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# Catholic Army Clubs



## Progress Report

TO JUNE 1st, 1918

AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

### This Year's Campaign

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Presented at the Ontario State Convention of the  
Knights of Columbus held in Windsor, Ontario, on  
June 4th and 5th, 1918.

# CATHOLIC ARMY HUTS PROGRESS REPORT

TO THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS DELEGATES ASSEMBLED IN  
CONVENTION AT WINDSOR ON JUNE 4TH AND 5TH, 1918 :

Throughout the history of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario probably no better evidence of the power of unity could be cited than the campaign of last year, inaugurated by the State executive, for assistance to the Catholic Chaplains Overseas in the name of Catholic Army Huts; in no way could the three cardinal principles of the order,—Charity, Unity and Brotherly Love—be better or more fully exemplified. Without a guiding precedent, without a mandate from the members, without organization for a campaign of such magnitude, your state officers, under the very capable leadership of State Deputy Bro. J. L. Murray, abundantly displayed to the people of all Canada the virility of our membership, and to the soldiers and beloved priests overseas manifested our devotion, zeal and generosity in providing our fighting men with the means of religious practice and mental and physical relaxation. True, \$70,000 may not be considered a large amount from the Catholic people of Ontario, but it is a matter of satisfaction that in the State Convention of last year we only committed ourselves to approximately \$7,000. or one dollar per capita, and we gave upward of ten times that amount, and in the success of that initial campaign of 1917 there is ample evidence that when our priests and our men on the battle front again send the clarion call across the waters of the Atlantic, help will be immediately forthcoming in full measure and overflowing from the Catholic people not alone of Ontario but from all the federated provinces that comprise the great Dominion of Canada.

Let me here relate briefly the events that led up to the application for authority to organize the Catholic Army Huts, the necessity for such an organization acting under and by authority of a government charter, and something of the more important features of the campaign itself.

## DEVELOPMENT OF AN ORGANIZATION.

As to the development of the proposal, that the Knights of Columbus of Ontario should render assistance to the Overseas chaplains, an appeal was made at last year's convention by Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, which was substantiated by letter from Col. Rev. W. T. Workman, M. C., Director Catholic Chaplain Services, Canadian Headquarters, London, and from the Most Rev. Apostolic Delegate.

The Ontario State Convention unanimously pledged its unqualified support to the appeal, and a per capita tax of \$1.00 per member was immediately levied.

It was further resolved that owing to the urgency of the appeal,

and the pressing needs of our Canadian Catholic men at the Front, the State Deputy be instructed to communicate with the Archbishops and Bishops of Ontario, for the purpose of enlisting their support in the work, and to urge the Catholic people of the Province to contribute as generously as they could to the cause.

These instructions were carried out by the State Deputy. Other efforts were also put forth, in an endeavor to arouse sentiment favourable to the necessities of the situation.

Meanwhile, the organization of the Catholic Chaplains Overseas service, unfortunately long delayed, because of reasons unnecessary to herein set forth, was progressing most favourably, and during the past summer reached its present splendid standing. Concurrently, it was felt that as the work of the chaplains was of considerable proportions, and would require the handling of thousands of dollars, incorporation should be secured.

It was recognized that the Knights of Columbus of Canada, not only individually, but through their established organization, would be the main bulwark of support in the collection of funds, and were therefore entitled to representation on the proposed incorporation. In fact, the chaplains were most anxious that a mutually satisfactory working basis should be thus organized.

To explain a slight misunderstanding, and also answer a surprisingly-often asked query, as to why the Knights of Columbus did not act independently of the chaplains, both in the collecting of funds, and in the expenditure of same, such as our American brothers, for instance, have done, it is perhaps pertinent to here state that the foremost reason was the lack of a Dominion-wide national cohesion among the various Canadian jurisdictions. Secondly, the Knights of Columbus had received no official recognition, as a war and patriotic agency, from the Canadian Government, and there was slight encouragement to hope for same; finally there was in existence a hard-fought-for and a well-built-up association overseas, in the Chaplain service itself, and the logical procedure was to entrust to the chaplains the promotion of the work.

Insofar as the Knights are concerned, as an Order, the only possible advantage any arrangement, other than the one adopted, could be the publicity, but surely that is not our aim and ambition, rather that we should do our bit, as best we can, to assist any endeavor recognized as necessary to the successful prosecution of the war.

So, Brother J. L. Murray, State Deputy of Ontario, and Brother Geo. H. Boivin, State Deputy of Quebec, representing the two leading Canadian jurisdictions, co-operated with the chaplains, and in conjunction with them, applied to the Canadian Government for letters patent incorporating the "Catholic Army Huts", a body corporate and politic with rights and powers to erect, equip and conduct Catholic Army Huts for Canadian soldiers, which shall serve the two-fold purpose of chapels

for Catholic soldiers and recreation huts for all soldiers, irrespective of creed and to supply Catholic Chaplains in the Canadian Overseas Forces and in the Canadian Militia with rosaries, medals, prayer books and similar devotional aids for distribution to Catholic soldiers.

The following were to be eligible for membership in the corporation :

Every Catholic chaplain in the Overseas Military Forces of Canada shall, during the period of such service, be deemed a member, unless he writes to the Board of Directors relinquishing his right to membership.

Any Catholic Chaplain on duty in Canada, or any Catholic Chaplain who is listed in the Canadian Militia, shall be eligible to apply in writing to the Board of Directors for membership in the corporation, and upon the receipt of such application by the Board of Directors he shall be deemed a member of the corporation.

The State Executive Officers of the various State Councils of the Knights of Columbus in Canada shall, in their first annual meeting after re-election, have power each year to nominate representatives, who shall be members of the corporation, for the period of one year, or till their successors be appointed, as follows :

The State Executive of the Knights of Columbus in the State jurisdiction, styled, Quebec and Ontario, shall have power each to elect three representatives, each of the other State Executives of the Knights of Columbus in Canada shall have power to elect one representative for each Canadian Province under the jurisdiction of said Executive.

No other class of persons shall be eligible for membership;

Members who are chaplains shall retain their membership as long as they are Catholic Chaplains in the Overseas Military Forces of Canada or in the Canadian Militia, unless they previously resign their membership in a letter to the Board of Directors.

Members who are representatives of the Knights of Columbus shall retain membership for the period for which they were elected, unless they previously resign their membership in a letter to the Board of Directors.

The operations of the Corporation to be carried on throughout the Dominion of Canada and elsewhere.

That the said Major the Reverend John Joseph O'Gorman, George Henri Boivin and Joseph Lawrence Murray are to be the first or Provisional Directors of the said corporation.

Having in mind the foregoing Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, representing the chaplains, got in touch last summer with all the Canadian State Deputies, relative to campaign for funds.

The result of the Ontario campaign is well known, and does not require further detailed setting forth herein, as the report of the Ontario State Treasurer states, there has been collected, and turned in to the

Catholic Army Huts Association the magnificent sum of \$72491.73.

The Association has further received from Manitoba and Saskatchewan \$974.00; from Alberta and British Columbia \$3214.64; from the Maritime Provinces \$1090.25; from the Fourth Degree Fund of the Knights of Columbus \$2,000.00 and from miscellaneous sources about \$2500.00, making a total of \$9778.89, apart from a few other contributions, sent direct Overseas, and of which the Canadian Secretary Treasurer has not received the details. The figures quoted are approximate. Further particulars of same, together with summary of expenditures, will be published within the next few months, when the official and duly audited statement has been prepared.

So much for the collection work of the individual Canadian jurisdictions of the Knights of Columbus. Provided there is a united Dominion-wide campaign, profiting by the experience already gained, it is easy to appreciate that a splendid amount could be realized to assist this very necessary and deserving endeavor.

Now as to the actual work of the Catholic Army Huts Association; attached to this report is a printed pamphlet, containing further particulars of letters patent incorporating the Association; also memo of agreement, and the report of the provisional directors. The first formal meeting of the Overseas directorate was held in London on December 10th, 1917. There were present Lt. Col. Rev. W. T. Workman, M. C., A.D.C.S. (RC) O.M.F.C., President; Lt. Col. Rev. F. L. French, D.S.O., D.A. D.C.S., Canadian Corps, Vice-President; Major Rev. P. H. M. Casgrain, C.M.G., War Office, and Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, C.F. Father O'Gorman was appointed Overseas Secretary-treasurer. An office was provided for the secretary by the Canadian Chaplain Service in Oxford Circus House, one of the Canadian Headquarters Buildings. Every Overseas Chaplain is a member of this Society, and keeps the Secretary posted as to the nature of the supplies or help he requires.

As evidence of the progress already made, herewith following is a list of the Catholic Chapels and huts in England and France, already operated by the Catholic Army Huts.

#### IN ENGLAND.

1. Bramshott:—The Military Catholic chapel is the neatest building in the Bramshott Camp. It was built for the Canadian soldiers by the Aldershott Command Catholic Extension Society, through the Imperial Senior Chaplain, Father O'Farrell. It has been decided to reimburse Father O'Farrell, that he may be able to extend his work elsewhere. The adjacent Catholic (C.W.L.) Hut has been enlarged through the funds of the C.A.H.

2. Witley: (a) A small army hut is fitted up as a chapel and recreation room. At present there is here in course of construction a large hut to cost about \$15,000.00.

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(b) A library and recreation room for the 8th Reserve French Canadian Battalion (Father Desjardins) has been supplied with a French library.

(c) The Recreation room of the 150th French Canadian Battalion has likewise been provided with a French library. The dining room of this battalion has been fitted up with an Altar, and the Officer Commanding (Col. Barre) has written the society thanking them for what they have done.

3. Shorncliffe: (a) East Sandling. A Catholic Chapel, due to a private English donor, has been fitted up as a combination Chapel and recreation room.

(b) West Sandling.

(c) St. Martin's Plains.

In both these places a small army hut has been fitted up as a combination Chapel and Recreation Room.

4. Purfleet. An army hut serves here also as Chapel and Recreation room.

5. Seaford. A hut similar to the one in Purfleet is in operation here.

#### LONDON CLUB.

As large numbers of Canadian soldiers are constantly on leave in London, existing huts and clubs are taxed to their utmost. To cope with the situation a building at No. 24 Grosvenor Place, opposite Buckingham Palace Gardens, has been rented, together with an annex. This club is open to the soldiers of the British Empire and the United States, irrespective of creed. The household management is under the charge of the Catholic Women's League, and is under the direct supervision of the chaplains. The formal opening has already taken place, and this club is, to say the least, second to no soldiers' club in London. It provides wholesome home life constantly to large numbers of soldiers, and there is bed accommodation for about 125 men in all. The chaplains report that the moral conditions of London's main thoroughfares are a disgrace to Christianity, and the need of an institution such as this, with its refining and religious influence is indisputable.

#### IN FRANCE.

1. LeTreport: The Catholic Army Huts have built a hut here.

2. Etaples: A hut has been here established.

3. Canadian Corp Area: One Chapel Tent is with each Canadian Division and one has been forwarded to the 22nd French Canadian Battalion.

4. Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, Chapel tent here.

5. Canadian Railway Troops. Four tents are located among these battalions.

6. The construction was authorized of a hut to be erected in a



ruined French town, as near as possible to the Front, which will have chapel, recreation room and canteen, and which after the war will become the property of the Bishop of the Diocese, wherein located, and serve as a church in the reconstruction period.

7. The question of a hostel at Lourdes has been under consideration, but definite action has been held over.

8. Three portable huts are in course of construction.

#### RELIGIOUS SUPPLIES.

Over five thousand rosaries and four thousand scapular medals have been distributed, also a number of Sacred Heart badges. As the army supplies prayer books, French and English, the Association has not had to buy prayer books, however, the Association was instrumental in having the French prayer-book (Petit Paroissien) re-printed by the H. M. Stationery, and distributed four thousand of these. Several portable altars have been completed out of the Association funds. Other religious articles supplied to Chaplains include: Mass vestments, altar linen, altar breads and altar wine, candles, candlesticks, stations of the cross, thuribles, holy water vats, crucifixes and religious pictures. Travelling expenses of officiating clergymen have been paid in instances not covered by army regulations.

#### STATIONERY.

Up to the present 80,000 letter heads and 54,000 envelopes have been distributed free to soldiers. Now that an arrangement has been entered into with H. M. Stationery to obtain, upon repayment, any amount required, a much larger distribution of stationery will take place, 100,000 letter heads and 50,000 envelopes ordered for April and May.

#### READING MATTER AND PRINTING.

A library was forwarded to No. 2 Canadian General Hospital, £25 was assigned for an addition to the French library of the 10th Reserve Battalion and substantial increases were made to the French library of the 150th Battalion before it coalesced with the 10th (French Canadian) Reserve. Small numbers of books easily transportable have been forwarded to the various units. An arrangement has been made with the Catholic Truth Society to forward every fortnight a parcel of 80 pamphlets for free distribution to each Catholic Canadian Chaplain in France. The Association has paid the expenses of the printing of an official report on the work of the Catholic Chaplains. It has printed cards announcing Mass, cards to record the reception of the Sacraments, and a leaflet for hearing Confessions in Polish, prepared by Father P. Casgrain, C. M. G.

#### HOLY NAME SOCIETY.

By far the most important printing yet done by the association,

was the printing of 25,000 pamphlets for the Holy Name Society. This work, which needs a special report of its own, to adequately describe it, was begun in the Fourth Canadian Division by Father MacDonell, O.S.B., M.C., C.F., 13,000 leaflets, which contain a foreword by Major General Watson, an appeal in favour of the Holy Name by Father MacDonnell and a pledge to be signed by each soldier, have been distributed in that Division. All Chaplains, irrespective of creed, are co-operating in this work. A similar leaflet with foreword by Major General A. C. MacDonnell, has been prepared by the First Division, and 12,000 copies have been issued. This appeal, to avoid lewd talk and profanity, and to invoke the confidence of the Holy Name of Jesus, will do an amount of good, the extent of which may never be known.

#### CANADIAN MEETING.

The first general Canadian meeting of the Association was held in the Columbus Club, Ottawa, on January 29th, 1918. The Knights of Columbus of Ontario were entitled to three representatives at said meeting. Accordingly, Brother James E. McGlade, District Deputy, Brockville, and Brother R. A. Jeffery, District Deputy, Arnprior, were appointed with State Deputy Murray to be present. The Knights of Columbus of Quebec were likewise entitled to three representatives, but their State Deputy advised that the officers of the Quebec State Council declined to appoint any representatives on the directorate of the Catholic Army Huts Association. Brother Geo. H. Boivin, the State Deputy of Quebec, however, as one of the original incorporators of the Association, was represented by proxy. The State Deputy of Alberta, Brother E. J. Sehl, of Lethbridge, was present in person, and the other Canadian State Deputies were represented by proxy. The Overseas chaplains were also represented by proxy.

The incorporation and organization of the Association was duly approved, and after presentation of various reports, a general discussion followed.

The Secretary-Treasurer presented Financial Statement, which showed in the Bank of Montreal, Renfrew, a balance of \$8,912.06.

The question of the advisability of undertaking any financial obligations in the promotion of the work of the Association in Canada was then discussed. The meeting was unanimous in its decision that recognizing the extreme urgency of funds Overseas, much as the society is desirous of carrying on the work here, it was the decision of the meeting that all available funds, in the first instance are for Overseas requirements, and until otherwise decided, no funds should be expended in Canada, and the Association could not assume responsibility for the payment of accounts contracted without its authority, and all concerned should be governed accordingly. Since then the sum of \$2,000.00 has been voted for work in Canada by the Overseas Directors.



The election of Directors resulted as follows :

For the five chaplain directors :

Lt. Col. W. T. Workman,

Lt. Col. F. L. French,

Major P. H. M. Casgrain,

Major John Knox,

Major J. J. O'Gorman,

For the K. of C. representatives :

Major Canon Sylvestre.

Bro. J. L. Murray.

Brothers Wm. Kearns and L. R. O'Connor of Ottawa, were appointed auditors of the Association.

Major Canon Sylvestre is at present in Canada, and is devoting considerable time and attention to the promotion of the work of the Association in the Province of Quebec.

#### AS TO THE FUTURE.

Now that we have commenced on a work so meritorious, so far-reaching and important, we cannot turn back, if we would; the star of duty directs us to greater achievements; the call is loud and insistent and the enthusiasm and generosity of those of us who cannot go Overseas will defeat any attempts at opposition and silence any murmurings of criticism of details. That the work of the Knights of Columbus in the recent campaign was fully appreciated I may cite the words of one authority, who says :

"All honour and praise to the Knights of Columbus! The nation, irrespective of the ancestral strains or religious beliefs of its component parts, pays tribute to this organization of Catholic men who are ministering to the soldiers of Democracy. It is a laudable work, requiring no extended remarks, for its deeds are beyond our mental grasp; but acknowledgement of its services, coupled with prayer, is helpful and stimulating."

The Catholic people of Ontario, and of Canada as a whole, are under a debt of gratitude to the State Deputy; the organization of last year's campaign was very largely due to his foresight, ability and self-sacrifice, and that organization is a substantial foundation on which this year's work may be built,—a work, the magnitude of which cannot be overestimated.

Permit me here, by way of comparison to refer briefly to the splendid example set by our Brother Knights in the United States, who aim at establishing in one year a fund aggregating \$28,000,000 for their Catholic Chaplains and soldiers. \$6,000,000 of this sum is now on hand at the executive offices of the Supreme Council in New Haven; \$12,000,000 will be subscribed by July 1st of this year and the entire fund of \$28,000,000 will be required by July 1st of next year. In this

connection President Wilson voices the sentiments of America when he says :

"I heartily approve your plan to accumulate a fund to be spent for the spiritual and moral welfare of our soldiers, and I am very much gratified to know that your effort, while born of the charitable impulse of a single church, is non-sectarian in its scope and purpose and intended to confer a fundamental benefit on those whose mental, moral, and physical health is our solemn concern."

Such too must be the solemn concern of the people of Canada. With one accord the Canadian Chaplains and soldiers have expressed deep appreciation of what has been done and their request is that we not only continue what we have begun, but that we enlarge the scope of our activities to meet the exigencies and the demands of the grave situation. What has been done in the past has largely been to supply and equip huts in the training camps of England and the concentration centres in France. What is required of us now is that the Knights of Columbus of Canada inaugurate a Dominion-wide campaign that will not only continue and enlarge that work but will make possible suitable clubs or meeting places that will be havens of rest, comfort and safety for our soldiers, who are in training or on leave in London and other large centres of England, ensuring in as great a degree as we can the return of our soldiers on the blessed day of peace "with heads erect and shoulders full square to the breeze of heaven, clear of eye, clean of heart—just as they went away." That such clubs are authorized under the charter granted the Catholic Army Huts is made quite clear in the following cablegram received on May 14th from Major J. J. O'Gorman, Overseas Secretary-Treasurer, and signed by him and by Rev. Fathers Workman, French and Casgrain:

"Permit granted Withy Chapel Hut, begins immediately; Deputy Judge advocate general Canadian gave opinion London clubs within our charter. In London soldiers hut same as soldiers' club; first London Club now opened with authorization Imperial and Canadian Military authorities and Cardinal Bourne; second club now taken over; these clubs supply extremely urgent religious and recreational need; soldiers Overseas expect generous universal support of Canadian Catholics."

For this purpose approximately \$50,000 will be required.

For other work in England and France a sum approaching \$200,000 will be required.

A third necessity, strongly urged by the Chaplains and one of obvious necessity, is the erection of permanent Catholic army huts in permanent training camps in Canada.

It is therefore evident that upward of \$250,000 will be required within the next year.

To successfully carry on all of these various phases of a work that is as great as it is glorious the suggestion comes from Overseas that

a special Knights of Columbus War Committee, comprising representatives from all provinces of the Dominion of Canada, be formed to act in conjunction with the directors of Catholic Army Huts. The necessity of such a Canadian committee is apparent and we confidently commend the suggestion to the careful consideration of this Ontario State Convention of 1918, and recommend that such a Committee be formed as soon after the Convention as possible in order that a Canadian-wide plan of action may be formulated.

Delegates are urgently requested to carry back to their respective councils the positive assurance that another campaign is absolutely necessary. Not only must we as Catholics assume our full duties and obligations in this war with Prussian autocracy, we must insist on breaking down the barriers of prejudice so readily raised against us. The undertaking of this second campaign is admittedly a large one, but not too large nor too important for the vast potentialities of the Knights of Columbus who make the just claim that their membership of nearly 8,000 embraces the flower of the Catholic laity throughout the length and breadth of Canada.

To ensure complete success will require the co-ordination and co-operation of every useful agency.

First of all the sympathy and active support of the hierarchy and clergy must be secured. In the last campaign the assistance from some of our bishops and clergy was of incalculable benefit and there is every reason to hope that in the approaching campaign this assistance will be again extended in an even greater degree.

The power of the press cannot be over-estimated and newspaper and circular-letter publicity should be utilized to the fullest possible extent. This applies not only to the organization by the State Executive, but particularly to local committees.

There appears to be no reason why the various municipal councils—township, town, city and county—should not be approached for a grant. The fact should be emphasized that the Catholic Army Huts is an organization recognized by the Canadian, American, British and French governments and military authorities; it has been assuming and will continue to assume an adequate share of the work of caring not only for the spiritual needs of Catholic soldiers but for the comfort, convenience and recreation of soldiers of all creeds and nationalities.

Public meetings of a patriotic nature should be held and above all strong local committees should be chosen in every urban and rural community. In the last campaign canvassing committees were formed and allotted certain districts and this proved to be the most effective agency throughout the entire Ontario campaign. With the co-operation of the clergy, the active support of the press and the efforts of a strong canvassing committee of Catholic laymen the cause of the Catholic Army Huts must be understood and well received in any community.

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Church collections as a method of collecting funds should be discouraged. In most cases the amount derived is not adequate and the effort is not commensurate with the importance of the laudable undertaking.

Knights of Columbus are but taking the initiative, the call is a general one to Catholics from sea to sea, and it is but reasonable to hope and expect that the deeds and needs of our brave soldiers may be a stimulus for concerted and generous action on our part and that the holy ministrations, the chivalry and self-sacrifice of our beloved priests will help us to realize that the services of the chaplains are an absolutely essential part of present day military life.

(Signed) R. A. JEFFERY,

Windsor, June 4-5, 1918.