial. In a brief and inspiring address the general especially spoke to young folk. Incidentally, he mentioned that Lady Birdwood would visit the township before she left South Australia. During the gathering Pte. H. Clark was presented by Gen. Birdwood with a Military Medal won in France with the 43rd Battalion. Donations to the Memorial Fund were laid on the foundation stone by a number of local residents. About £50 was thus raised.