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200 years of migration to England

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city, amidst a constant din of guns, as many of our big guns were stationed in the city itself and the enemy replied vigorously. Anxious to see all I could on the occasion of my first visit, I walked to the railway station to find a high barricade of sandbags in front of it, and I was warned to leave as quickly as possible as many casualties had occurred near the station. I continued in touch with the Londoners of the 60th Division until they left in November for Salonica, where they distinguished themselves, both here and subsequently in Palestine.

The services of the New Year of 1916 were held on the First Day in the village of Acq, in the Arras sector, in a crowded cinema—to which places the soldiers gave the name of "Cinema-gogues." On the afternoon of the same day, I took my Ark and Sefer Torah into the car, and, after a two hours' run, met a large body of men belonging to the R.A.F. and local divisions in rest in the middle area near Doullens, where a hangar was lent to us, and a very impressive service was held. On the Second Day, an old barn called "The Empire Theatre," in Senlis, close to Albert, where the battle was still raging, was filled by a congregation drawn from men who had come direct from the trenches and who begged of me to come again on the Day of Atonement. I therefore arranged my first service on Kippur in Acq as on the New Year, and the second in the afternoon in Albert itself, some fifty miles distant. It was on this occasion when I was organising these services that Divisional Headquarters, through the D.A.A.G. of the 14th (Light) Division, suggested a plan which was afterwards carried out on every important holiday, of allotting a number of lorries to each unit, which met the men at a spot immediately behind the trenches and brought them to the services, and so saved them the fatigue of a long tramp. The institution of this scheme led to the numbers of men at our services being largely increased. The Day of Atonement was a busy day for me, for, after the service at Acq, where about 350 men attended in the morning, I made my way to Albert, thus holding the first Jewish service ever conducted within the walls of this city. We were over an hour late in arriving at Albert, as the car had to travel slowly owing to the roads being choked with marching troops and guns. The men, however, were patiently waiting in the cinema, although the city was being heavily shelled at the time. I learnt, to my regret, that the men of the 56th London Division, whom I had hoped would attend our gathering in large numbers, had gone "over the top" near High Wood that same morning; but we still had 300 men who attentively followed the service.

On the same day services were being held in other parts of the front area by my colleagues, the Rev. V. G. Simmons, the Rev. D. I. Freedman, of the Australian Forces, and the Rev. Arthur Barnett, whilst the Rev. L. Morris was active in Etaples and Boulogne. Unquestionably the most striking services which we held were in September and October of the following year, 1917, on the New Year and Day of Atonement, when attendances were remarkably large. Thus, in Poperinghe, near the great battle for the Passchendaele Ridge, the Y.M.C.A. hut in which Mr. Morris held his service was so crowded that many men could not obtain admission. By this time there was a Chaplain in each of the five Army areas and three at the bases.* Moreover, our organisation for getting into touch with the individual men in the scattered units and for obtaining lorries to bring them to the services had been perfected, with the result that at my services in Bapaume over 1,500 men gathered together. In this small town not a single habitable building had remained intact when the enemy evacuated the area in March, 1917. I had entered Bapaume for the first time with Lieut. E. X. Kapp, the cartoonist, four days after the enemy had retreated, after destroying the town. Many of the houses were still burning and we visited the Town Hall, of which two storeys still remained standing. The following night this building was blown up by a delayed mine, and a number of people, including the two French Deputies of the town, were killed.

The winter of 1916 found me at Contay, near the Beaumont-Hamel fighting, where my billets in succession were a dark low-roofed apartment in an old farmhouse and the back-room of an *estaminet*. It was here that I was suspected by a zealous Scottish A.P.M. of being a spy, as he did not recognise my badge, and I escaped arrest through the intervention of the village Town Major.

The snow and subsequent thaw of this winter covered the roads and fields in which the camps and C.C.S. were pitched with a troublesome layer of thick mud, and many of the roads which before had been used chiefly for farmers' wagons broke up under the weight of the heavy army traffic. This greatly added to the difficulties of travelling. On one occasion, we left the main road

* The number of Chaplains on the Western Front was never adequate, the consequence being that each was allotted an area of far too wide an extent to be thoroughly worked by one Chaplain. In spite of numerous applications to the authorities none of my colleagues had a motor car allotted to him to enable him to journey as often as necessary through the length and breadth of his Army or Base. Some rode long distances on horseback or borrowed a motor ambulance or other conveyance to travel from place to place, whilst the R.A.F. units were especially helpful in lending a car whenever possible.

to make a détour across a narrow track and suddenly the car sank to its axles in a mass of mud, and had to be extricated by the horses of a ploughman near at hand. About January, 1917, the 62nd Division joined my Army and I found a considerable body of Leeds Jews in the ranks. These men took part in the rapid advance which followed upon the retreat of the enemy in March, 1917, and one Sunday during this month I proceeded to the village of Louvencourt to hold a service to find that the Division had suddenly moved off in pursuit. I followed the path of the advance through the ruins of Beaumont-Hamel eastward where the Canadian Railway troops were already laying down the lines in territory which a few days before was in hostile hands. I was able to assemble a number of men and take the service, but naturally the sudden change in the whole military situation disturbed my plans for some time. The arrival in February of the EHN (58th) London Division with its large contingent of Jewish soldiers added considerably to my work, especially as my car happened to break down, and over two weeks elapsed before a new one was supplied. In the meantime, Army H.Q., the R.A.F. and the D.M.S. (Director of Medical Service) lent me conveyances to travel long distances in the performance of my duties.

In the spring of 1917 I returned to the Arras sector in preparation for the battle of Vimy and the Arras struggle, which kept me very busily occupied. The Jewish casualties in this offensive were very severe, and in many a newly-opened cemetery I read the Burial Service over our brave lads who fell. From place to place I journeyed, as summoned by 'phone or wire, for example—upon the same day I officiated in the Arras cemetery, and in the afternoon some fifty miles away at La Chapelle, south of Peronne, which was then the extreme end of the British line. The Feast of Weeks (May 27th) was celebrated by two services, the first in the open field in the captured area at Mercatel on the Arras—Bapaume road, close to a line of old German trenches, the second in a marquee lent by the O.C. of No. 19 C.C.S. at Agnez-lez-Duisans, west of Arras. My frequent visits to the areas devastated by the enemy in his retreat proved to me that my services were now needed in those districts east of the Arras-Peronne main road where all sign of human habitation had been destroyed—especially as the Third Army holding the line there included large numbers of our men in London and Leeds divisions and in battalions which contained most Jews like the Royal Fusiliers, Middlesex, Manchesters, Rifle Brigade and King's Royal Rifles. I therefore