

25th REINFORCEMENTS.

“SEND-OFF” AT TEMUKA.

The “send-off” to the Temuka, Geraldine, and districts’ representatives for the 25th. Reinforcements took place on Tuesday last, and was one of the biggest and most successful yet held. Shortly before half-past three the men, their relatives, and friends were entertained to afternoon tea by the Ladies’ Patriotic Entertainment Committee, and as usual there was an abundance of refreshments, and the men would depart well fortified for their journey to Wellington. After the good things had been done full justice to a few speeches were made.

Mr Gunnion, chairman Temuka P.E.C., welcomed Major Kennedy and his contingent from Geraldine. They had also with them some returned soldiers, as fine a stamp of men as could be found anywhere. At their last gathering they had with them a soldier from Geraldine who had only been in camp a month, and he could only say that if they could turn out such soldiers from Trentham in a month, it was well worth while going into camp. He told a couple of stories to show what the training at Trentham could accomplish in the way of reforming a man, and went on to say that it had been stated that it was unlikely that the boys not going into camp would see a shot fired in the war. He hoped that this would be right, and that the war would be over before these men arrived on the scene. They were going away with Temuka’s best wishes. Everyone knew they would do their duty, and when they came back they would get a hearty welcome.

Captain Hawkes (S.A.) said they had met to bid farewell to the boys going away, and it had stirred feelings in some of them never stirred before. He knew this, for it had so affected himself. He had been called up, and would have to go himself later. Those who were going should have a conviction of the righteousness of the cause for which they were training, and a conviction of the dangers they were going to face. This conviction of what they were going to do would make them better men, and able to guard against dangers, and become more noble men. They were there to bid farewell to those going away. The men were going on a journey they never made before; on a journey it was not often given to a man to take. To-day the necessity had arisen, and their lads were going to start on a new path of life. They were going to the front to stand for truth, liberty and righteousness, and we should try to prove that our sympathies are with them. That afternoon they all united in wishing that their boys would come back safely, and that before they got to the front the war would have ceased. He appealed to the boys going away to stand firm and true against the temptations that would beset them, and remember that they were standing not only for themselves, but for their country, their loved ones. This conviction

would strengthen them, and make them better soldiers. Those left at home would not forget them, and would look for their return. He asked them not to forget to write to their dear ones, for in his visits to people he had frequently heard them express the wish for letters from their boys at the front. They were going to be “Soldiers of the King,” to uphold the honour and glory of the British flag, and he believed they would do it well. He hoped God would protect them and bring them back safe and sound. The captain concluded by offering up a prayer, asking for a blessing on those going away, those who sorrow, and those left behind.

Major Kennedy, on behalf of the Geraldine boys, thanked the ladies who had entertained them so royally, and called for three cheers for them. Those having been given, Major Kennedy continued. The war was still going on, and they were still sending their men away. The war was being fought for the rights of the whole human race, and in a rigid spirit by the British people. To-day they were sending away men who were not able to go before, but who had now taken up the cudgels, and were going to help those who had gone before. They had had a high example set them.. The training given at Trentham had enabled their men to meet the best trained troops in the world. The men who were going did not know what they were going to do, but with a little sound common-sense they would make as good soldiers as any who had gone. They would be part of the great British army. They knew its traditions. They would meet the soldiers of our Allies, and they must remember that they had to uphold the honour of the British Army, and in doing so they would uphold the honour of New Zealand. He hoped they would be successful in training, and be able later on to show their worth, and have the good fortune to come back, and ge[t] a hearty welcome. All he could say to them was “Stand up to it, do your duty, wherever and whenever you are called, and then you will do honour to yourselves and those connected with

The men then assembled outside the hallball, and a procession was formed, and marched to the railway station, headed by the Brass Band, under Conductor Jackson. The streets were crowded, and the procession was the largest yet seen at a “send-off” to our boys. The names of those who left were :

G. Annals.

John Buckley.

A. A. Bingley.

G. Coulter.

Daniel Connell.

A. R. G. Donaldson.

R. Giles.

M. Hamilton.

W. Inglis.

T. Lindsay.

J. J. O’Leary.

G. Pithie.

T. M. Robinson.

T. Sugrue.

J. Watters.

H. Burns.

A. W. Scott.

On arrival at the railway station, Sergeant Lorrimer, having called the roll, [sic]

The Mayor (Mr A. Frew) made a short speech. He expressed his pleasure at seeing such a large gathering, to bid good-bye to the departing soldiers. The young men were still going strong, and were strong young men, and those left behind must not forget the stand they are taking by standing between them and the enemy. It was very encouraging for them to have a hearty send-off, and it was our duty to do what lay at our door. We must never forget to pay the tribute of honour due to them, and he asked all to give them three hearty cheers.

Major Kennedy (Geraldine), being called on to speak, said we were still carrying on the same work which we were carrying on two years ago, and we were going to carry it on in the future. It was a case of necessity, and we were going to see it through. The men going away were leaving the civilian life that day to take up the life of a soldier, and the first thing they would have to conform to was “discipline.” Without discipline they would not get on. No matter what they had to do they must have discipline. He knew they would take to it kindly, and do their best to make themselves efficient, and when they got into the firing line they would be as good soldiers as any New Zealand had produced. They were going to fight for the freedom of the whole human race; for the small nations whose rights had been trampled on by a great military Power. They would always respect those of different nationality, and he particularly urged them to respect the women and children, remembering their own women and children that they were leaving behind. He knew they would never disgrace themselves. — (Applause.) He hoped they would have the opportunity of proving their worth in the firing line, have a good smack at the enemy, and come back and tell us of the great military achievements of the British Army. Their duties would be onerous, and they would have to undergo many hardships, but they must stand up to them., They would remember that they came from “God’s Own Country,” and not do anything to cause those they left behind to blush for them. (Applause.)

Mr Gunnion spoke of the valued services rendered by the Band, and called for three hearty cheers for it.

These were heartily given.

The men then took their seats in the train, and as they left they were cheered again and again, the Band playing “Soldiers of the King.”

About 90 men from South Canterbury were aboard the train, under the command of Captain Chapman.

AT GERALDINE

On Tuesday afternoon the members of the Geraldine quota to the 25th Reinforcements left for Temuka at 2.20 p.m. There was a large crowd at the Post Office steps to bid them farewell, and as the cars moved off hearty cheers were given. The men had received their official send-off a week earlier, so there was no ceremony on this occasion.

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HOME AGAIN.

OUR FIGHTING MEN.

A TIMARU PARTY.

By special train from Christchurch yesterday forenoon, a further twenty-two men returned from the war, one of them having been a prisoner of war in Germany. Notwithstanding that the time of arrival of the train made it difficult for many people to leave their business there was a large attendance at the railway station, and the men in khaki were made to feel that the residents of their home town were delighted to see them back.

His Worship the Mayor (Mr J. Maling), called for cheers, which were lustily given. He then extended to the men a very hearty welcome home, and assured them of the pride which all those who had stopped at home felt in those who had fought so gallantly for them. They would never be unmindful of the great work which the soldiers had done for them in freeing them from the greatest menace that had ever threatened civilisation. They were not unmindful either, of the hardships which those who had been prisoners of war in Germany had gone through, and one of these men was in the car from which he was speaking.

(Applause). It had been said that the soldiers, after all their experiences, would find it difficult to settle down again to civilian life. If he might be permitted to give one word of advice it would be that every soldier should, in his own interest, get into harness again as soon as possible. They had proved able to take their places in the front ranks of the Allies, and he was quite sure that they would be able to take a front place in civil life. (Hear, hear.) He wished them the very best that could come their way. (Applause.)

More cheers were given, and the soldiers were taken away in cars which were waiting for that purpose. Those who returned were:— **A. Black**, R. J. Atkinson, G. R. Christmas, A. Clarkson, **D. Connell**, E. Curran, **J. Davidson**, W.

Fitzsimmons, A. J. Fitzsimmons, **M. Flynn**, C. S. Harkness, **J. Kirby**, **T. W. Lvnch**, J. T. McDougall, C. McKillop, J. E. Mason, J. A. Nichol, F. Peake, R. P. O'Brien, F. Palliser, L. C. McMurchy, F. Palmer, W. W. Pye, P. D. L. Hornibrook, G. Bennewith, and Searle. (The latter belongs to Dunedin, but broke the journey here.)

Those who lent cars were: — Mrs J. Moody, Miss Guinness, Messrs A. Adams, Imrie and Higgins, Lamb, W. R.[?] Macdonald, H. M. Stonyer, A. C. Williams, G. T. Dawson, L. R. James, Cowie, J. S. Turnbull, H. Allchurch, F. Lewis, H. W. Mcnere[?], A. Copland, j. Craigie, H. B. Kirk, J. P. Murphy, and H. H. Kingham.

Messrs H. Innes-Jones, D. A. Morrison, W. Harper, W. R. Pearson and W. J. Hindmarsh controlled the arrangements at the Railway station, so that they worked very smoothly.

TEMUKA.

A large crowd had assembled at the Temuka Station when the special troop train arrived yesterday forenoon, and a rousing cheer greeted the local soldiers as they disembarked. During the wait of the train at the station fruit was distributed throughout the cars by a band of willing ladies, and the soldiers showed their appreciation by cheering lustily as the train rolled out again.

Following the established custom a procession was formed, and preceded by the Pipe Band marched to the Post Office where the official welcome took place. Mr T. Gunnion, chairman of the Patriotic Entertainment Committee, hailed the new arrivals as "one of the finest lot of boys that had reached Temuka." The Mayor (Mr A. Frew) said that this was a day to rejoice, especially for the relatives of the men who had returned. The men had been more or less damaged, but they had brought victory with them. (Cheers.)

Sergt-Major R. Macaulay and Sergt E. S. Davey briefly thanked the people for their splendid reception, and after three hearty cheers had been given the new arrivals were motored to their homes. The following men arrived—Battery Sergt-Major.R. Macaulay, Sergeant **E. S. Davey**, Corporal M. Flanagan: Gunners **W. Fitzgerald** and J. N. Fisher; Privates A. Brockie, G. Rainey, **W. Tozer**, H. L. Struthers, and **Connell**.

The following very kindly lent cars - Mrs Beri, Messrs G. Ward, T. Quinn, C. H. Street, G. B. Cartwright, M. H McLeod, T. Sheen, T. Frisby, W Kellahan, H. Struthers, S. Coates.

GERALDINE.

It was reported yesterday morning that a number of Geraldine men were returning by the special train and bunting was soon floating in their honour. On arrival of cars Private Walton was the only man to return and Major Kennedy said that Messrs Mason, **Campbell**, Seward. **Sugrue** and Ritchie of Arundel, had remained at Orari, and Macdonald and Burke had remained in Christchurch.

He then asked the Mayor to welcome Private Walton, expressing the hopes that Private Walton would have satisfaction in knowing that the people appreciated what he had done, and that he would have many years of happiness.

Mr B. R. Macdonald said that Private Walton had not only fought for them; he had the misfortune to be a prisoner of war in Germany, though, fortunately not long enough to suffer very severely. He was extremely pleased to welcome him home. He then called for three cheers for Private Walton, and these having been given heartily the returned soldier briefly returned thanks.