

Temuka Leader, 7 September 1911 (Papers Past) [29/05/2024]

PRESENTATION TO MR AND MRS WEBBER.

A very pleasing ceremony took place at the Milford School on Tuesday afternoon, when a large number of friends, parents, and the pupils of the school assembled to bid good-bye to Mr and Mrs Webber, who are leaving Milford to take up their residence in Southland, Mr Webber having been appointed headmaster of the Drummond School. Mr H. Pye, chairman of the School Committee, in opening the proceedings, apologised for the absence of Mr G. W. Armitage, who was unable to be present, and said he was sorry that Mr Webber had given them occasion to be present there to say good bye to them, he would much rather he had remained among them, for during Mr Webber's stay here he had gained the esteem and respect of both parents and scholars and had always taken a keen interest in the welfare of the school. He had been very successful as a teacher, as shown by the Inspector's report. Last year one of Mr Webber's pupils had gained the distinction of winning one of the two National Junior Scholarships awarded to South Canterbury, which in itself spoke volumes for Mr Webber's ability as a teacher. Mr Webber had established very creditable school gardens and had also formed a cadet detachment, which acquitted themselves admirably during the Coronation proceedings. He also mentioned that as soon as it was made known that they were about to leave here, the pupils decided that they could not allow them to go away without giving them some respect in which they were held. He was sure one and all joined in wishing Mr and Mrs Webber every success in their new home, and had much pleasure on calling on Master J. Douglas to make a presentation to them. Master Douglas, in a neat little speech, on behalf of himself and the scholars, handed to Mrs Webber a pretty silver and pearl butter cooler and knife, and to Mr Webber a handsome oak and silver ink stand suitably inscribed, and in doing so hoped they would be long spared to use them. Mr Webber feelingly responded on behalf of himself and his wife. He thanked them all for the kind remarks that had been said about them and also for the handsome presents just received, which had been a great surprise to them. He was pleased to know that his efforts had been appreciated, but did not need presents to remind him of the happy days they had spent at Milford. He was sorry they were leaving, but thought he was justified in doing so, as he could be bettering himself in the larger school. In concluding Mr Webber said he wished the school continued success, and hoped they would soon have their infant mistress restored to them. He again thanked them all, and sat down amidst applause. Mr Pye then called for three cheers for Mr and Mrs Webber, which were responded to heartily, followed by cheers for Master Webber. All then rose and sang "For they are Jolly Good Fellows," after which the ladies entertained Mr and Mrs Webber, the scholars, and all present to afternoon tea in the schoolroom in their usual liberal manner, and this was very much enjoyed by all.

Southland Times. 28 June 1916 (Papers Past) [25/05/2024]

Our Drummond correspondent writes: For some considerable time Mr J. O. Webber, headmaster, Drummond, has been anxious to get away to the front, but for various reasons has not been able to do so. He is now going with the 20th Reinforcements and proceeds to Trentham at once for special training. As he was to hold himself in readiness to move at the very shortest notice, and the notice was so brief when it did come, Drummond people did not have an opportunity of giving Lieutenant Webber a send-off befitting his loyalty and patriotism, and the general interest he has shown, and the efforts he has made in every movement in the Empire's cause. Those who had been associated with him, and best knew how devotedly he

had worked to promote and carry out all the schemes undertaken, were resolved he would not leave, though hurriedly, without in some way or other being assured of their recognition of his many services, gratuitously and willingly rendered. The result was a very pleasant social and presentation, with songs and recitations, etc., and brief but pointed addresses expressive of esteem for Mr and Mrs Webber personally, congratulating him on his patriotism in leaving behind him Mrs Webber and a family of young children in the cause for which he has volunteered, and expressing the hope of seeing him safely return loaded with honours. A very pleasant evening closed with the "National Anthem," "Auld Lang Syne," and "They are Jolly Good Fellows."

Southland Times, 17 August 1916 (Papers Past) [26/05/2024]

SOUTH SCHOOL

ROLL OF HONOUR.

THE UNVEILING CEREMONY.

The unveiling of a tablet containing a Roll of Honour, recording all the names of ex-pupils of the South School who are known to have gone to the front, was performed yesterday in the kindergarten room of the school. The chairman of the School Committee (Mr A. L. McCulloch) presided, and there were present a large number of parents and relatives of the lads whose names appeared on the Roll of Honour, and old boys. The school Drum and Fife Band was in attendance, and contributed selections before the ceremony commenced and during the proceedings in the schoolroom.

The chairman expressed pleasure at seeing such a large attendance. He explained that it had been the intention of the South School Committee to erect a tablet, but when some of the old pupils heard of the movement they asked to be granted the honour of doing so. To this the committee consented. Later, a few parents who had lost sons at the front asked to be permitted to subscribe, and that request also had been granted. To Mr Percy Holtz had been allotted the task of drawing up the plans for the memorial; Messrs Cooper and Milne executed it, and the signwriting had been done by Mr R. Nash in his best style. The combined results of the gentlemen named would be appreciated, he knew, as the work done by them in connection with the memorial was all that could be desired. The promoters of the movement had thought that it would be better if the speakers at the unveiling ceremony were chosen entirely from old boys, and, therefore, there would be no other speakers. Photographs of the memorial had been taken and could be purchased from the committee, and next week at the Popular Picture Palace a photograph of it would be thrown on the screen, and during each week thereafter a photograph of one of the ex-pupils who had lost his life at the front would be screened. Mr McCulloch then called upon Mr H. A. Macdonald to unveil the memorial.

In performing the ceremony, Mr Macdonald said that he could not find words to express the pride he felt in having been asked to do so. He had been a pupil at the school on the day it was opened 37½ years previously. There were, he thought, five epoch-making days in connection with the school's history. The first was the opening of the school by the late Mr W. G. Mehaffey; the second was the send-off to Mr Mehaffey accorded him by the old boys; the third was when the old boys subscribed for and erected the flagpole, which was made from a mast of the old Chance; the fourth was the send-off to Mr Webber, the former headmaster, and the fifth was the ceremony they were performing that day, which was the real red letter day in connection with the school. In addition to the names that were already included in the Roll of Honour, fifteen or sixteen additional ones had to be put on, and the committee invited any one who could do so to supply any name or names that had been omitted. The names that would be

placed on record were those of the boys who had offered their services voluntarily, and the names of those who would go forward when compulsion came into force would not be included. There was no place on the honour board for them. The men whose names were permitted to appear were those who had responded voluntarily to the call of their King and their country. The Kaiser, or the German war party, had relied upon the troubles that seemed to be inflicted at that time on the British Empire, but they had made the biggest mistake they had made in their lives, for the response throughout the Empire had been a magnificent one, and no other part had done better than had India. He referred to the work done by Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, and said that in proportion to population New Zealand, he thought, held the record in the number of men she had sent to the front, and also in regard to supplying food, without which no army could fight. Even the Niue Islanders had sent forward 200 men. Since Agincourt the Navy had occupied pride of place in our history, and no one could safely predict what would be happening to-day had it not been for our navy. But as a military power Germany had scoffed at us. After the retreat from Mons, however, it was the British who had held up von Kluck, and since then Britain had raised an army of about 4,000,000 men. Since 1868, the Maori war period, there had been no fighting in New Zealand, and in the strict sense of the term we were not a military people. But the feats performed by the Australians and the New Zealanders, for he placed the men from the two countries together — the Anzacs — had shown absolutely that they were in no way inferior to the best trained troops in the world. Not only had they shown courage and bravery, but they had also shown that they were possessed of great initiative. Of the men whose names appeared on the Roll of Honour, there were four of the name of Braxton, four of the name of Holmes, and five of the name of Stead (two families). Those who had made the extreme sacrifice were: — O. V. Stead, R. Galt, R. Chilman, W. W. McNeil, S. S. McNeil, W. E. Varcoe, W. A. Hamilton, J. Gilman, T. A. Lambeth, W. Hayward, W. H. Burgess, E. Cochran, A. Norrie, A. G. Clark, J. H. Whitaker, Henry McNatty and Compton Tothill. Those who were among their brightest and best had so given up their lives. If the shirkers could only see the honour board, it might move them to a sense of their duty, and it might be the means of compelling them to go to the front. It was a shame that such men did not volunteer, as it was essential at the present time that more and more men should be provided. The names of those who had lost their lives on the board must cause a re-awakening of the grief and sorrow of parents, who, however, could pride themselves that their sons had not needed compulsion, and had laid down their lives cheerfully, he believed, for their Empire. It was the fortune of war that they had lost their lives, but their parents and friends had the pride and gratification of knowing that when the occasion arose their lads proved equal to it. There were shirkers in Invercargill who ought to have been at the front long ago. The names on the Roll of Honour would go down, not only to the next generation, but to generations thereafter as boys who had nobly done their duty. (Loud applause).

Mr H. W. Royds said that, like Mr Macdonald, he was an ex-pupil of the school, which was now occupied by a younger generation. During the intervening years a large number of boys and girls had gone forth from the school to take their part in what was known as the battle of life, and in that connection the school had earned a good reputation, for many ex-pupils had taken a prominent part in the life of the community, and could be found throughout New Zealand doing their duty as citizens of the Empire. Therefore, they were proud of the achievements of the ex-scholars of the school, and although many of those whose names appeared on the Roll of Honour were not known to them, they could nevertheless claim them as schoolmates. It had been said that love was great, but loyalty was greater, and these boys, he was quite sure, had displayed loyalty in its truest sense. They had gone out to fight against an unscrupulous foe in order that we who had to remain at home might enjoy that freedom that was allowed wherever the British flag was unfurled. They must therefore feel that they owed a deep debt of gratitude to those boys for having answered the call. Pupils and ex-pupils would

revere the memory of those who had fallen fighting for their country. For those in the trenches he asked for consideration in the matter of providing comforts, and asked for practical sympathy towards the men who returned sick or wounded. It was inspiring to see, he said, the spartan courage that enabled those who had lost their dear ones to go about their duties with brave faces, although the speaker knew that they had aching hearts. The magnificent spirit thus shown was beyond all commendation. Let those who could not go to the front strive to keep the home fires burning, and to remember those who had fought for us in order that we might enjoy peace and comfort under the grand old British flag. (Applause).

Mr T. D. A. Moffett said that he endorsed what the two previous speakers had said, and said that his heart went out to those who had lost their loved ones. When he looked at the board he thought of the splendid array of fine young fellows, and felt proud that he was privileged to be an old boy of the old school, at which he was present on its opening day. They had not the remotest idea of such a war occurring during their lifetime. They had thought that the world had become too civilised, too educated, and that the old fighting spirit had gone and that they would not need any more soldiers. But it was a very fine thing that they had such striking evidence of the retention of the old fighting spirit that day, and it gave him very great pleasure to be present on such an occasion.

Mr C. E. Borne, as another old boy, said that he also was very proud to be present, and endorsed what the other speakers had said. There was one thing in connection with the boys at the front, and that was he hoped that none of them would bring back French wives with them, as he had read of a North Islander having done. The Government should do something in the matter, as we had plenty of our own girls who would make admirable wives for our boys when they returned. (Laughter).

Mr John McQueen said that he was not an old boy of the school, but he had the pleasure of rearing two of the boys whose names appeared on the board. He thanked the old boys on behalf of the parents and relatives for having erected the board, and said that they were greatly indebted to them for having done so. He hoped that, if the present was not the final war, it would at least be the last those living would see. It was something awful to think that a most highly civilised people should be compelled to go to war, and we had Christianity in the world too. He hoped that such a complete job would be made of the present war — and the South School and the dominion as a whole were doing their share towards it — that they would kill the dog that was worrying the sheep — they should cut his head off.

The proceedings closed after the band had played the National Anthem. Following are the names that are included in the Roll of Honour: -

A. R. Agnew, J. Aitken, W. Alsweiler, A Barlow, O. Webber, C. Webber,

Southern Cross, 19 August 1916 (Papers Past) [26/05/2024]

South School

ROLL OF HONOUR UNVEILED INTERESTING CEREMONY

“The South School has always maintained a high standard,” remarked Mr H. A. Macdonald when unveiling the roll of honour in the kindergarten room on Wednesday afternoon in the presence of a deeply interested gathering of parents and other relatives of men at the front. Mr Macdonald had ample justification for his assertion, for the roll bore the names of 218 ex-pupils of the school who responded to the call of King and Country, with a number still to be added, to say nothing of those who may have enlisted elsewhere. Among these may be mentioned Dr. Brownlie of Edinburgh, who is now serving with the members of the Royal

Army Medical Corps attached to the Yorkshire Regiment. Dr. Brownlie, it will be remembered, was a pupil in the school, and was afterwards one of the teachers, there. Returning to Wednesday's ceremony, the school drum and fife band, which, under Mr Moloney as conductor, is justifying its right to its title (Onward), played several selections in the course of the afternoon, one, appropriately enough, being "The Heroes."

Mr A. McCulloch, chairman of the committee, presided and explained that when the subject of a roll of honour was mooted the old boys asked to be allowed to take it in hand. They did so, and later the parents of some of the lads at the front claimed the privilege of sharing in the cost. Photographs of the roll, large and, small, had been taken and could be bought, and it would also be screened at the Popular Pictures, where later the photograph of one of the men who had died at the front would be screened each week.

Mr H. A. Macdonald, who had been unanimously chosen to unveil the roll, said that he could not express the pride he felt in having that honour conferred on him. He recalled past red-letter days in the history of the school, since its opening 37½ years ago, and said that this was the greatest day of all. The memories of the old boys who had volunteered for duty would be revered for generations to come, but there would be no place on that roll for those who joined the colours under compulsion. They were not a military people, but the feats performed by the Australians and the New Zealanders, for he placed the two countries together — the Anzacs — had shown absolutely that they were in no way inferior to the best trained troops in the world. Not only had they shown courage and bravery, but they had also shown that they were possessed of great initiative. Of the men whose names appeared on the roll of honour, there were four of the name of Braxton, four of the name of Holmes, and five of the name of Stead (two families). Those who had made the extreme sacrifice were — O. V. Stead, R. Galt, R. Chilman, W. W. McNeil, S. S. McNeil, W. E. Varcoe, W. A. Hamilton, J. Gilman, T. A. Lambeth, W. Hayward, W. H. Burgess, E. Cochran, A. Norrie, A. G. Clark, J. H. Whitaker, Henry McNatty and Compton Tothill — some of their brightest and best. The parents and other relatives who mourned the loss of loved ones, must comfort themselves with the thought that they had given themselves cheerfully and ungrudgingly to the Empire, and had fallen in defence of all that men hold dear. — (Applause).

Mr H. Royds, another old boy, remarked that it had been said love was great, but loyalty was greater, and the men whose names appeared on the roll had displayed loyalty in its truest sense. Mr Royds emphasised the bravery of our men, and the Spartan courage with which their friends at home went about the duties of life with brave and smiling faces, although their hearts were aching. That was the spirit which would win the war. He bespoke sympathy and help for the lads who were coming back sick or wounded, after a series of nerve-racking experiences.

Messrs T. D. A. Moffett and Mr O. E. Borne (old boys) and Mr John McQueen also gave short addresses, the last-named stating that although he was not an old boy of the South School he had two sons at the front whose names were on the roll. At Mr McQueen's instance a vote of thanks was passed to the old boys for having provided such a fine roll of honour.

The roll of honour contains the following names: — A. R. Agnew, J. Aitken,, J. A. McQueen, J. S. McQueen,, O. Webber, C. Webber,

The roll of honour is formed of polished red pine, 7½ft. long by 5½ft. wide, the beauty of the wood being enhanced by the beautiful carving executed by Mr W. Robinson (of Robinson and Swanson, Kelvin st.). The roll itself was made by Messrs Cooper and McMillan, an excellent bit of work, and Mr R. Nash did the painting — the names lettered in gold — in what the chairman justly called his best style. The roll was designed and its construction supervised by Mr Percy Holtz, architect. Altogether it is one of the finest things of the kind we have yet seen. In addition to the old boys who addressed the meeting, there were also present Messrs J. T. Boyce, A. M. Macdonald, S. Giller, and A. Washer.

The gathering closed with the playing by the band of the National Anthem.

Southland Times. 3 April 1922 (Papers Past) [02/06/2024]

TEACHER'S CONFERENCE ROLL OF HONOUR UNVEILED.

The teachers' annual conference was concluded on Saturday morning when a Roll of Honour erected in honour of the members of the teaching profession in Southland, who served in the Great War was unveiled. The Roll of Honour, which has been placed in the meeting room of the Teachers' Institute in the Southland Education Board's Office, has inscribed on it the following names: -

Killed in Action: Norman Hall, Nisbet Lamont, David S. Manson, Eric V. McKay, Arnold J. Petrie, Robert J. Lamb, Albert Lyttle, Peter McGlashan, John McLeod, A. Sydney. Returned: George Agnew, Escott Bonthron, John Burt,, Alfred C. Rowe, Henry C. Simpson.

The ceremony, which was held in the Museum Hall of the Southland Technical College, was attended by a large number of teachers and relatives of the soldiers whose names appeared on the Roll of Honour. Miss C. McLeod presided.

The memorial was unveiled by Mr J. C. Thomson, who represented the Southland Education Board. In the course of an eloquent address, Mr Thomson paid a tribute to the cheerful spirit in which the teachers had responded to the call of Empire, and stated that none had answered more readily and cheerfully than members of the teaching profession. Of the forty-nine teachers who had enlisted in Southland, ten had given their lives in defence of their homes and for the Motherland, and in the cause of civilisation. To those fallen heroes had been erected a beautiful and imperishable token of affectionate remembrance. By the unveiling of the tablet and by the sentiments expressed they had showed, that while the Great War had become a matter of yesterday, the memory still enshrined all that was held most dear in the characters of those that had died that others might enjoy peace and freedom. They could never repay the dear dead for their sacrifice, but it was their duty to keep their memory ever green and to show a sincere and undying gratitude for sacrifice made in the hour of supreme national necessity. To relatives and friends this was a source of consolation and comfort, as it was the one touch of nature that made kin the whole of the units of a nation. The Great War had stimulated a desire for peace and the result of the Washington Conference was an evidence that war was neither a biological nor an economic necessity. Mr Thomson went on to refer to the patriotism of the early Greeks and Romans, but stated that the great war had revealed heights of sacrifice and patriotism, which were without a parallel in the history of the world. Those who had fought in the recent war had left an example to generations yet unborn and a name, whose lustre would not be dimmed with the passing of the years.

After the Roll of Honour had been unveiled those present joined in singing "The Recessional." Addresses were also given by Mr A. L. Wyllie, Mr H. P. Young and Chaplain-Captain Gilbert, all of whom paid a tribute to the services rendered by the Southland teachers, who served at the front.

The ceremony concluded with the sounding of the Last Post and the singing of the National Anthem.

Southland Times. 3 April 1922 (Papers Past) [25/05/2024]

In the account of the unveiling of the Teachers' Roll of Honour the names of Mr Wright and of Mr J. Oswald Webber were inadvertently omitted from the list of those inscribed on the memorial.

Press, 17 May 1962 (Papers Past) [29/05/2024]

Obituary

MR J. O. WEBBER

The death has occurred in Christchurch, after a long illness, of Mr John Oswald Webber. He was in his seventy-eighth year.

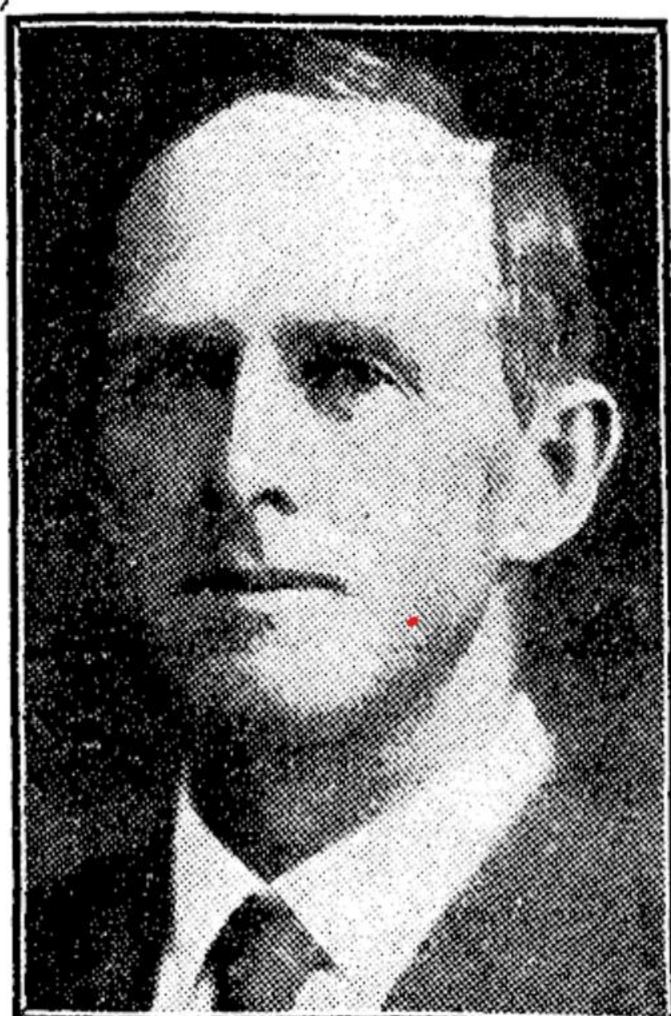
Mr Webber was the eldest son of the late Mr Edmund Webber, who was for 30 years headmaster of the South School, Invercargill, and followed his father in the teaching profession. He was headmaster successively at Milford (South Canterbury), Drummond and Makarewa (Southland), Bunnythorpe (Manawatu), Drurie Hill (Wanganui), Oxford District High School, Rangiora, Spreydon West and Gore Main where he retired in 1946.

Mr Webber took an active interest in the volunteer movement before World War I, and was commissioned in the Southland Mounted Rifles in 1911. He went overseas with the 20th Reinforcements of the 1st New Zealand Expeditionary Force and served in France with the 1st Otago Regiment. He was invalided home after the battle of Passchendaele where he was a company commander.

During World War II he returned to duty for a period on home defence at Burnham and later retired with the rank of major. He was awarded the Efficiency Decoration in 1930 and held the Colonial Auxiliary Service long-service medal.

Throughout his life Mr Webber was an active member of the Church of England and was, at various times, a lay reader and vestryman. After his retirement in Gore he was Eastern Southland representative for Heritage.

Mr Webber is survived by his wife, three sons and three daughters, Messrs E. G. Webber (Hastings), J. G. Webber (Wellington), N. P. Webber (Palmerston North), Mrs A. F. Miller (Oamaru), Mrs N. Johnston (Napier), and Mrs M. Gilbert (Ashburton).



*Mr J. O. **Webber**, headmaster of the Drury Hill School, Wanganui, who has been appointed headmaster of the Oxford District High School.*

Press. 13 October 1932



Mr. E. G. Webber, of Rotorua, editor of the N.Z.E.F. Times and senior war correspondent in the Middle East, who has been appointed public relations officer, Second N.Z.E.F., with the rank of captain.

Edmund Godfrey Webber
Auckland Star. 16 September 1943