A Century since WWI: Reverend Michael Adler (1868-1944)

The centenary of the start of the First World War is an appropriate if sombre time to recall Rev. Michael Adler, Chaplain to the British Armed Forces and one of the most accomplished ministers of his time.

The first minister to serve as Chaplain was Francis von Cohen (1862-1934) (minister of the Borough Synagogue) and the Central Synagogue (and former minister of Hammersmith Synagogue) succeeded him.

Initially, the responsibilities were part-time and included an annual Chanukah military service, which [illegible] soldiers who died in action.

Initially working as the lone Jewish Chaplain on the Western Front, he enlisted the support of Jewish [illegible] asking what was to be done with the special food that was awaiting distribution.

In the first month of the War, Michael Adler wrote a Soldiers' Prayer Book, which Chief Rabbi Hertz (who visited France in June 1915) later enlarged.

As the conflict continued, more Chaplains were required and Rev. Vivian Simmons of Westminster [illegible] by Arthur Barnett. Adler returned home unwell, his place as senior chaplain in France being taken [illegible]

In 1922, Michael Adler edited the British Jewry Book of Honour, which recorded the names and [illegible] Medieval England.

Rev. Adler's chaplaincy article in the British Jewry Book of Honour and US Living & Learning's booklet www.theus.org.uk/100yearsago [1]. Many of the outbreak of World War One are available at

Date Uploaded: Monday 11th August 2014

Source URL: https://www.theus.org.uk/article/century-wwi-reverend-michael-adler-18681944

Links
[1] http://www.theus.org.uk/100yearsago