

AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Chaplains

Item number: 6/5/7

Title: Senior Chaplain, Methodist,
Headquarters AIF, London

July 1918



AWM4-6/5/7

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WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Chaplain's Department Army Form C. 2118. 473
Senior Methodist Chaplain
July 1918

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Chaplain H. S. Bath. No 4	Command Depot, Hurdcott.		<p>This Chaplain held 4 Church Parades for the month & conducted 4 Fellowship meetings at the Y. M. C. A. No Voluntary services were held as the men attend the Churches & Chapels in the neighbouring villages. He regularly visited the Hospital at Forward & attended to the spiritual needs of his men there. He in common with the other Chaplains at the Depot, has felt that there is a new & very serious spirit of enquiry at all parades & other services & that the men are listening with an intensity never seen before, listening not with their souls than with their ears. This has given rise to a number of conferences between the Y. M. C. A. officials & the Chaplains, with the result that a Mission has been arranged for the month of August, & great hopes are entertained as to its success. Men are regularly visited in their tents and the Chaplains services are always at their disposal.</p>	
Chaplain A. P. Bladen No 1	Australasian	Hospital, Warefield.	<p>Statistics: - 6 services 4 celebrations of Holy Communion. One funeral. He reports that he has consistently done what was possible to cheer & entertain the patients & does not count his efforts unsuccessful. He has received a sum of money from the Senior Methodist Chaplain, from the on behalf of the men & he has expended it in such comforts as were obtainable. He, as opportunity offered, endeavoured to direct the thoughts of the lads to the highest things & he has found them not averse to talks on religious themes; in fact, most of them are eager to discuss such matters, once their natural reticence has been overcome. He distributed a great number of Australasian newspapers during the month & found they were much appreciated. He works in complete accord with the other Chaplains & the representative of the Red Cross Society & in conjunction with them, looks after the recreation & entertainment of the inmates of the hospital. He transacted a large amount of business for patients unable to leave their beds & wrote many letters on their behalf.</p>	

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Chaplain V. R. Bradbury	10/2		<p>Command Depot Littlemoor Camp.</p> <p>This Chaplain has recently arrived from France & is finding very great acceptance with the troops at the camp. Most of them are unfit for active service and are wishing to be sent back to Australia. He is finding a fruitful field of labour amongst them. He held 4 Church Parades & 4 Voluntary services during the month & they were carried out with every assistance from the camp authorities. He gave a series of lectures on Biblical Literature & the attendances were very fine. In all, the number of lectures given was 12.</p> <p>He arranged & supervises a class for teaching men to write with their left hand & a great many men have enrolled & are enthusiastically practicing.</p> <p>In conjunction with the Y. M. C. A. Secretary he conducts parties of men to places of interest in the vicinity & gives short talks on their history.</p> <p>He has kept an eye on the recreation & sports of the men & has seen that they are well supplied with material.</p> <p>He visits the men in their huts & in the Y. M. C. A. with very great profit to them. He has conducted a number of impromptu talks on Religion in the huts & has found a very keen interest.</p>	
Chaplain F. C. Bremer	5/9		<p>59th Battalion.</p> <p>No Parade services were possible as the Battalion was in the Forward area; several Voluntary ones were held & were followed by the celebration of Holy Communion.</p> <p>He supervised the Y. M. C. A. forward Stock & continually had hot drinks ready for the men as they travelled in & out of the line. He also assisted in the distribution of comfort fund gifts.</p> <p>During the 'stunts' which took place he was placed in charge of a stretcher bearers relay post in the trenches & saw to it that the wounded were attended to & that a continual service was maintained. His efforts assisted materially in the steady evacuation of casualties.</p> <p>He paid regular visits to the huts in the Front line & was welcome everywhere.</p> <p>He conducted 10 burials, attended to the correspondence entailed, & saw to the erection of crosses over the graves.</p> <p>He also visited the C. C. S. some distance behind the line in order to do what he could for the men of his unit who use them.</p> <p>He carried out his usual personal work during the month.</p>	

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Chaplain F. T. Cleverdon

23rd Battalion

Statistics: 3 Church Parades, 2 Voluntary Services, 20 burials.

This Brigade was in a very successful attack at Villers Bretonneux on July 4th. He was at the R. A. P. and A. D. S. during the whole of the operation assisting with the evacuation of the wounded and was also in charge of a hot drink buffet.

He distributed goods from the Comforts Fund & from the 6th Brigade Depot, during his visits to the line which took place regularly.

He records the good fellowship which exists between the men of the Brigade & the Americans who are attached. The coming in of such a fresh & keen body of troops has infused fresh heart into our fellows.

He ran two canteens, one at the Grandfont lines & one in Villers Bretonneux. The turnover for the month was 28,000 francs. The profits were somewhat reduced this month owing to the fact that the forward canteen was subject to enemy bombardment. An amount of 400 francs was lost in this way through enemy action. This is the first occasion on which any loss has been suffered notwithstanding the fact that for seven months the canteen had never been further behind the line than B. H. Q. unless the Battalion was out in rest. During the 12 months that this chaplain has been in charge of the canteen an amount of 14,000 francs, approximately, has been made in profits. This has been returned to the men in food, sporting material, prizes, comforts etc.

A great deal of correspondence was attended to. Forty letters dealing with deceased, missing & wounded men were written by the chaplain. Such letters involved a fair amount of time as enquiries had to be made for every particular concerning the death & circumstances of burial etc. of each one as the relatives are particularly anxious for such information and are exceedingly grateful for what is given. Requests for photographs of graves are frequently received by the chaplains & though the S. R. U. will supply one after a considerable lapse of time, it would be a great convenience & a source of comfort to sorrowing relatives if permission were given for chaplains to carry cameras for this purpose.

Chaplain R. P. D. Finnigan

4th Divisional Troops

Statistics: 5 Church Parades, 2 Voluntary Services, 3 Lectures.

He was appointed a member of the Sports Committee & carried out the duties devolving on him.

During the month he assisted in running the canteen & carried out the usual routine work. He regularly visited the men in the line & in billets & placed himself at their service for anything they might desire doing within his scope & power.

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Chaplain H. J. Foreman
No 13 at 3. M Abbeville.

Statistics: - 12 Voluntary services. 4 Fellowship Meetings 4 Bible classes. 4 Celebrations of Holy Communion.

The usual Hospital Visitation was carried on & the hundred & one things incidental to it were attended to. He distributed a great deal of religious literature & many New Testaments. These were supplied by the Religious Tract Society & he reports that for the past four months Abbeville has been vigorously ploughed but so far more has fallen on the Hospital though some did come very near.

Chaplain J. A. Sauld
A. J. B. D. Havre.

Statistics (which speak for themselves) Church Parades 5. Evangelistic Services 9. Lantern Services 3. (at these services 3 1/8 decisions for Christ were recorded) Fun nights 8. Excursions 6. Celebrations of Holy Communion 10. Services for outgoing draft 10. Hospital Visitation 4. Presided at Concerts & Lectures 3. Wrote 120 letters.

He writes: - "It has been a very busy month with the chance of doing a very varied kind of work. In a sense like the golden rule of work is the evening from 6-30 to 9 when the men are off work, dull & so I have got, for months, had dinner in the Mess. The C. O. has given me permission leave of absence. I am tremendously indebted to the Y. M. C. A. for the daily use of their premises for all kinds of work. Our outgoing drafts are farewelled in their barracks. It is in their buildings or under their auspices that all the evening work is done & all the splendid resources are at the disposal of the Chaplain at all times. The Psychology of this Base, situated as it is between the front line & the rear seems to lend itself very conspicuously to evangelistic efforts and at the same time the social side of the work must go hand in hand with it. It is very easy to run on evangelistic service in the H.Q. where the night before you have had a Fun Night. The Comforts Fund have made the farewelling of our fine men a great joy by their gifts of cigarettes, newspapers, sweets etc. These are greatly appreciated. There have been greatly helped in the Parade & Farewell services & excursions by the other C. P. D. Pades & we are a particularly happy quartette & by cooperation a much larger field is covered. We are trying to keep in touch with the Havre Hospital areas each man being responsible for one Hospital. The men have greatly appreciated the privilege afforded them by the kindness of the C. O. of the Depot, in visiting the very beautiful forest around our camps, under proper escort. These large voluntary route marches are a great testimony to the love of the beautiful Havre men have. The weather has been most delightful making almost every open air function planned possible & the Sunday evening open air services are attended by men from all down the Roullis Valley. We should have had some huge gatherings but for the fact that twice on the Sunday afternoon a draft of nearly 1000 men went up the line.

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Chaplain H. Green	13 th	3 P.M.	<p>Have reported to this Base early in the month & has been getting into the method of the work since that time.</p> <p>He has conducted 2 Church Parades and 1 Voluntary services. His preaching meets with great acceptance and he secures converts at every service.</p> <p>He is working in conjunction with Chaplain Gault and is a very able colleague.</p> <p>He sees every draft off & takes part in the farewell services & celebrations of Holy Communion. He acts as a secretary at the Funerals & regularly visits No 39 Hospital. He has taken part in a number of Sunday services & has already reacted the tents of the new.</p> <p>He lives in a room at the Y.M.C.A. to which the new comers come uninvited & he is doing a great work in connection with the funeral interviews etc.</p> <p>He writes enthusiastically of the great opportunity which the Base affords to a Padre.</p>	
Chaplain H. J. Heath	12 th	4 th	<p>Lancing Brigade Bedford</p> <p>Statistics - 4 Church Parades 4 Hospital services. 2 services for outgoing drafts at which 30 men signed decision cards & concerts.</p> <p>He regularly visits the men of his Brigade who may be in the New Zealand Hospital at Bedford & also pays attention to the Short Hospital.</p> <p>He goes round the tents when the men are off duty & thus gets to know them personally with the result that he is able to help them in many ways & also gets attended addresses at his services.</p> <p>He has arranged hospitality in London through the senior Chaplain, for men on leave in London & has, in conjunction with the P.R.I. conducted a series of bridge, euchre & billiard tournaments in the Regimental Institutes.</p>	
Chaplain F. Humphrey	26 th	Battalion.	<p>Statistics 4 Parades 3 Voluntary Services. He also gave 3 lectures in connection with the Y.M.C.A. on subjects dealing with entering into the 5th year of war. He ran 3 impromptu concerts.</p> <p>He carried the Battalion canteen well forward & had it in full work at the Bois de L'Abbe on the Villes Bretonnes road. It was heavily shelled but escaped damage. The turnover for the month was 29,060 francs.</p> <p>He conducted 3 burials & erected crosses in addition to writing to the next of kin.</p>	

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Chaplain C. A. Jenkins	6th	at Jenkins	<p>No 2 Command Depot Weymouth Statistics 2 Church Parades, 9 Voluntary services 4 Bible classes 3 Fellowship Meetings, conducted 4 Excursions to places of interest. During the month a boatload of droops left for Australia but the draft was torpedoed & all the men arrived back penniless & with very little clothing. With the permission of the C. O. the Chaplain obtained from the comforts Fund commissions something for each man. This Chaplain also goes out on route marches with the droops & thus gets the sympathy of the men very quickly. They count him one of themselves. He has carried out his usual hospital visitation & library work during the month & has also done a great deal of personal work.</p>	
Chaplain F. S. Lewis	7th	5th	<p>5th Training Brigade Forward. This Chaplain arrived at the T. B. at the end of the month. He has recently landed from Australia. He was employed for a few weeks visiting hospitals. He went to the following places:- Kapabury, Crocyden Taplow, Orington, Epsom & Wardsworth. His duty was to look up the Australian Methodists in these places. He records that the men were delighted to see an Australian Chaplain & appreciated his visits greatly. He speaks in terms of great admiration of both the officers & men who are wounded. Their patience & fortitude is wonderful.</p>	
Chaplain A. H. Mitchell	36 th	Brigade A.F.A.	<p>This Chaplain reports similarly to June. He has distributed comforts, visited the Batteries & Observation Posts & has kept in intimate touch with the men. He has conducted 4 Church Parades, arranged 3 concerts & has had 3 burials with their incidental correspondence.</p>	

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