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SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL UNVEILED LAST SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Impressive Exercises Marked the Unveiling of Soldiers' Memorial on Court Square—R. E. O'Conner and Ex-Governor Cornwell were Speakers for the Occasion

Probably the longest to be remembered Armistice Day since 1918 was last Sunday when the beautiful monument which represents months of hard work, toil and thinking was unveiled with fitting ceremonies and a celebration long to be remembered. Thousands of ex-soldiers, friends and relatives of the martyrs and those who came out of respect for the memory of the men who gave their all for the preservation of liberty and civilization were there. Not only was the crowd contained to those of Barbour County but there were those present from the neighboring counties of Randolph, Upshur, Taylor and Preston as were also those from a distance. The town was packed with automobiles and the weather was the finest and most favorable for the occasion.

The local Legion Post No. 44 has worked long and hard for this occasion and it was not a disappointment in any way. As was arranged, Ex-Governor Cornwell, who was the state's chief executive during the war, was the principal speaker of the day and a hardly less shining light during the ceremonies was State Commander of the Legion R E O'Conner, of Elkins.

The ceremonies were started with services in all of the local churches in the morning all of which were very fitting and appropriate for the occasion. A recess was taken until one o'clock during which (an) hour free luncheon was given to all ex-servicemen who were visitors or members of the local post at the Geneva Hotel and Moore's restaurant. A big parade was formed on Walnut Street at one o'clock near the Iron bridge. The formation was in the following order:

Colors, Post Banners, Company By Guard led by Sgt. Trout, Two Firing Squads, commanded by Lt. Ross Leaders, Elkins; float—Lest We Forget, One Firing Squad, Lt. Cassabone; Junior Band, American Red Cross Float, One-Platoon Uniform Rank, Cap't Williams; American Legion Float, One Platoon Uniform Rank, Lt. Kittle; 40 Hommes and 8 Cheveaux, French Box Car Float.

This formation covered almost a quarter of a mile and marched up Main Street in Review past the speakers' stand and returned and formed a circle around the monument while the ceremonies were held.

A. C. Merrill, an ex-serviceman of the local post was in charge of the ceremonies and after a short invocation by Rev. Ray N. Shaffer a list of the contents of the Strong Box was read by Rezin E. Chrislip, post finance officer and it was placed at the foot of the monument after which he introduced Cap't R E O'Conner of Elkins, State Commander of the American Legion who made one of the principal addresses. O'Conner's remarks were addressed chiefly to the Legionnaires and the ideals of the Legion. He warned them, that their duty did not end with the signing of the Armistice five years ago, but that it was their duty to preserve the government and make useful and helpful citizens. Cap't O'Conner said in part: "This day has a special significance to ex-soldiers. Our service to our government did not end on Armistice Day five years ago. This day the world is looking to America for leadership and we should not hesitate to take the lead. I speak to the ex-soldiers for the American Legion which has an opportunity to serve now and which is trying to serve the government.

I would have every ex-soldier join the American Legion, continued the speaker, because it stands for this government of ours and believes in it. There is need for the legion now—need for action and not talk. The

erection of this monument in Barbour County shows what the American Legion can do in keeping alive patriotism.

After what you soldiers have gone through you believe this government is worth preserving. The American Legion believes it. If you are an honorable soldier and if you are an honorable citizen the legion wants you and needs you. The Legion is strictly American and if necessary for its members to sacrifice their blood to save the government they will gladly do it, said Cap't O'Conner in conclusion.

Then came the principal speaker of the day, Hon. John J. Cornwell, who was introduced by Merrill, who made one of the most excellent addresses of his career. He started by declaring he was no longer in politics and came here with no selfish motives, but came simply as a guest of the boys and considered it a privilege and an honor to come to the unveiling of the monument on the sacred and hallowed occasion of Armistice Day. He related as how governor of the state during the war period he was forced to sign orders taking the men from his own country and how after it was all over he had used his influence with Secretary of War and President Wilson to get a parade in Richmond called off so that the boys could return home a little sooner. "This Memorial" said Mr. Cornwell, "should stimulate the patriotism of the boys and girls of Barbour County who have subscribed to it. Speaking of patriotism and duty and responsibility, I never was and are not now in favor of entangling European alliances but I believe this country has a duty to perform for Europe--to guide those people with safety to ourselves. It is true we have had peace and prosperity during the past five years as well as we could have had it within ourselves. But they are helpless in Europe and need American advice and assistance. We cannot stand aside and see Europe on fire without getting our fingers burned."

#### Matter of Duty

"It is the duty of this government to mingle with other governments just as it is the duty of a citizen of a community to mingle with and help his fellow citizens. I trust that you ex-soldiers of Barbour will continue to give the same faithful service and interest to your government in time of peace as you did in the time of war and I again want to congratulate you on what you have done in the erection of this monument to your dead heroes."

At the conclusion of Governor Cornwell's a Miss Margaret Peterson, of Weston, who spent eighteen months overseas duty pulled down the cord that caused the flag which veiled the monument to be removed and the monument met the gaze of the thousands who had gathered, standing towering in the air a beautiful and impressive thing. The bronze figure of the doughboy, charging through the wire entanglements with fixed bayonet and a hand grenade ready to throw, in the glistening rays of the setting sun brought out all the more, by the white marble base upon which it stood, made a memorable impression on the throng. Tears were plentiful in the eyes of many. The soldiers stood at attention while C. O. Phillips read the names on the tablet. They were:

Fred L Jones, John Irwin Kramer, Andrew L Matthew, Lawrence L. Mayle, Charles Wayne Moore, Wilbur Simpson Moore, William Hobart McDaniel, William Myers, Nelson Newman, Carl Frederick Nitz, Lloyd F. Reed, Lawson D. Regester, Robert J. Ritter, Carl Simmons, Walter Ray Smith, Loring Carl Thorpe, Thomas Caton Wilson, Oscar Orville Alexander, Clayton Bosworth Brandon, Jesse Gordon Cole, Quincy C. Dadisman, Okey R. Duckworth, James Blaine Hovatter, Everett Earl Ice, David Oren Jones.

After the names were read the salute was fired by the combined squads from Elkins and Philippi posts after which taps were sounded and the band played the Star-Spangled Banner. Thus ended the biggest Armistice Day since the memorable one of 1918.

The Junior band and the members of the posts from Grafton and Elkins were present in numbers. The biggest showing of uniformed men that has ever paraded in Philippi was present for this occasion. The day will long be remembered.

*See next page for microfilm of original document*