

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 1920, p.7

## UPLEADON WAR MEMORIAL.

### UNVEILING BY MAJOR J. D. BIRCHALL, M.P.,

The unveiling of the War Memorial of Upleadon took place on Sunday afternoon. The day was one of bright, warm sunshine, tempered by the lingering cold of the previous night's frost and was a perfect one for the occasion. There was a large attendance including many from the surrounding districts, about 500 being present. A procession was formed at the school, headed by the Rev. C. R. Greaves (vicar of Upleadon) and the Rev. Mackenzie (Wesleyan minister) followed by the demobilised men of the district under Sergt. Major Beard and Sergt. Meek, and the friends and relatives of the fallen, the processional hymn "Onward, Christian Soldiers," being sung. The proceedings were opened by the Rev. Mackenzie, who spoke touchingly of the feelings that the memorial aroused not only in the hearts of those who had lost, but of all present, and of the need of such a memorial—not for the present generation or for the coming one, for the memory of the fallen would always be fresh with them—but for future generations, to whom it would be a perpetual wayside reminder of the sacrifice of their forbears.

The Vicar having recited the opening prayers of the dedication service Mr. J. M. Scudamore called upon Major J. D. Birchall, M.P., to unveil the memorial. The latter, in a most impressive speech—having expressed his appreciation of the privilege—a sad one, but still a privilege—of being there at their request that day, and of his long and pleasant connection with Upleadon, emphasised the fact that the cross, the symbol of Christianity throughout the ages, was the most fitting form a memorial of the war could take. The sole reason for England entering the war was, not extension of her power, not for possessions, but for the prevention of the victory of might over right, that small countries might retain their freedom as well as the more powerful ones. However secluded a life a man might lead, his life had an influence upon the community, and unless such an influence was for good he was failing in his duty to his fellow man, and so to his village, his town, his city and his country. They must never forget the sacrifices of the war, or the covenant into which they as a people had entered to make this land of ours the better for such sacrifices. This could only be accomplished by each individual leading a better life, a life guided by the teachings of Christ.

Major Birchall then unveiled the memorial, reading out the inscription and names of the fallen.

The solemn service of dedication was conducted by the vicar (Rev. C. R. Greaves), who in an earnest address enforced the lessons of the war. He contended that as a man received first the call from God and then from his conscience to service his country, he was, as a soldier following close in the pathway to the Cross. Obedience was the first duty of a soldier, and such duty was exemplified by the fallen, who had obeyed "even unto the end."

The Vicar having pronounced the benediction, the Last Post was sounded by Mr. Bert Davies, of Newent.

Many wreaths and floral tributes were laid upon the steps.

The memorial is in the form of a Cross of the 14th Century design, in Keinton red stone, the octagonal shaft merging into a square pedestal on a graduated base. It is incised on the front with the following inscription:—

Erected in memory of the men of, and connected with Upleadon who fell in the Great War 1914-1918.

"Their name liveth for evermore."

Then follow the names of the fallen (14). The sides of the pedestal are incised with the names of those who also served and were spared to return, numbering 33. Upleadon has certainly lost heavily in the war the 14 fallen men representing nearly eight per cent. of the whole population.

The land upon which the memorial stands was presented to the parish by Major J. D. Birchall, M.P. It forms the east corner of Upleadon cross roads, at the upper part of the village. The cross therefore faces "the land of the setting sun."

Messrs. Green and Son, sculptors, Gloucester, who designed and executed the memorial, are to be congratulated upon their work, the cross being most pleasing in its proportions and in its harmony with the surroundings.