

24 May 1941

Soldiers Farewelled at Upper Lansdowne.

(Contributed).

The evening of 5th May will be probably long remembered in this district for the large concourse of people who made their way to the local spacious hall (estimated by some who should know at between 500 and 600 people) to attend the farewell to be given to Privates E. Bridge, W. Bridge, J. Ritchie, E. Fleming, P. Mooney, J. Clune and E. Unger. The latter was on the boundary line and belonged to Lansdowne branch to farewell, but an agreement to unite the gathering was arrived at by the residents and executive officers of the two branches and thus the gathering was representative of both and some also came from Langley Vale. The president of Upper Lansdowne Patriotic and War Fund (Mr. C. C. Drury) presided. Mrs. H. Moseley (president of Lansdowne Comforts Fund) was also present. Community singing was heartily entered into for a considerable time, being conducted by "Uncle Arthur," of Langley Vale, and interspersed with some fine vocal and instrumental items. Mrs. Unicomb, of Cooperbrook, was the accompanist for the community singing and other young ladies, all of whose names I am not familiar with, for individual items, which were all capably rendered. At the conclusion of this part of the programme the chairman asked all returned soldiers present to form a guard of honor and the guests of the evening to come to the stage, which they did, the audience singing heartily "For They Are Jolly Good Fellows." The parents of the lads were then asked to take seats on the platform; also several young ladies to fasten the wristlet watches about to be presented.

The speakers were Mr. Chas Barlin, Mr. H. Moseley, Mr. McDougall, Mr. Thompson, Mr. A. Bryan, on behalf of the returned soldiers, who very sincerely and feelingly reminded the lads that they had taken the most serious step of their lives, recounting some of the experiences they were likely to meet, and concluding, as all the speakers did, including Capt. Mitchell, who arrived later, with the heartiest of good wishes for a successful campaign and a safe return to home and friends with a warm welcome assured. The chairman also spoke briefly, regretting that war was occasioning such farewells, but very aptly and appropriately suggesting that we place our cause in Higher Hands. He then asked Mr. Jas. McLaughlin, as a father with 3 sons on active service, to make the presentation to each lad of a handsome wristlet watch, which he did with suitable words to each. Miss Vera Atkins was then asked to present a parcel to each

words to each. Miss Vera Atkins was then asked to present a parcel to each soldier on behalf of the Upper Lansdowne Comforts Fund. Mr. Chas. Barlin then made a presentation to Pte. E. Unger from Lansdowne District Patriotic Fund of a handsome wristlet watch and also from the Comforts Fund of a parcel and both he and Mr. Moseley expressed pleasure at being able to unite with Upper Lansdowne in the farewell.

After the presentations were made each soldier suitably responded with hearty thanks. The fathers also very appropriately and sincerely thanked all for their kindness to their lads. At the conclusion of the proceedings choice refreshments were provided by the ladies and dancing was indulged in by some of those present.

Apologies were read by the chairman from Mr. and Mrs. W. Minett and Mr. G. Cassimaty (Taree).

Mr. N. Atkins had charge of the ticket office and Mr. J. C. Minett was the doorkeeper.