

NCWC Box 6, Folder 51

Paris, France.

3-22-1919.

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Rev. John Burke,
120 West 60th St.,
New York.

Dear Father Burke:

Each day I plan to write you, and at night—generally midnight—I have to say: "Surely to-morrow" No one could be busier than I, for every minute, every second of my long day is filled to overflowing. This letter, if I ever accomplish it, will have to be read as it is written, in installments, for it will be a whole book, if I put down half what I have to say to you.

An enclosed sheet with statistics will prove to you that our club is doing real service. No statistics, however, can give an idea of the spirit that rules the club. That must be felt to be understood. Mr. Fosdick calls it; "the personal touch" The boys say constantly that; "This is home and the only real one we have known this side the Atlantic." We have carried out many things we were told would be impossible. We have polished floors, no spittoons, and altogether beautiful surroundings. I have never said a "don't" or posted a rule since I opened the club all alone, February 5th, six weeks ago. The boys take the greatest pride in saying "Our club is sure the best in Paris." We give the Sunday morning breakfast with pancakes and in the evenings each boy has a bowl of hot soup or cocoa. The club closes at 11 P.M.

We have books from the Library Association and quite a number have been given us by different people, so we have a fair library. We have all the magazines. There are always cigarettes on the tables and stationary, and ~~the~~ evenings each boy has a good cigar and either candy or chocolate. There is always someone to welcome him as he enters and someone to grasp his hand as he goes out. There are games and generally music. These are impromptu, excepting on Saturday afternoons and Sundays groups of French fr

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friends provide music and other informal entertainments. We have had two really beautiful dances with music from the military headquarters' band. One dance was the night before Ash Wednesday and the other on St. Patrick's Day. On both occasions we served refreshments to everyone.

We are to have our formal opening next Tuesday and many invitations have been sent out to well known people French and American, in Paris. On Wednesday the regular canteen service will be opened.

I am more than pleased with the group of women workers sent over. They are serious and intelligent and will do fine work. I am much disappointed there was no stenographer and accountant among them. I sent you a special cable asking for one, also that each one coming over should bring household linen. As none was brought we have had to pay double the American prices to have it here. I am wondering how that cable was overlooked. An accountant, as you can understand, is a first necessity, and a stenographer is something I can neither find here, nor do without excepting at the greatest inconvenience. Miss Hardwick is doing her best with the accounts so I can send you a statement in a few days. I am enclosing my personal account. *for Mr. Hooker.*

Another thing we are all disappointed in is the uniforms. They prove to be of very poor material and already are showing wear and look shabby. Beside the smart overseas uniforms of the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A. Y.W.C.A. and even the K.C. women they do not do the National Catholic War Council credit. The eyes of everyone seems to be fixed on us and we are jealous even for our personal appearance. Another thing, the colour cannot be matched over here, and in getting other uniforms over here we will be obliged to choose something quite different probably something more expensive, but something that will save money in the end. I shall get the same material as that used by the "Y" units but a different colour. May I suggest that other workers sent should wait to get their uniforms here. ^{as} The emblem is beautiful - nothing could be better.

to open the case with the other organizations -

I have secured two much needed members of our unit. One is Miss Mary Kearny, who has been in the Vanderbilt Hospital ever since it was founded and did wonderful service in the French Hospital before we entered the war. She is well known in Paris, and as soon as her hospital closed she had urgent offers to join other units, but she pre-

ferred coming to us as we were Catholics, The other is a charming girl, half French, half English, who has been in Dr. Blake's celebrated hospital and before that with the French when they first began hostilities. They both speak perfect French. Miss Kearney is in charge of all our hospital visiting. I have put Miss Conway with her and together they are doing wonderful work entirely independent of the K. and C. Miss Perdreau, the second one is our bureau of information. She maps out and plans the sight-seeing for the boys on their three days leave. This makes us a band of fourteen. I could recruit many good women over here, but these are all I shall take on our force until we do other work, and oh! Father Burke, there is so much we should do, so much that lies at our door if only we had the right!!

As our workers live in the house it is like another club for them, quite separate from our boys. They seem pleased and happy in their duties and sur-

roundings. Once a week I have someone come in to talk to them on work and problems over here. Father Hennick talked to-day. Three times a week they have a French lesson, as they must all learn French as quickly as possible. Miss Gadioux ^{the French} is already doing work among the French. We give them no money and she gives only extra time, doing her work regularly for our soldiers so there can be no criticism. I personally am visiting our U.S. Military Prison, seeing the men in their cells. There are between 250 and 300 there.

Our work as it is grows every day but we should be all over France and in cooperation with the French organizations. We are wanted, needed and asked for on all sides. People must have been talking in their sleep when they said there was no work for Catholic women to do over here. Mr. Fosdick appeals to us to go into the leave areas. I have cabled you about all this and am most anxiously awaiting some reply from you. Your silence puzzles me and even causes something a little akin to discouragement. I am wondering if possibly you all at home are not taking the situation over here, and the position and dignity of the National Catholic War Council in it all seriously enough. I am ready at a moment's notice to split this unit up and go anywhere and to do

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anything, but we need an organization and your authority. This club is a success, an absolute success, but we should be doing a far greater work with, I repeat, an organization of our own.

As to the girls' salaries it would be impossible for them to live over here on \$ 150. - 814 francs and 50 centimes, ^{a month} and pay their board outside the club. The Red Cross give their women 900 francs a month in Paris. The K.C. stenographers and office workers get 1086 francs a month, \$200. I shall look into all this carefully and charge for board a sum small enough to be just to them. Expenses are very great, as I told you in the letter I sent by Mr. Denechaud, for food and living. My girls will work very hard and I promise you they will do good work.

The regular exchange at the bank is 5.43 fr. for one dollar

We are to-day getting our red workers cards which gives us a military standing equal to the other organizations over here. With them we will be full-fledged war workers and subject to all regulations.

By the way, I have asked Miss Callahan not to wear our uniform or at least not our emblems. Only members of this unit have a right to it over here unless sent specially and directly to represent you in Washington, and if anybody can put it on when they like it lessens the dignity attached to it and detracts from its serious meaning. Miss Callahan is alright and we are good friends, but she does things as an independent individual that my girls-in-uniform cannot do. She obeys no rules nor is she accountable to anyone. We are all now registered and our uniform known. She does not even represent the N.C.W.C. nor is she united to us in any way. She has agreed graciously to my request. No other organization would ever permit such a thing.

I cannot close without paying a tribute to Madame la Comtesse de Sayve. She is wonderful in helping us and indeed fatigable in working with us and for us. Let me say that with only two exceptions, the Sous Committee is supporting us loyally and all is harmonious. These two have not gotten over their disappointment about not spending the money for their churches.

Thank you for two copies of the Catholic World that came yesterday. I was interested to see the article by Mr Zlamal. The members of that mission all came to see me and I did what I could for them. I shall write oftner and not at such length.

Yours Sincerely Margaret R. Miller

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Statistical Report,
Etoile Service Club, 16 Ave. Wagram.

No. Breakfasts Served

Feb. 9th	28
Feb. 16th	30
" 23rd	49
Mar. 2nd	75
" 9th	100
" 16th	149
Total	431

Given to Czecho-Slovak Mission,

Mr. Zlamel	1500 cigarettes 6 boxes of cigars 1 large carton smoking tobacco.
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Given to prisoners

U.S. Military Prison.

1500 cigarettes
1 large carton smoking tobacco
1 large tin chewing tobacco
6 boxes chocolate
2 boxes cigars
100 hand towels
100 combs
100 tooth brushes
493 doughnuts 493.

No. of names written in Club Register

March 2nd to March 22nd 740

(Many have not registered)

No register was kept before March 2nd.

Each night since Feb. 9th from two to six gallons of soup or cocoa have been served to the men.

Every Saturday afternoon and every Sunday afternoon tea and sandwiches have been served.

Two dances given:

Shrove Tuesday, Suppers served	125
St. Patrick's Day " "	165

Every evening cigars are given to each man and bars of chocolate or candy. Cigarettes are always on the table for use on the premises.

Inventory being made of tobacco, and ^{a statement of} full amount used sent later. Club stationary given out freely in writing room where silence is kept.

3-22-19

NCWC Box 6, Folder 51

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WAR COUNCIL
Etoile Service Club
16 Avenue Wagram
Paris.

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April 29, 1919.

From: National Catholic War Council.

To: Col. L. H. McKinlay, Welfare Officer, 53 Ave. Montaigne, Paris.

Subject: Etoile Service Club, 16 Ave. Wagram, Paris.

1. This Club is entirely under the management and control of the National Catholic War Council. It is for enlisted men--soldiers and sailors--in the A. E. F.

It is conducted by women wearing the National Catholic War Council uniform. All of these women have red workers permits, which were issued through the K of C in the same way that other organizations obtain them through the Y. M. C. A.

2. The accommodations consist of:

(1) A large lounging and reading room with an open fireplace, piano, tables for games and plenty of comfortable chairs.

(2) A large, well lighted, writing room, furnished with club stationary and every convenience. In this room there is always perfect quiet and silence.

(3) Billiard Room.

(4) Dining-room.

(5) Very large kitchen.

3. Daily papers and periodicals are provided liberally, and there is a small library of popular books. Cigarettes and tobacco are always where men can help themselves, and, when they can be had, cigars are distributed, also candy or chocolate.

4. Breakfast is served every Sunday morning from eight to eleven, consisting of Bread and butter, coffee or chocolate, oatmeal and pan-cakes. There is a regular canteen service daily from two-thirty to six-thirty P.M. and from eight to ten-forty-five P. M. Coffee, tea, scup, or cocoa, sandwiches and some one sweet--cake, doughnuts, pudding or pie--are served. The menu is varied as much as possible.

5. Everything is free. There is absolutely no charge for anything on the premises.

6. The Club was opened informally February 10th. The canteen was opened March 26th. It has never been advertised, but has grown steadily in numbers and popularity. A register of names was begun March 2d, and up to date 2,670 names are registered. A man only registers once and some fail to register at all.

The number of Sunday breakfasts served averages 256 for each Sunday. The number served in the canteen averages, 212 men per day. These statistics are from carefully kept records.

7. Besides the actual Club work, hospital visiting is regularly done in Military Hospitals numbers fifty-seven and four. Convalescents are brought from time to time in taxis or camions to spend the afternoon at the Club. Those who are strong enough are taken sight seeing.

8. A few dances have been given, and since Easter it is planned to give one every week. The floors are perfect. The music is always furnished by members of the Headquarters Band, District of Paris.

9. Personal attention is given men on leave in helping them plan their sight seeing in Paris. Informal talks are given from time to time about places of interest.

10. Lists of rooms are kept for those desiring them, but this task grows more and more difficult. Many soldier students have found rooms through the Club.

11. Canteen supplies are bought from the U. S. Commissary at St. Denis. A small part of the staple articles go to the Etoile Club Mess. Each worker pays her board to cover actual expenses, but, I repeat nothing whatever is sold.

12. Tobacco, reading matter and from time to time doughnuts and cake are sent out to the U. S. prisoners at Roquette prison.

13. The Club has been duly inspected by the A. E. F. Sanitary Inspector of the District of Paris, and all recommendations are being faithfully carried out. A Welfare Officer has also visited the Club.

14. The first object of those running the Club is to create an atmosphere of home life as near as possible. There are no rules posted and every one has perfect freedom and is quickly put at ease. Everyone is made heartily welcome, absolutely irrespective of creed.

15. Supervision and inspection are always more than welcomed. They will only help the Club to attain more perfectly its aims and ideals of usefulness to the A. E. F.

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Etoile Service Club.....3.

16. The Club is under the direct supervision of the undersigned

Mrs. Stocks Millar,
Supervisor Womens Overseas Work
National Catholic War Council.