Finding a Needle in a Haystack

An Examination of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau 1915-1919

By

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ABSTRACT

The Australian Red Cross information bureaux network was founded in the latter part of 1915 during the First World War. As one of six such bureaux, the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau opened its doors to the public on 5 January 1916. It had the self-appointed task of assisting those in society 'anxious to seek news of sick, wounded or missing men' who had enlisted from the state.[1] The archival collection of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau housed in the State Library of South Australia is the only extant such archive in Australia and, more broadly, in what was once known as the British Dominions.

The thesis examines the workings of the bureau in South Australia based on this extensive and unique archival collection. It undertakes to understand the bureau's development and organisational structure to meet the changing needs of the public as the war progressed. It identifies the functions of this bureau at the crucial meso-level of society, positioned between the public, on the one hand, and state and military institutions, on the other, as an organisation and a set of resolute individuals. It also considers the role of this bureau within a national and international network run by the Australian Red Cross Society and within the context of other institutions undertaking similar enquiry work.

This thesis thus adds to the current historiography by showing how the bureau's success in South Australia moved beyond supplementing the particulars supplied by the government and military authorities concerning casualties, as it worked collaboratively with other state bureaux and, importantly, an Australian bureau abroad. It further corrects the current understanding of the bureau's wartime work by turning attention to the pivotal role played by Australian searchers. The bureau's success on the home front depended on the effectiveness of what Deakin achieved in the Australian bureau abroad. This thesis argues the bureau abroad represents practices of global humanitarian nationalism, employing international humanitarian networks to fulfil its tasks. It did so through undertaking strategic organisational development in response to demands on the home front, as enquirers became increasingly dependent on the efficient completion performance of its functions.

More than an organisational history, this study is an interdisciplinary examination of how the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau undertook vital activities. It adopts a language analysis tool to interpret the communication patterns between the enquirer and the bureau secretary, revealing knowledge about the writer's characteristics and the circumstances in which letters between enquirers

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[1] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Register*, 10 April 1916.

and the bureau were composed. This approach opens possibilities for future work based on this unique and invaluable archive.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed...Sondra Kearney

Date...22 April 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

> What, after all, are objects and appearances but stories in disguise. Is not the most mundane of things crystalised history?[1]

In June 1917, Private John V. Gordon, twenty-three years old, wrote a letter to his mother, Mrs Frances M. Gordon, who resided in West Croydon, an inner-western suburb of Adelaide. He was one of two sons fighting in Europe. In his letter, quite possibly written in a muddy trench or dugout, with his pince-nez glasses perched on his nose, Private Gordon mentioned a day away from the fighting.[2] He told his mother about a professional photograph taken with his friend in a French studio. Unfortunately, the young men had no money to pay for the picture and left it at the photographers. Perhaps he planned to return to collect it on his next day out of the line. Letters such as this often functioned as a balm providing solace and comfort to the writer and the recipient.[3] In September, Mrs Gordon initially wrote to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau upon receiving an official telegram. She was merely informed that her beloved son had died. At this moment, she was unaware of the letter her son had penned to her just days before his death. Like so many other parents in a similar position, she requested the details of her son's death and burial and desired a photograph of his grave; she mentioned that he was Church of England. In response to Mrs Gordon's enquiry, the Information Bureau's Charles Edmunds wrote to the Base Records Office in Victoria Barracks in Melbourne requesting any available official information before enquiring with the Australian Information Bureau, which operated in London.

In October, Mrs Gordon phoned the Information Bureau on North Terrace in the City of Adelaide. Upon reading her son's final letter, his correspondence had become more significant. She asked the legal volunteer if the photograph mentioned by her son could be found in St Omer, France; she was happy to pay the cost.[4] Lawyers from the South Australian legal fraternity volunteered for an hour or two each week in the bureau, often interviewing enquirers. Edmunds wrote to Vera Deakin, Secretary of the Australian Bureau in London, and guaranteed payment of all expenses if anything could be done to obtain the photograph. He signed off, thanking her for her usual courteous attention to the South Australian Bureau's requests. The response from London informed Edmunds that St Omer in Northern France was a large town; therefore, the request may be difficult to fill. However, the

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[1] Kitty Hauser, Bloody old Britain: O.G.S. Crawford and the archaeology of Modern Life (London: Granta Books, 2008), 55.
[2] 'Papers relating to No. 1039, Private John V. Gordon,' Service File Series B2455/3527600, National Archives of Australia (NAA).
[3] Don Longo, ed., *Pens and Bayonets* (South Australia: Wakefield Press, 2018), 19.
[4] 'Papers relating to No. 1039, Private John V. Gordon, 11th Light Trench Mortar Battery,' SRG 76/1/3661 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/john-vivian-gordon.

London Bureau wrote to the 'British Red Cross Society representative in France and asked him to do what he could in the matter'.[5]

Finally, in January 1918, a cable slip arrived stating the searcher did find an unclaimed picture that might be the right one; London attached a copy to the current correspondence. Deakin confirmed a second copy of this photograph was being sent by mail to South Australia. There was no charge, as the photographer gave it freely to the British Red Cross Society searcher. Deakin regretted they were unable to do more for Mrs Gordon. Requests to chase up photographs were unusual, yet the process was familiar; the enquiry was undertaken as part of the natural scheme of things in this form of wartime work undertaken by civilian volunteers on behalf of enquiring families. Their actions contrasted with the military authorities' approach towards family enquiries in South Australia, where much of the requested information was treated as restricted. Indeed, in correspondence with another Honorary Secretary, Edmunds noted that the Adelaide military authorities gave a 'constant excuse that they did not have the information themselves, a circumstance which, one would think, they might easily overcome by a little effort in the right direction'.[6]

Edmunds provided witness statements to Mrs Gordon detailing Private Gordon's death and burial and wrote to another witness on her behalf to gain further information. She was informed that her son had died in Messines, West Flanders, Belgium. Such correspondence conveyed something of the reality of war to the home front in both a personal and public way. The effect and emotion within such letters to families from the bureau are truly fundamental components of war that are rarely considered.[7] Edmunds's letters to Mrs Gordon were confident and analytical as usual, although his tone was more sombre, no doubt due to the content of the witness statements.[8] Mrs Gordon, in response,

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[5] 'Papers relating to No. 1039, Private John V. Gordon, 11th Light Trench Mortar Battery,' SRG 76/1/3661.

[6] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 30 October 1917,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[7] Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (2003), 1342.

[8] In this Chapter, the summary variables for analytical thinking, clout, authenticity and the emotional tone of the family correspondence were briefly touched upon above by analysing the letter-writing style of Mrs Gordon and Charles A. Edmunds, Honorary Secretary of the South Australian Bureau in the enquiry undertaken about Private John Gordon. The word use analysis results were obtained using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count text analysis tool. 'Analytical thinking captures the degree to which people use words that suggest formal, logical, and hierarchical thinking patterns, people low in analytical thinking tend to write and think using language that is more narrative, focusing on the here and now and individual experiences. Those high in analytical thinking perform better academically; Clout refers to the relative social status, confidence, or leadership that people display through their writing or talking; Authenticity relates to when people reveal themselves in an authentic or honest way, making them more personal, humble, and vulnerable; Emotional tone includes both positive and negative emotion dimensions', see Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc, 'The Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/. High readings above 50% in each category show positive emotions while readings below 50% suggest negative emotions; The results show that in his letters to Mrs Gordon, Charles A. Edmunds had a score of 78.32% for Analytics, 98.25% for Clout, 2.42% for Authenticity and 29.96% for Tone; See Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey

was grateful for the effort that the South Australian Bureau took to provide her with details about her son. Her writing reveals she was analytical, confident and a woman of social standing. Yet, she shows little of her emotional state; indeed, her tone is quite optimistic given the nature of her enquiry.[9] Historian Martyn Lyons emphasises that the materiality of the letters cultivates intimacy.[10] Private Gordon's familial relationship with his mother was preserved through their correspondence in the face of his long-term absence. As with so many other final letters from casualties on the war front, this last letter bore witness to the epistolary contract that had bound the letter writers together and revealed something of the conversational character of familial correspondence.[11] Mrs Gordon explained to Edmunds that following communication with 'my dear boy's comrades in France', she corrected her first assumption and explained that the town was Morbecque, southeast of St. Omer. She wondered if she was now asking too much of the London Bureau to do anything more.

Edmunds remained professional, revealing little of his thoughts on the matter. Although apologetic, he was firm that nothing more was achievable; the searcher had put a lot of effort into the first search. He suggested she write to her son's comrade and perhaps ask him to procure the photograph.[12] Edmunds closed by noting that the bureau was always willing to help to the best of its ability. Still, this request was already beyond their standard working arrangements, and the volunteers needed to focus on wounded, sick and missing soldiers.[13] Unsurprisingly, Edmunds wrote to the London Bureau after receipt of further witness statements for Private Gordon. He asked if the soldier who supplied the correct details for the photograph, address included, could advise the photographer's name to narrow the search as Morbecque was a much larger town than St Omer.[14] Edmunds may have visited the Public Library (now the State Library of South Australia) to view the running exhibitions on battlefront locations or consulted an atlas. Unfortunately, there is no record to suggest the photograph was found. It was 1920 before Mrs Gordon received official notification from the military authorities of

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Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.

[9] Using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count text analysis tool, Mrs Gordon had a score of 65.69% for Analytics, 94.33% for Clout, 37.73% for Authenticity and 83.88% for Tone. High readings above 50% show positive emotions while readings below 50% suggest negative emotions; see Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; Pennebaker, Chung, Frazee, Lavergne and Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, 1-10; Kacewicz, Pennebaker, Davis, Jeon, and Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' 125-43; Mehl and Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' 857-70; Tausczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' 24-54.

[10] Martyn Lyons quoted in Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (2003), 1342; Martyn Lyons, 'Love Letters and Writing Practices: On Écritures Intimes in the Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of Family History* 24, no. 2 (1999), 232-39.

[11] Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' 1342-43.

[12] 'Papers relating to No. 1039, Private John V. Gordon, 11th Light Trench Mortar Battery,' SRG 76/1/3661.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

her son's final resting place in Messines.[15] Their record management and processes differed significantly from that of the state bureaux and constrained any immediate response to an enquiry about an individual soldier. The bureaux in Adelaide and London provided these details and much more to Mrs Gordon between September 1917 and July 1918, highlighting the significant need for the wartime work conducted by the Australian bureaux at home and abroad.

Thesis question

The main question of this thesis asks how the South Australian Bureau, and the broader network of bureaux undertook their self-appointed role of supplying information, furthering enquiries as to sick, wounded, missing, and killed soldiers in the First World War. The work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux, particularly the South Australian Bureau, will be considered from an administrative point of view in both a local and global context. Importantly though, this is more than just an organisational history. The answer can be sought by understanding the place of these bureaux in Australian society, through the South Australian Bureau's institutional history, and by examining the text within the letters of the soldier enquiry packets using two methods within the Linguist Inquiry and Word Count text analysis tool (hereafter the LIWC). The word count statistical analysis element of the program studies word frequency within the letters.

In contrast, the linguistic inquiry component provides an understanding of how the writer conveyed meaning by examining four distinct language summary variables. Empirical results demonstrate the ability of the program to detect meaning in a wide variety of experimental settings, including social relationships, individual differences, and thinking styles.[16] The intent is to understand better the social interaction between the enquirer and the bureau. In addition, by examining the letters as material artifacts and reading them as part of an ongoing epistolary exchange, this research method will provide invaluable insights into how familial relationships were threatened or strengthened by long-term absence.[17] The South Australian Bureau archives are the only remaining detailed record of this wartime work in Australia and, more broadly, in what was once known as the British Dominions. The richness of the archival material offers the scholar an insight into this significant wartime work that intimately tied the home front to the war front.

Of particular interest is the shift that occurred in the gender roles engaging in volunteering activities in South Australian society during the First World War. For example, did this change contribute to the move from a Military Information Bureau run by the League of Loyal Women of

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[15] 'Papers relating to No. 1039, Private John V. Gordon,' Service File Series B2455/4787442, National Archives of Australia (NAA).
[16] Ysidczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' 24.
[17] Martyn Lyons quoted in Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' 1342.

Australia (hereafter the League of Loyal Women) to the Red Cross Information Bureau established in late 1915 and run by men from the South Australian legal profession? How did the benevolent bureaucracy of the newly formed bureau shape a particular perception of war in society as the war progressed? In addition, the issue of censorship amongst the network of Australian bureaux has been a contentious issue amongst scholars, but what was the actual censorship policy on sensitive eye-witness reports from the front; how was this managed in the South Australian Bureau when relaying information to families? The thesis will clarify some of the recent controversial ideas discussed regarding censorship in the South Red Cross Information Bureau and how the bureau communicated its findings with enquirers. To what extent can the letters of the Honorary Secretary and the enquirer reveal the communication patterns of enquiries in society at that time? Indeed, was the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau the last nexus in moderating civilian sensibilities during the war?[18]

Writing the Red Cross

There are no definitive works on the Red Cross information bureaux in Australia. Much of the current Australian historiography for this period focus on the wartime work of the Red Cross Society on the home front and reveals a commonality of key descriptors. These primarily focus on its armies of volunteer labour, the vast quantity of donated goods, and the even more significant sums of money raised through community fundraising, predominantly by the female population.[19] Less is written on the Australian Red Cross information bureaux men who volunteered for home service rather than the front line. These men filled an essential void in society as the fate of Australian soldiers became more imperative for family members following the Gallipoli landing in April 1915. Available articles primarily focus on the Australian London Bureau archives held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. As previously indicated, other key descriptors in these works focus on the anxiety, grief, fear, and loss felt by family and next-of-kin of individual soldiers.

Yet, what was the significance of the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau on the South Australian home front during the war? What do these records tell the scholar of the social complexities in Australian society as people negotiated relations with military authorities and then the Information Bureau? Five key academic works have used the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau archive. These works highlight individual cases while briefly examining the roles of searchers and the

[18] Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' *Australian Law Journal* 92, no. 9 (2018), 706.

[19] Melanie Oppenheimer, 'The role of the Australian Red Cross and Anzac,' *Labour History* 106 (May 2014), 123-142; John Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity War and the Rise of the Red Cross*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1996; Joan Beaumont, 'Whatever Happened to Patriotic Women, 1914–1918?' *Australian Historical Studies* 31 no. 115, (2000), 273-286; Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81 (2001), 29-49; Melanie Oppenheimer, *All Work and No Pay*, NSW: Ohio Productions, 2002.

legal profession. The five articles also highlight the gaps that still exist in the organisational history of the bureau. The global network established by the Australian legal profession in partnership with the Australian Branch of the Red Cross Society (hereafter the Australian Red Cross Society) was significant. It proposed assisting Australian families seeking news on the fate of a loved one in the Ottoman Empire and Europe during the First World War. The thesis intends to highlight the significance of the workings of the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau network at home and abroad. It will examine the position of this group in civil society, its relationships with other government institutions both at home and overseas and, importantly, its more intimate dealings with the families and friends of loved ones on the battlefield.

In the 1995 publication *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, historian Jay Winter focused on wartime and post-wartime grief across three countries. To examine the use of language, he used historical evidence to express mourning practices for soldiers and establish 'kinship bonds' with the families and those who assisted them in managing their grief. In his chapter on 'Communities in Mourning', Winter noted that the clergy in Australia delivered the immediate news of a soldier's fate.[20] He drew attention to the harsh language often used in the standard cables received, in many cases, up to a fortnight after the event had occurred on the battlefront. Such responses from military authorities triggered a 'quest for truth' from family members who wished to know just a little more about what happened to their loved ones.[21] An Officer's letter that often followed with details of the event regularly had 'three stock messages' that told the families nothing of the fate of the fallen. These, according to Winter, included 'the man in question was loved by his comrades; he was a good soldier and died painlessly'.[22]

As the war progressed, 'rules were put in place about the sort of language to be used'.[23] Officers worried about the violation of regulations argued with Deakin, who relocated the Australian bureau from Cairo to London in 1916. As a result, the bureau tended to deal with unofficial searchers' reports directly from fellow soldiers coming out of the line. These witness statements were often quite detailed and, in many circumstances, did not hold back on the 'vivid and disturbing set of images of combat and the deaths that regularly followed'.[24] Winter explains how fellow soldiers and voluntary organisations, such as the Red Cross information bureaux, spoke a more recognisable language to the families and next-of-kin affected. As part of society, language has an 'internal and dialectal' relationship.[25] It is a part

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[20] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of* Mourning (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 31; In Britain, it was the telegraph boy on his red bicycle who delivered the death notice, while in Germany writes Joy Damousi, a similar terse telegram was also delivered, see Joy Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 19.

[21] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 705.

[24] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.

[25] Noel Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 19.

of society and is part of a socially conditioned process determined by non-linguistic aspects of society.[26] This situation is why such records are valuable information in understanding this period of South Australian history. Ultimately, families turned to the Australian Red Cross information bureaux network on the home front and abroad in their quest for more information.

Winter was the first historian to highlight the existence and value of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau records in his 1995 work. He argues that these records outline a story that 'could and should be told'.[27] Yet the bureau records Winter concentrated on in this chapter related to the archive of the Australian bureau, formerly in Cairo and latterly in London, now held in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. His work is insightful, but it is proposed to build on the material he touched upon in Chapter 2, 'Communities in Mourning'. Particularly in explaining in greater detail the complexities of the work conducted by this bureau in Cairo and then London alongside the state bureaux when they were 12,000 miles apart as the war raged in Europe. Winter argues this story requires telling from the experience of civilians impacted on both sides of the conflict.[28] But, in this instance, what about Australian civilians on both sides of the enquiry process at home? The South Australian Bureau has a history in the public domain entwined with memory to inform our shifting and contested understandings of the past.[29]

In *The Labour of Loss - Part One* (1999), Joy Damousi examines the impact of loss and mourning for both women and men, mothers and fathers. She describes how a life lost in the First World War was a 'profound emotional and psychological experience powerfully conveyed in the detail of its telling' by another soldier.[30] Grief and mourning affected both men and women differently, as shown by Damousi, and will be discussed further in a study of cases within this thesis. Importantly, she also examines the role soldiers had in imparting outcomes from the chaos of the battlefield. In her Chapter on 'Theatres of Grief, Theatres of Loss', she shows that soldiers as watchers of suffering and grief in that moment also experienced a loss of control and certainty typically exhibited in their role as soldiers. Interestingly, Damousi highlights the importance of soldiers as messengers and chroniclers of events on the battlefront. Like historian Joanna Bourke, she discusses the difficulty experienced by soldiers whose vulnerabilities and frailties were exposed as they grappled with a language that suddenly became 'instantaneous, emotional and intimate'.[31] In keeping with Damousi's ideas, these men did not have the

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26 Ibid, 19.

27 Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.

28 Ibid, 36.

29 Ibid, 6.

30 Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 9.

31 Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 9.

experience or preparedness to 'transmit the news of carnage to strangers'; instead, their letters home often 'exalted the dead and resisted the finality of loss'.[32]

In contrast, a soldier's witness statement within the soldier enquiry packets of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau had little room for expressions of grief about death. The thesis will explore how the witness tried to convey and transmit the news of carnage to strangers by retelling his experiences to a Red Cross Searcher.[33] In her chapters on 'The Sacrificial Mother' and 'A Father's Loss', Damousi reminds us of society's response to parents when they challenged the 'moral ambiguity of war' following the soldier's death.[34] While in her chapter on 'The War Widow and the Cost of Memory', she discusses how the place of the war widow was ambiguous, especially as the welfare administration neglected to include mothers in the terms.[35] The absence of a loved one fighting abroad had a material and emotional impact on many women, who took to their beds ill from worry. In contrast, fathers have remained absent when recounting the effects of war on the home front, as shown by Damousi. This thesis discusses how war extinguished any certainty for a mother dependent on her son's wage, a wife who refused to accept her new identity as a widow, and a father's struggle with the absence of letters from the front and the premature death of his boy.

In *Remembering War* (2006), Winter reflects on memory and its relationship with history. He notes that 'historical remembrance' allows scholars to interpret the past by drawing 'on both history and memory, on the documented narratives and on the statements of those who lived through them'.[36] The telling of the South Australian Bureau's history situated within civil society during the First World War will emphasise the value of this primary material beyond the purpose for which it was possibly kept.[37] Winter has argued that the Australian bureaux were not unique as each combatant country had a Red Cross Bureau, which is true. However, the kept records are detailed organisational and epistolary records unique to Australia. They provide insight into the personal voluntary work undertaken on the home front on behalf of enquirers. This record also details the systems and processes used in this wartime work conducted by all state bureaux on the Australian home front and abroad in the First World War.

Eric Schneider travelled from Britain in the mid-1990s to examine the South Australian Bureau records. He used the previously mentioned chapter in *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* to frame his work. His study aimed to investigate the individual soldier enquiry packets to show how such reports 'brought

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[32] Ibid, 9.
[33] Ibid, 10.
[34] Ibid, 27.
[35] Ibid, 69-70.
[36] Jay Winter, *Remembering War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 9.
[37] '2019 - 2022 Archive Strategy, State Record of South Australia' (Adelaide: State Record of South Australia, 2019), 1.

to civilians descriptions of life and above all, death at the front'.[38] He also used the South Australian records to contribute to 'the broader discussion of what British civilians knew about the individual soldier's experience of war'.[39] In this statement, in the absence of 'destroyed British Red Cross Wounded and Missing [Department] records', Schneider chose to use the Australian record as a proxy for the lost British record.[40] He further justified this approach by arguing that the Australian Red Cross Society 'was but a subsidiary of the British parent society and drafted reports for soldiers in a similar manner'.[41] The thesis will argue against these statements as the war in Gallipoli, and Europe took its toll; it will further show that Schneider chose to plough his own furrow in this research. The Red Cross Society as an organisation did operate uniformly wherever it was established; however, the records of the South Australian Bureau reveal a uniquely Australian story. The 'tyranny of distance' for Australians was significant and greatly impacted South Australian society's war experience on both the home and the war front.[42] There are limitations to Schneider's assumptions of South Australia being a good proxy for Great Britain in this instance. Indeed, Deborah Thom rightly suggests that each country has different national traditions in remembering and communicating the war.[43]

This 'tyranny of distance' also meant many families initially had to find alternative ways to 'confirm or supplement the official story'.[44] Winter argues that a family's need to know more was central to this. In many cases, to hear the more brutal disclosure of information beyond what the Military or the State government provided was often paramount.[45] Carl Bridge remarks that a Gallipoli display at the South Australian of State Library exceeded expected numbers with an average of 148 daily visitors during the war. The family and friends of soldiers extensively used library books and maps to gain background knowledge on where their loved ones were fighting.[46] In Britain, soldiers were commonplace on the streets throughout the war, either on furlough, passing by train, or in military hospitals and bases. The Continent and battlefields were a short distance across the English Channel. Before many troops left Australia for the war raging in Europe, an article in the *Advertiser* in September 1915 highlighted the issue of distance for Australians.[47]

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[38] Eric F. Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' *War in History* 4, no. 3 (1997), 297.

[39] Ibid, 298.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] The term first used by William Bunge in 1961 was later adopted by Geoffrey Blainey in reference to Australia's geographical remoteness and isolation, in particular from Britain, and its concerns about its future economic prosperity and shaping of its national identity; See William Bunge, 'The Structure of Contemporary American Geographic research,' *The Professional Geographer* 13, no. 3 (1916): 19-23; See Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, London, New York: Macmillan; St. Martin's P., 1968), 327.

[43] Deborah Thom, 'Making Spectaculars: museum and how we remember Gender in Wartime,' in *Evidence, History and the Great War*, ed. Gail Braybon (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 50.

[44] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.

[45] Ibid, 35

[46] Carl Bridge, *A Trunk Full of Books: History of the State Library of South Australia and its Forerunners* (South Australia: Wakefield Press, 1986), 97.

[47] 'Wounded and "Missing", *Advertiser*, South Australia, 4 September 1915.

In 1915, Marie, Lady Galway, wife of the South Australian Governor, mentioned that the South Australian Bureau intended to be in close contact with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners stationed in Egypt. The remoteness of the Gallipoli Peninsula from Australia increased families' obstacles in obtaining the urgently needed details of soldiers in combat.[48] The war impacted all civilians, particularly the ordinary Australian people requiring the bureau's assistance to find any thread of information about loved ones. Contrary to Schneider's article, Winter in *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* acknowledges the difficulties for Australian families, 'furthest away from the main theatres of war', trying to find out what happened in Gallipoli and Europe.[49] Schneider further suggests that the Australian Red Cross Bureau in London operated as a 'clearing house' for British reports compiled by British searchers. The thesis will discuss the valuable work of Australian searchers, both official and unofficial, who worked on behalf of Australian enquirers. Due to British War Office regulations and the duplication of labour, these searchers acting on behalf of the Australian Bureau operated as the 'eyes and ears' of Australian families on the other side of the world.[50]

There is a basis for a robust epistemology in constructing the evidence and its interpretation in the South Australian Information Bureau's records rather than 'separating history from the material out of which it is constructed'.[51] The South Australia records are unique in telling a societal story from an Australian perspective in the First World War. The material within the soldier enquiry packets offers the scholar an intimate insight into the South Australian Bureau's interactions at a meso-level of civil society. Positioned at this intermediate level, the legal volunteers engaged with families at a micro-level and state institutions at a macro-level to bridge the gap and reduce the void when information was so desperately needed about the fate of a soldier. It would be a failure in our understanding of 'the history of civilian engagement with the war' in South Australia if one were to act otherwise with these records.[52]

In 2016, historians Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig produced the most comprehensive study on the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau.[53] In their use of organisational material and the soldier enquiry packets of this bureau, the article focuses on the formation of the Australian Red Cross as a branch of the British Red Cross Society at the outbreak of the First World War. The authors considered the bureau's considerable contribution as a humanitarian

48 Ibid.
49 Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.
50 Ibid, 36.
51 Jay M. Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies 1914 to the Present*, 4th ed. (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 7.
52 Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1 (2015), 8.
53 Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' *First World War Studies* 6, no. 3 (July 2016), 277.

organisation as it sought to provide the details of those soldiers enquired about on the home front. This thesis expands on this argument, particularly concerning the bureau operated by Deakin in Cairo and then London. Interestingly, Langer Owen, K.C., honorary secretary of the Sydney Red Cross Bureau, later considered his bureau the only Red Cross Information Bureau under the direction of the Society. His understanding was that the legal fraternity independently ran the other state bureaux in their state; this is incorrect and is explored further within this thesis.

The authors also acknowledge the Australian Red Cross 'initially relied on the British Red Cross in August 1914' to trace wounded and missing soldiers.[54] However, contrary to Schneider's article, Oppenheimer and Kleinig highlight how an Australian bureau was established in Egypt in October 1915, following pressure from Australian society for answers about casualties in the Gallipoli campaign. Their mention of founding the Red Cross information bureaux within Australia is particularly interesting. Oppenheimer and Kleinig suggest that the first information bureau was established in July 1915 in New South Wales. This office was undoubtedly the first bureau to be opened and run by the New South Wales legal fraternity under the umbrella of the Australian Red Cross Society. However, South Australia, as previously pointed out, also had a Military Information Bureau operating from mid-1915. In addition, the Young Men's Christian Association (hereafter YMCA) also ran a Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau in Sydney and Adelaide in 1915. Both bureaux will be discussed in relation to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau.

In their article, Oppenheimer and Kleinig undertook a case study analysis of 250 soldier enquiry packets raised during the Gallipoli campaign in the South Australia bureau to explore the broader social and familial effects of the war more generally in Australia. It is essential to state that two sets of Red Cross Bureau archives in Australia hold enquiry records for some South Australian soldiers. The Australian War Memorial has retained the soldier enquiry files of the Australian bureau that operated in Cairo and then London; the records were compiled in alphabetical order. Post-war these soldier enquiry records were deposited in Canberra's Australian War Memorial. In contrast, the South Australian Bureau soldier enquiry packets deposited in the State Library are sequential in order, beginning with the first and ending with the last enquiry letter received by this bureau. Oppenheimer and Kleinig state that the South Australian Bureau records 'enhance and complement' rather than replicate the 32,000 individual cases returned to Australia from the Australian Cairo and London Bureaux post-war. A comparative study of the 804 soldier enquiry packets examined in this thesis will be undertaken to see if this continues to be the case. The differences between the records provide the potential to add to the story of the enquirer and the soldier. The Australian state bureaux generated most of the enquiries for

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[54] Ibid, 278.

the Australian bureau in Cairo and then London throughout the war through direct contact with family members. While it may be argued none of the 250 examined records in the article appear in the Canberra archive, this archival material should hold at least some replicated records of the South Australian Bureau. An initial investigation has shown this is the case; further discussions with Andrew Piper, manager of online services at the State Library of South Australia, also confirm this.

Another interesting aspect of Oppenheimer and Kleinig's study is their discussion on themes of anxiety and fear that emerged in civil society as the war unfolded.[55] They suggest that 'the South Australian records are a window into the genuine anxieties and fears on the home front created by a country at war'.[56] They are not alone in bringing attention to these themes in Australian society during the First World War.[57] Philosopher and psychologist Rom Harré, the editor of *The Social Construction of Emotion* (cited in Bourke 2003), reminds us that there is no such thing as 'fear'; there are only fearful people'.[58] Indeed, historian Joanna Bourke agrees with this argument and points out that 'the only access historians have to these fearful people' during the war 'is through the records they have left behind'.[59] In *The Story of Pain* (2014), Bourke notes that in interpreting these feelings, such emotions should be considered a 'type of event' to understand better the impact of that event identified by someone who is, in this instance, fearful or anxious.[60]

Psychologist James Pennebaker argues that language style offers the scholar a clearer sense of the social and psychological processes affecting individual behaviour.[61] As mentioned above, a select number of soldier enquiry packets will be examined to expand on this statement. The intent is to look at communication patterns between the enquirer and the bureau's honorary secretary, Charles Edmunds. Another strong theme highlighted by Oppenheimer and Kleinig is the 'general domestic distress and social dislocation on the home front'.[62] They note that seventy per cent of enquirers in the first 250 packets were female. In general terms, this investigation will expand on these observations in Chapter 6 to look for patterns of gender, tone, relationship closeness to the soldier, the class of soldier

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[55] Ibid, 279.

[56] Ibid, 277.

[57] For examples of other historians who also focus on anxiety and fear see Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' 7-25; Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81 (2001), 29-49; Joanna Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History,' *History Workshop Journal* 55, no. 1 (2003), 111-33; Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 1999; Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 2018.

[58] Rom Harré cited in Joanna Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History,' *History Workshop Journal* 55, no. 1 (2003),' 117.

[59] Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History,' 117.

[60] Joanna Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2014) 25.

[61] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 47; Franciska Jong, Khiet Truong, Gerben Westerhof, Sanne Lamers, Anneke Sools. 'Emotional Expression in Oral History Narratives: Comparing Results of Automated Verbal and Nonverbal Analyses.' *The Netherlands: Erasmus School of History, Culture Communication* (2013), 310; Lia Litosseliti, Research Methods in Linguistics, (London: Continuum, 2010), 51.

[62] Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 284.

enquired about, and other patterned sequences in these social relationships as the war progressed, and the casualty numbers increased.

In contrast to Oppenheimer and Kleinig, Carole Woods, in 2020, looked at the workings of the Australian bureau in Cairo and London under the stewardship of Deakin in two detailed chapters of her book, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*. As Woods accessed Deakin's private records, Chapters 4 and 5 provide interesting personal observations from Deakin about events in Cairo and London while operating the Australian bureau abroad.[63] The book primarily focuses on Deakin as a leader, particularly during the war in her role as secretary of the Australian bureau abroad. However, Deakin was part of a more comprehensive network of Australian bureaux that worked closely together to create proficient and efficient systems to maintain their workloads throughout the war. Indeed, Sir Josiah Symon KCMG K.C., in South Australia and Owen in Sydney noted early in the Australian bureau work that to be successful on both fronts, they depended on 'the effectiveness of what was done abroad by way of organisation'.[64] Yet, no Australian bureau worked in isolation; the bureau network supported each other, and all collaborated and offered additional support and guidance in this wartime work. The rich material of the South Australian Bureau's archives offers further insight into specific events discussed in this book. Unfortunately, Woods did not use the South Australian archives to elaborate on some of these incidents to complete the story.

Similarly, historian Robert Sackville-West, in his recent book, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War* (2021), in Chapter 1, 'In Search of the Missing: the Enquiry Department', discusses the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau archives from the perspective of the material from the London Bureau now held in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.[65] However, he failed to mention the organisational material or the 8,033 soldier enquiry packets stored in the State Library of South Australia. The soldier enquiry packets are available online, although the detailed administrative history of the South Australian Bureau is not; it is, however, available at the State Library. Sackville-West, like Schneider, suggests that the Australian record and its reporting style help represent how the British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Department operated (hereafter British Red Cross Department). Yet, notably, Australia had the added difficulty of distance from the theatres of war in the Ottoman Empire and Europe regarding searchers, and neither considered this.

The record of the South Australian Bureau offers a rich source of comparative information about the processes adopted by the British and the Australians in this wartime work. Upon examination

[63] Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020.
[64] 'Soldiers Abroad – Red cross Information Bureau,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 5 January 1916; 'Red Cross Extension – Information Bureau in Adelaide,' *Register*, 5 January 1916.
[65] Robert Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021.

of the records, it is apparent that the British system differed from the strategies adopted in the Australian bureaux at home and abroad. This difference shifts the perceptions put forward by Schneider and Sackville-West and makes their argument redundant. The Australian Red Cross honorary secretaries shared the intimate details of witness statements with an enquirer and continually sought answers up to and after the Armistice. They never judged the situation and kept files open until the bureaux closed in late 1919. In contrast, the British Red Cross Department provided enquirers with a general picture of battle conditions around the time of the soldiers' disappearance and closed the enquiry. This action left the enquirer's questions unresolved one way or the other.

Historian Bart Ziino makes an important observation in his article about Victorian private life impacted by the war at home.[66] In keeping with Ziino's idea, there is a need to listen more intently to the voices of the people in the archives of the First World War.[67] Doing so might lessen the distance between the war front and the home front because those people lived through the war experience.[68] For example, the 8,033 soldier enquiry packets held within the South Australian Information Bureau records contain many intimate conversations between an enquirer, an honorary secretary, and others. What if these letters of enquiry could reveal something about the impact of the war at home for them? The enquirer wrote letters looking for answers to their questions about the fate of a loved one on the battlefront. In response, the Honorary Secretary of the bureau provided many answers in letters that often-included witness statements. Administrative staff at the bureau filed a carbon copy of the bureau's replies in each soldier enquiry packet. In his chapter titled 'Statements about Emotions', language scholar Errol Bedford notes those 'sharing the same information and the same expectations about another person's behaviour may place different emotional interpretations on those behaviours if their knowledge is confined to descriptive statements about it'.[69] More importantly, Bedford argues that examining the use of emotional words has proven that such terms are not purely behavioural. Instead, used words 'without qualification also carry implications about its social context'.[70]

Catherine Moriarty also argues that the material culture within an archive is often a collection of both the official and the personal and mirrors those relationships.[71] Civilians on the home front had their own legitimacy that was deeply entwined and entangled with the soldiers and the battlefield.[72]

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[66] Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1, 2015.
[67] Ibid, 8.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Errol Bedford, 'Statements about Emotions,' in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, edited by Rom Harré (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 21.
[70] Bedford, 'Statements about Emotions,' 21; Sherlock R Campbell, and James W. Pennebaker, 'The Secret Life of Pronouns: Flexibility in Writing Style and Physical Health,' *Psychological Science* 14, no. 1 (2003).
[71] Catherine Moriarty, 'Review Article: The Material Culture of Great War Remembrance,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 4 (1999), 654.
[72] Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' 9.

Ziino is correct in asserting that men were not so prominent as women correspondents with the front.[73] Such observations are interesting and require exploring further to show who was enquiring and who responded in the South Australian Bureau. The findings are discussed in Chapter 6. In his article about the unknown sock knitter in 2001, historian Bruce Scates took the approach that the voluntary movement challenged and enforced traditional gender roles.[74] He extensively used the Australian Red Cross Bureau records from London and Cairo, now housed in Canberra; he also investigated newspaper articles and literary works by other academics about the Australian Red Cross.

Regarding the South Australian Bureau, Scates suggests that the tone of the correspondence from the bureau in Adelaide was predominantly male.[75] He did not reference this point in his article, but he compared the male-dominated bureau in New South Wales and the female-dominated bureau in London. Indeed, a female volunteer managed the letters sent to enquirers from the bureau in London; Deakin considered Lilian Whybrow to have the right approach for this role. In conversation with Scates, he suggested the tone in the bureau correspondence to family members led him to this conclusion. The volunteers in the South Australian Bureau were predominantly male; however, when enquires increased, eight female administrators were hired to assist. In the 'Scheme of Works', drawn up by Symon, the Honorary Secretary was required to sign all correspondence.[76] What differentiates discourse from the text? Professor of Linguistics Norman Fairclough has stated that text is a product rather than a process and is part of the whole process of social interaction.[77] Pennebaker argues that gender impacts language style; however, he suggests it also differs as 'a function of people's age, social class, degree of formality and quality of relationships and so on'.[78] It seems the 'smallest, stealthiest words' can often reveal quite a lot about the individual; this will be worth exploring further in the linguistic inquiry element of the thesis in Chapter 7.[79]

Scates also focused on the 'sock knitter' cultural icon that developed out of this intimate level of wartime work. The work of patriotic women was considered an extension of the work undertaken in the home rather than a new form of ownership and citizenship that broke new ground. In retrieving 'something of the largely forgotten labour of the sock knitter', Scates examined the role of women as 'mediators of grief and bereavement'. He touched on the self-contradictory nature of wartime work and the emerging tensions between militarism and humanitarianism.[80] Oppenheimer and Kleinig argue that

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[73] Ibid, 13.
[74] Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81, 2001.
[75] Ibid, 43.
[76] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 8 August 1917,' SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[77] Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 20.
[78] Pennebaker, *The Secret Life of Pronouns*, 43.
[79] Ibid, 43.
[80] Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' 31.

while sometimes strained, the relationship between such institutions and the voluntary sector was generally favourable.[81] By building on these arguments, this thesis will add to the discussion using correspondence between various parties on both sides of the enquiry.

Regarding narratives, Scates states that reports from the front were significantly amended and fashioned into accounts that consoled a family.[82] Tony Cunneen also suggests that the London Australian bureau records sanitised many witness statements.[83] Schneider argues the opposite, stating that there was 'no consistent policy of self-censorship at Adelaide' when relaying information to families.[84] He suggests it was, at times, haphazard in its responses to enquirers and further argued for each toned-down report others passed on unhindered.[85] If this was so, did the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau staff act as an 'adoptive family' as suggested by Scates or display 'kinship bonds' as indicated by Winter; were there people who felt let down by the bureau? Did each Honorary Secretary make a call based on the circumstances of the enquiry, or was there a standard policy regarding censorship? These observations and the nuances within the correspondence will add to the discussion to better understand these current interpretations. Scates has described an 'elaborate bureau of inquiry' network with its headquarters in the Australian bureau in London. This thesis will show how the London Bureau, alongside the state bureaux, worked as a collaborative network rather than under the command of any one Australian bureau.

Each state bureau had a Red Cross Executive Council that met weekly to discuss the work; it followed that the Red Cross Central Council in Sydney was then updated, while the bureau located in London answered to the Australian High Commissioner's Office. On the one hand, each bureau had specific roles concerning the men who enlisted in their state. On the other hand, they each had to work together within a cohesive structure with other institutions and organisations such as the Australian military authorities, the British Red Cross Society, the Australian High Commission in London, the American Consulate in the Ottoman Empire and the two Australian cable companies. This structure enabled the honorary secretaries to negotiate and navigate the difficulties of creating a system that worked for all concerned. Scates has also argued that the purpose of such offices was to 'locate the men posted as killed or missing and to clarify they had not been wounded or taken prisoner'. He suggested that the bureaux looked 'to piece together the final moments of their lives'.[86] This response was

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[81] Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 284.

[82] Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' 40-2.

[83] Tony Cunneen, '"What has happened to our dear boy?" The New South Wales Lawyers and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War One.' *War Time*, no. 54 (October 2011): np.

[84] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 302.

[85] Ibid, 302.

[86] Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' 40; Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 14.

certainly the case as the bereaved often clung to the hope that a 'killed in action' report was mistaken, and in some instances, this was true.

Much of the current literature on the Australian Red Cross Information Bureaux has been viewed primarily concerning the impact of war on individual families and the soldier. Sociologist Piotr Sztompka shows authentic experiences and observable social events are produced within the gaps created by the constraint of structures and the dynamics of action in society.[87] Oppenheimer and Kleinig state that 'the Bureau became a conduit between the military and the home front'.[88] The bureau also reduced the distance between the home front and the war front. Each group within the structure was necessary for the connections and information they provided to each other. In the thesis, these connections will be examined as each offer good indicators of societal shifts throughout the war on the home front. This thesis will argue that the legal fraternity used their social relations, maintained for other purposes before the war, to acquire information during the battles for families because their human capital and social capital held value across these groups. It is proposed to explore the communication channels that allowed soldiers and their families, who felt both powerless and marginalised, to seek and receive information through this network thousands of miles apart.

Essential to society's social fabric is the glue that holds society together. The social bonds shared by individuals form a socially cohesive and culturally rich community. The work of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau during the First World War shows how this 'social existence manifested itself best'.[89] Each state bureau created a social existence through their bonds and relationships within the new networks they formed. It will be argued that while necessary at that time, these connections lasted only for the crucial period of the war. There is intent in the thesis to examine and describe the bureau's actions in a social context using the theory of social capital to explain how 'this action was shaped, constrained, and redirected by that very context'.[90] The bureau's work relied on people to look beyond themselves to provide voluntary support to families and friends of wounded or missing soldiers. It was not for reward or immediate reciprocal help, although one or two volunteers did have a son or colleague in strife on the battlefield. The thesis will argue they did what they did because they considered their actions were the right thing to do.

The Red Cross Wounded and Missing Bureau, positioned at the meso-level of society, was part of a social network that bridged the gap between the Military at the macro-level of society and the

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[87] Piotr Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniya, no. 8 (2009), 23.
[88] Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 284.
[89] Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' 8.
[90] James S. Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,' *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), S95.

families placed at the micro-level of Australian culture during the war. Within the theory of social structure, the macro-level reflected the systems and patterns of socioeconomic stratification between large groups; in this instance, it relates to the organisation of the Military at the top level. The meso-level incorporated the establishment of social network ties between organisations and people; this middle tier reflected the position of the state bureaux as they attempted to and succeeded in bridging the emerging gap between military authorities and a soldier's family. Close associates, such as a soldier's family dealing with the battlefield events alongside their everyday life, represent the micro-level. This social structure influenced the social norms of the relationships between the three groups.

This thesis will show how "closure" on enquiries eventually established trustworthiness in the South Australian Bureau's social structure that allowed 'the proliferation of obligation and expectations' in their work.[91] The central argument of Sociologist John Field in his article 'Volunteering' is that relationships matter. The thesis will explore how achievements were reached between the different levels of society where it would have been more difficult or impossible to have the same outcome individually.[92] Within the theory of social capital, Sociologist David Gauntlett acknowledges that social capital is a resource based on both trust and shared values that maintain its strength by the 'weaving-together of people in communities'.[93] Social capital, in this instance, reflects the network of relationships amongst those civilians in Australian society that allowed this society to function effectively. Working within the legal profession, Edmunds and the other lawyers in the South Australian Bureau who chose to voluntarily give their time positively related to a form of political and civil volunteering. Interestingly, the importance of education varies between distinct types of volunteering.[94] Edmunds declared in a monthly report to the Law Society and the South Australian Red Cross Depot at Government House that Florence Saunders and Olive Croft managed the female administrative staff. Due to their 'diligent and loyal co-operation', they largely contributed to the success of the South Australian Bureau.

In August 1917, Edmunds introduced Florence Saunders to John Kiddle K.C. of the Melbourne Bureau as his first lieutenant in the working of the South Australian Bureau. As the bureau work got underway, Edmunds sent Saunders inter-state to learn firsthand about the management and working of the Victorian Bureau.[95] While no legal men who volunteered got paid for their service, the records indicate that the volunteer staff in daily attendance at the South Australian bureau were given a

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[91] Ibid, S108.

[92] John Wilson, 'Volunteering,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000), 215.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid, 220.

[95] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 8 August 1917,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau, Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

nominal amount. This payment covered their 'bare out-of-pocket and luncheon expenses'.[96] There were two salaried female typists, with a third required by late 1917 due to the workload; they would later increase to a staff of eight. Although, in contrast, Owen had put forward the idea of a paid personal and clerical assistant in the Sydney Bureau, he had sought a male clerk 'skilled in shorthand and typwriting'.[97] Women's involvement in paid work had changed considerably by 1913, and it did so rapidly. Domestic help and service roles were soon overshadowed by manufacturing positions, with women accounting for a quarter of all manufacturing employees.[98] Commerce was another area of growth for women. They also had the vote, which enabled them to be taken more seriously as they had a say in shaping the nation's future.[99] An important question will be whether there is a discernible gendered aspect concerning the bureau material in a specific historical context, particularly for those who staffed the state bureaux.

The thesis will explore, within the theory of social capital, how the South Australian Bureau used its social ties and resources to become more efficient and proficient in the work and in the use of systems as the war progressed and the number of sick, wounded, missing, or killed soldiers increased. Sociologist John Wilson suggests that social ties are often an indicator of those who will volunteer; those with human capital are more likely to volunteer.[100] Did the social organisation that developed out of this wartime work improve the efficiencies of the process, or did it just suit a purpose? Did each group reach a consensus by sometimes bypassing the formal system to make things happen, simply by speaking with and supporting one another? The thesis will also examine what drove the legal profession to take on such a role and consider how the South Australian legal fraternity compared with their counterparts in other states in establishing this bureau. The records not only incorporate the work of the Australian bureaux on the home front with the families and friends of soldiers, as stated above, but they also incorporate their interactions with the Military in Adelaide and Base Records in Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. Combining social resources with volunteering will undoubtedly enrich the research experience and reveal if those social ties were positive or negative when undertaking the bureau's work.

In 2018, Lawyer Peter Moore wrote about the South Australian legal fraternity that enlisted in the First World War in A Legal Cohort. He also looked at the work on the home front of those legal minds which, for assorted reasons, were unable to or chose not to enlist. Moore briefly discusses the

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96 In 1917, the weekly expense of the bureau amounted to £9; See 'Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau, South Australian Division: Annual Report 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 17, SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919.

97 'Langer Owen in correspondence with the South Australian Bureau, n.d.,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened. Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917.

98 Raelene Frances, 'Women in White Australia,' in *Glorious Days: Australia* 1913, ed. 'Michelle Hetherington and National Museum of Australia, (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2013), 115.

99 Ibid, 43.

100 Wilson, 'Volunteering,' 224.

work of the South Australian Bureau in a chapter titled 'Information Service'. He argues that 'the Law's best efforts in the war were reserved for the Red Cross Information Bureau which tracked the dead, wounded and missing for anxious families at home'.[101] While there is only a short, concise chapter on the South Australian Bureau, Moore has also made mention of the bureau in various other chapters and provides insight into the character of some of the legal men who volunteered for this work. He highlights the early beginnings of the Australian Bureau in Egypt and the role of South Australian William Isbister K.C. in relaying enquiry details to all the Australian state bureaux from this location.

Moore's work gives us the closest insight into the impact of the First World War on the South Australian legal profession. He describes how 170 people from this small group of four hundred men 'undertook military and civilian services at home and abroad'.[102] He gives no definitive reasons why eligible legal men such as Edmunds chose not to enlist. However, he puts forward a probable reason that it was considered necessary to maintain civil order.[103] Moore also suggests that the immediate response of the legal community was to keep 'the home fires burning' and noted quite a few in this South Australian community were too old to enlist. Knowing why Edmunds and others in the South Australian Bureau did not enlist may be challenging to confirm one hundred years on; however, Moore suggested while they were not exempt from enlisting, 'they were critical to society's functioning' during the war.[104] This situation is significant as the legal profession ran the South Australian and other state bureaux throughout the war. He argues that the initial number of eighty men who volunteered in the bureau dwindled over time to a mere twenty-four regular attendees at the South Australian Bureau.[105] Indeed, Edmunds left one weekly schedule within the records that list his regular twenty-four volunteers. His correspondence in the bureau records is insightful of this man. Moore's work will be expanded upon to create greater insight into the character of Edmunds concerning his bureau work pre-and post-war.

Cunneen has also focused on the legal profession, particularly in New South Wales during the First World War. In his several articles on this topic, he examined the impact of the First World War on those in the legal profession, predominantly in this eastern state. Using archival material, newspaper articles and other articles mentioned here, Cunneen followed the story of soldiers whose families engaged with the Sydney Bureau to trace their loved ones. In his article "What has happened to our dear boy?" for the Australian War Memorial's *Wartime Journal*, he gives a comprehensive breakdown of the establishment of the bureau established in Sydney by Langer Owen. Unfortunately, this article was

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[101] Peter Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War* (Australia: Australian Legal Heritage, 2014), 139.
[102] Ibid, x.
[103] Ibid, 115.
[104] Ibid, 116.
[105] Ibid.

not referenced. Therefore, some statements are difficult to clarify further. Cunneen suggested, as did Oppenheimer that Owen's wife Mary was instrumental in her husband establishing the Red Cross Information Bureau in Sydney.[106] Owen put this idea forward following his wife's premature death in 1917. However, he also suggested something different in a speech the previous year.[107]

On that occasion, Owen stated that the idea came to him after he received a copy of *The Way of the Red Cross*.[108] Published in March 1915, this book presents a complete record of the British Red Cross Society's work; all proceeds from its sale went into *The Times* fund for the sick and wounded during the First World War.[109] In Chapter V, 'The King's Soldier's Counsel', the authors describe the type of enquiry cases dealt with and the working methods used by the first British Red Cross Department in its 'tracing service'.[110] Lord Robert Cecil KC., a politician and diplomat, initially ran the Department.[111] Following the Battle of the Marne in 1914, he struggled to trace a missing soldier. Unfortunately, no other agency offered such assistance at that time, so upon his return to Britain, Lord Cecil decided to change the situation for others who found themselves in a similar predicament. He approached the British Red Cross Society, and they established a Wounded and Missing Department. Lord Cecil emptied his chambers at Temple, moved into two rooms at the Red Cross Headquarters in London, and began locating missing and wounded soldiers as part of the Society's services.[112]

The Red Cross already played an essential role in supporting military medical services, providing comforts for prisoners of war, and assisting civilians on the home front. In this chapter, the authors also explain that tracing soldiers is a task best suited to a man 'versed in the taking and sifting of evidence' and 'who can pick out the main points from a host of irrelevancies'.[113] Lord Cecil's legal role probably motivated Owen when the Australian Red Cross Society approached him to undertake similar work.[114] Owen indeed referred to this particular chapter when establishing the 'Scheme of Works' for the Australian bureau in Sydney. The other state bureaux followed his lead before moving beyond the British framework to develop their processes and rules. In the key works mentioned previously, the book has rarely been referenced. It will be discussed further in the thesis it is fundamental to the system adopted by the Australian Red Cross information bureaux at home.

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[106] Cunneen, '"What has happened to our dear boy?", np; Oppenheimer and Kleinig. "There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 282.
[107] 'Red Cross,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 14 December 1917.
[108] Charles E. Vivian and John E. Hodder Williams. *The Way of the Red Cross*, London, New York, Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915.
[109] Ibid, 9.
[110] Ibid, 162-164.
[111] 'Red Cross Work - Inquiry Bureau: What the Depots are Doing,' *Sun*, New South Wales, 23 April 1917; Vivian and Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 163.
[112] Redcross.org.uk/WW1, 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1.
[113] Vivian and Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 166.
[114] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Mail*, New South Wales, 4 August 1915.

Cunneen argues, in 2018, that the Red Cross information bureaux were 'one of the many overlooked stories within the grand narrative of the experience of Australians in World War 1'.[115] He also suggests that this area of study is in its infancy.[116] In this article, Cunneen undertook a detailed study on searchers, the establishment of the Australian Bureau in Egypt, and the often-difficult conversations had within the bureaucracy of the military powers. This subject is rarely found in other material about the bureaux, although, as noted above, Oppenheimer and Kleinig touched on it. Cunneen notes the 'searchers comprised the operational front of the bureau'.[117] He references newspaper articles and the vast metres of files in the Australian War Memorial archives and, in so doing, omits the extant set of records in South Australia. Cunneen also touches on the social complexities in Victorian society during the war. He notes the ease with which the legal fraternity moved between the families and the Military. He describes the modifications made to searchers' reports by the lawyers in the various state bureaux as an adaptation of the military world in a process that was 'typical of a frontier experience'.[118] This remark contradicts statements previously mentioned and evidence found in the South Australian archives about the best way forward given the sensitivities of the report contents.

This author also states that 'the reports were not as neutral as they first appeared and suggests that they reflected and in part shaped the civilian impression of the war as essentially a heroic if tragic, activity'.[119] Indeed, as discussed previously, this was often the case in formal correspondences between the military and a soldier's family upon his death. However, this was certainly not the case in relation to correspondence between the bureau and families in similar circumstances. Cunneen has further stated, 'frontier zone of sensibilities did not allow for a confronting reportage'.[120] His statements add to the earlier discussions above on self-censorship and the systems adopted by the bureaux. The bureaux preferred dealing directly with each other rather than going through the military with such reports. The honorary secretaries also discussed these topics with each other, which will be expanded on. Cunneen makes an interesting statement about 'certain rules about the sort of language to be used', arguing that the resulting reports from the searchers to the bureaux, who then passed them on to enquirers, shaped a particular perception of war amongst society on the home front.[121] It is proposed to explore this statement further to see if it is as he said that 'such influence back onto the organisation who initially sent forth their representatives was a feature of frontier interactions'.[122] Was the Australian Red Cross

[115] Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 695.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid, 696.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid, 705.
[122] Ibid.

Information Bureaux the last nexus in moderating civilian sensibilities?[123] Cunneen examines the dynamics of the daily operations of the bureaux in Australia and overseas, ever mindful of the role of the searchers. He outlines the leading legal men in each state and omits to give Edmunds a mention, instead naming only Sir Josiah Symon as the leading character in South Australia. Cunneen supports the notion that the bureaux became a powerful social enterprise, and this point will be further expanded upon within the thesis.

The Archives – why the records matter

The South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau records contain a societal narrative that has shaped the Australian perception of war on both the home front and the war front between 1915 and 1919.[124] Yet, this narrative has been told in isolation rather than in a broader institutional context. This thesis focuses on the South Australian records of the bureau. The documents have been compiled in a way that allows an interpretation of the wartime work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux network. This structure reveals interesting characteristics about their place in civil society at that time. The working relationship with institutions such as the Commonwealth Department of Defence, the State War Council, and the military authorities was sometimes complex and strained. Each organisation responded differently to the needs and frustrations of family members seeking information on the fate of a loved one. These working relationships in Australia will include their dealings with the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, established in Cairo in 1915 before it relocated to London in 1916. This shift was in response to the Australian Imperial Force moving to Europe and the Western Front.

Three key elements stand out within the primary source material of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau housed in the State Library of South Australia. Firstly, the arrangement of the archive offers a breakdown of the whole into parts that situate South Australia's place at home and abroad during the First World War. The distinct relationship between the records and the people who generated them differentiates these archives from other documentary resources. The records of this civic institution were carefully assembled using archival principles. American archivist Theodore Schellenberg described this process as an arrangement proceeding from an understanding of the whole of the group or collection rather than 'being separated on a piecemeal bases'.[125] This description may be applied to the bureau records in this instance.

Secondly, the bureau left a direct connection to various civilians at home impacted by the war. Professor of Law, David Sugarman, argues that it is 'the fractured lives of individuals and societies that

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[123] Ibid, 706.
[124] Ibid, 707.
[125] Theodore R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 11.

expose the rents in conventional life histories'.[126] These lives provoke a reworking of the past through families and family life narratives. Included in this group are those other civilians who stepped in to assist and alleviate the grief and sorrow so often present in times of war.[127] These records offer the scholar an opportunity to interpret places and events through administrative documents and correspondence, records that, in some ways, have become surrounded by myth and emotion. The bureaux staff showed the commitment of time and effort throughout the war to serve the community while holding paid jobs or running legal offices. Yet, their profession was severely impacted, with almost 120 men enlisting for upwards of four years.[128] Their greatest challenge was structural, as the profession struggled to perform its civic duties. Moore suggests that the legal environment diminished and changed character as some partnerships became one-person firms.[129] Previously, volunteering labour was viewed as the domain of women within the community. Wilson argues the idea of combining paid employment and volunteering was seen as incompatible.[130] It is proposed to examine the social ties and organisational activity within the South Australian Bureau as explanations for volunteering. Social ties, argues Wilson, can often be relatively insignificant.[131] However, the voluntary work undertaken by the bureau showed meaning and significance in easing the burden on families. As the war intensified in Europe, the motivations, the needs, and the impulses of these volunteers who used their social resources and networks appeared to be proactive rather than reactive.[132]

Thirdly, the archival record is about the Red Cross bureau people who understood the meaning and the outcomes of their progress through the war. They achieved something that influenced the course of history in Australian society in this period by the very nature of their voluntary work. Historian John Tosh reminds the scholar that what they will ultimately achieve in interpreting texts is determined primarily by the 'extent and character of the surviving sources'.[133] As honorary secretary of the bureau, Edmunds conscientiously chose to preserve the records and was thorough in this task. As previously noted, the material was assembled around certain themes before categorising the information in specific terms.[134] Although examining such records can yield a variety of details and insights into the personal communications and workings of the bureau, care needs to be taken in explaining their texts. These documents are subject to the social and cultural conditions of their

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[126] David Sugarman, 'From Legal Biography to Legal Life Writing: Broadening Conceptions of Legal History and Socio-legal Scholarship,' *Journal of Law and Society* 42, no. 1 (2015), 31.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War*, 116.

[129] Ibid, 116.

[130] Wilson, 'Volunteering,' 220.

[131] Ibid, 224.

[132] Ibid, 216.

[133] John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History,* 2nd ed. London; (New York: Longman, 1991), 30.

[134] Sotirios Sarantakos, *Social Research,* 2nd ed. (Australia: Charles Stuart University, 1998), 317.

production. Their 'habit of mind' differs significantly one hundred years on.[135] Sociologist Steph Lawler reminds us that the story being told is selected for its 'meaningful place in the narrative'.[136] Edmunds was selective in what was kept, as can be gleaned from the quantity and structure of the records. Archivist Joanna Sassoon has cautioned that 'archives can and do expose active choices behind the very nature of the memories that are preserved there'.[137] Using the archives in the thesis was a process of 'actively creating' rather than 'passively reproducing' meaning.[138] These records are an opportunity to reconnect 'the bonds that were so effectively severed, bonds that are our most intimate and fundamental', certainly concerning the soldiers, their families, and the community.[139]

In keeping with Tosh's ideas, the significance and relationship of the main events need to be considered, and the relevant factors weighed in turn. The material within the records of the South Australian Bureau was not written with posterity in mind. Instead, the records relate to the bureau's 'everyday business and social intercourse' throughout the war.[140] Archivist Terry Eastwood, however, remarks that a fundamental principle of such an archive is that it was 'set aside consciously as a memorial of the action or actions giving it existence'.[141] While the configuration of each factor may have shifted when the record was assembled for submission to the archive department, their connectedness should still be apparent and, therefore, possible to describe and interpret.[142] The language within the correspondence of these records to date has been used to discuss the anxiety, fear, grief and loss felt by families and friends of a wounded or missing soldier. Moriarty has suggested how people privately faced grief differed from its representation in 'ceremonies, words, and behaviour of grief in public spaces'.[143] Multiple experiences are observed in the soldier enquiry packets from a wide range of people other than just soldiers.[144] To date, insufficient attention has been paid to the range of perspectives available about the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau and its wartime work.

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[135] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, 32.

[136] Steph Lawler, 'Stories and the Social World.' In *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*, ed. Michael Pickering (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 33.

[137] Joanna Sassoon, 'Phantoms of remembrance: libraries and archives as the collective memory,' *Professional Historians Association of NSW* 10 (2003), 41.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 1.

[140] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History,* 32.

[141] Terry Eastwood, 'Towards a social theory of appraisal,' in *Appraisal in the archival imagination: essays in honor of Hugh A. Taylor*, ed. Barbara Craig (Ottawa: Association of Canadian Archivists, 1992), 74.

[142] Tosh, The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History, 118.

[143] Catherine Moriarty, 'Review Article: The Material Culture of Great War Remembrance,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 4 (1999), 654.

[144] Ibid.

Methodology

It is central to the argument of this research to reassess the nature of all the evidence available in the archive so that new histories may be written. In this instance, the focus has centred on the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau's voluntary wartime work and the individuals who tried to bridge the gap between the home and the war front for those immediately impacted by the war.[145] Historian Tom Griffiths reminded us that 'records are constantly lost or destroyed without purpose or import, yet what was kept is kept with purpose, and that which is made public has import'.[146] One must delve into 'the mobilisation of human and emotional resources' to trace the processes of total war.[147] This act allows the scholar to expose how Australians on multiple levels, e.g. individuals, families and community, were 'deeply enmeshed in sustaining a war that required the total and absolute destruction of one's enemies'.[148] One also needs to understand the mobilisation of those bureau volunteers on the home front who attempted to sustain and support the families of soldiers seeking details about their fate. The significance of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau and its broader network at home and aboard will be realised in two distinct parts.

Firstly, using the primary material, a qualitative study was undertaken on the wartime administrative work of this group of South Australians. Attention was drawn to the gaps that still exist concerning the fields of historiography and theory relating to the bureau from organisational and civic viewpoints during the First World War. The retained records show the staff understood the significance of the exceptional event they lived through and the work they conducted far from the battlefield. The enquiry activities initially undertaken by the League of Loyal Women and later by the South Australian legal fraternity in late 1915 differ significantly. The League operated on the home front in tandem with military authorities. In contrast, the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau worked within its network of other bureaux interstate and globally with the small office in the Australian High Commission in London, the Australian bureau in Cairo and later London. Another established Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau was also operating in Adelaide in 1915 under the management of the YMCA. Comparisons will be drawn between this enquiry bureau and the Red Cross information bureaux network at home as different institutions supported each other, but they inevitably started working together. As the war intensified in Europe, one gains insight into the more general difficulties involved in the work by examining the interactions of the South Australian bureau with its Australian counterpart in Cairo and then London, particularly concerning time delays, cabling issues, systems, and distance from the war front. Using social capital theory, studying these connections will allow the

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[145] Gail Braybon, *Evidence, History and the Great War* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 33.

[146] Tom Griffiths, *The Art of Time Travel: Historians and Their Craft* (Melbourne: Black Inc, 2016), 146.

[147] Bart Ziino, 'Total war' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts,* eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett, (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan (2017), 165.

[148] Ziino, 'Total war' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, 165.

scholar to understand more clearly how this bureau used its skills and networks to remove obstacles, make connections and assemble a more robust social network. The records also directly link South Australia with the battlefront in Gallipoli and Europe as the war progressed.[149]

Secondly, the 8,033 soldier enquiry packets that sit alongside the administrative records of the South Australian Bureau pertain to individual soldiers classed as sick, wounded, missing, or killed in action during the war; they also include many miscellaneous enquiries. Overall, the packets hold multiple layers of correspondence from various civilians impacted by the conflict. Examining the letters between the enquirer and the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau is an opportunity to open up the language of the war on the home front to understand better the social patterns that emerged at the micro and meso-levels of society.[150] This point of contact on the home front is where uncensored news from the battlefront was regularly 'negotiated, consumed, circulated and reproduced' and represents how 'people made sense of the war'.[151] The letters provide an opportunity to begin examining how people at home collectively experienced and responded to the impact of the war at home. LIWC, briefly discussed above, will be used to analyse the epistolary exchange in a group of letters between enquirers and the bureau's honorary secretary. The program reads written texts and counts the percentage of words that reflect different emotions, thinking styles, social concerns, and even parts of speech. At the centre of the program is a group of eighty-one dictionaries that tell the text analysis module which words to identify and classify.[152] The output lists all LIWC categories and the rates that each category was used in a given text.[153] The findings will be presented in a tabulated format by combining the output from LIWC with the IBM SPSS program. This software suite supports statistical analysis, analytical reporting, graphics, and modelling.

This interdisciplinary approach to letters views language as a form of social practice. It allows the scholar 'to view words used in everyday language to reveal thoughts, feelings, personality, and motivations'.[154] The aim is to interpret, evaluate, critique and explain the discourse differently. The State Library of South Australia has provided the entire database of 8,033 soldier enquiry packets; the Australian War Memorial did similar for the 32,000 soldier enquiry records of the Australian bureau abroad during the war. The packets contain personal family letters, searcher reports, witness statements and correspondence between the bureau and an enquirer. Similarly, some soldier attestation files in the

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[149] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press USA - OSO, 2005), 221.

[150] Ziino, 'Total war' in Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts, 169.

[151] Ibid, 170.

[152] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019, http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[153] Tausczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' 27.

[154] Fairclough, *Language and Power*: *Language in Social Life Series*, 9; Sherlock R. Campbell and James W. Pennebaker, 'The Secret Life of Pronouns: Flexibility in Writing Style and Physical Health,' *Psychological Science* 14, no. 1 (2003), 61.

National Archive of Australia (NAA) also retain the correspondence between the military authorities and family members. However, in this instance, they will not be included in this analysis.

Combining this information will show variety in the stories of soldiers and those who enquired after them with the bureau.[155] It will also reveal critical patterns and societal variations within society as the war progressed. Professor of Psychologist James Pennebaker argues it is not what the authors are saying that reveals insight; it is about how they are saying it that is in itself 'profoundly social'.[156] Winter reminds the scholar that historian Ken Inglis showed that 'performance mattered as much as composition' and argued 'language is too important a subject to be marginalised in the historical study'.[157] The soldier enquiry packets directly connect Australian families and the next-of-kin with men fighting on the battlefield. Letters between family members and the bureau are more informative and differ significantly from the official language or "dialect" of military correspondence.[158] An examination of language may reveal an important link between the nature of the legal profession that established the bureaux and the distinctiveness of the bureau language. This part of the investigation affords an understanding of how the 'huge gap of conjecture' was minimised and changed for families and next-of-kin when a loved one was listed as sick, wounded, missing, or killed on the battlefield.[159]

The Chapters

Chapter One looks briefly at certain distinctive features of South Australian society through the First World War. It also examines the volunteering roles of the League of Loyal Women of Australia (hereafter the League of Loyal Women) and the YMCA Soldier Enquiry Bureau that emerged early in the war. The South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was considered, established, and voluntarily run in Adelaide by the legal profession. Chapter Two details the early development of the Australian Red Cross Bureaux network on the home front and the prominent people involved in the formation. In July 1915, these developments commenced in Sydney, while it was early January 1916 when the last of the newly formed state bureaux opened its doors to the public in South Australia. A high level of detail will be required to overcome the current misconceptions and emphasise the changes in the bureaux throughout the war and, importantly, their impact on society. Chapter Three argues that the Australian bureau set up and run by Deakin in Cairo and later London during the First World War was part of a global humanitarian network. It was an Australian bureau close to the war front that actively sought answers to enquiries from the state bureaux rather than being what others have termed

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[155] Campbell and Pennebaker, 'The Secret Life of Pronouns: Flexibility in Writing Style and Physical Health,' 61.
[156] Ibid, 63.
[157] Jay M. Winter 'Introduction to Ken Inglis on Language, Culture and Commemoration,' in *ANZAC Remembered: Selected Writings by K. S. Inglis*, eds. John Lack, Ken S. Inglis, Jay Winter (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, Department of History, 1998), 5.
[158] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 42.
[159] Ibid, 36.

a 'clearing house'.[160] Ultimately, the success of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux on the home front was dependent on the effectiveness of what was achieved in the Australian bureau abroad.

Chapter Four opens with a focus on the formative work of Henry C. Smart, the Commonwealth Publicity Agent, and a member of the High Commission's staff in London, concerning the Australian Red Cross enquiry work in London before the transfer of the Australian Bureau from Cairo to London under the charge of Deakin and her team of volunteers. The chapter then focuses on the arrival of Deakin to London, her engagement with various other organisations such as the British Red Cross Society, including its Wounded and Missing Department, and the Australian and British military administration headquarters. This chapter also examines the vital role of the searcher in the enquiry work undertaken to satisfy the many letters and cabled enquiries received from the state bureaux at home. A searcher's role was pivotal to the success of much of the work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux.

Chapter Five highlights how the state bureaux within Australian society, which comprised three social tiers identified here as the macro, meso, and micro levels, bridged the gap at a meso-level of society to provide and verify final answers for enquirers.[161] This chapter will also reveal an organisational history that shows how the enquiry work of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was undertaken on behalf of a soldier's family or friends. It highlights how Charles Edmunds, as its honorary secretary, was a team player instigating change and collaborating with the other honorary secretaries across Australia and abroad. Another focus will be the events that unfolded at a state and national level when the reliable, cost-effective cabling system between the state bureaux and Europe was threatened by government intervention and hindered by lengthy delays. By drawing a comparison between the competing ties of family members, military authorities, and the Commonwealth Department of Defence, it is proposed to clarify the relevance of this intermediate group in wartime society.

Chapter Six is devoted to a statistical analysis of the word count of two separate groups of letters found within the soldier enquiry packets that comprise part of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau archive. In this chapter, a quantitative method is adopted to look more closely at the word count of a collective group of letters between enquirers at the micro-level and the Honorary Secretary at the meso-level of society through the First World War; LIWC will be used to achieve this. As a transparent text analysis tool, LIWC counts words in psychologically meaningful categories. The

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[160] Aaron Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front* 1916-18 Australian Army History Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 91; Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 298.
[161] José López and John Scott, *Social Structures*, (England and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), 3.

program's empirical results demonstrate its ability to detect meaning in various experimental settings. These results include attentional focus, emotionality, social relationships, thinking styles, and individual differences.[162] The study in this chapter aims to understand the social connection and collective communication patterns on both sides of the enquiry.[163] Each enquiry packet represents a unique timeline in searching for information about a soldier from initiation to conclusion on the home front. In keeping with the ideas of historians Winter and Antoine Prost, the war not only broke families apart but also bonded them more firmly.[164] The letters related to individual enquiries highlight that individuals outside of 'social groups and public institutions' did act in their suffering.[165] The correspondence between the bureau and enquirers shows us how ordinary people, in what Winter and Prost term 'anonymous individuality', tried collectively with the bureau to change their situation 'which at any moment threatened to crush them'.[166]

In Chapter 7, the current categorisation of the soldier enquiry packets, housed in the archive of the State Library of South Australia, is redefined here to represent the nature of the enquiry on the home front rather than the outcome of the enquiry on the war front, as is currently the case. Close reading and exegesis of a small number of letters between the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary, Charles Edmunds of the bureau, will follow using three distinctive soldier enquiry packets to represent the many across types. This chapter's qualitative approach also uses LIWC to examine the epistolary exchange. The words used in everyday life reflect what individuals are paying attention to and how they organise and analyse their world. One can reveal information about their 'priorities, intentions and thoughts' by tracking people's attention.[167] In keeping with historian Michael Roper's ideas, Ziino notes that the strong connections between both fronts are 'critical to understanding total war as the domain of citizens as much as soldiers'.[168] While civilian letters have not survived in a similar number to soldier's letters, the letters of enquiry within the South Australian bureau archives provide details about how individuals existed in wartime society in the state and how they 'negotiated their private and public imperatives through their own writing'.[169]

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162 Tausczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' 24–54.
163 Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou, 'Analysing Narratives as Practices,' *Qualitative Research* 8, no. 3 (July 2008), 383.
164 Jay M. Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies* 1914 *to the Present*, 4th ed. (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 167; Roger Chickering, 'Why Are We Still Interested in This Old War?' *History of Warfare* 62 (2011), 11.
165 Winter and Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies* 1914 *to the Present*, 167.
166 Ibid.
167 Tausczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' 30.
168 Ziino, 'Total war' in Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts, 171.
169 Ibid.

CHAPTER ONE
PRELUDE

Introduction

The story of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society during the First World War is well documented in Australia. This Society was accorded official recognition, by the British War Office, as the organisation responsible for the Red Cross movement throughout the British Empire.[1] The Red Cross Society's care of the sick and wounded of all nations had been expressly recognised and officially adopted at the Geneva Convention in 1906.[2] The first Royal Charter was granted by H.M. King Edward VII, the British Red Cross patron, on 3 September 1908. With the onset of war in Europe, it was undeniable that many of the young men in Australian society would enlist, leaving it to the women to accept this valuable work, particularly on the home front. In 1914, it was hoped that a national voluntary organisation would be realised in Australia's newly federated country.[3]

This chapter will briefly look at the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society in Australia in 1914 and the volunteering roles that emerged within society. As the legal fraternity in South Australia stepped up to establish an Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, two other enquiry bureaux were already operating in Adelaide in 1915. This move was in response to the growing number of casualties on the war front and the slow release of information from the Commonwealth Department of Defence. The Secretary of the YMCA was opposed to opening another bureau when his Association was already working successfully in this area. Although, the newly formed Military Information Bureau run by the League of Loyal Women appeared to support the proposed Red Cross Information Bureau readily. The League had also undertaken a program of training women to replace men in the workplace, although some in society were not at ease with the new arrangement of women in paid roles. One individual was moved to make his concerns public in the local newspaper, while others in their various churches were quick to champion the efforts of these patriotic women. The Commonwealth Government came under criticism from within parliament and the Press itself when it attempted to censor war news. Inevitably, causality lists increased in local newspapers across the country and became essential reading for many families with next of kin fighting in the Ottoman Empire and Europe. By the close of 1915, the death toll of Australian soldiers would exceed 8,000

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[1] Charles E. Vivian and John E. Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, (London, New York, Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), 127-28.

[2] International Committee of the Red Cross, 'Treaties, States Parties and Commentaries,' International Committee of the Red Cross, accessed 21 July 2020, https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/INTRO/180.

[3] Melanie Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of Australian Red cross* 1914-2014 (Sydney, NSW: HarperCollins, 2014), 15.

following the Gallipoli campaign.[4] The need for another bureau in the form of a network of Australian Red Cross information bureaux would be quickly understood and supported within the community, especially as the reality of the battlefields began to take on a different meaning at home.

The Red Cross Society in Australia

Helen, Lady Munro-Ferguson, wife of the Governor-General newly appointed to Australia in 1914, has routinely been credited with forming the Red Cross Society in Australia. Indeed, she said as much herself in a newspaper article in 1914; however, credit must go to Lauretta (Laura) Bogue Luffman, an English journalist, editor, and author who moved to Sydney in 1902.[5] Luffman was also associated with the Women's Liberal League of New South Wales (renamed the Women's Reform League in 1915). She joined its council in 1908 and was organising secretary from 1909 until her role as president from 1918-1921; she also edited the League's monthly journal and became a delegate to the National Council of Women of New South Wales.[6] She was inspired to establish a branch of the British Red Cross Society in New South Wales following a meeting about its work with Ellen. J. Gould, Principal Matron at Saint Kilda's Hospital, Sydney and Colonel Reuter E. Roth, Honorary Medical Officer, at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney; each had served in the 2nd Mounted Infantry Brigade of the Australian Army during the Boer War in South Africa. Gould also enlisted and served in Egypt during the First World War.[7]

From the outset, this single informal Australian branch of the Society achieved only moderate success in its efforts to train women in nursing and other tasks 'fit for service of the sick and wounded in wartime'.[8] In 1914, Luffman, Mary Owen, Mrs Shepheard Laidley, Mrs Gordon Weache and Mrs Hanbury Davies decided to renew their efforts due to the unrest growing in Europe, particularly in Ireland, where the possibility of a civil war loomed.[9] The women invited Lady Munro Ferguson to speak in support of their aims when she arrived in Australia in 1914.[10] She had some experience with

[4] Craig Deayton, '"To Sanctify and Hallow the Memory": The Search for Australia's Missing from World War I,' *Social Alternatives* 37, no. 3 (2018), 26.

[5] Ernest Scott, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*, 11 (Sydney, N.S.W.: Angus & Robertson, 1935), 701; for other examples see 'Red Cross Movement for Australia,' *Register*, 10 August 1914; Melanie Oppenheimer, 'Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson and the Australian Red Cross: Vice-regal Leader and Internationalist in the early Twentieth Century,' in *Founders, Firsts and Feminists: Women Leaders in Twentieth-century Australia*, eds. Davis, Fiona, Nell Musgrove, Judith Smart and University of Melbourne (Melbourne: EScholarship Research Centre, University of Melbourne, 2011), 274; Jonathan. A. Spear, 'Embedded: The Australian Red Cross in the Second World War,' *PhD thesis*, (The University of Melbourne, 2007), 40; Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, (Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020), 85.

[6] 'Laura Bogue Luffmann, 1846-1929', Libraries Australian Authorities, accessed 31 August 2020, https://librariesaustralia.nla.gov.au/search/display?dbid=auth&id=50769652; Margaret Bettison, 'Luffman, Lauretta Caroline Maria (1846–1929)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed 31 August 2020, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/luffman-lauretta-caroline-maria-7260/text12581.

[7] 'Gould, Ellen Julia (Nellie) (1860-1941),' The Australian Women's Register, accessed 31 August 2020, https://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0397b.htm.

[8] Scott, *Official History of Australia in the War of* 1914-1918, 702.

[9] Scott, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*, 702; 'Great Red Cross Worker – The Late Mrs Langer Owen,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 3 December 1917.

[10] Scott, *Official History of Australia in the War of* 1914-1918, 702.

the Society before her arrival and was generally interested in the Red Cross Society's work. Historian Melanie Oppenheimer suggests that Lady Munro Ferguson's detailed knowledge of the Red Cross Society stemmed from establishing a Scottish Society branch five years previously.[11] Indeed, on the vice-regal couple's first visit to Sydney in July, with war looming, she discussed the Red Cross movement and, more particularly, the workings of the British and European Red Cross with the women of the Double Bay Ambulance.[12]

Historian Ernest Scott also suggests that the stimulus of Lady Munro Ferguson's vice-regal patronage in 1914 ensured success, particularly with the onset of war in August.[13] In answer to her cable to the Secretary of State in London on 13 August 1914, the British Red Cross Society officially responded within days that they 'gladly accord recognition to the branch being formed in 'Australia which will be known as Australian Branch'.[14] She was soon a leading light in transforming Sydney's informal branch office of the British Red Cross Society into a formal Australia-wide movement known as the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society (hereafter the Australian Red Cross Society). Lady Munro Ferguson became the President of the Australian Branch of the Society and determined that Red Cross work was essentially women's work. However, the charter and rules of the British Red Cross Society regulated the joint work of both men and women.[15]

Voluntary work in South Australia

The voluntary work of Australian women under the umbrella of the Australian Red Cross Society was not the only voluntary work of the Red Cross Society in Australia during the First World War. Another important story in this period predominantly focuses on a group of Australian men who did not enlist but undertook their patriotic duty on the home front. It is the story of the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau that was established from mid to late 1915; it was run and funded by the legal professions in each Australian state until 1919. Lawyers in each state considered how those in their legal fraternity who had not enlisted due to age or other considerations could offer their services. They proposed assisting those in society 'anxious to seek news of sick, wounded or missing men enlisted' from the state.[16] In parallel with the YMCA, the South Australian Bureau looked to undertake a civic service to minimise the gap exacerbated by the long delays by the Department of Defence to notify family members of casualties on the battlefront.

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[11] Melanie Oppenheimer, 'Red Cross under the Southern Cross,' *State Library of New South Wales Magazine*, Summer 2016-17, accessed 11 September 2020. https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/red-cross-under-southern-cross.
[12] Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of Australian Red cross* 1914-2014, 15.
[13] Scott, *Official History of Australia in the War of* 1914-1918, 701.
[14] 'War 1914. Red Cross Society (Australian Branch),' File series A11803, 1914/89/18/4, National Archives of Australia (NAA), 9-10.
[15] 'Red Cross Society: the annual meeting,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 14 September 1917; British Red Cross, 'Royal Charter', accessed on 3 August 2020, https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-run/royal-charter.
[16] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Register*, South Australia, 10 April 1916.

There is a generally accepted theory that the Australian Red Cross information bureaux were the only organisational soldier enquiry bureaux operational in Australia during the First World War, but this was not the case.[17] Before the South Australian Bureau opened its doors in January 1916, the Young Men's Christian Association had established a 'YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau' in Sydney and Adelaide. So too had the League of Loyal Women in support of families seeking information on the fate of a loved one in the Gallipoli campaign. The women in the League who ran the Military Information Bureau stepped out of the strict gendered roles found in pre-war Australia. Oppenheimer notes that these women soon began to be shaped by their female leadership. However, they were also influenced by 'imperial, national and familial ideologies and experiences'.[18]

It is important to note that the military influences that guided the bureau work of the League and the YMCA in their enquiry work contrast with the Australian Red Cross information bureaux run voluntarily by the legal fraternity. Importantly the state bureaux remained independent of military influences throughout the war. Therefore, it is essential to provide some context into the origins of both other groups, their role in Australian society, and their associations with military authorities at home and in the case of the YMCA abroad as this Association mobilised for the war front. In late 1915, the League would transfer their enquiry work to the South Australian Information Bureau and pass on other enquiries through the war as they received them. However, the YMCA's South Australian General Secretary, Henry A. Wheeler, had a different mindset and would write to the local newspapers in December 1915, questioning the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau's proposed opening in January 1916. Wheeler's opposition to the new bureau is unclear as he supported the Society and, in 1916, became an elected South Australian Red Cross Executive Committee member.[19]

Casualty lists from the battlefront

In August 1915, the Australian Imperial Force was in its fourth month of fighting in the Gallipoli campaign against the Ottoman Empire. Lieutenant Colonel James Barrett, a member of the Executive Committee of the Red Cross Society in Egypt, reported that the wounded and sick were arriving in Cairo 'on a scale probably never known or equalled before'.[20] Casualty lists of Australian soldiers

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[17] Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' *First World War Studies* 6, no. 3 (2016), 278; Oppenheimer, Melanie. A Short History - South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, Centenary of Anzac 2014-2018, accessed 7 February 2019. https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/short-history-south-australian-red-cross-information-bureau#https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/images/page/Verco%20Building-war%20memorial.jpg

[18] Melanie Oppenheimer, 'Red Cross for War: Responses of Imperial Feminism and the Australian Red Cross during the Great War, in *Australia and the Great War*, eds. Michael J. K Walsh & Andrekos Varnava (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2016), 28.

[19] 'Red Cross Society: A Year's Activities,' *Register*, South Australia, 1 September 1916.

[20] James W Barrett, *Report on the British Red Cross in Egypt: from March to September* 3rd, 1915 (Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society. Cairo, 1915), 4.

wounded, missing or dead in the battle were soon released by the Department of Defence for publication in local newspapers in towns and cities around Australia. Headlines such as 'Australian Losses: Thirteenth Casualty List, 15 died of wounds, 46 wounded' appeared in the *Argus* in early May 1915. This list was one of the earliest published on the home front. Following the Gallipoli campaign, William R. Coleman, a serving South Australian soldier, noted that the casualty lists soon brought a rude awakening to many in Australia who considered the war 'to be a distant thing'.[21] He described a frantic search for atlases in the community to discover where the Dardanelles and Gallipoli were in the world.[22] As the theatres of war intensified, these casualty lists in 1915 quickly increased from an initial thirteen to sixty-six at home by August.[23] Such reports soon became too familiar to families with loved ones on the battlefront. Under each state sub-heading was a soldier's name, battalion, place of origin and condition. Before long, the information provided in these casualty lists was considered too meagre and insufficient for family members who needed to know more and sooner.

With sad and tragic events unfolding in the war, a family's worries increased about 'the wellbeing of loved ones', reiterating Australia's isolation and distance from the rest of the world.[24] Historian Bart Ziino reminds us that in many cases, families were left to mourn for a man killed in action and buried half a world away.[25] The 'tyranny of distance' experienced in Australia also meant that many families initially had to find alternative ways to 'confirm or supplement the official story'; a family's need to know more was central to this.[26] In many cases, to hear the more brutal disclosure of information beyond what the military or the government provided was often paramount.[27] The combination of newspaper casualty lists and private correspondences began to inform individuals of the immediate impact and realities of the war front.[28] Across Australia, it became apparent that something needed to be done at a civilian level to assist the public.

Wartime voluntary work performed by civil society rather than the state was an area where women gained prominence. Men considered unfit for active service due to age or poor health contributed to the war effort by assisting local groups such as the Australian Red Cross Society and its

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[21] William R. G. Colman, *There and back with a Dinkum* eds Claire Woods and Paul Skrebels (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing Pty Ltd, 2013), 15.

[22] Ibid.

[23] 'Australian Losses: Thirteenth Casualty List,' *Argus*, 12 May 1915; 'Sixty-Sixth Casualty List: Additional Names, 259 South Australia,' *Register*, South Australia, 20 August 1915, 'Thirteenth Casualty List,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 12 May 1915.

[24] Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life.' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1 (2015), 9.

[25] Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley, W.A: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 1.

[26] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, London, New York: Macmillan; St. Martin's P., 1968); Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 29, 35.

[27] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, (UK: Cambridge University Press), 35.

[28] Bart Ziino, 'Making Sense of the War (Australia),' in 1914-1918-online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, eds. Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2017-08-18.

auxiliary circles. Young women volunteered as voluntary aid detachments (VADs), providing nursing care for military units.[29] Women's volunteer activities within local communities exceeded the often-misguided assumption that their voluntary wartime work was merely a continuation of their role within the home baking and knitting socks for soldier comfort parcels or local convalescing hospitals.[30] Women established urban and rural generic community task groups as the first troops left their communities. They also looked at new ways of volunteering to raise money to support state and national charities. Many local patriotic groups in suburban and rural communities also facilitated the return of an ex-soldier as he transitioned back into civilian life.[31] Historian Jatinder Mann shows that the achievement of women was 'the combination of state and charitable support that sustained those' on the home front, particularly those without the direct financial support of the breadwinner who had enlisted for service.[32]

The League of Loyal Women of Australia

In South Australia, on 20 July 1915, Marie, Lady Galway, the wife of Sir Henry Galway, Governor of South Australia, who took office in April 1914, founded the League of Loyal Women of Australia. She formed it to 'unite all women engaged in furthering British Imperial ideals and national welfare and support and benefit all associations and institutions with this end in view'.[33] Lady Galway established the headquarters of the League in Adelaide in response to the many South Australians, particularly women, 'prepared to assist business firms in this time of national crisis' by taking on temporary roles.[34] This League was the only group to be organised and administered entirely by women.[35] However, with more than 900 women wishing to attend its inauguration at Adelaide Town Hall, many were turned away at the door that evening as the crowd was so large.[36] At their inaugural meeting, the ladies stated that their reason for being was to:

> promote a strong sense of fellowship and Imperial duty amongst women, and to link together all those who are engaged in patriotic and national service to the mutual benefit of their respective associations.[37]

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[29] 'Keswick Hospital', *Red Cross Record South Australia* 1, no 2, July 1916; Melanie Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of Australian Red cross* 1914-2014, 31; Melanie Oppenheimer, *All Work and No Pay* (NSW: Ohio Productions, 2002), 55; Sandra Kearney, 'A New Sense of Citizenship: Women's War Work in Unley,' *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia* No. 48 (2020), 53.

[30] Kearney, 'A New Sense of Citizenship: Women's War Work in Unley,' 50.

[31] For further details on the varied voluntary work of one group of women in a South Australian suburb see Kearney, 'A New Sense of Citizenship: Women's War Work in Unley,' 59; Peter Stanley, 'Part III Society - Mobilising: Volunteers and Censorship,' in *The Centenary History of Australia and the Great War: The War at Home* Volume 4 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2015), 172.

[32] Jatinder Mann, War Finance (Australia), in 1914-1918-online, International Encyclopedia of the First World War, eds. Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2015-01-15.

[33] 'The League of Loyal Women,' *Mail,* South Australia, 12 June 1915.

[34] 'What Women Can Do: Lady Galway Explains,' *The Daily Herald*, South Australia, 30 October 1915.

[35] Melanie Oppenheimer, *All Work and No Pay*,39.

[36] 'The League of Loyal Women,' *Mail*, South Australia, 31 July 1915.

[37] 'The League of Loyal Women: For God and For Empire,' *Mail*, South Australia, 24 July 1915.

This organisation later became the first group authorised, by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in South Australia, to collect and transmit gifts to Australian soldiers at the front.[38] As mentioned above, British Journalist Laura Luffman presented a paper to the Women's Liberal League of New South Wales Commonwealth Conference in Brisbane in 1909, suggesting that the principles of associations for women alone were because women had at last found their voice.[39] One that could 'only be exercised clearly and forcefully' through women's organised associations.[40]

Historian Peter A. Howell notes that as enlistments and casualties grew, the League's focus soon shifted to caring for soldiers, their families, and loved ones in the community.[41] Several clubs formed on the back of the League, bringing together relatives of men who had left for the front. The League of Loyal Women attempted to form social bonds amongst those at home that strengthened and maintained the bond of sympathy and fellowship for women who shared common interests and anxieties. The organisation expressed its intense patriotism by offering empathy and an expression of hope to those families impacted by a death on the war front. They anticipated that families would find comfort in the nobility of the sacrifice by the soldier for his country.[42] In Australian homes across the country, casualty lists soon became a starting point for family enquiries in their quest for more detailed information.

The South Australian branch of the League immediately set about establishing a Women's Emergency Corps. Women attended a course of lectures and received a month's training in hospitals to work as hospital domestics freeing up the nurses to attend to repatriated soldiers.[43] Publishing a notice in the local newspapers, the group asked all South Australian women to register for volunteer roles according to their qualifications.[44] They intended to place an efficient female worker in almost any position that allowed a man to leave his post to enlist. Lady Galway stated that when the military men returned from war, 'the women would of course retire and make way for them'.[45] The Editor of the Ladies Page of the *Soldier* journal later questioned whether the energy and skills of women in their voluntary work were only to last for the length of the war. She asked her readers to consider if women

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[38] 'Unley Comforts for Soldiers in the trenches,' *The Daily Herald*, South Australia, 7 December 1915; 'League of Loyal Women,' *Chronicle*, South Australia, 16 October 1915.

[39] Laura Bogue Luffman, 'The Principle of Women's Associations for Women Alone,' Paper read before the Women's Liberal League of New South Wales Commonwealth Conference held in Brisbane, 1909. Sydney: D. S. Ford, 1909; In 1915, this League became known as the Women's Reform League.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Peter A. Howell, 'Galway, Marie Carola (1876–1963)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/galway-marie-carola-10273/text18171, accessed online 9 January 2020; 'League of Loyal Women,' *Chronicle*, South Australia, 16 October 1915.

[42] 'Loyal women: Unity at Home,' *Register*, South Australia, 3 August 1916.

[43] *Chronicle*, 16 October 1915.

[44] 'Women and War,' *Register*, South Australia, 10 August 1915.

[45] 'What Women Can Do: Lady Galway Explains,' *Daily Herald*, South Australia, 30 October 1915.

would continue to be efficient and skilled workers in the future.[46] In Adelaide, the Institute of Accountants approached Lady Galway and offered their assistance to the League.[47] It followed that a small number of accountancy firms in the city arranged to coach free of charge 'sixty female bookkeepers as temporary replacements for male clerks who had enlisted'.[48] Lady Galway suggested that the young women who came forward were proud of the opportunity to join the community in 'the common work'; she also stated that the women 'expressed gratitude' for the meaning this work had given to their lives.[49] She considered that fending for oneself and being useful was 'one of the best things women could wish for'.[50]

Advocates and Dissenters

The League of Loyal Women had many strong advocates. One who wrote to the South Australian *Register* stated that he commended South Australian women for stepping up to the challenge.[51] He noted that their enterprise would require 'a tremendous amount of work and devotion', but he was sure that 'both would be forthcoming'.[52] The Catholic Archbishop of Adelaide, Robert W. Spence, was also moved to write to the *Advertiser* (South Australia) declaring that:

> [a] union of sympathy in the execution of the noble object of the League will be most helpful in bringing about a strong sense of fellowship among the members which in turn will redound to the honor [sic] of South Australia.[53]

However, not everyone was as convinced of the League's efforts. One 'male clerk' wrote a letter to a newspaper in November 1915.[54] He suggested very little could come of these accountancy classes for the young woman because these ladies mostly belonged to that class of society where monetary consideration was of little or no consequences.[55] Indeed, historian Peter Stanley notes that an opinionated piece in the *Lone Hand* in June 1914 stated that 'the wife of a working man is necessarily a worker' while 'the status and duties of middle-class wives are vague and under-defined'.[56] The Clerk said it was 'nonsense to assume a clerical education resulted by a few weeks tuition'.[57] He argued that it

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[46] Michael McKernan, *Australians at Home: World War* 1 (Victoria: The Five Mile Press, 2014), 77.

[47] *Daily Herald*, South Australia, 30 October 1915.

[48] 'Office Training for Girls,' *Register*, 29 September 1915; Howell, 'Galway, Marie Carola (1876–1963)', Australian Dictionary of Biography.

[49] 'Women Workers,' *Register,* South Australia, 10 November 1915.

[50] *Register,* South Australia, 10 November 1915.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] 'League of Loyal Women,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 24 July 1915.

[54] 'Office Work for Women,' *Register*, South Australia, 10 November 1915.

[55] *Register*, South Australia, 10 November 1915.

[56] 'Lone Hand, 1 June 1914,' quoted in Peter Stanley, 'Part III Society - Mobilising: Volunteers and Censorship,' in *The Centenary History of Australia and the Great War: The War at Home* Volume 4 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press (2015), 173. The *Lone Hand* magazine published monthly included literature and poetry and was a sister magazine to The Bulletin.

[57] *Register*, South Australia, 10 November 1915.

took years of study and thought to master his work and was irked that there were more women than men in the state; he lamented that this feature was not reassuring.[58]

The Clerk anticipated that a difference of several thousand favouring women was probable when the population figures for 1915 were released. The previously recorded population of Adelaide in 1911 was 189,646 residents.[59] This shift in gender numbers had first occurred in 1914, and only in South Australia, no doubt with so many men enlisting.[60] Interestingly, and perhaps offering a more accurate insight into the grievances aired by this clerk was the question he put to the reader. Applauding the women, he asked them if they had ever considered the catastrophic injury inflicted on the male population who were hindered from joining the military or were already repatriated from the war front. He suggested that these men were perfectly willing and able to fill clerical positions they were now unable to get.[61] The League being more practical about the situation, was conscious that the number of men in South Australian society was decreasing with enlistments and surmised quite rightly that some returning soldiers would come back from the war 'shattered both mentally and physically'.[62] Therefore, they suggested that more responsibility would devolve upon the women in society to do all within their power to serve the nation.[63] The Clerk considered that it was scandalous in most cases to employ women in clerical roles and appealed to the public for agreement on this point. Yet, many women supported by the League of Loyal Women undertook accounting classes. Such was their enthusiasm that two local accountancy firms noted that their company clients were 'highly gratified at the results of their efforts'.[64]

The Clerk was not alone in his opinions; a later article published in *The Daily Herald* in January 1916 questioned if South Australia was going downhill. This writer lamented that South Australia had a much smaller population as the new year emerged than the previous year. He argued that the current situation was reflected in the lack of available employment, an increase in deaths, a lower birth rate and, more prominently, the departure of many South Australian soldiers to the war front in Europe. Indeed, New South Wales had the most significant proportion of the population in the country. Moreover, the average life expectancy of the overall population was mid-fifties for males and late fifties for females.[65] The author also suggested that the current circumstances were having a knock-on effect on the price of

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[58] 'Is South Australia Going Down Hill?' *Daily Herald*, South Australia, 22 January 1916.
[59] Australian Bureau of Statistics - Australian Historical Population Statistics, 2019. Accessed on 9 December 2021. https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/historical-population/2016/3105065001ds0003_2019.xls.
[60] *Daily Herald*, South Australia, 22 January 1916.
[61] *Register*, South Australia, 10 November 1915.
[62] *Mail*, South Australia, 24 July 1915.
[63] Ibid.
[64] *Register,* South Australia, 10 November 1915.
[65] Georgia Allan, 'The demographic impact of WW1.' ID Informed Decisions, 2014, accessed on 9 December 2021, https://blog.id.com.au/2014/population/demographic-trends/the-demographic-impact-of-wwi/.

properties, the volume of business transacted, the reduction in State revenue and the increase in public debt per head.

Following Australian Federation in 1901, the Australian Constitution enabled the Commonwealth Parliament to make laws with respect to 'the naval and military defence of the Commonwealth and of the several States'.[66] The Governor-General became Commander-in-Chief, and the states transferred their naval and military forces to the Commonwealth of Australia under the control of the Department of Defence. Historian Gordon Greenwood suggests that some of the main objectives of the Commonwealth Government in Australia had already been accomplished when war broke out. By 1914, Australia had established the Royal Australian Navy and developed 'an independent system of military training from which could be drawn a citizen army of mainly conscripted soldiers'.[67] Parliament also actively shaped the new nation's public safety and defence laws.[68] The Commonwealth Parliament had given 'the national aspirations of the country legislative form'.[69] According to Greenwood, every facet of Australian life was involved in the creative activity that had enveloped the foundation work of the nation with enduring quality.[70] Society as a whole had raised the question, 'what sort of society, what kind of nation did Australians wish to build' since Federation in 1901?[71] More than one-third of all eligible men in Australia chose to enlist, although a much smaller percentage served overseas.[72]

At the same time, South Australian women were already more than a decade into exercising their voting rights and hearing their voices in society. Historian Raelene Francis has shown that voting was taken seriously by Australian women as it allowed them to have a say in shaping their nation's future. Although, historian Michael McKernan argues that few women chose to participate in the political process at that time.[73] In keeping with curator Andrew Sayers's ideas, Australia already had a strong sense of confidence in its nationhood before the 'persistent myth' was introduced to Australia after the First World War that the Anzac landing at Gallipoli in April 1915 brought national unity into being.[74] Importantly, historian Joan Beaumont emphasises that the growth of national sentiment in

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[66] Rob Lundie and Joy McCann, 'Commonwealth Parliament from 1901 to World War 1,' Politics and Public Administration Section, Parliamentary Library, accessed 20 January 2021,
https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1415/ComParl.
[67] Lundie, and McCann, 'Commonwealth Parliament from 1901 to World War 1.'
[68] Ibid.
[69] Gordon Greenwood, *Australia: A Social and Political History* rev. ed. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1974), 196.
[70] Ibid, 197.
[71] Ibid, 199.
[72] Peter Stanley, 'Part III Society - Mobilising: Volunteers and Censorship,' in *The Centenary History of Australia and the Great War: The War at Home* Volume 4 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2015), 178.
[73] Raelene France, 'Women in White Australia,' in *Glorious Days: Australia* 1913, ed. 'Michelle Hetherington and National Museum of Australia, Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press (2013), 97; Michael McKernan, *Australians at Home: World War* 1, 65.
[74] Andrew Sayers, 'Foreword,' in *Glorious Days: Australia* 1913, ed. Michelle Hetherington and National Museum of Australia. Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press (2013), 115.

Australia or other dominions did not eclipse imperial loyalty; indeed, that loyalty remained steadfast in public discourse.[75]

Since early 1913, women's involvement in paid work in Australia continued to advance rapidly.[76] Historian Frank Bongiorno reminds us that women in the year before the war accounted for approximately a quarter of all manufacturing employees.[77] With a need to provide for Australian soldiers abroad, the growth in manufacturing soon concentrated on the 'clothing, food, textiles and printing sector'.[78] Although, during the First World War, Australian women did not have anything comparable to British women regarding paid work. Beaumont points out that more than one million British women moved into formal employment in Britain during the war. In comparison, a mere two to three thousand Australian women joined the ranks of 'professional' jobs.[79] In this period, South Australian women earned less than half that of their male contemporaries in similar roles; however, few women remained employed once they married.[80] Nonetheless, these women overcame deeply entrenched prejudices against them in the Australian workplace to undertake voluntary work at a new level.

Commerce also became an area of development that enabled some women to move from domestic employment into paid roles in offices, banks, and insurance companies.[81] Those women who found openings in clinical or medical positions had the prospect of longer careers ahead of them. Proclaimed in 1911, the *Female Law Practitioners Act* allowed women to practise law. Indeed, women were more prevalent and secure in legal offices within the legal profession than in most other disciplines. As a result, women soon began to replace men who had enlisted. Lawyer Peter Moore notes that the number of female workers already within the South Australian legal system by 1915 was unassailable.[82] He also observed that such were the requirements within all disciplines of the legal profession in the matter of legal copying and letter writing that 'with women came the typewriter'.[83]

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[75] Joan Beaumont, 'Unitedly We Have Fought': Imperial Loyalty and the Australian War Effort,' *International Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2014), 399; Bart Ziino, 'Why Australia is still grappling with the legacy of the First World War,' *The Conversation*, 11 November 2019; Greenwood, *Australia: A Social and Political History*, 258.

[76] Frank Bongiorno, 'A Working Man's Paradise' in *Glorious Days: Australia* 1913, ed. Michelle Hetherington and National Museum of Australia. Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press (2013), 115.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Pam Maclean, 'War and Australian Society,' in *Australia's War* 1914-1918., ed. Joan Beaumont, (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1995), 75. For other examples of women's movement into paid and unpaid employment during the war see Michael McKernan, Australians at Home: World War 1; Joan Beaumont, 'Whatever Happened to Patriotic Women, 1914–1918?' *Australian Historical Studies* 31 no. 115, (2000): 273-86; Melanie Oppenheimer, *All Work and No Pay*. NSW: Ohio Productions, 2002.

[79] Joan Beaumont, 'Whatever Happened to Patriotic Women, 1914–1918?' 275-76.

[80] Michael McKernan, *Australians at Home: World War* 1, 65.

[81] Bongiorno, 'A Working Man's Paradise,' 115; Joan Beaumont, 'The damage inflicted on the Australian home front by the Great War,' *The Strategist* 3, November 2018, accessed 27 October 2020, https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-damage-inflicted-on-the-australian-home-front-by-the-great-war/.

[82] Peter Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War* (Australia: Australian Legal Heritage, 2014), 127.

[83] Ibid.

Mary Cecil Kitson was articled to a legal firm in Adelaide when she was a year into her law degree at Adelaide University in 1915.[84] In October 1917, the first woman in South Australia to graduate in law, she was admitted to the Bar. However, many other professional replacement roles were considered temporary until the soldier returned home.

The South Australian Military Information Bureau

The idea for Military Information Bureaux came about once the Commonwealth Liberal Minister, Richard Beaumont Orchard, considered opening a Military Information Bureau in the capital of each state as essential; in Adelaide, the League of Loyal Women followed suit.[85] From the emergence of the first casualty lists following the Gallipoli campaign, both the Commonwealth Government and Australian families grappled to secure information about the condition of those wounded, missing or killed on the battlefield. Indeed, the missing often became the first casualties in a theatre of war. Orchard argued that his proposed bureau arrangement would alleviate the need for family members to travel to state army bases, often a 'considerable distance from the centre of activities', to supplement the particulars the Department of Defence supplied concerning casualties.[86] Accordingly, without delaying the matter any further, he intended to take the issue in hand immediately to establish a bureau in the heart of Sydney.[87]

The following month, in August 1915, with approval from the District Commandant at Keswick Army Barracks in Adelaide, a 'Military Information Bureau' was established by the League of Loyal Women. The bureau was initially under the charge of Mrs Edgar Brown and four associates before a Miss Gilbert, able to devote her whole time to the bureau, took control.[88] Membership already numbered 2,000 women in the League and continued to grow to a membership of approximately 10,000 through the war.[89] The South Australian Military Information Bureau opened to the public in rooms donated by Dr Alexander Matheson Morgan in Gawler Chambers at 46 North Terrace, in the City of Adelaide. This move put South Australia on a par with New South Wales concerning this type of wartime work. It also allowed South Australian women to undertake valuable work outside the home, beyond the accepted roles mentioned above. There is no available record of any other military information bureaux opening in Tasmania, Western Australia, Victoria, or Queensland during the First World War. However, in Victoria, the Military Base Records Office at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne was easily accessible and already provided information to the enquiring public.

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84 Elizabeth Olsson, 'Three Brilliant Adelaide Girls,' *The Bulletin*, (October 2017), 8.
85 'Military Information Bureau,' *Telegraph*, Queensland, 8 July 1915.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
88 'League of Loyal Women,' *Chronicle*, South Australia, 16 October 1915.
89 'League of Loyal Women,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 24 July 1915; *Chronicle*, South Australia, 16 October 1915.

The League intended to provide information in Adelaide to the 'relatives of Australian soldiers at the front, who wish information on any matter' and to limit the need for families to make 'a tedious journey' down to Keswick Army Barracks in an inner south-western suburb of Adelaide.[90] These barracks were approximately three miles (five kilometres) from North Terrace. Although many families lived in the south-western suburbs, perhaps the tram lines into the city provided a more central location for everyone. Furthermore, as events on the war front increased, military authorities did not want the distraction of numerous family members making enquiries at the army base when they were war focused. Indeed, the League clearly stated that their office could quickly supply much of the information required by a family or next-of-kin on North Terrace and that their work offered a double purpose. The League also relieved the Australian military authorities of 'a certain amount of unnecessary work' by allowing enquirers to call to their rooms.[91] If the available information was insufficient at the time of an enquiry, the League stated that 'they would obtain the necessary details from military headquarters as soon as possible'.[92] Methodist Minister Henry Howard, asked by the League to write to the *Advertiser* to advocate their objectives, wrote that 'the part that woman is playing in this war, both at the front and at home is unique in the history of the world'.[93] He went further in his admiration, stating, 'the women of the day are not content merely to endure; they are eager to achieve'.[94] Reverent Howard was associated with the YMCA and was known for his well-attended evangelistic meetings each Thursday in the city.[95]

The YMCA in South Australian society

The YMCA had been an integral part of Adelaide's civil society since its inception in 1850 and was the first Association in Australia. A second branch at the time opened in Kooringa (Burra), a copper mining town 96.9 miles (156 kilometres) north of Adelaide. Centres in Melbourne and Sydney followed in 1853, while another opened in Hobart in 1855. Some centres faded out as early Associations were not generally connected to one another.[96] However, John Massey, a former General Secretary of the YMCA, notes that Adelaide and Sydney Associations had, having maintained some contact with new members, evangelistic zeal, and new ideas, reopened their Associations with new vigour.[97] Melbourne soon joined with both Associations, becoming the strong organisation they are today. The Association was highly esteemed and attracted men of compassion and social conscience who undertook social good. Women, too, held active roles within the organisation relating to religious and social activities

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[90] 'Military Information Bureau,' *Daily Herald*, South Australia26 August 1915.

[91] *Chronicle*, South Australia, 16 October 1915.

[92] *Daily Herald*, South Australia, 26 August 1915.

[93] *Advertiser*, South Australia, 24 July 1915.

[94] Ibid.

[95] 'Report of Adelaide YMCA Army Department 1915-1916,' Y.USA.9-2-5H.A.WheelerAdelaideAustralia, Kautz Family YMCA Archives (Minnesota University Library, USA), 8.

[96] John Tolson Massey, *The YMCA in Australia: A History* (Melbourne and London: Frank W. Cheshire, 1950), 37.

[97] Ibid, 38.

and, more importantly, in the YMCA's wartime work abroad. Although women were not initially involved in governing the Association, the YMCA was the foundation for the development of the Young Women's Christian Association that followed. The South Australian Association was viewed as the Adelaide Branch of the London YMCA. The layman's movement was 'deliberately and unalterably Christian in government and purpose'.[98] In South Australia, it provided all forms of club life, from sports to a literary and debating society. More generally, branches had a strong presence in the Australian culture, where their committees offered excellent training grounds for responsible and creative leadership.[99]

Like the Australian Red Cross Society, the YMCA understood the need to 'maintain the link between the men and their homes' with the outbreak of the First World War.[100] Unlike the institutional response to civilian anxieties and fears at military and government levels, both the YMCA and the Red Cross Society stepped in at a societal grassroots level to assist families immediately impacted by war at home. In late 1915, the YMCA across Australia was not yet a unified national military service organisation, partly due to the great distances between the capital cities of each state. To be effective in their auxiliary non-combatant honorary service of providing social and recreational facilities and moral guidance, the organisation quickly realised that it needed to work nationally. Massey notes that a uniform policy program was required between the military authorities and the YMCA. Both parties agreed on 'common supervision and control, coordinated financial appeals and centralised expenditure'.[101]

Massey states that the Department of Defence and the YMCA 'shaped a national policy by understanding rather than as an official agreement' to cover these points.[102] The Commonwealth Government had already turned down the YMCA when the Association sought patronage before the war. Undeterred, the Adelaide YMCA General Secretary, between 1905-1916, Henry A. Wheeler, initiated 'a nation-wide War Services YMCA organisation'.[103] The newly formed Australian National Committee held an 'Australian YMCA Army Work' conference.[104] In his new role as the Secretary of the YMCA Army Department, Wheeler secured permission to berth five secretaries from each of the larger states on the first troopships leaving Australia.[105] Dissimilar to the voluntary Australian Red

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[98] Ibid, 323.
[99] Ibid, 324.
[100] 'Report of Adelaide YMCA Army Department 1915-1916,' 5.
[101] Massey, *The YMCA in Australia: A History*, 272.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Henry A. Wheeler, general secretary to the South Australian YMCA, was also the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian YMCA in England and France. In his seat at the Australian YMCA Executive Committee in London he formed a valuable link with the English National Council of the YMCA during the war, see J. W. Daly, *The Adelaide Y.M.C.A.* 1879-1934: *some aspects of its development*,' Honours Degree in History, University of Adelaide, 1972. State Library of South Australia (SLSA), 47.
[104] Massey, *The YMCA in Australia: A History*, 272.
[105] Ibid. 273.

Cross Commissioners and administrative supporters who left for Egypt at their own expense, each YMCA War Work Secretary was given £40 and equipment to set up at Mena and elsewhere in Egypt.[106]

The YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau

YMCA branches in America, Britain, and Germany had worked closely together before the war under the 'World's Alliance of the YMCA' umbrella. In August 1914, the World Alliance Executive Committee held two meetings in London to discuss the beginnings of their wartime work. With the onset of war, its committee membership was greatly reduced due to neutrals and belligerents; the Association eventually relied on its 'Geneva Executive'.[107] Like the British Red Cross Society, the YMCA had previously aided soldiers and prisoners of war during the American Civil War and the Spanish-American War. Some YMCA secretaries were also involved in the Boer War, the Russo-Japanese War, and the Balkan Wars. During the First World War, this organisation was required to develop new 'diplomatic skills' to gain access to soldiers held by belligerent governments.[108]

Massey states that in taking on their most significant single enterprise, caring for the soldier's social, recreational, and moral welfare during the First World War, things in the YMCA would never be the same again.[109] As mentioned above, establishing the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was not a stand-alone effort in Adelaide during the war.[110] By December 1915, the South Australian branch of the YMCA, not unlike the League of Loyal Women, was also operating a 'Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau' from its significant premises located on the corner of Gawler Place and Grenfell Street in the City of Adelaide. It is important to briefly mention the division of labour between the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau and the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau to outline the context in which the YMCA established its information bureaux in association with military authorities. Importantly, by 1917, both organisations had joined forces in their enquiry work to ease the demand for the cable system as the theatres of war intensified in Europe.

Following the first landing at Gallipoli in April 1915, the YMCA decided to assist 'anxious friends in the pursuit of ascertaining information concerning the whereabouts of individual soldiers'.[111] When they visited casualties in hospitals, they found long queues of family members outside

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[106] Ibid.

[107] Kenneth Steuer, *Pursuit of an "Unparalleled Opportunity", The American YMCA and Prisoner of War Diplomacy during World War* 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), chapter 2, Ebook Gutenberg-e.org http://www.gutenberg-e.org/steuer/steuer.ch02.html

[108] Ibid.

[109] Massey, *The YMCA in Australia: A History*, 110.

[110] Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 278; Melanie Oppenheimer, 'A Short History - South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau,' Centenary of Anzac 2014-2018.

[111] 'Information Bureau for Soldiers' Relatives,' *Register*, South Australia, 24 November 1915.

government war offices seeking information about the dead, wounded and missing. The YMCA International Committee was aware of services beyond that of providing for the spiritual needs of the soldier, where required. Under these circumstances, the idea was born to establish a soldier's enquiry bureau on the Australian home front to assist further families seeking information.[112] The work of the YMCA in Egypt and the Gallipoli campaign, until the troops were evacuated, was federated under the control of their Egyptian National Committee, comprised of military personnel and prominent men in society. The Egyptian Executive Committee consisted of Britain, Egypt, Australia, and New Zealand representatives.

The YMCA Associations combined proved to be more efficient in their work abroad. The initial arrangement was informal in the early days of the war; however, as the battles intensified, YMCA representatives at a conference in Melbourne decided to systemise this work at home with each Australian state. The Association took advantage of the fact that they already had an extensive network of personnel in Britain, Egypt, and Gallipoli. They argued that they had the means to form a YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau whereby enquiries could be speedily made and reliably dealt with in most cases. Their first Australian bureau opened in Sydney, but another soon followed in Adelaide. In November 1915, an article in the *Register* stated that the YMCA proved its worth to parents and friends making enquiries by letter or cable to their bureaux. Like the procedures implemented in the Australian Red Cross state bureaux, the enquirer bore the cost of such cables.[113] Early in the First World War, the freedom of movement given to the YMCA in some hospitals and prisoner of war camps relied on the agency of their secretaries from neutral countries such as America. The Association also had centres in Cairo and Alexandria, at the Canal Zone, on the Western Front, and in the Dardanelles, Mudros and Salonika, all locations Australian soldiers frequented.[114] Yet, in comparison, the Red Cross Society later had greater access to casualties when the Society was recognised as an official channel for distributing casualty information to families at home.

In New South Wales in 1915, the first War Chest Commissioner for the Australian Comforts Fund, Henry E. Budden, began undertaking his tracing work through contacts in Egypt and at the war front. Due to the efficiencies of the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau in Egypt, he notified his committee back in Sydney that he had handed over these enquiries to this bureau. It seems this was in preference to the newly operational Red Cross Information Bureau run by Vera Deakin in Cairo. Impressed by the work undertaken in the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau, Budden also requested a

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[112] Steuer, *Pursuit of an "Unparalleled Opportunity": The American YMCA and Prisoner of War Diplomacy during World War* 1.

[113] 'Information Bureau for Soldiers' Relatives,' *Register*, South Australia, 24 November 1915.

[114] 'Adelaide Y.M.C.A. Army Department Report 1915-16,' SRG90/29 Young Men's Christian Association of Adelaide (SA) Annual Reports, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), 25; SRG90/29 'Adelaide Y.M.C.A. Army Department Report 1915-16,' Young Men's Christian Association of Adelaide (SA) Annual Reports 1880-1968 (with gaps), State Library of South Australia (SLSA), 25.

car be put at their disposal to assist searcher activities. A second car followed, enabling the YMCA Bureau to deal with 'many hundreds of enquiries'.[115] Indeed, benefactors later undertook similar actions for the Australian Red Cross Bureau in Cairo. Budden strongly argued that the Association was best suited to do this enquiry work at this juncture as they could directly consult with the British Red Cross Society and other organisations in the various hospitals. It is possible he was unaware of Deakin, who had arrived in Cairo in October 1915, and was only getting to grips with establishing the Australian bureau. Accordingly, the YMCA Bureau was soon handling enquiries for soldiers in Egypt, France, and England and those interned or Prisoners of War in Germany.[116] However, a report in the *Register* (South Australia) highlights that as the tracing work intensified, the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau and the 'YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau' began exchanging lists of soldiers' names to pursue their enquiries following events at Gallipoli.[117]

On the war front, the Australian YMCA pooled its resources with the United States, Canada, Britain, and New Zealand to provide social services to all Allied troops in Cairo, Alexandria, and elsewhere.[118] William Jessop, the American Secretary, had established an Anglo-American mission in Egypt in 1913. Afforded official and unofficial channels, the YMCA's secretaries also investigated and received information on casualties. America eventually entered the fray and ended its neutrality in April 1917 following attacks on American shipping. In response, John R. Mott, the International YMCA Secretary, developed a system that allowed the World's YMCA Committee in Switzerland to manage enquiries for soldiers on behalf of belligerent countries. Like the Australian Red Cross Society, they had secured special cable rates related to their soldier enquiry work.[119] The YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau records currently available for examination are limited to their Adelaide bureau's running costs and expenses. Therefore, it is difficult to be assured how accurate their searching processes were compared to the Australian Red Cross information bureaux. However, the new service offered by the legal profession in the state bureaux highlights a distinct separateness and distance from military authorities that are discussed throughout this thesis. Regardless, the YMCA bureaux, often associated with the Australian state bureaux and the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in Cairo and later London, dealt with 261,167 family and next of kin enquiries related to Australian soldiers during the First World War in Australia.[120]

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[115] 'Information Bureau for Soldiers' Relatives,' *Register*, South Australia, 24 November 1915.
[116] 'Report of Adelaide YMCA Army Department 1915-1916,' 13; 'Information Bureau for Soldiers' Relatives,' *Register*, 24 November 1915.
[117] *Register*, South Australia, 24 November 1915.
[118] 'Interior of Australian Y.M.C.A. in Egypt, 1917,' Courtesy of Springfield College, Archives and Special Collections, accessed 20 November 2020, https://springfieldcollege.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15370coll2/id/2959/
[119] 'Report of Adelaide YMCA Army Department 1915-1916,' 13.
[120] 'War Work of the Red Triangle,' *Warracknabeal Herald*, Victoria, 19 November 1918.

The South Australian legal fraternity

Legal men also stepped up to establish, self-fund and run the Australian Red Cross information bureaux in each state from mid to late 1915. Moore suggests that war-age legal practitioners who chose not to enlist varied in circumstances and obligations when remaining in their civil posts.[121] He further argues that 'most of the men [in South Australia] were known to be fit as some had a history as competitive sportsmen in their youth, so failing medical examinations seemed unlikely'.[122] Honorary Secretary of the South Australian Bureau, Charles Edmunds, was a first-class lacrosse player and a university oarsman as a university student. When the First World War broke out, he was thirty-one years old, married and had two young daughters. The family lived at 381 Angas Street in the City of Adelaide, next to Victoria Park. He was university educated and set up as a principal in legal practice in Adelaide for eleven years when he accepted the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau role. Moore notes that 'his life in the law and out of it displayed a good legal mind, logical orderliness, keen understanding of people and a good business sense'.[123] The archival material compiled by Edmunds post-war with Florence Saunders and Olive Croft, his chief administrators, reflects this characterisation. No one was required to enlist in the early stages of the war. Edmunds's effectiveness and success in his voluntary role at the bureau during the war may have urged the South Australian Red Cross Executive Committee to keep him in that position once the work of the Information Bureau gathered momentum.[124] In many ways, the enquiry work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux involved looking for a needle in a haystack. The Red Cross bureaux strived to provide more information from the war front about those soldiers classified as wounded, sick and officially missing; they also sought to supplement an official pink cable with the more intimate details of a soldier's death and burial.

On the home front, the priority of the legal men running the state bureaux within each state would be to conduct local and global forms of collective action, governance, and leadership. This approach would enable the men in each bureau to provide, wherever possible, the details of the whereabouts and welfare of a sick or wounded soldier.[125] The social relationships and networks of the state bureaux would have been challenging to transfer abroad. Yet, having an Australian-run bureau set up in a prime location in Europe close to the Australian troops and military hospitals in the Mediterranean and Britain would mean that their social ties and networks would effectively be far-

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[121] Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War*, 189.
[122] Ibid, 149.
[123] Peter Moore, 'Edmunds C. A., Draft Dictionary of Biography,' Email, 24 April 2022.
[124] Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War*, 150.
[125] Laia Balcells and Patricia Justino, 'Bridging Micro and Macro Approaches on Civil Wars and Political Violence: Issues, Challenges, and the Way Forward,' *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 8 (2014), 1348.

reaching and shared to benefit all involved.[126] Edmunds retained enough of the original correspondences between the South Australian Bureau, the inter-state bureaux and the bureau abroad to enable the scholar to explore the history of mutual conversations and their collective decisions to run a successful wartime operation. His actions allow researchers an opportunity to interpret the sites, places and events that have sometimes become surrounded by myth and emotion.

The bureau was supported by those women in South Australian society, discussed above, who moved into paid and voluntary roles in the workplace. Notably, a small number would accept prominent positions within the Red Cross Information Bureau located on North Terrace in the City of Adelaide. In contrast, others contributed to civil society by undertaking charitable work and organising task-focused committees that established groups such as the League. Like their counterparts in other states, South Australian women also found suburban and rural charitable auxiliary Red Cross circles across the state under the umbrella of the South Australian branch of the Red Cross Society.[127]

Newspapers: linking the home front and the war front

Newspapers kept their readers informed on daily happenings in South Australia, nationally and more broadly internationally, during the First World War. They also provided a link between the home front and the war front, between civilians and soldiers; soldier letters were regularly sought for publication, while newspapers were periodically sent to soldiers at the front to keep them up to date with news from home.[128] Indeed, the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau would run a daily notice under the Military Casualty List section to highlight their office's work and invite family and next of kin to call in or write to the bureau if they had an enquiry about a soldier. The bureau would soon receive enquiries such as the one from Mrs Palmer, who wrote to the bureau on behalf of Private Albert Tonkin's mother; she requested Honorary Secretary Charles Edmunds 'to kindly answer this enquiry privately through the newspapers'.[129] It seems unusual to reply privately in a newspaper; what Edmunds was supposed to do in the circumstances is unclear. He simply wrote to Mrs Palmer with an update on the soldier. He advised her that the Information Bureau 'treated all enquiries as strictly confidential and did not answer them through the medium of the newspaper'.[130] Newspapers also had other vital uses

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[126] Thomas Faist, 'The crucial meso-level,' in *Selected Studies in International Migration and Immigrant Incorporation*, eds. Marco Martiniello and Jan Rath, 1st ed (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 60.

[127] There were other organisations like the South Australian branch of the League of Loyal Women of Australia that formed across the country during the First World War. They included the Citizen's War Chest in New South Wales, the Queensland Patriotic Fund, the On Active Service Fund (Tasmania), the Victorian League of Western Australia and the Mayoress' Patriotic League in Victoria, see Jack Ryan, 'Beginnings of the League.' Adelaidia - League of Loyal Women. accessed 19 June 2019, https://adelaidia.history.sa.gov.au/organisations/league-of-loyal-women.

[128] Lisa Peters, 'The role of the local newspaper during World War One: an important link between the home front and the battle front,' *Publishing History* 79 (2018), 9, 12.

[129] 'Papers relating to No. 1458, Private Albert E. Tonkin, 11th Light Horse Regiment,' SRG 76/1/70 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/albert-ernest-alfred-tonkin.

[130] Ibid.

during the war. Once the bureau's work got underway, Edmunds would often advise an enquirer to check the daily papers when requesting arrival times of military ships returning from Europe with wounded soldiers.[131] On one occasion, an enquirer was directed to read the section 'From the Front,' where wounded soldiers returning to Australia were also listed. Of course, casualty lists were published daily and then scoured by family and friends in the vain hope that next of kin was listed. When a soldier's name did appear, this would often prompt individuals to raise an enquiry with the bureau.[132]

Newspaper reporters also frequently wrote articles chastising the government and the Censorship Department as wartime censorship rules began to impact their work and stifle news from the front. An article in the South Australian *Advertiser* in January 1915 reported that war-related articles appearing in one Australian newspaper were often excluded in another.[133] The reporter noted that this occurrence was happening in Britain's Press at home and abroad. He reasoned that it would be natural for the reader to conclude that there would be less censoring of the local Press in Australia, so far removed from the theatres of war, but the contrary was the case. He explained how a report first censored in Britain was also edited when it arrived in Australia. He then suggested that this resulted in 'partial and quite misleading views of military and naval operations' abroad.[134] The reporter then queried if those in power supposed that the Australian people could not bear the shock of bad news. He noted that the British Prime Minister, Herbert H. Asquith, and the British Leader of the Opposition at the time agreed that the only legitimate reason to censor the newspapers was when it might be advantageous to the enemy. This South Australian reporter complained that 'to only report, heroics treated the [Australian] reader like a child, timid children or hysterical girls'.[135] While those in Britain, with the danger of war much nearer and real, were able 'to read about sunken steamers and captured prisoners of war'.[136] He reasoned that the general public had the nerve to withstand unfavourable news alongside the Australian Prime Minister and his government.[137] In comparing the information published in both countries, the reporter reminded the reader that Australia already had reasons to protest against the apparent tendency of the Commonwealth Government to spread an unqualified optimism daily as they concealed or minimised Australian losses.[138]

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[131] 'Papers relating to No. 9, Sergeant Charles R. McIvor, 3rd Infantry Brigade,' SRG 76/1/43 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/charles-reid-mcivor.

[132] 'Papers relating to No. 510, Private John McNeil, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/270 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/john-mcneil.

[133] 'Censorship,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 11 January 1915.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Ibid.

In May 1915, when the British Press published news about troop movements and recent events on the war front, the Australian Minister of Defence from 1915, George Pearce, once again came under attack from the local press in South Australia.[139] This reporter argued that the Censorship Department had assumed that the Australian public was too frail to stand anything other than reports or rumours of victories.[140] He disagreed with heavy editing in the press to keep people cheerful and happy and undisturbed by uncomfortable war facts. However, he agreed that war news should be withheld from the enemy or delayed in the press until it had lost its 'mischief-making potentialities'.[141] Interestingly, the reporter suggested that the officially cultivated optimism obscuring the actual gravity of the situation was perhaps influencing the current slackness in recruitment.[142] He concluded his article by suggesting that it was vain to suppose that war matters remained a dark secret to the enemy simply because such details were excluded from the Australian Press.[143]

In parallel with these two newspaper articles, Labor Senator for Tasmania, David J. O' Keefe, asked Pearce about altering the current method of censorship adopted by the Imperial defence authorities. As shown above, both British and Australian censors were severely criticised for withholding news from the Australian public. O'Keefe was referring to an official report in the morning papers on an engagement in the Dardanelles. It had omitted to say anything about Australian casualties. However, a second unofficial report in the same newspaper had included significant casualty figures, and O' Keefe argued that the suspense for Australian families was surely 'worse than a knowledge of the actual facts'.[144] He asked that 'authorities in Great Britain publish an official intimation alongside such articles' stating the correctness or otherwise of the second unofficial report. [145] He argued that there were two types of censorship and that the government must take care that 'in trying to avoid one evil, we do not get into a greater evil'.[146] Pearce also clarified that there were two types of news, 'the official and the locally sourced type, and news circulated from the enemy or neutral sources'.[147] He argued that the second publication was from enemy sources, and in allowing its publication, the public was assured that the worst which can be said is allowed to appear. The Minister of Defence concluded that preventing such publications would only bring criticism and denouncement from other honourable senators that the government was withholding news from other outlets.

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[139] 'The Censorship,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 25 May 1915.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Thursday, 30 April 1915 (Senator O' Keefe),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 17 (1915), 2811-12.
[145] Ibid.
[146] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Thursday, 30 April 1915 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 17 (1915), 2813.
[147] Ibid, 2811-12.

In another parliamentary sitting, Senator Edward D. Millen for New South Wales, and former Minister for Defence in Joseph Cook's Liberal government, suggested a serious misuse of the powers of censorship had occurred. He argued that preventing publications and disseminating news that might assist the enemy was understandable. However, censorship was never intended to suppress criticism of the administration or the government. He stated that each citizen was entitled 'to suggest a criticism if it will assist the government in improving the efficiency of the country in its conduct of war'.[148] The Deputy Chief Censor argued they only wished to withhold information harmful to 'Great Britain or her Allies, or likely to be of service to the enemy or to create alarm and unrest in the civil population or hamper the government in its naval and military preparations'.[149] Pearce reminded the Members that the censor staff were selected from the civilian population; in Sydney, the majority of them were barristers and university men 'in touch with the ordinary civil life of the community'.[150] This description might have easily been applied to the legal fraternity that stepped up to provide information for those directly impacted by events on the war front.

Social structures in wartime society

Before the large casualty numbers following the Gallipoli campaign, the League of Loyal Women and the YMCA had attempted to fill the gap and provide family members with details about a soldier's fate. Yet, the need for a network of Australian Red Cross information bureaux soon became apparent as they began to pattern their decision-making with each other systematically. The demands of enquirers at the micro-level of society and the decisions made by the government and military authorities at the macro-level of society soon shaped the work.[151] In examining the work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux in the context of these other groups, the importance of their wartime work at the crucial meso-level will be emphasised; this is something not previously undertaken in Australia. It is argued that the political and economic forces operating at a macro-level in society failed to take decisive action on essential facets of social concern that were developing for family groups and individuals at the micro-level. In Chapter 5, these societal levels are discussed in greater detail. It will not be enough to posit the relevance of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux in each state by simply saying they fit into this position between families and state institutions.[152] Ultimately, the relational ties that already existed or were newly formed at the meso-level would produce a more complex social network that would be far-reaching during the war.[153]

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[148] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Thursday, 27 May 1915 (The Deputy Chief Censor),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 17 (1915),' 3445.
[149] Ibid.
[150] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Thursday, 27 May 1915 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 17 (1915),' 3446.
[151] Faist, 'The crucial meso-level,' in Selected Studies in International Migration and Immigrant Incorporation, 73.
[152] Ibid, 67.
[153] Ronald L. Breiger, 'The Analysis of Social Networks,' in *Handbook of Data Analysis*, eds. Melissa Hardy and Alan Bryman (SAGE Publications, Ltd, 2004), 506-507.

As more and more family members submitted enquiries, the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau's wartime work would soon circumvent the Department of Defence's rule that casualty notifications to relatives could only go through that department.[154] In fact, by late 1915, Minister Walter Massey-Greene noted in parliament that the general public was obtaining information more quickly and thoroughly from the Red Cross Society and the YMCA.[155] In this instance, the minister spoke about those bureaux already operational in the eastern states. What was taking place in Europe was unprecedented in the history of Australia up to that point. The fact that the Commonwealth Government, in 1915, viewed the administration of the Australian Imperial Force as the responsibility of the British War office only widened the gap. However, it must be remembered that the Commonwealth Government of Australia was in its infancy when the First World War broke out in July 1914. Following the Federation of Australia in 1901, the government only passed Australia's first *Defence Act* in 1903, followed by an amended act in 1909.[156] By the end of 1915, it was apparent in society that things had to change on the home front to close the gap and assist the families of those Australian soldiers fighting on the battlefront.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at some of the distinctive features of South Australian society from 1913 to January 1916 and the volunteering roles that emerged, in particular the formation of the Australian branch of the British Red Cross Society and the League of Loyal Women of Australia. It also took an in-depth look at the establishment of the Young Men's Christian society in Australia and its subsequent soldier's enquiry bureau established with the outbreak of the First World War. As men left for the front, women came forward in large numbers to support the war effort in paid and voluntary roles. Some in society were not ready for the shift in gendered roles, notably when women replaced enlistees in offices once considered the domain of men. Yet, women also had champions in commerce and the church who supported their actions. In addition, social and community gatherings revealed people's interest in the war at a local level. Many were vocal at the events held in the city, while others just as heartily put pen to paper to voice their opinions in their local newspapers. Early in the war, government and press censorship were already impacting those in a society grappling with a lack of details about their loved ones fighting abroad.

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[154] 'A report on postal services and allied subjects connected with the A.I.F. in Egypt by Mr Keith Murdoch,' File Series MP367/1, 564/4/258, 13 September 1915, National Archives of Australia (NAA), 17; 'Notification of Casualties,' *The Ballarat Courier*, Victoria, 11 February 1915.

[155] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Friday, 29 October 1915 (Massey-Greene),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates House of Representatives Official Hansard, no. 43 (1915), 7040.

[156] Lundie and McCann 'Commonwealth Parliament from 1902 to World War 1,' 1.

The following chapter will discuss the South Australian legal fraternity men who established a Red Cross Information Bureau in late 1915. It became one of six state bureaux established by the legal profession that year. In this vital voluntary and self-funded work, legal men from each state undertook initiatives that developed into a global network to meet the demands of the enquiring public. The bureau's operations replaced the earlier Military Information Bureau in Adelaide; this Australian Red Cross information bureaux network would eventually work closely with the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau at home and abroad. In South Australia, the legal fraternity was assisted by a small, dedicated team of female administrators and a core group of volunteer lawyers in Adelaide. In addition, Edmunds, as the bureau's Honorary Secretary, set about reducing the gap between the home front and the war front in South Australia.

CHAPTER TWO
SEMI-MILITARY OR QUASI-OFFICIAL?

The webs of significance of any event, place or person are fine-lined and faint. It takes a lot of looking to see them.[1]

Introduction

Established in the latter half of December 1915, the Executive Committee of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was comprised of men from the legal fraternity. This committee included Sir Josiah Symon as Chairman, Charles Edmunds as Honorary Secretary, Messieurs Thomas Slaney Poole, George McEwin, T. J. Mellis Napier, and Richard Bennett. Edmunds was appointed to consider and arrange the bureau's necessary day-to-day working details.[2] William Isbister, KC., would later become a legal advisor to Symon on this committee when he returned from his work in Egypt; in Chapter 3, this work is briefly discussed. Alongside his voluntary work in the bureau, Edmunds maintained his role as the Honorary Secretary of the South Australian Law Society. He was also on a sub-committee of the Law Society Council, alongside Symon, Isbister and Henry Angas Parsons MP. At one point, they were tasked with raising £500 through the legal fraternity to provide a fully equipped motor ambulance to the British Field Forces' through the British War Office.[3] Through the generosity of Dr William A. Verco, a 'fine suite of offices' was made available in the Verco Buildings at 178-179 North Terrace, Adelaide, for the South Australian Bureau.[4] John Martin & Co. Ltd, a popular chain of department stores in South Australia, provided the furnishings. Another department store in the city, James Marshall & Co, located on the corner of Rundle Street and Stephens Place, also assisted the South Australian Bureau.[5]

This chapter details the early development of the Australian Red Cross Bureaux on the home front and the prominent people who were involved. In July 1915, these developments commenced in Sydney, while it was early January 1916 when the last of the newly formed state bureaux opened its doors to the public in South Australia. Current studies have not examined how each state bureau established a dynamic rather than a static role in society in this period of Australian history. A high level of detail is required to overcome the current misconceptions and emphasise the development of the

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[1] Greg Dening, *Readings/Writings* (Victoria: Melbourne University Press,1998), 208.

[2] 'Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918),' 12, SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[3] Peter Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War* (Australia: Australian Legal Heritage, 2014), 131.

[4] 'First annual report from inception until 30 June 1916,' SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau 22 June 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[5] 'Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918),' 13, SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919.

Red Cross information bureaux throughout the war and, importantly, their impact on society. This detail will provide a better understanding of how its volunteer workforce undertook initiatives that enabled them to meet their demands, such as providing a tangible link between the bureaucrats and the public that minimised the gap when seeking information from the war front. As discussed, there is already a body of literary work about the Australian Red Cross information bureaux in the First World War. However, this chapter looks to answer different questions from those in the current literature. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the establishment of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau against what was happening in the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, Britain, and Australia's home front.

The South Australian Bureau officially opened its doors to the public on 5 January 1916. Although, enquiry work on behalf of South Australian families was already underway from the commencement of the first battle at Gallipoli in April 1915 and the subsequent issuing of casualty lists in Australian newspapers. The chapter must start with this early period because events unfolding in Gallipoli directly impacted civil society. Up to this point, Australian families relied on the military authorities, the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau, the Commonwealth Government, and the British Red Cross Department in London to meet their needs. However, it was soon apparent that action was required to bring solace more quickly to Australian families on the home front. As the casualty numbers increased at Gallipoli, so did the delays incurred by family members seeking information. The first response to the situation resulted in establishing a Military Information Bureau in Sydney and Adelaide, as discussed in Chapter 1.

The legal fraternity soon replaced the Military Information Bureau in South Australia with a Red Cross Bureau. Symon put forward a 'Scheme of Work' to establish the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau on the home front. The Society also aimed to establish a reciprocal Australian bureau in Egypt close to the Military Intermediate Base Office, which distributed soldier reports to Base Records at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne. This bureau would also be near the hospitals and convalescent units receiving Australian soldiers from Gallipoli and nearer to London, where the leading British Red Cross Department was well established in this line of work since 1914. The Australian bureau intended to deal directly with their British counterpart on the ground in Cairo. The word bureau was possibly adopted in Australia to reflect the legal volunteer's intent to operate as 'an agency for the coordination of related activities, or the distribution of information'.[6]

Interestingly, although the legal fraternity of each state had the knowledge, social standing, and financial capital to assist in the running of the bureaux and possibly mixed in similar social circles, the

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[6] *Oxford English Dictionary* 2020, accessed 26 October 2020, https://www.oed.com.

honorary secretaries were never to meet in person during the war. Lady Munro Ferguson, instead, travelled to each state to meet with those running Red Cross Society branches and bureaux. Representatives from the Adelaide and Brisbane bureaux did visit Melbourne and Sydney early on to understand the systems established by John Kiddle, K.C., and Langer Owen. This outcome is extraordinary when one considers the work these men undertook, and the systems and processes established and refined in this period of history. Honorary Secretary Edmunds suggested 'a conference from time to time with the other Honorary Secretaries'.[7] However, he also noted 'the impracticalities of time and distance'.[8] Helen, Lady Munro-Ferguson, as head of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society, attempted to hold a conference in January 1917, in Melbourne, at the Australian Red Cross Society Headquarters, 'for the purpose of discussing matters arising out of the general working of the various bureaux'.[9] However, the meeting never materialised due to a misunderstanding regarding who in South Australia could attend. Instead, each Honorary Secretary corresponded by telegram or letter, sometimes daily, concerning their wartime work. Their correspondence ranged in content from systems required, processes in use, cable costs, soldier reports and the all-important information gathered relative to family enquiries.

Combatants, Bureaucrats and Volunteers

In October 1915, with an Australian Red Cross Bureau now open in Cairo, the military authorities at home were no further in their discussions about opening a similar operation in Egypt. An article published in the *Age* argued that this delay was regrettable as a bureau was urgently needed due to the number of ships arriving daily with casualties from Gallipoli.[10] This situation highlights that the work of the YMCA Soldier's Enquiry Bureau, already underway for some time on the home front and in the field, was not viewed or possibly recognised as being sufficient for the needs of the military in this line of work. The initial position of the Australian Military also reaffirms the previous statement by the British War Office that the London-based British Red Cross Department was the only officially recognised organisation permitted to make such enquiries for the missing.[11]

It was always the Commonwealth Government's intention to relieve relatives' anxiety and inform them of the whereabouts of their loved ones. However, as reflected in Parliament Hansards for

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[7] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Henry Greig in Western Australia, 9 November 1917,' SRG76/28 Correspondence with the Perth Bureau 28 Oct 1917 - July 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[8] Ibid.
[9] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Vera Deakin', 9 August 1916, SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[10] 'News of the Wounded: Military Information Bureau Suggested (Departmental Officers in Conference),' *Age*, Victoria, 26 October 1915.
[11] Redcross.org.uk/WW1, 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1, accessed 14 January 2020,
https://vad.redcross.org.uk/~/media/BritishRedCross/Documents/Who%20we%20are/History%20and%20archives/Missing%20and%20wounded%20service%20during%20the%20First%20World%20War.pdf.

1915, Paul Dalgleish shows that both the government and the Australian Imperial Force continued to view the Australian military administration as the British's responsibility authorities.[12] The Department of Defence disagreed that the casualty lists had anything to do with them. Minister of Defence George Pearce argued that it was the responsibility of the General Commanding, who in turn had deputised the duty of collating the casualty lists to a junior officer who then sent the lists to the British War Office Base in Egypt.[13] The lists were then processed and forwarded to Colonel Victor Sellheim in the Australian Intermediate Office section, who forwarded them to Pearce's Department of Defence for distribution in Australia.

This stance is the most precise point where the Australian Military, the Commonwealth Government, and Australian civilians intersected and were already at odds. The Commonwealth Government was aware the current system was not working, given the public response to their efforts and the questions raised by the Labor Party in parliament. Minister Walter Massey-Green reasoned, 'it was not at this end [Australia], and it was evidently not on the peninsula at Gallipoli', as the trouble had begun after the troops had left the Dardanelles.[14] Compiling casualty lists was complicated because hospital ships did not always arrive in Alexandria as intended. When hospitals in Alexandria were at capacity, ships were regularly sent on to a port in Malta or Britain.[15] This created issues for the Australian Military Intermediate Office in Cairo, which needed to sustain up-to-date records, and delays naturally ensued. Company officers who had to report the name and number of a wounded soldier under their command also struggled when companies, battalions and brigades became tangled up after a battle.[16]

In February 1915, Pearce further exacerbated the situation for families longing for news from their loved ones abroad. He stated in parliament that notification of casualties to relatives could only be released through his department. He argued that 'no notice whatever should be taken of startling reports from alleged "good sources" or outside reports of casualties among the Australian troops'.[17] By May, the *Argus* in Melbourne reported that the Opposition Leader, Senator Joseph Cook, had appealed to 'the Ministry to make greater efforts to secure the smoother and more effective working of the departments dealing with the issue of casualty lists, and the notification to relatives'.[18] By mid-winter,

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[12] Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' *Archives and Manuscripts* 48, no. 2 (2020), 130.

[13] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 29 (1915), 4626.

[14] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Friday, 29 October 1915 (Senator Massey-Greene),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates House of Representatives Official Hansard, no. 43 (1915): 7039; 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 29 (1915), 4626.

[15] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Friday, 29 October 1915 (Senator Massey-Greene),' 7039.

[16] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Pearce),' 4626.

[17] 'Notification of Casualties,' *The Ballarat Courier*, Victoria, 11 February 1915.

[18] 'Reporting the Casualties: complaints in parliament,' *Argus,* Victoria, 20 May 1915.

complaints continued to mount daily regarding the postal service, cable costs and the meagre information with their bureaucratic undertones received by families, often many weeks late. Australian journalist, Keith Murdoch, was commissioned by Pearce to visit Egypt on his way to a new Press appointment in Britain. Murdoch received £25 for his expenses. When challenged in parliament about his choice of agent, Pearce argued 'that a report from some person unconnected with the Forces would tend to allay the existing public uneasiness on these matters'.[19]

Liberal Minister Edward D. Millen, a journalist and politician, was dubious of a pressman doing this work. Both Millen and David J. O'Keefe, Labour Minister for Tasmania, argued that they were known to sometimes 'ferret out things' that 'nobody wanted them to know'.[20] Pearce responded that the Press knew the state of feeling amongst the public regarding these matters. He intended to appease the many family members who were complaining.[21] Murdoch agreed to the request and was instructed to furnish the Commonwealth Government with a report regarding postal and cable arrangements to Australia. He was also asked to confirm the current structures used in notifying the Department of Defence of the 'disposition of sick and wounded [soldiers] to hospitals'.[22] There was a growing perception in society and within the Commonwealth Government that no one was representing the affairs of Australians in Egypt.[23]

This void was of great concern to the government on two fronts. Firstly, Walter Massey-Greene, a Member for Richmond, New South Wales, noted the Department was aware of 'the painful effect of suspense' for families trying to ascertain what has happened to a soldier once he was listed as a casualty.[24] Secondly, he argued, the lack of, or delays in, notifications to affected families was 'retarding the recruiting movement' with unsubstantiated stories becoming more exaggerated as they spread in the community.[25] The government argued that to have a constant flow of recruits, the Department of Defence needed to get on top of the military administration in Egypt. By September, in the report submitted to the Commonwealth Government, Murdoch outlined the difficulties of collecting the information and the expense regarding cablegrams. From his discussions in Cairo, he acknowledged that the Eastern Extension Cable Company (hereafter the Eastern Extension Company) were anxious to assist the Australian people and was willing to provide concessions.[26] However, his report also noted

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[19] 'Red Cross Memorandum for the O.C., Australian Intermediate Base, Egypt,' File Series MP367/1, 564/4/258, 12 July 1915, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

[20] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Millen),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 29 (1915), 4628.

[21] 'Red Cross Memorandum for O.C., Australian Intermediate Base, Egypt,' File Series MP367/1, 12 July 1915.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' 130.

[24] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Friday, 29 October 1915 (Senator Massey-Greene),' 7039-40.

[25] Ibid.

[26] 'A report on postal services and allied subjects connected with the A.I.F. [Australian Imperial Force] in Egypt by Mr Keith Murdoch,' File Series MP367/1, 564/4/258, 13 September 1915, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

there were slack periods through the night between Egypt and Australia; sending cables home in these periods should be used. The hospitals provided daily reports on the seriously ill and wounded soldiers to the Australian Military Intermediate Base Office, which then cabled these reports to the Military Base Records Office in Victoria Barracks in Melbourne.

At a Military Departmental Officers Conference held in October 1915, the Australian Military Authorities moved to consider enquiring about a soldier's condition to supplement their casualty lists. The Military argued that such work required the services of military staff rather than 'civilians, clad in plain clothes as they had neither the requisite authority nor the knowledge of military matters for the work'.[27] This stance contradicted the earlier proviso issued by the British War Office in July, which permitted the British Red Cross Society to enquire about the 'missing'. Let us not forget that the YMCA was already undertaking such enquiry work with its operatives. Although non-combatants, they were in uniform at the front, in the trenches and amongst the soldiers on furlough. Interestingly, the officers further stated that a civilian was less likely to receive the same assistance as a soldier in uniform who answered to a higher authority. This stance contrasted with the detailed reports elicited by Stanley Addison, a Red Cross volunteer searcher, from soldiers coming in from the front. The officers suggested it was probable that the Department of Defence could organise a Military Information Bureau that would provide cables from those in Egypt to the home front, 'therefore, there was little need for further undue delays'.[28] However, the military authorities conceded such a proposal was still at the 'consideration stage' before acknowledging that various other military officers and Edward F. Mitchell, K.C., from Victoria, who represented the Red Cross Society, proposed a conference to discuss the matter further.[29] Further conferences were held with officials of the Department of Defence. Mitchell, in a letter dated September 1915 to Symon in South Australia, enclosed the Victorian scheme of work and laid out the significant results of one such conference:

> […] a satisfactory arrangement has been reached under which the Information Bureau, with the legal profession, are now invited to form, will do work supplementary to that now being done by the Base Records Office. A scheme has now been prepared which has been unanimously adopted by the Council of the Law Institute and by a meeting of the Bar', and accepted by both the Australian Red Cross Society, and approved by the Minister of Defence and the Defence Department, which will willingly assist our Bureau in every possible way. [30]

Lady Munro Ferguson worked with Mitchell on this scheme on behalf of the Red Cross Society. She provided the latest information on what the British Red Cross Society was doing to obtain similar data

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[27] 'News of the Wounded: Military Information Bureau Suggested (Departmental Officers in Conference),' *Age*, Victoria, 26 October 1915; Redcross.org.uk/WW1, 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1, accessed 14 January 2020.

[28] *Age*, Victoria, 26 October 1915.

[29] Ibid.

[30] 'Edward Mitchell's circular to the Victorian legal profession September 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened between July 1915 - January 1916', January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

for families and next-of-kin of soldiers overseas.[31] However, as late as November 1915, the issue was still being debated in Parliament as to when Murdoch's report regarding postal delays and passing information on to the families of soldier casualties would be released to the public. Pearce argued that while the Commonwealth Government had the report, the British Government had requested not to make it public. However, he did issue instructions by cable to Colonel Sellheim, the Officer in Charge of the recently established Australian Intermediate Base Records in Cairo, to create a new 'Central Inquiry Bureau' in the exact location. As a result, a new unit was established within the recordkeeping department of the base in Cairo. These instructions are discussed further in Chapter 3. Later in the war, this department relocated to London as part of the Australian Imperial Force administration.

Clearing house or Australian hub abroad?

In some literature on the Australian Red Cross information bureaux, there is an apparent misconception that the Australian bureau, initially established in Cairo, functioned solely as a 'clearing house' for British reports relating to Australian soldiers before its relocation to London.[32] However, the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, run by Vera Deakin, was never a 'clearing house'. Such a statement minimises and undermines the significance of this essential wartime work. Throughout the war, the entire network of Australian bureaux at home and abroad attempted to establish a necessary and efficient global communication service to supplement Department of Defence notifications and answer enquiries on the whereabouts and welfare of individual Australian soldiers in the theatres of war. The 'Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau' issued by the Sydney Bureau stated that gents [known as searchers] were required for every hospital in Egypt, Malta, and any other country in or about the Mediterranean where Australian soldiers were being treated.[33]

In October 1915, following a conference by New Zealand's then Governor, Lord Liverpool, a branch of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St John were established.[34] Indeed, in the latter half of 1916, Deakin noted how New Zealand enquiries (in New Zealand, the Red Cross Enquiry Bureau was also known as the Red Cross Killed and Missing Bureau) were at times difficult to deal with efficiently. The New Zealand Records Office 'sometimes liked to answer the enquirer directly and at

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[31] 'Soldiers Abroad – An Information Bureau – Legal Professions Scheme,' *Age*, Victoria, 16 September 1915.

[32] Aaron Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front* 1916-18 Australian Army History Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 91; Eric F. Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' *War in History* 4, no. 3 (1997), 298.

[33] 'Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau, mid-1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened between July 1915 - January 1916', January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[34] The 2nd Earl of Liverpool, Arthur William de Brito Savile Foljambe was originally appointed as the first Governor in 1912, but it was 1917 before the office was raised to Governor-General and his term extended until 1920; See New Zealand History, 'Second Earl of Liverpool,' accessed 8 April 2021, https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/second-earl-of-liverpool, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 14-Jul-2014.

other times returned the answers to the Australian Bureau in London to reply.35 On another occasion, the Australian bureau in London was in cable and postal communication with the American Red Cross enquiry bureaux in Washington and Paris. Deakin was 'glad to find that the few particulars they shared regarding their [Australian] bureau system were of help to them in formulating their methods'.36 Later, the Australian bureaux shared information with 'kindred associations in Canada and Switzerland'.37 This insight into the various bureau interactions affords an understanding of how the immense gap of conjecture was minimised for families and next-of-kin when a loved one was listed as wounded in the casualty lists, killed in action or went missing.38 The Australian legal fraternity and Deakin put systems and processes in place that eventually supplemented, wherever possible, the information provided by the military authorities and the Australian Commonwealth Department of Defence to alleviate the anxiousness and fearfulness of civilians for their loved ones. The South Australian Bureau eventually dealt with enquiries on behalf of 8,079 individually enlisted soldiers.39 The actions of the bureaux associated with these enquiries intimately connected civilians in South Australia with the theatres of war in Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, Gallipoli, Iran, Iraq, and the Western Front.

Assisting the marginalised

In one sense, this narrative is an example of how a team of volunteers in civil society, through their legal positions and actions, played a crucial role in bringing the details of the war front, in all its rawness during the First World War, into the homes of Australian people. The social capital of the combined bureaux made possible specific achievements that would not have been successful if they were absent.40 Social capital is defined here as a network of relationships amongst people who live and work in a particular society. The legal fraternity had a wealth of knowledge and some financial support in the form of donations to run the bureaux.41 Their purposive action developed an effective network of relationships between the bureaux, the families, and the military authorities in Australian society.42 Their sharing of common values constituted a resource that bypassed the formal system to make things

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35 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 30 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
36 'Vera Deakin's work report for the Australian Bureau in London in September 1917', SRG76/16 Correspondence with the Australian London Bureau via Melbourne Bureau (15 Oct 1917), January 1916 – December 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
37 'Second Annual Report and Balance Sheet 14 August 1916,' The British Red Cross Society, Australian Branch, Queensland Division, (Melbourne: The Division, 1915-1919), 21.
38 Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 2018), 36.
39 There are 8,033 soldier enquiry packets with multiple soldiers enquired about in a number of packets, hence the figure of 8,079 soldiers.
40 James S. Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,' *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), S98.
41 These men as part of their ordinary legal business regularly kept files on individuals, gathered evidence about them, their protagonist, antagonists, and circumstances, especially their changing status, confidentially. Moreover, the lawyer's oath refers to faith, truth, honesty and allegiance; See Dal Pont, Gino Evan, *Lawyers' professional responsibility in Australia and New Zealand*, 6th ed. New South Wales; Pyrmont, Lawbook Co, 2017; Peter Moore, ed., *The Roll of Practitioners admitted in the Supreme Court of South Australia, 1837 to 1945*, Sydney, Australian Legal Heritage, 2013.
42 David Gaunlett, 'Making is Connecting: The Social Meaning of Creativity from DIY and knitting to YouTube and Web 2.0,' (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), n.p., accessed 3 April 2019, www.makingconnecting.org.

happen. As a result, their social capital held value across different communities, including the powerless and marginalised.[43] The establishment of the Australian state bureaux redefined their social level within Australian society to reduce the frustrations felt by the families dealing with the bureaucracy of military authorities and the Commonwealth Government.

The early establishment of a Military Information Bureau is a prime example of how the public was initially kept at arm's length when enquiring about a loved one listed as a casualty. Social norms influenced the relationships between the bureaucrats and the public. Societally positioned to bridge the gap between institutional and relational structures, the objectives of the Red Cross Information Bureau ultimately brought benefits to both the Military Authorities and the worried families of soldiers. The social stratification consisted of three social groups identified here: macro, meso and micro levels.[44] The Commonwealth Government and the military authorities were represented at the macro level, while the public, comprised of families and next of kin, was represented at the micro-level. In Chapter 5, these different levels of society are discussed in greater detail. During the war, the Australian Red Cross bureaux made up the intermediate level that reduced the hierarchical stratification and enabled communication channels to open more widely. The Red Cross bureaux intended to gather the information that provided a basis for further action from the outset. People wanted the truth about the fate of a soldier as soon as possible. The social relations of the Australian legal fraternity within the Red Cross Society network constituted a form of social capital that allowed them to acquire and share that information through their social networks maintained for other purposes.[45] The family's aim was an attempt to extract even the smallest detail. By forgoing self-interest to act on behalf of the interests of enquirers, the Red Cross bureaux reinforced social support in the community.[46] More importantly, their actions strengthened a family's resolve in many instances as these Red Cross volunteers acted selflessly in the family's interest.

Being a part of the Red Cross Society's network on the home front and abroad facilitated the Australian bureaux in strengthening their coordinated actions with counterparts in Egypt and elsewhere. The British War Office recognised the British Red Cross Society as the only organisation responsible for the Red Cross Society movement throughout the British Empire during the war. All voluntary offers of assistance had to go through the Society so that this organisation maximised all offers of voluntary service.[47] Other voluntary aid associations were not entitled to recognition, protection, or neutrality under the terms of the *Sick and Wounded in War: Papers Relating to the 1906*

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43 John Field, *Social Capital* (London: Routledge, 2008), 1.

44 José López and John Scott, *Social Structures* (England and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), 3.

45 Coleman 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,' S104.

46 Ibid.

47 Charles E. Vivian and John E. Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross* (London, New York, Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), 127-29.

Geneva Convention.[48] The status of these other organisations was dependent on what was accorded to them by belligerents during the war. In 1915, the norms of the Red Cross Society were reinforced by 'social support, status, honour and other rewards'.[49] Such norms also strengthen voluntary organisations such as the Society, which acted selflessly in the interest of civilians. Sociologist James Colman explains that norms such as these are the social capital that often builds young nations.[50] The Australian Red Cross Society was not establishing a nation, yet it did set up a global network of contacts to assist it in its bureau-based wartime work. They purposely sought and maintained relationships with others to encourage positive effects. The legal profession undertook the intent to develop an Australian Red Cross Enquiry Bureau in Egypt out of a necessity to offer direct support to the families of Australian soldiers abroad and for the good of the community on the home front.

The movement gathers momentum across Australia

As early as July 1915, Australia's first state bureau was established 'in order to obtain information about men at the front and assist the Defence Department'.[51] The month before the Sydney Bureau opened to the public, time was spent organising and preparing for the work ahead. The volunteers reduced everything to a definite system, so there was little room for confusion later when the work began in earnest. The New South Wales legal profession contributed £100 a year to the bureau's running costs, which allowed hiring two stenographers to be employed full time while three others volunteered their services.[52] Owen stated that this bureau intended to obtain information from the front that was impossible for the Department of Defence to receive and 'in that way will assist the department in that branch of its work'.[53] This statement contradicts historian Aaron Pegram's view that the bureau in Sydney was established to 'circumvent army bureaucracy'.[54] On the contrary, the military authorities referred questions about missing men to this bureau as the war progressed.[55] Owen was William Francis Langer Owen, recently appointed as the Honorary Secretary for the Sydney Red Cross Information Bureau by the Red Cross Society President, Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson. He, like other volunteers, had a son serving in Europe.[56] Owen wrote to Symon in Adelaide upon his appointment and the establishment of the Sydney Bureau. He included three documents in his correspondence and explained to Symon that he had created these circular templates when establishing the Sydney Bureau in the

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[48] Great Britain, War Office, and Conference for Revision of the Geneva Convention of 1864. 'Sick and Wounded in War: Papers Relating to the Geneva Convention, 1906, Command Papers; Cd.3933' (London: Harrison and Sons 1908), 53; Charles E. Vivian and John E. Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 127-29.

[49] Vivian and Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 127-29.

[50] Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,' S104.

[51] 'Information Bureau, assisting the Department,' *Forbes Advocate*, New South Wales, 29 July 1915.

[52] 'Story of the Red Cross in N.S.W.' *Sydney Mail*, New South Wales, 5 April 1916.

[53] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 29 July 1915.

[54] Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front* 1916-18, 88; 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 29 July 1915.

[55] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Mail*, New South Wales, 4 August 1915.

[56] 'Mrs Langer Owen,' *Mirror*, New South Wales, 8 December 1917.

previous month. Owen thought them useful for the formation of the South Australian Bureau; the attachments included:

> Circular A: Australian Red Cross Society, N.S.W Division,
> Circular B: Copy Progress Report: Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau
> Circular C: Hints to Members in charge of Office.[57]

He confirmed that Messrs, Adrian Knox, K.C., and Norman Brookes, the former Australian Grand Slam singles tennis champion, had established the necessary agencies in the 'East' by which he meant [Cairo, Alexandria, Malta, and Lemnos]. The powers accorded to the British Red Cross Commissioners to make enquiries were also given along the same lines to the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo. The Australian Governor-General, Sir Munro Ferguson, requested similar powers from the British Government and the war office.[58] Meanwhile, in the Sydney Bureau, a process of forwarding enquiries to 'the East and England' was already underway.[59] This reference to the 'East' [Cairo, Alexandria, Malta, and Lemnos] highlights that Britain was considered the geographical centre of world events. In Britain, Henry C. Smart, the Commonwealth Publicity Agent, and a member of the High Commission's staff in London, had already begun forming relevant committees around England to assist in gathering further information on Australian soldiers who arrived at the hospitals from the battlefront. People soon started reading the first casualty lists that filtered through to the Australian home front. Others were still awaiting news of a loved one missing in battle, and others still were coming to terms with a soldier's death.[60] In the push to assist those families affected, each Red Cross bureau established directives for the work ahead. Before this, volunteer labour was considered the domain of women in the community, often middle-class, with time on their hands. This view changed with the outbreak of war as 'national and family history coincided in the most powerful manner'.[61]

Indeed, Owen had reported in late August that the Sydney Bureau was forwarding enquiries to 'the East and to England', yet geographically, these locations were west of Australia.[62] This bureau dispatched twenty-nine cables to the 'East' within the first three weeks of operation. It received sixteen replies to these enquiries and initiated a further eighty-nine men by 'packed cable', i.e., one that included a long list of men.[63] Over one hundred and sixty names were sent by mail to the British Red Cross bureaux in Cairo, Malta and the American Ambassador in Constantinople through Sir George

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[57] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 23 August 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened between July 1915 - January 1916', January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[58] 'Correspondence from Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson to the Australian High Commissioner,' 'War 1914, Red Cross Society (Australian Branch),' File Series A11803, 1914/89/18. National Archives of Australia (NAA), 134.
[59] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 23 August 1915,' SRG76/32.
[60] Jay M. Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies* 1914 *to the Present*, 4th ed. (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 169.
[61] Ibid, 170.
[62] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 23 August 1915,' SRG76/32.
[63] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Daily telegraph*, Tasmania, 2 October 1915.

Reid, an Australian politician. He sat in the House of Commons.[64] Approximately 200 men volunteered for the Sydney Bureau; some went so far as to devote their whole time to the cause.[65] This outcome was undoubtedly in response to what was unfolding at Gallipoli, as Australian troops fought in the battle of Lone Pine, The Nek, Sari Bair, and Hill 60, resulting in heavy casualties, including many missing men. The Sydney Bureau also succeeded in communicating with the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. Like other countries, this branch was exempt from displaying the Red Cross as an Islamic country.[66] The Sydney Bureau later established communications with the Greek Red Cross Society regarding prisoners of war. Such connections were significant as many of the Australian soldiers listed with this group did not appear on official lists.[67] These relationships highlight how the Australian bureaux on the home front were a valuable part of the global network of bureaux that evolved throughout the war.

In the Sydney Bureau, Owen stated that 'they were proposing to go further than and along different lines to what Mitchell proposed for Melbourne'.[68] The different lines that he referred to related to public engagement. Following several conferences with the Department of Defence and Pearce, as the Minister for Defence, Mitchell proposed that the Melbourne Red Cross Information Bureau, temporarily located in the chambers of its Honorary Secretary, Kiddle, a well-known Melbourne lawyer, would not open its doors to the public. Mitchell reasoned that the Military Base Records Office, set up in October 1914 to keep track of the Australian Imperial Force heading overseas, already had a system established to answer enquiries and provide information to family and friends. In addition, every volunteer soldier had 'a file with an attestation form (name, religion, next of kin, etc.) and details of their enlistment, embarkation, promotion and fate'.[69] The honorary secretaries feared confusion and overlapping of the work would otherwise occur. This overlap occasionally happened in the South Australia bureau, so it probably occurred in other bureaux, particularly during busy periods. However, by July 1917, the demand from the public was such that the Victorian bureau was open to enquirers daily and 'had a constant stream of people calling to their office'.[70]

Owen proposed opening the Sydney Bureau's doors to the public and aimed to forward on their behalf 'either by cable or letter; all enquires which are reasonably able to be answered' for those enlisted in New South Wales.[71] Each of the Australian bureaux eventually adopted this process in its

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[64] *Daily Telegraph*, Tasmania, 2 October 1915.

[65] 'Soldier's Abroad,' *Argus*, Victoria, 16 September 1915.

[66] Great Britain, War Office, and Conference for Revision of the Geneva Convention of 1864, Great Britain, War Office, 'Sick and Wounded in War: Papers Relating to the Geneva Convention, 1906, 43.

[67] 'Story of the Red Cross in N.S.W.'' *Sydney Mail*, New South Wales, 5 April 1916.

[68] Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 23 August 1915,' SRG76/32.

[69] Sir John Monash Centre, 'Base Records Office: Conveying the News,' Sir John Monash Centre, accessed 15 October 2019. https://sjmc.gov.au/base-records-office-conveying-the-news/.

[70] 'The Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, Victoria Division,' *Gordon, Egerton and Ballan Advertiser*, Victoria, 6 July 1917.

[71] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon 23 August 1915,' SRG76/32.

state. At the same time, the bureau abroad intended to answer all enquiries and obtain information about soldiers wherever they may have enlisted. Initially located at Woodside Stock Chambers, 88 Pitt Street, in Sydney, Owen planned to open the bureau from 10 am to 5 pm from Monday to Friday and from 10 am to 1 pm on Saturdays.[72] In its 'Scheme of Work', each bureau proclaimed that the success of their Red Cross bureaux in Australia depended upon the effectiveness of the work carried out by agents in Egypt and other locations. Abroad, voluntary, or fully paid searchers were assigned to hospitals where Australian soldiers were treated for sickness or wounds. Previously, it was viewed that the volunteer labour force consisted 'mainly of women with time on their hands; this implied that paid employment and volunteering were considered incompatible'.[73] The experience and support of the British Red Cross Society in such work was an advantage for those involved. Historian Deborah Thom suggests that you cannot ignore the process used in assembling an organisation's records. Within this process, the history of the war was revealed from a civilian viewpoint. In this instance, it exposes the bureaux's transformation throughout the war period.[74]

The New South Wales division of the Red Cross Society and Lady Munro Ferguson had been eager to inaugurate such a bureau and, as previously discussed, appointed Owen as its Honorary Secretary. In a speech made in 1916, Owen stated that the idea to open a Red Cross Information Bureau came to him when he received a copy of the recently published London book *The Way of the Red Cross*.[75] He suggested that this book also influenced him to implement 'a system of operation on similar lines for the Sydney Bureau'.[76] He adopted a similar approach by sharing and implementing his plans across the other Australian states. Deakin later shared these processes with the American bureau in Washington and Paris. Tony Cunneen confirmed historian Melanie Oppenheimer's view that Mary Louise Owen, wife of Langer Owen, was instrumental in her husband establishing the Red Cross Information Bureau in Sydney.[77] Owen also put this idea forward following his wife's premature death in 1917. As discussed in the Introduction, before the war, Mary Owen had been a pioneer of the Red Cross movement from its initiation in Australia in early 1914. Later, she became a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Red Cross Society in New South Wales.

On the home front, the Sydney Red Cross Information Bureau was up and running by 13 September 1915, with a card and packet system established by Owen for each soldier enquiry. At the

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[72] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Daily Telegraph*, Tasmania, 2 October 1915.

[73] John Wilson, 'Volunteering,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000), 220.

[74] Deborah Thom, 'Making Spectaculars: museum and how we remember Gender in Wartime,' in *Evidence, History, and the Great War*, ed. Gail Braybon, (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 50.

[75] 'Red Cross,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 14 December 1917.

[76] 'Red Cross Work: Inquiry Bureau – What the Depots are doing,' *Sun*, New South Wales, 23 April 1916.

[77] Tony Cunneen, '"What has happened to our dear boy?" The New South Wales Lawyers and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War One,' np; Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig. "There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' *First World War Studies* 6, no. 3 (July 2016), 282.

beginning of October, the *Daily Telegraph* published a report by Owen stating enquiries for 420 men had been received by the Sydney Bureau. Of these, 279 packets related to wounded, missing, or killed soldiers were opened.[78] He remarked that the efficiencies in the Cairo Bureau were set to improve with a contingency of five Australians arriving there in October. Owen noted that their work in Australia covered more than just the 'specific enquiries about men at the front'; they also liaised with bureaux in Malta, Cairo, and London.[79] The group had already resolved issues about the information on letters and parcels. Owen remarked he had requested the New South Wales legal fraternity because of the daily work increase and found much voluntary support readily available. The New South Wales information bureau also had two salaried shorthand typists. Bureau volunteers strived 'to offer a good deal of comfort and relief to the homes where there was so much anxiety'.[80] The military authorities were indeed out of step with the needs of civil society as the information bureaux began to bridge the immense gap between the home front and the battlefront.

Queensland, Tasmania, and Western Australia establish bureaux

Keeping pace with the Sydney Bureau, the Brisbane bureau opened on 18 October 1915 following an invitation from Lady Munro Ferguson to the Queensland Law Society to institute an Information Bureau to assist relatives of soldiers.[81] This bureau was located at Spencer Block, on Queen Street in the city centre and invited 'persons anxious to seek news of sick, wounded, or missing men to call or write to them at their new premises'.[82] Similar to the Sydney Bureau, opening hours were 10 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday and from 10 am to 1 pm on Saturdays. In addition, this bureau confirmed that they would forward all enquiries to the state where the soldier had enlisted for further investigation. The honorary secretaries of each bureau had previously decided to put this system in place to prevent any duplication or overlapping of the work both in Australia and at the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau abroad. Over time urgent cases were dealt with in the Australian state bureau, where the enquiry was made. The information, when obtained, was then shared with the bureau in the state where the soldier had enlisted.

The QLD bureau posted an advertisement in the *Telegraph* requesting returned soldiers to call into the Red Cross Information Bureau on Queens Street if they held any information on soldiers listed as missing. In their search for information, each state bureau adopted a similar system of posting such notices in newspapers, hospitals, homes, and rest homes, where returned soldiers recuperated. The QLD notice reiterated that 'the legal profession had freely and generously offered their services in

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[78] *Daily Telegraph*, Tasmania, 2 October 1915.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] 'Red Cross Information Bureau – Whereabouts and Welfare of Soldiers,' *Queenslander*, Queensland, 16 October 1915.
[82] *Daily Telegraph*, Tasmania, 2 October 1915.

conducting the work for the [Red Cross] Society'.[83] This bureau also proposed to make a thorough enquiry into approved cases whereby the official information was insufficient, and the enquirer had invoked the aid of the bureau. The legal profession in this bureau proposed funding the expenses of 'clerical assistance and other outgoings, such as postages, cabling, &c.'[84]

An article in the *Queenslander* reported on a meeting held at the District Courtroom attended by the Bar and Law Associations of the Queensland legal fraternity. Arthur Feez, K.C., suggested the legal fraternity contribute £1 to 10 shillings each per month to support the work of the Bureau. He had previously applied to travel to Egypt to assist the Australian Red Cross Commissioners, Messrs Knox, and Brookes; however, his services were not required.[85] At the meeting, he moved that their bureau be known as the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, Queensland Division and establish a committee of three members of the Bar and three solicitors to administer its work. Feez requested the committee be given 'the power to fill any vacancy that might occur from time to time'.[86] His request was carried out. Three clerical administrators worked in the Brisbane Bureau with assistance from others within the legal profession when necessary.

As the legal profession in each state established their bureaux and systems on the home front, Lord Kitchener was busy telegraphing the War Committee in London to recommend a partial evacuation from Gallipoli with 'the possible exception of Helles'.[87] In their November memorandum, the General Staff considered holding Helles to assist the Royal Navy in future operations. They argued while withdrawal was likely to cost them 50,000 men, remaining on the peninsula would only increase losses due to sickness and casualties.[88] The General Staff proposed that evacuating soldiers would increase Allied numbers on the Western Front in time for the Spring of 1916. In fact, in mid-December, 80,000 Australian and Allied troops withdrew from Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove with few casualties. The following month, on 16 January, Allied troops also left Cape Helles.

Contemporarily, three more Red Cross information bureaux opened on the home front. In November 1915, two bureaux opened in Tasmania, one in Hobart and the other in Launceston. Two bureaux in such a small state harked back to colonial days when both townships were 'established to prevent the annexation of the Island by the French', and the divide has remained to the current day.[89] The third bureau opened in Perth, Western Australia, on 6 November 1915. This latter bureau,

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[83] 'Information Bureau – Through Red Cross Society,' *Telegraph*, Queensland, 13 October 1915.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Red Cross Society: Information Bureau – Whereabouts and Welfare of Soldiers,' *Queenslander*, Queensland, 16 October 1915.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Cecil F. Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations Gallipoli*, Vol. II (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1932), 427.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Judith, Hollingsworth, 'North-South Relations,' *The Companion to Tasmanian History*, accessed 10 October 2019, https://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/N/North-south.htm

inundated with enquires, found the workload beyond its current capacity. As a result, the Western Australia Red Cross Executive Committee decided to advertise for a General Secretary, differing from the other bureaux. When appointed to the role, Henry Greig worked for the W.A. Tramways Traffic Department.[90] The fact he was not a legal man is often apparent in the tone of the correspondence between Grieg and Edmunds in Adelaide as their work in the respective bureaux progressed. Edmunds was more deferential to Kiddle and Owen in the eastern states; being senior counsel, they were his superiors within the legal profession. With Grieg, the correspondence was egalitarian and friendly though nonetheless professional.

South Australia and the distant war

In South Australia, Marie, Lady Galway, the wife of Sir Henry Galway, Governor of South Australia since February 1914, announced that an information bureau of a like character to London was to open in Adelaide. The South Australian Bureau intended to collaborate closely with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in Egypt. Lady Galway argued that the remoteness of the Gallipoli Peninsula from Australia increased families' obstacles in obtaining the urgently needed details of soldiers in combat. The bureau proposed bridging the gap between civil society, the Australian Military, and the Commonwealth Department of Defence.[91] The 'tyranny of distance' from the battlefield caused many families to find alternative ways to 'confirm or supplement the official story'.[92] In Britain, soldiers were commonplace throughout the war, either on furlough, passing through on trains, or as casualties and convalescents in the military hospitals and bases scattered around the country. In contrast to Australians, the battlefront was much closer in Europe. As previously noted, in South Australia, so far from the war front, the remoteness of the theatres of war to those on the home front was quite apparent when a Gallipoli display at the South Australian Public Library exceeded expected numbers with an average of 148 daily visitors early in the war.[93]

Interestingly, Deakin, aware of the 'tyranny of distance' in 1917, would later travel to France from the Australian Bureau in London, with Australian military authorities' permission, to stress the importance of obtaining information about missing Australians and supplying the Australian bureau in London with reports. She also wanted to emphasise Australia's distance from the battlefront with

[90] 'The Red Cross Society: Paid Secretary Appointed,' *Daily News*, Western Australia, 29 October 1915.
[91] 'Wounded and "Missing",' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 4 September 1915.
[92] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 29; Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1 (2015), 12; 'Soldier Sons – Mothers' Enquiries,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 18 October 1915; Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, London, New York: Macmillan; St. Martin's P., 1968.
[93] 'Board minutes of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia, 20 November 1915,' State Library of South Australia (SLSA); Carl Bridge and State Library of South Australia. *A Trunk Full of Books: History of the State Library of South Australia and Its Forerunners* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press in association with the State Library of South Australia, 1986), 97.

bureau staff face to face.[94] British bases in France had their own Red Cross Information Bureau. Still, because they predominantly dealt with British soldiers, their reports were not always despatched as quickly as the Australian bureau wanted. Furthermore, considering the wounded British soldier often arrived home to a British hospital within a few days of reaching the main dressing stations, his family were better positioned to visit him in a hospital or could enquire more directly about him. In contrast, Deakin constantly wrote to the British Red Cross enquiry bureaux in France to remind them of the distance of Australia from Britain. She later admitted that she exaggerated the distance several times to get her point across. She has also reiterated how against the better judgement of military authorities, she travelled into the war zones to convey her message in person.[95] These actions strongly counter the argument put forward by Eric Schneider that the South Australian Enquiry Bureau records are usable to 'discuss what British civilians knew about the individual soldier's experience of war'.[96]

Schneider further justified his approach by claiming 'the Australian Red Cross was but a subsidiary of the British parent society'.[97] He has vindicated this argument by stating that 'the reports were written predominantly by British Red Cross searchers' and conveyed a consistent message usable as a British experience.[98] While there were more official British than Australian searchers, it is hard to say who wrote a particular report. The whole enquiry process on behalf of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux was Australian in its formation and execution. The legal profession drew up a questionnaire in Australia consisting of twelve questions for searchers.[99] It was 'the duty of each agent [searcher] to prepare and forward all information obtained from this questionnaire' to the Australian bureau abroad or the state bureau that enquired. The Honorary Secretary then sent the report on to the enquirer.[100] The searcher not only spoke with a wounded man in the hospital; in the case of a missing or killed soldier, he was required to talk to at least three other soldiers within the same Australian unit who had witnessed the last sighting of the soldier during a battle. Historian Robert Sackville-West, in comparison, suggests that the British searchers cross-checked, on average, five separate accounts per missing person.[101]

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[94] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802, National Library Australia (NLA), accessed 27 March 2019, https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:27:39

[95] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12, at time 00:27:39

[96] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 298.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

[99] The questions used by the searchers in the British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Department's Joint War Committee's Report appear to have differed significantly from the Australian searcher's questionnaire. Robert Sackville-West suggests that the searchers often targeted the state of the action to determine whether the line was advancing or retreating, they also asked who held the ground when the soldier was last seen to ascertain if the wounded had been looked after by fellow soldiers or whether he was taken prisoner; See Robert Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021), 22-23.

[100] 'Scheme of work for Red Cross Information Bureau,' 15 December 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[101] Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 15.

Deakin later highlighted that soldiers were often tired and weary when approached and reluctant to speak with a stranger about what they had witnessed. That was until the searcher explained to them that what they said was being sent home to the families of affected Australian soldiers; it might well be their story told on another day. Language is the most familiar form of social behaviour when people rely on common-sense assumptions; therefore, language should be viewed as a social practice.[102] Professor of Linguistics Norman Fairclough shows that face-to-face contact, in this instance, between the enquirer and the interviewee, was no doubt adapted based on the questions asked and the answers given in return.[103] In conversation with a searcher, the Australian soldier produced a version of his reality as he lived it. Considering the practical methods of assembling, contesting, and stabilising the interview is essential.[104] There is no way of knowing whether the searcher was Australian or British. On the other hand, the soldier enquired about were known to be Australian, as were the soldiers within his Australian Imperial Force unit who gave their statements.

The Australian reports evidenced a soldier's experience and interpreted his injury or events surrounding him going missing on the battlefield. Fairclough reminds us that it is essential to analyse the relationship between texts, processes, and social conditions alongside the methods of production and interpretation.[105] For example, in one newspaper article, an Australian searcher noted, 'it did not take me long to go around the Australian wards as I know my Australia'.[106] He was alluding to the Australian soldiers' names given to the hospital wards. Although both nationalities spoke English, they told it differently; the Australian's English language corruption made theirs less formal. Indeed, this searcher also noted how different the Australian hospitals were from the English-run hospitals with their red tape and regulations.[107] The British Red Cross bureaux, by prior arrangement with their Red Cross Department in London, were willing to act on behalf of the Australian Bureau in Britain and the Australian bureaux on the home front. Deakin's visit to France was to 'bring it home to the British Red Cross bureaux how cut off [Australian] parents and loved ones felt from their men abroad'.[108] These English bureaux needed reminding of how vital the reports about Australian soldiers were to their families back home.

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[102] Noel Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 3.
[103] Ibid, 9.
[104] Andrea Whittle and John Wilson, Ethnomethodology and the production of history: studying 'history-in-action', *Business History* 57, no. 1 (2015), 43.
[105] Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 21.
[106] 'Red Cross Searching,' *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, New South Wales, 1 January 1918.
[107] Ibid.
[108] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12 at time 00:27:39

Point of difference

August 1915 continued to be a busy month with establishing the Australian bureaux both at home and in Egypt. Mitchell wrote to Symon enclosing a copy of the Circular that they were about to circulate to the legal profession in Victoria. He noted Knox and Brookes had initiated a movement amongst the legal profession in Melbourne like the one Owen had undertaken in Sydney.[109] Accordingly, the Melbourne Bureau proposed in their circular to supplement the work of the Base Records Office at Victoria Barracks and to issue reports from searchers as soon as they arrived. They also suggested exercising discretion in passing this information to the enquirer rather than being mechanical in their actions. Indeed, each bureau adopted its own rules on censorship over time as sensitive eye-witness reports from the front began to arrive at each office.

Where the Base Records Office could not supply sufficient official information for an enquiry, a Melbourne Red Cross Information Bureau quorum decided on the enquiry's urgency and whether to send a letter or a cable overseas. The cost of the cable was to be paid by the enquirer or, failing this, from the bureau's Red Cross fund. The Melbourne Bureau also intended to use legal volunteers each evening to enable information to be sent out to families as quickly as possible. Social resources such as these played a crucial role in their volunteering goals.[110] In addition, they promoted social solidarity amongst the legal fraternity and the community they served.[111] Mitchell, in his correspondence, also referred to Lady Munro Ferguson, who had shown him a newspaper article relating to the Red Cross bureau in Cairo. He, like Owen, considered that 'they had quite an effective organisation for obtaining information well established there [Cairo] already'.[112]

In Melbourne, the Victorian Red Cross Information Bureau opened for business on 15 September 1915 and opted to send enquiry cards out to the public rather than conduct public interviews. In anticipation of this, the Melbourne Bureau distributed forms to various legal practices in Victoria to make access easier for Victorians. For example, a notice in the local Victorian newspapers informed the public that Philip R. Fraser, solicitor, located on the corner of Malop and Yarra Streets in Melbourne, stocked the relevant enquiry forms required to assist the Red Cross Information Bureau.[113] In Bendigo, Victoria, a second subsidiary Red Cross Information Bureau, was established under the auspices of local members of the legal profession. Cohen, Kirby and Co., solicitors of View Street, were the local representatives there, and enquiry forms were also available from their offices. In addition,

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[109] 'Correspondence between Edward F. Mitchell and Sir Josiah H. Symon, 5 September 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[110] Wilson, 'Volunteering,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000), 224.
[111] Ibid.
[112] 'Edward F. Mitchell in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 5 September 1915,' SRG76/32.
[113] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Geelong Advertiser*, Victoria, 2 December 1915.

they could be forwarded to the central bureau in Melbourne on behalf of enquiring family members. Mitchell confirmed with Symon that the Red Cross Information Bureau would have plenty to do and hoped each state's legal profession would step up.[114]

In October 1915, Symon prepared his detailed circular for submission to the South Australian branch of the Red Cross Society Executive Committee for approval. It was titled 'Australian Red Cross Society - Information Bureau'. He outlined the objective of the South Australian Bureau:

> to assist in relieving the anxiety and suspense of the relatives and friends of our men at the front by collection and communicating to those interested information as to their whereabouts and welfare, supplementing as much as possible the information which the Defence Department obtains, and receiving and dealing with specific individual enquiries wherever and as far as possible.[115]

He detailed the work currently undertaken by the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo. He wanted the Information Bureau of the South Australian Division of the Red Cross Society to open its doors to the public as soon as the Australian bureau abroad was fully operational and all the necessary agencies were in place in Cairo, Alexandria, Lemnos and elsewhere.[116] He remained firm in his convictions to Owen that 'the success of the bureau depended on the effectiveness of what was done in Egypt and other places in the way of organisation'.[117]

Owen had written to Symon in late September to inform him that the Australian group en route to assist in the Cairo Bureau was arriving in Adelaide the following Wednesday. He wondered if 'they may be of assistance and benefit to him in the setting up the Adelaide Bureau'.[118] This group of Red Cross volunteers had all undertaken to pay their travel and living expenses and work within the Red Cross Society and the information bureau abroad without any remuneration. This situation contrasted with the YMCA's people, who had equipment and funds in their pocket when they left Australia for Egypt. Furthermore, each Red Cross volunteer had offered their services for the length of the war, while a Mr Du Boise could only remain for twelve months.[119] Owen considered the volunteer's shortstop in South Australia an opportunity for Symon to forward some suggestions to Knox in Egypt or possibly explain Adelaide's methods for their bureau.[120] Unfortunately, there is nothing to suggest that Symon did meet the delegation from Sydney.

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[114] 'Edward F. Mitchell in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 2 September 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[115] 'Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau, mid-1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened between July 1915 - January 1916', January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[116] Ibid.
[117] 'Soldiers Abroad – Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.
[118] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 30 September 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[119] 'For Egypt: Patriotic Businessmen,' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 September 1915.
[120] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 30 September 1915,' SRG76/32.

Interestingly, Owen's offer again reflects his opinion that the Sydney Bureau was a separate entity from the other state bureaux. This stance will become more apparent in Chapter 5 when cabling issues in 1917 eventually forced the honorary secretaries to put forward a definite scheme to bring about 'something approaching uniformity' in their work.[121] In October, other correspondence to Symon came from Richard W. Bennett of Stock & Bennett, Solicitors and Notaries Public. Mr Bennett had already communicated with 'several members of the Profession regarding forming an Information Bureau on the lines of the bureaux established in Melbourne and Sydney'.[122] However, speaking with 'Symon's Mr Rounsevell', he discovered Symon was already moving in a similar direction and wished to meet with him later that day to discuss the matter.[123] Horace Rounsevell was an Adelaide solicitor who had previously served his articles under Symon and later became a partner with him and Edward E. Cleland, K.C., in Adelaide.

In early October 1915, Symon wrote to Mrs Cholmondeley at the League of Loyal Women requesting information about the League's use of casualty lists in the Military Information Bureau. On behalf of Mrs Cholmondeley, Angel Symon responded to his query, stating that 'the only lists we have received are of recruits for a concise period, between August and the end of October', no doubt in the previous year.[124] One would have assumed that the League acting as a buffer between the military authorities and enquiring families, would have had the most immediate 'military' information regarding enlisted men on the home front. However, as the records of the Military Information Bureau are no longer available, there is no way of knowing the nature of their wartime work regarding enquiries. In his Red Cross Information Bureau circular, Symon proposed asking four to six men within the South Australian legal fraternity to join him on an Executive Committee to oversee the bureau's operations. Unlike Melbourne, the committee did not consider a quorum committee regarding enquiry decisions. Instead, Symon noted that the Honorary Secretary would determine if an enquiry should be sent by letter or cable to the relevant agents abroad. He proposed requesting a commitment from the Adelaide legal fraternity to reliably volunteer a set number of hours on certain days each week to do the work. These volunteers were to assist in selecting the necessary staff and arranging the distribution of work and other details for the bureau in Adelaide. He proposed opening the bureau from 2.30 pm to 5.00 pm

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[121] 'Henry Greig in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 5 October 1917,' SRG76/28 Correspondence with the Perth Bureau. 28 Oct 1917 - July 1919.
[122] 'Letter from Richard Bennett to Sir Josiah H. Symon, 6 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[123] Ibid.
[124] 'Letter from Miss Symon on behalf of Mrs Cholmondeley to Sir Josiah H. Symon, 6 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

Monday to Friday and from 9.00 am until 12.30 pm on Saturdays to allow the legal volunteers to interview enquirers. Symon was keen that enquiries be 'promptly received and efficiently dealt with'.[125]

In the Circular, Symon also raised the issue of expenses for the necessary 'clerical assistance, rent and other outgoings, including postages, cabling etc.,' and stated that the Australian Red Cross Society usually bore them.[126] He argued the legal fraternity would surely agree that they should at least defray the expenses of running the bureau for South Australia. He suggested that the Profession pay a monthly sum of £2 or less to assist with costs. The lawyers could also defray the cost of sending necessary cables if possible. Cable costs continually raised questions for all the state bureaux as they developed their systems in those early days; these are discussed in Chapter 5. The intent was to implement a system that enabled the Australian state bureaux to undertake their enquiry work efficiently. Arrangements regarding cablegrams sent by the Red Cross Society to its agents in Britain, the Mediterranean and Egypt were outlined in a letter from the Federal Government's Postmaster General to Lady Galway in late October.[127] Using the Eastern Extension Company's route, cables were to be charged at the same rates and under the same conditions as weekend cable letters.

The Pacific Cable Board, formed in 1902 to provide international telegraph traffic with Australia, agreed to similar arrangements. The Atlantic Companies, whose cables included part of the route of messages sent via 'Pacific' disagreed, making this option inoperable. Mr L. Webster, the South Australian manager of the Eastern Extension Company, 'kindly proposed to send all enquiries for the Enquiry Bureau at quarter rates' in a later meeting with Lady Galway.[128] This result was on the proviso Symon was good enough to sign the enquiries to validate them. He later organised that the Honorary Secretary for the South Australian Bureau became the sole signatory of all enquiries and related correspondences. Following a discussion about registering a code address for the Australian Red Cross Society, the Postmaster General argued this was out of his control. He directed the Society to speak with military authorities. Webster had, however, contacted the Commonwealth Department of Defence on their behalf and had 'every confidence that arrangements were being made within a day or two to enable the code address *Redcib* to be registered as indicating the Red Cross Society'.[129] Abbreviated

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[125] 'Red Cross Extension – Information Bureau in Adelaide,' *Register*, South Australia, 5 January 1916; Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 18, SRG76/22.

[126] Ibid.

[127] 'Letter from the Postmaster General to Marie, Lady Galway, 4 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[128] 'Marie, Lady Galway in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 18 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[129] 'Letter from the Postmaster General to Marie, Lady Galway, 4 October 1915,' SRG76/32.

wording and codes were essential in keeping costs down for the individual bureaux and the families enquiring after a soldier.

In his circular, Symon had also raised the possibility of having 'a paid [Honorary] Secretary that could give his whole time to running the bureau' in Adelaide.[130] He was open to discussing this further and remarked that the bureau at least required a paid 'clerk' (shorthand writer and typist)'.[131] He considered 'the proposed bureau a peculiarly one' to be run by members of the Profession because 'for one reason their trained minds and experience in the investigation will be of great advantage in deciding if an enquiry should be sent abroad'.[132] Given the nature of the work and the existing skillset amongst the lawyers, their human capital, social capital, and education capital exposed these legal men to being asked to volunteer. In his conclusion, Symon stated that the Circular was like those adopted by Owen in the Sydney Bureau. In Victoria, as mentioned above, Mitchell had chosen not to open their Red Cross Information Bureau to the public due to their proximity to the Military Base Records Office in Victoria Barracks. By now, Symon, Lady Galway, and other concerned citizens were already working in tandem with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners, the Australian bureau in Cairo and Lady Katherine Weston Barker from the British Red Cross Enquiry Bureau in Cairo.

Symon submitted the two-page circular to the Secretary of the Australian Branch of the Red Cross Depot (hereafter the South Australian Red Cross Depot) at Government House in Adelaide for approval at a special sitting on 22 October. Four days later, the Circular was approved and distributed to the South Australian legal fraternity. A South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was taking shape. Members of the legal fraternity were requested to respond within seven days to the Law Society Secretary, Edmunds, upon receipt of Symon's circular laying out his objectives for a South Australian bureau.[133] On foot of approval from the South Australian Red Cross Executive Committee for the establishment of an information bureau, Symon received correspondence from Colonel Sandford, who had received information from the Adjutant General that:

> The officer in charge, Base Records, will supply a complete set of the Casualty Lists issued as soon
> as the Bureau is ready to being operations, and an additional copy will be included with those sent
> to your command for distribution, to be handed over to the representative of the Red Cross, when
> released to the Press.[134]

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[130] Sir Josiah H. Symon in a letter to the Legal Profession in South Australia, 26 October 1915, SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, with some enquires received before the bureau was open, July 1915 – January 1916, January 17, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid.

[133] 'Australian Red Cross Society Information Bureau Circular drawn up by Sir Josiah H. Symon 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[134] 'Correspondence between Colonel Sandford, Keswick Barracks and Sir Josiah H. Symon, 12 November 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

The South Australian military authorities showed good intention to work more intently with the newly established Red Cross Information Bureau. They proposed supplying the casualty lists ahead of those published in the newspaper; this process and the relationship between the Red Cross Information Bureau and military authorities in Adelaide were sometimes contentious and raised questions for Edmunds. However, the League of Loyal Women appears to have readily passed on their enquiry work to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. The League's headquarters later moved into rooms across the hall from the bureau in the Verco Buildings. By November 1915, two months after his exchange with Owen in Sydney, Symon received correspondence in his Gladstone Chambers in Pirie Street from Red Cross Commissioner Norman Brookes in Cairo. Brookes acknowledged receipt of Symon's letter, dated 18 November and the enclosures. He confirmed that the attached enquiries had been forwarded to the Cairo Bureau to be dealt with in due course.

Symon and Edmunds contrived the transition of the South Australian Military Information Bureau from the League of Loyal Women of Australia to the newly formed Red Cross Wounded and Missing Bureau. Why Edmunds chose not to enlist later in the war is unknown; in his youth, he had been a first-class sports man and was probably a healthy man. Moore has argued the reasons to remain a civilian varied in circumstance and obligation for men in the legal profession.[135] Not being sought to enlist early in the war may have contributed to Edmunds's decision to remain at work in Adelaide. He combined his legal practice with Anderson & Gordon during the war when his friend Leslie Gordon enlisted. Conducting a colleague's practice during his absence was actively encouraged by the Law Society. Indeed, Moore notes that 'embarking practitioners had to provide for their absence and return' or for 'the possibility that they may not return'.[136] Gordon was killed in 1915, and Edmunds continued running the combined practices at the Chamber of Manufacturers' Building on Pirie Street 'well into the 1920s'.[137] Edmunds's law clerk, Patrick A. Ohlstrom, enlisted in July 1915 and later resumed his clerical role when he returned from the war in 1919. Edmunds found time to serve on the South Australian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals board, and he was a warden at the Church of the Epiphany in Crafters, also located in the Adelaide Hills; he held this church role for twenty-three years.[138]

Separation from the British system

In November, Lady Barker, operating the British Red Cross Enquiry Bureau in Cairo, notified Edmunds that Australian enquiries would no longer be sent to the British Red Cross Department in

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[135] Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War*, 149.
[136] Ibid, 117.
[137] Ibid.
[138] W.P. Fook, *The First* 100 *Years. The Church of the Epiphany, Crafters and the Anglican Parish of Stirling* (Adelaide: Peacock Publications, 1978), 28; South Australian Almanacs and Directories 1864 – 1970, 'Societies 1915,' (Melbourne: Sands & McDougall Pty Ltd., 1900), 1840-41, last updated 9 July 2019, https://images.slsa.sa.gov.au/almanacsanddirectories/1915sandsandmc/1866/

London. Her cable arrived as preparations to open the doors of the South Australian Bureau neared completion. All future enquiries from the family or next of kin of Australian soldiers were to be dealt with through the newly established Australian bureaux. These bureaux were instructed to liaise with the 'Australian branch' of the British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau, newly established in Cairo. It was clarified that all future Australian enquiries received at the various British offices (London, Malta, Alexandria, Mudros, &c.) must be forwarded to the 'Australian branch' secretary. Deakin would follow up with the South Australian Bureau or other state bureaux where appropriate.[139] Lady Barker also took the opportunity to transfer some current enquiries to the South Australian Bureau previously sent to her from the British Red Cross Department in London. She provided Edmunds with the names and addresses of the enquirers in South Australia and requested he respond to the relevant families with the information enclosed. She reminded Edmunds that her office in Cairo had, in some cases, already cabled the bureau in Adelaide to inform the next of kin.[140] While the British Red Cross Department proposed working with the Australian bureaux, this move officially recognised the newly opened bureaux on the home front as being solely about Australian enquiries, independent of British enquiries.

On behalf of the British Red Cross bureau in Cairo, Lady Baker, who had assisted Deakin in Cairo and later became the representative of the Australian information bureaux in London, wrote to Symon in late December 1915. She anticipated all Australian enquirers would stop writing to remote offices in the future. She foresaw that the local bureaux in Australia would reduce duplication and confusion in the workload at her end. Deakin later suggested a central office in Australia be established for the same reason and allow for more streamlined reports from her bureau. Lady Barker also indicated that the military authorities welcomed the establishment of the bureaux as it relieved them of the extra work brought about through enquiries. This statement is interesting when the YMCA was already undertaking searches on behalf of families. It may well be that the YMCA, whose personnel wore uniforms and were non-combatants, were viewed as part of the military workforce. Moreover, Lady Barker suggested that the Red Cross information bureaux were in 'a better position to secure information that the military authorities were scarcely in a position to obtain'.[141] This approach is significant because the Australian Imperial Force, at their conference, had stated that a man in uniform was in a better position than a civilian to gather information on wounded and missing soldiers. The contribution and strength of the work undertaken between the British Red Cross Department in London and the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in Egypt to the war effort were apparent. It

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[139] 'Lady Katherine W. Baker in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds,' November 1915, SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, with some enquires received before the bureau was open, July 1915 – January 1916, January 17, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[140] Ibid.
[141] 'Red Cross Extension – Information Bureau in Adelaide,' *Register*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.

is therefore surmised that military authorities and the Commonwealth Government saw value in the work of the bureaux.

As mentioned, Symon and others knew they depended on the Australian bureau's success and effectiveness abroad to be valued at home. He saw the role of the Information Bureau as being 'especially valuable' when families and friends of soldiers wanted more information than was obtainable from official channels or in cases 'where the official records conflicted with private advices' received by those on the home front.[142] British Red Cross branch offices were also established and operating in Le Treport, Étaples, Malta and Alexandria, dealing with wounded and missing soldiers' enquiries. Étaples was especially important as the hospital was 'exceedingly large and growing rapidly'.[143] In one month alone, the British Red Cross Department in London received 250 enquiries relating to Gallipoli. The Eastern Extension Company, having sent cablegrams free of charge up to that point, enabled the British Red Cross Information Bureau to obtain immediate information. The British Red Cross searchers, numbering 1,200 to 1,300, were then able to find these men in English hospitals and resulted in upwards of fifty to eighty reports daily, some on behalf of Australian family enquires.[144]

The beginnings of an Australian system

With all the bureaux either open or about to open, Owen wrote to Symon to clarify arrangements he had made to prevent work overlapping and avoid several enquiries about the same man from the different Australian bureaux. Indeed, Owen had engaged with local 'mercantile firms and the Registrar General's office, who placed card and register systems at his disposal to enable a simple and effective method of registration of names and particulars' of soldiers to be established.[145] The Sydney Bureau had also arranged that they only deal with those men who had enlisted in their state, 'except in very special cases' that were considered urgent enquiries that needed immediate action.[146] Otherwise, the enquiry was passed on to the state where the soldier enlisted. Owen explained that when an enquiry was received 'a packet was opened for every man under a File No., and in that packet are kept all papers, with the letters, cables, etc., relating to that man'.[147] The Sydney Bureau, when instructed to request information, recorded all activities on Form B. Owen provided a sample card and noted that this form held the history of the man enquired after in each packet and everything the bureau did to assist the enquiry.[148] Also enclosed in Owen's letter to Symon was a sample of Form C that bureau staff used to

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[142] 'Soldiers Abroad – Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 11 December 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] 'Australian Red Cross Society Information Bureau Circular drawn up by Sir Josiah H. Symon 1915,' SRG76/32.

take down the 'particulars of inquiries made'; Owen explained that the same form was later attached to enquiries that came in by letter.[149] The Sydney Bureau found the 'card system and the practice of keeping a packet for each man's papers afforded them a sufficient record'.[150] Owen explained that upon receipt of official casualty lists, 'the whole of the names of the New South Wales soldiers are added to the [Form A] cards, and this part of our card system is merely used as an index to the casualty lists'.[151]

Owen assumed that the South Australian Bureau had already received word from Lady Munro Ferguson with 'full instructions for cabling methods to agents in Egypt and London. The bureau was already acquainted with the arrangements made with the cable companies. He also mentioned the concessions made when using the Defence Department's code.[152] Owen ended his correspondence, noting the work of the Sydney Bureau had increased, and they now had sixty men from the legal fraternity regularly assisting them in this work. When Symon received this letter from Owen, the South Australian Bureau was less than a month away from opening its doors. The bureau in Adelaide also adopted this card system. Today, it affords the scholar a complete enquiry history of a South Australian soldier and offers an insight into the operations of the Australian bureaux network beyond what Owen anticipated.

Conclusion

By the close of 1915, each of the six Australian Red Cross information bureaux was established and operated on the Australian home front. The Australian bureau in Cairo was also fully functional and soon working in tandem with other bureaux in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and America. The Australian bureaux aimed to assist those in society 'anxious to seek news of sick, wounded or missing men enlisted' from the state.[153] Those in the legal fraternity who did not enlist wished to contribute to the war effort and be of value by undertaking a civic duty. They considered their training adequately equipped them to do so on behalf of the families of soldiers. As the legal fraternity prepared to open the bureau doors to the public, Symon and Edmunds had already conducted many enquiries.

Each bureau had an appointed honorary secretary, a small female administrative staff, the promise of donations, and a commitment from the legal profession to assist with enquiries and running each state bureaux. The legal men had the training and networks to determine what actions were required and deal with each case promptly and effectively. However, casualty lists increased by the hundreds from the beginning of 1916, causing delays as public concerns grew. One family found the

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[149] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 15 December 1915,' SRG76/32.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid.
[153] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Register*, South Australia, 10 April 1916.

delays more difficult to bear than the outcome that their boy was wounded as they anticipated this outcome.[154] However, by November 1915, the Australian military authorities were only beginning to establish a Military Information Bureau in Cairo to assist with enquiries from families regarding the fate of their loved ones. In comparison, most Red Cross information bureaux were fully operational for five months. The legal men and the Australian Red Cross Society foresaw that the complex social problems emerging around enquiries required implementing innovative solutions to 're-negotiate the settled institutions or build new ones'.[155]

Indeed, as members of parliament had pointed out during the year, the Red Cross Society and the YMCA were doing a more thorough job in this area than the government was. Deakin had established an efficient bureau in Cairo and implemented appropriate systems to assist with each enquiry that arrived on behalf of an Australian family. In December 1915, Lady Barker's letter confirmed that the Australian enquiry system was a fully functional separate entity from the British enquiry system. Symon was also confident that the Australian Red Cross Bureau in Cairo was now sufficiently established and had implemented the systems and processes to assist the South Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Bureau. The following chapter will discuss in detail the workings of the bureau in Cairo and its interactions with the Australian state bureaux on the home front. It will show how these bureaux worked tirelessly together and independently to establish systems and develop processes to undertake this work at home and abroad on behalf of Australian soldiers and their families.

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[154] 'Soldiers Sons – Mother's Inquiries,' *Sydney Morning Herald*,' New South Wales, 18 October 1915.
[155] Jakomijn van Wijk, Charlene Zietsma, Silvia Dorado, Frank G. A De Bakker, and Ignasi Martí, 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' *Business & Society* 58, no. 5 (2019), 887.

CHAPTER THREE
THE EAST AND TO ENGLAND

Introduction

In 1915, there was a distinct lack of control regarding administration services in the 'East'. The solutions proposed by the Commonwealth Government and military authorities continued to be discussed throughout that year, while organisations such as the Red Cross Society and the Young Men's Christian Association (hereafter the YMCA) were already finding solutions. The success of the newly formed Australian branch of the British Red Cross information bureaux on the home front depended on what happened in Egypt and other places such as Britain in the way of organisation.[1] As Chapter 2 explained, it had quickly become apparent on the home front that the needs of Australian families regarding information about individual soldiers were not being met. This outcome was partly due to the poor postal and hospital administration services abroad as the casualty numbers mounted, and the Commonwealth Government considered that the Australian Imperial Force administration was the responsibility of the British authorities.[2] Historian John Hutchinson reminds us that modern war differed immensely from previous wars because of the availability of the telegraph message. At the same time, the press stirred up 'the fears and hopes of thousands', and armies were held more accountable for the fate of their soldiers.[3] Gustave Moynier, a former President of the Red Cross Society and Louis Appia, a former member of the Geneva Red Cross 'Committee of Five', stated that 'the very instantaneous [character] of communications has favoured this awakening' about war.[4] Therefore, society lived more intimately with an army than it had formerly.

Various communication systems were undoubtedly advanced when the First World War began. Yet, through a combination of factors, information was often meagre and generally slow arriving back to Australia. As discussed in Chapter 2, from July 1915, the Australian Red Cross Society and the legal fraternity in each state began working closely to establish the Australian Red Cross information bureaux. They aimed to reduce the information void between families and the Department of Defence. Understanding the need for and the development of the Australian bureaux system affords a better understanding of how each bureau transformed into efficiently run business-like offices after their initial establishment. Within this wartime work, the volunteer workforce was a combination of men and

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[1] 'Soldiers Abroad – Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 5 January 1916; 'Red Cross Extension – Information Bureau in Adelaide,' *Register*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.

[2] Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' *Archives and Manuscripts* 48, no. 2 (2020), 124.

[3] John F. Hutchinson, 'Rethinking the Origins of the Red Cross,' *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 64, no. 4 (Winter 1989), 571.

[4] They noted this in their blueprint for the Red Cross movement in the late 1800s; See Gustave Moynier and Louis Appia, *La Guerre Et La Charité: Traité Théorique Et Pratique De Philanthropie Appliquée Aux Armées En Campagne* (Geneva: Cherbuliez, 1867), quoted in John F. Hutchinson, 'Rethinking the Origins of the Red Cross,' *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 64, no. 4 (Winter 1989), 572.

women who worked closely together to achieve their aims for Australian families. Langer Owen, in Sydney and Sir Josiah Symon, in Adelaide surmised correctly that the key to their success on the home front was reliant on the work conducted in the Australian bureau abroad, in this instance by Vera Deakin.

This chapter will argue that the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, initially set up and run by Deakin in Cairo and later London, was part of a global network seeking answers for Australian families rather than being what others have termed a 'clearing house'.[5] Deakin also assisted and supported other Red Cross Information Bureau branches worldwide in setting up systems. These bureaux existed in America, Canada, Greece, Turkey, Britain, Europe, the 'East' [Cairo, Alexandria, Malta, and Lemnos], Russia, Australia, and New Zealand.[6] In contrast, working with the Red Cross Crescent in Turkey proved more difficult.[7] Throughout the war, Deakin also formed working relationships with the British War Office, the Australian and British military authorities, the Australian Defence Department, the Australian High Commission, the British Red Cross Department, as well as several other organisations in an attempt to alleviate the concerns and misery of many Australian families waiting on news of their loved ones.[8]

Deakin was the daughter of Alfred Deakin, the former second Prime Minister of Australia, and his wife, Elizabeth 'Pattie' Deakin. When the First World War broke out, she had just completed musical studies in Budapest. Upon returning to Australia, Deakin travelled to America with her parents for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915. She assisted her mother in all 'the official duties connected with publicity schemes for the Australian Pavilion'.[9] Deakin also volunteered at the Military Base Hospital. In 1914, inspired by Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson's Red Cross Work at Federal Government House, she gained the Order of St. John Ambulance Passport in medical care and another certificate for home nursing but proposed applying for a second certificate.[10] During this period, Deakin also collaborated with the Australian Red Cross Society distributing comforts to the various camp hospitals. However, this was not enough; it seems her intent was always to get involved in the

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[5] Eric F. Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' *War in History*, Vol. 4, issue. 3 (1997), 298; Aaron Pegram, 'Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front 1916-18,' BA Honours Thesis, Research School of Humanities & Arts, ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences (2017), 125, 91.

[6] See, 'SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); SRG76/29 Correspondence with the New Zealand Bureau. May – June 1918; SRG76/30 Copy of letter sent to the International Red Cross Committee, Geneva, Switzerland Oct 1918; SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918; BritishRedCross, 'First World War: What we did during the war: Missing and Wounded Service,' accessed 3 August 2020, https://vad.redcross.org.uk/What-we-did-during-the-war.

[7] Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross* (Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020), 104.

[8] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802, National Library of Australia (NLA), accessed 27 March 2019, https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:36:16; 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:37:30.

[9] 'Mr. Deakin's Daughter Traces Missing Soldiers,' *Herald*, Victoria, 22 October 1918.

[10] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 86, 91.

war effort. Deakin eventually cabled her sister's brother-in-law, Norman Brookes, the Australian Red Cross Commissioner working in Egypt, to offer her services. Brookes was open to her travelling to Cairo. In response, she and her close friend Winifred Johnson prepared to leave for Egypt.

By late 1915, Deakin would be immersed in a British system and network as she established an Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in Cairo. The British War Office broadly regulated the scope of the British work in this area.[11] Therefore, in this chapter, it is essential to explain how the British Red Cross Department's administration and tracing system for soldiers was established in 1914 before it evolved in the war zone, beginning with the clearing hospitals. This explanation provides a context to the procedures and work initially adopted by the Australian bureau in Cairo and enables an examination of how Deakin adapted that system to suit Australian needs. The work of the Australian Military Intermediate Office in Cairo is significant, as are the actions of the Commonwealth Government concerning the issues arising abroad and on the home front as the war in Gallipoli escalated.

The Australian Red Cross bureaux represent a complex group of people and agencies.[12] Their overarching aim was to provide even the smallest piece of new information to a family in the hope that it would ease their pain and give relatives some greater context to the fate of their loved ones on the battlefield. In correspondence with Owen in Sydney, Deakin reinforced the significance of verifying statements, remarking that she 'understood only too well that the anxious relative clutches at every straw'.[13] The work of the Australian bureau abroad requires a more detailed explanation concerning their activities than that suggested by Eric Schneider of this bureau being a mere 'clearing house'. It is inaccurate to view the role of this bureau, or the reports sent from abroad as the sum of that bureau's work. In keeping with the ideas of sociologists Anne Taufen Wessels and Bruce Latour, it is by examining such groups or networks that one can understand more clearly the social complexities experienced by them in their interactions.[14] The Australian bureaux adapted and developed systems that best suited the Australian experience of the First World War so far away from the theatres of war, but as mentioned above, the bureau run by Deakin also readily assisted other Red Cross societies in formulating their systems.[15]

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[11] Redcross.org.uk/WW1, 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1, accessed 14 January 2020,
https://vad.redcross.org.uk/~/media/BritishRedCross/Documents/Who%20we%20are/History%20and%20archives/Missing%20and %20wounded%20service%20during%20the%20First%20World%20War.pdf

[12] Anne Taufen Wessells, 'Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory by Bruno Latour,' *International Public Management Journal* 10, no. 3 (2007), 352.

[13] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 30 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[14] Taufen Wessells, 'Review of Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory by Bruno Latour,' 352.

[15] Taufen Wessells, 'Review of Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory by Bruno Latour,' 352; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press USA - OSO, 2005), 11.

The dynamics of Deakin's humanitarian nationalism at a global level would eventually bind all the actors together into a network that constituted an independent social group on the home front, inclusive of Australian families and, notably, abroad with other organisations.[16] Humanitarianism is an active belief in the value of human life, while nationalism is about identifying one's nation and supporting its interests.[17] As a comparative-historical sociologist, Shai Dromi shows us that nationalism has had a crucial role in formalising humanitarian sentiments and facilitating impartial relief work across nation-state borders.[18] Sociologist Ben Herzog coined the term 'glocal' to explain the partnership reflected or characterised by local and global considerations in this type of work in such organisations as the Red Cross Society.[19] Indeed, when established in Geneva in 1863, the Society operated as an international humanitarian movement. As secretary of the Australian bureau abroad, Deakin acted at both levels, through her work with other organisations, directly with Australian enquirers, and with the state bureaux on the Australian home front.

Within the Australian Red Cross Society in 1915, a strong sense of patriotic pride emerged on the home front to assist those immediately impacted by the war in Europe. Included in this group were the state bureaus. In her approach to the bureau work abroad, Deakin was no different. She attempted to meet the needs of Australian families through her immediate actions and adaptation of the British systems within the Australian bureau. Her trip to the British bureaux in the French war zone, as discussed in Chapter 2, clearly highlighted this sentiment. She bolstered the Australian identity and attempted to strengthen the nation's presence at the war front in a time of utter chaos by reminding the British bureaux of how the 'tyranny of distance' shaped her work. Alongside this nationalistic work, she directly assisted and supported other international Red Cross societies when called upon. The various international Red Cross bureaux shared a strong sense of identity within a movement presented quite clearly as a global phenomenon. Yet, they also operated with a strong sense of nationalism at home.[20]

Clearing hospitals and British tracing systems

At the front, the clearing hospital, operating as a mobile unit, was the first to receive the sick and wounded from the field ambulances. The Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Association were in a prime position to assist, ensuring that no wounded soldier was left behind if an offence occurred and troops had to fall back. The St. John Ambulance set up and ran a hospital in Étaples,

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[16] Taufen Wessells, 'Review of Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory by Bruno Latour,' 352.

[17] *Oxford English Dictionary* 2020, accessed 26 October 2020, https://www.oed.com.

[18] Shai M. Dromi, 'What Does nationalism have to do with humanitarianism,' *The Sociological Review,* accessed 1 October 2020. https://thesociologicalreview.org/journal-collections/featured-papers/what-does-nationalism-have-to-do-with-humanitarianism/.

[19] Ben Herzog, 'Between nationalism and humanitarianism: the glocal discourse on refugees,' *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 2 (2009), 191.

[20] Dromi, 'What Does nationalism have to do with humanitarianism,' *The Sociological Review*.

France. The Order of Saint John funded and staffed the hospital, receiving 35,000 patients throughout the war.[21] The Red Cross Society established a chain of Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) to undertake the work. The VADs met the needs of the wounded and incapacitated, transporting them from the battlefield to base hospitals.[22] The military administration divided the care of wounded soldiers into separate collecting, evacuation, and distribution zones.

The first zone consisted of the medical establishments with combatant units; the second supported the clearing hospitals. In contrast, the third consisted of 'station hospitals, general hospitals, convalescent departments, hospital ships and military hospitals outside the theatres of war'.[23] In this third zone, the Red Cross Society undertook its principal field of activity. The role of the VADs enabled them to provide valuable information to Red Cross and YMCA searchers enquiring about wounded or missing soldiers. Following Lord Cecil's initial Red Cross Bureau in his chambers, the British Red Cross Department in London originated when the British Red Cross formed the Joint War Committee with the Order of St John. Together they provided much-needed services and machinery on the British home front and in areas of conflict following the outbreak of the war.[24]

The British Red Cross Society quickly established a small bureau in Paris and Boulogne. As early as August 1914, the Society had a small team of volunteers in France who began collecting lists of wounded soldiers in French hospitals. Soon, visitors to these hospitals were requested to retrieve the daily hospital admissions lists related to soldiers on behalf of the British Red Cross Society. The lists were combined with similar lists received from the French Government. By October, the Deputy Adjutant General of the 3rd Echelon, a branch of British General Headquarters in Nantes, France, received a daily list of soldier names. This department dealt with records, casualties, and reinforcements; therefore, they too were asked to confirm whether a listed soldier was reported as a casualty.[25] Newspapers on the British home front soon began publishing long casualty lists of soldiers' names. The British Red Cross Bureau in France also included these lists in their enquiries. Military authorities in the various hospitals and camps who had access to the casualty clearing stations and hospitals also began assisting the British Red Cross Bureau by providing lists.[26] The work of looking for wounded and missing soldiers slowly grew, leading to a need for more searchers and the opening of

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[21] 'The Museum of the Order of St John Blog, 'Étaples Reports Project Introduction,' accessed 6 October 2020, https://stjohnsgate.wordpress.com/category/etaples-reports-project-introduction/.

[22] Charles E. Vivian and John E. Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross* (London, New York, Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), 134.

[23] Vivian and Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 19.

[24] 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1, accessed 14 January 2020, https://vad.redcross.org.uk/en/~/media/BritishRedCross/Documents/Who%20we%20are/History%20and%20archives/Missing%20 and%20wounded%20service%20during%20the%20First%20World%20War.pdf.

[25] 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1.

[26] Ibid.

other branch bureaux in Britain and France. Although this service began on a small scale, more funding was soon required to run offices in Britain and mainland Europe.

Evelyn Charles Henry Vivian, a pseudonym for the British editor and author Charles Henry Cannell, and John Ernest Hodder Williams, a British author, were soon tasked with writing a book titled *The Way of the Red Cross* based on the work of the British Red Cross Department in London. Owen referred to this book when he set up the Sydney Red Cross Information Bureau in July 1915. It is an interesting title because if the word red is omitted, one might consider a different connotation, namely *The Way of the Cross*. Although the shorter title may suggest an underlying religious meaning which could be argued as originating from Henri Dunant's association with the YMCA, this is not the case. As one of the 'Committee of Five' in Switzerland who established the Red Cross Society, Dunant did so as a humanitarian rather than a Christian organisation. It is stated clearly in the Geneva Convention of 1906 that 'it was voted unanimously that the Red Cross had no religious significance'.[27] The heraldic emblem of the red cross on a white background, formed by reversing the Federal colours of Switzerland, was retained as 'the sign and distinctive emblem of the medical service of armies'.[28]

The intention behind the book was to raise much-needed funds and present a complete record of the work undertaken by the British Red Cross Society up to the book's publication. The book begins with the first scheme for the organisation of VADs in 1909 and concludes in early 1915, just before publication. All profits from the book's sale were given to *The Times* fund for sick and wounded soldiers in Britain. The work of the Red Cross was calculated as costing £1 a minute that year.[29] The chapter 'The King's Soldier's Counsel' is of particular interest, which details the methods used in their soldier enquiry work in the British Red Cross Department. Vivian and Hodder Williams described 'indexing of inquiries, classification of details received, checking of identification discs to be attended to'.[30] They also detailed the checking and counter-checking process of witness statements for soldiers 'missing in action'.[31] The authors identified that this work was the task of [legal] men versed in handling and sifting evidence, picking out the main points from the irrelevant and then being able to multitask.

Later in Adelaide, Symon also made a similar judgement when requesting the legal fraternity to volunteer for this work in South Australia.[32] The authors of *The Way of the Red Cross* noted that

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27 Great Britain, War Office, and Conference for Revision of the Geneva Convention of 1864, 'Sick and Wounded in War: Papers Relating to the Geneva Convention, 1906, Command Papers; Cd.3933' (London: Harrison and Sons 1908), 43.
28 Ibid, 18.
29 Vivian and Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 289.
30 Ibid, 166.
31 Ibid.
32 'Scheme of work for Red Cross Information Bureau,' 15 December 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, January 1916 and January 1917., State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

unresolved case files were not closed until definite news was obtained. While this was the path taken by the Australian Red Cross information bureaux, the British Red Cross Department changed its process as casualty numbers grew. Contrary to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, which supplied witness statements from fellow soldiers in the field, historian Robert Sackville-West suggests otherwise for the British department. He states that this group judged whether the soldier was dead or alive based on a searchers report and forwarded this to the British War Office and the soldier's family during the First World War.[33] British families received letters written by the searcher but signed by George Bingham, 5th Earl of Lucan, that concluded: 'I fear we can no longer doubt the fact, and desire to close the case with our deep sympathy in your bereavement'.[34] Lord Lucan had served in the war during 1914, where he was mentioned in despatches.[35] In contrast, the South Australian Bureau, in its quest to allay relatives' fears and provide enquirers with some understanding of what had happened to their next of kin during the war, tended to keep unresolved enquiries open until the bureau closed in December 1919.[36]

British Red Cross Bureau operations in Europe

With the outbreak of the war, the British Red Cross Department, consisting of two rooms, was established in the Red Cross Society Headquarters at 83 Pall Mall in London.[37] In April 1915, this department moved to 20 Arlington Street, London, a property lent by Lord Salisbury.[38] As the nature of the enquiry work gathered momentum in London, with thousands of families availing of the service to reduce their anxieties regarding a wounded or missing loved one on the battlefront, more space was essential.[39] The British Red Cross Department in London registered all incoming enquiries and printed an enquiry list each month. Later, once Deakin found out about these lists in Cairo, she quickly moved to adapt the way the lists were used in an Australian context; however, more on this later. The British Red Cross Department distributed the lists to the Red Cross searchers, who then searched for information in Britain, France, and Egypt. When information became available, the searchers sent their reports back to London.

The British department processed and forwarded these reports to the original enquirer back in Britain.[40] Reports for Australia initially went through the Australian High Commission in London,

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[33] Robert Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021), 21.

[34] Ibid, 21.

[35] The Peerage, 'George Charles Bingham, 5th Earl of Lucan,' accessed 10 January 2022, http://www.thepeerage.com/p5245.htm#i52445.

[36] Vivian and Hodder Williams, *The Way of the Red Cross*, 166.

[37] Ibid, 165.

[38] 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,'Redcross.org.uk/WW1.

[39] 'Wounded and Missing,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 4 September 1915.

[40] 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1.

where a small bureau had begun operating on behalf of the Australian enquirers shortly after the Australian state bureaux opened. To meet the increase in enquiries as the war progressed, the British Red Cross Department eventually divided Britain into districts and put their branch enquiry bureaux under the responsibility of a head searcher who was always male. He then organised the work of the other searchers in his charge. This system was later modified to accommodate Australian enquiries after Deakin arrived in Britain to set up the Australian bureau in 1916. Throughout the war, official searchers were predominantly British. However, through independent means, a few Australians arrived first in Cairo and then Britain, where they signed up to assist the Australian Red Cross bureaux in this wartime work. Many Australian searchers offered to pay their expenses while abroad, for as long as the war lasted, while others stopped off and assisted for weeks on their way elsewhere.[41] The British Red Cross Department in London continued to employ a system that registered all incoming enquiries. As the casualty lists grew, so did the number of searchers; by late 1915, upwards of 1,400 were operating in Britain and Europe.[42]

British and Australian hospitals also increased in number to meet the demand for soldier casualties; this resulted in over 1,400 hospitals on the British home front by the end of the war.[43] As mentioned above, the first-line hospitals, i.e., those initially receiving the wounded and sick, often became a searcher's first port of call, followed by hospitals on the British mainland. The British bureaux initially issued reports using official forms when corresponding with family members. However, as the enquiry work progressed, the British Red Cross Department introduced a more intimate response by letter to the family of a soldier so that an enquirer felt that a personal interest had been taken in the case.[44] From the outset, it was the more personal method of correspondence adopted and maintained by the Australian state bureaux. To meet British enquiry demands, in June 1915, Lady Katherine Weston Barker arrived in Cairo. She was a Red Cross Women's Corp member and established a British Red Cross Information Bureau at the Gresham House Hotel. This bureau also began assisting with Australian enquiries and corresponded directly with the Australian state bureaux. By July, the British War Office recognised the British Red Cross Society as the only body that could seek official information on missing soldiers.[45]

In early 1915, while the Australian Red Cross Society was yet to establish a presence in Egypt, the administrative section of the Australian Infantry Force had already been there for some time. Bruce

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[41] '"Six Business Men" – Red Cross Work in Egypt,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 17 September 1915; 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802. National Library Australia accessed 27 March 2019. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:39:07.
[42] *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.
[43] 'Missing – The Searchers Instinct,' *Sun*, New South Wales, 16 December 1915.
[44] 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1.
[45] Ibid.

Faraday states that the Australian military authorities were initially willing to be subordinate to the British system, as were the Canadians.[46] A 'higher-level administrative arrangements' system was devised to enable the Australian Imperial Force to integrate its national military administration system with the British Government and the British Army while also 'conserving and co-ordinating Australian requirements'.[47] The Australian Intermediate Base was established under the command of Colonel Victor Sellheim within a section of the British Base. The Commander of the 1st Australian Division, Brigadier General William T. Bridges, explained its purpose was 'to co-ordinate action by the Australian and British Authorities, as the whole cost of the Australian Imperial Force was with Australia'.[48] It became an essential contact point for information once the Australian bureau was operational.

Australian military administration presence in Cairo

Established in early 1915, the Australian Military Intermediate Base Office oversaw and recorded the information of Australian troops as brigade after brigade began to arrive in Egypt. It initially operated with a staff of 20,000 individuals; however, within eight months, with soldiers' numbers increasing, staff numbers soon grew to 100,000 people.[49] When the department moved to larger offices on the Base, the postal group transferred to the central post office in Cairo. At the same time, the Australian 1st Division left for the front. As ships arrived from Australia in Alexandria, soldiers were registered and entered into a card index system before directing the men into the correct channels. Following a battle, those soldiers killed or wounded on the battlefield were processed through the Intermediate Office using the elaborate card index system. In addition, a soldier's arrival or discharge at a hospital was also registered, as was his move to a convalescent facility. The Intermediate Office was assisted in this work by the YMCA hospital secretaries. While this process enabled military records to be updated, it also helped the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau work at home.

Further co-operation was shown when the Australian Red Cross bureaux and the YMCA later shared lists of names to pursue their enquiries.[50] Indeed, a local newspaper in New Zealand noted that their own Red Cross branch was sending enquiries out 'through the Geneva Red Cross, the American Ambassador, Mrs Grant, in Geneva and the YMCA in Egypt'.[51] No organisation was on its own; each was collectively operating within a global network to support each other and the families on whose behalf they were making enquiries. When a wounded or sick soldier was admitted to hospital, a cable

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46 Bruce D. Faraday, 'Half the Battle: The Administration and Higher Organisation of the AIF 1914-1918,' Chapter 2, PhD thesis,' History, Australian Defence Force Academy, University of New South Wales, 1997), 41.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid, 42.
49 'Australians at Gallipoli – Work of the Intermediate Base,' *Age*, Victoria, 6 November 1915.
50 'Charles A. Edmunds in his May 1917 monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 'SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 – Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); Information Bureau for Soldiers' Relatives,' *Register*, 24 November 1915.
51 'The Missing – Red Cross Inquiry Bureau,' *Lyttelton Times*, cxvii, issue 17087, New Zealand, 9 February 1916.

was dispatched to Australia, the War Office and the Australian High Commissioner in London notifying the Department of Defence of the soldier's condition. In turn, if the case was severe, the office in charge sent a notification from the military Base Records Office in Melbourne to next of kin. A soldier's fitness for duty and his return to the front, light duties, furlough or return to England or Australia was included on the card.[52] Many cables outline this information in the soldier enquiry packets within the South Australian Red Cross Bureau archives. These individual packets contain letters and notes between a soldier's next-of-kin and the South Australian Bureau; there is also various other correspondence between the Australian bureaux and other agencies on the home front and in Europe. Cairo's Australian Military Intermediate Office was in direct contact with the Military Base Records Office in Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, which later became the first port of call for many enquiries submitted to a state bureau. As the war progressed, the Red Cross searchers became much more efficient and proficient at supplementing and relaying crucial information to enquirers via the Red Cross information bureaux' channels of communication.

In some cases, the Australian Intermediate Office failed to record the movements of a soldier post-battle; often, this was because the officer in the trenches charged with detailing such information lost his checklist due to shell fire or falling in the field.[53] In such instances, it took weeks to establish new lists under these difficult circumstances. There was also the issue of distance from Australia and a dependency on having other services running efficiently alongside this military office. A cabling department was established by the military authorities in the Australian Intermediate Office in Cairo to code and decode the numerous cables arriving daily. A second cabling branch was required to deal with the cables sent by invalided soldiers using their field cards. Long lists came from the front, hospitals, and the British War Office. This information contributed to the updating of a soldier's card. Each company in the Australian Imperial Force had its distinctive cards, and each force had a specific colour. As Deakin's systems evolved, passing information to the Australian Red Cross information bureaux at home became more manageable and efficient. Soldiers could also help officials keep their information up to date by carrying and using their field service letter cards.

A Field Service Card had four sections. The first card allowed the soldier to enquire about another soldier or mate in the forces. A soldier used the second card to detail the location of his hospital or convalescent institute. He also described his injuries or ailment and how long he might be out of action. This information allowed the Intermediate Office in Cairo to locate wounded or missing soldiers and update their official records. The third card was a cable card enabling a soldier to communicate his situation to his family or next of kin at home. The cable cost was deducted from the

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[52] *Age*, Victoria, 6 November 1915.
[53] Ibid.

soldier's pay before being sent to a recipient. This card, if sent, arrived at his home when he was wounded and hospitalised. The fourth card intimated a new address while out of the lines.[54] Soldiers rarely used this card. The number of miscellaneous enquiries to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau verifies this. Such enquiries looked to ascertain an address for a particular soldier when silence prevailed, or a letter was returned.

Local newspapers continually ran notices on how to address an envelope to a soldier. The information bureaux also regularly provided and specified the required format when addressing an envelope to a soldier. If no further information arrived, family members often posted or personally took the soldier's second field card or the last received letter to the enquiry bureau to request additional information. Once the bureau had sufficiently dealt with the enquiry, these items were returned to families by the honorary secretary. The outline of these systems explains how well the military authorities, often under challenging circumstances, provided information on each member of the Australian Imperial Force during the war. However, they eventually ran into difficulties that resulted in the matter being raised in the Commonwealth Parliament.

Establishing an Australian Red Cross presence in Cairo

On the Australian home front and running parallel to this military operation, in July 1915, preparations were underway to establish the previously mentioned Australian bureau in Cairo, Egypt. The Council of the Australian Red Cross Society held a meeting at the Federal Government House in Melbourne. The committee, including Helen, Lady Munro-Ferguson, wife of the Australian Governor-General, Financier, Edward Miller, the honorary treasurer, and the Governor of Victoria, Sir Arthur Stanley, appointed two Australian Commissioners to Egypt. [55] The first commissioner was Adrian Knox, K.C., a New South Wales legal fraternity member. As the newly appointed Red Cross Commissioner to Egypt in July 1915, he arrived in Cairo on 11 August. The second appointed Commissioner, Norman Brookes, arrived in Egypt two weeks later, on 27 August. Brookes was a Wimbledon Tennis Champion who, when rejected for active service due to stomach ulcers, chose to work with the Red Cross Society.[56] The Australian Red Cross Commissioners' objectives were to represent the Australian branch of the Society in Egypt and to set up an information bureau 'to obtain information regarding wounded and missing soldiers'.[57] It was also proposed that a committee in Britain would provide information about Australian soldiers who arrived in Britain for medical attention.[58] The Australian Red Cross

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[54] Ibid.

[55] 'Red Cross Commissioners', *Farmer and Settler*, New South Wales, 16 July 1915.

[56] Wilfred H. Frederick, 'Brookes, Sir Norman Everard (1877–1968)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed online 24 January 2020. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/brookes-sir-norman-everard-5373/text9091,

[57] *Farmer and Settler*, New South Wales, 16 July 1915.

[58] 'Red Cross Information Bureau – Our Men at the Front,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 29 July 1915.

Commissioners were instructed to co-operate with the British Red Cross Egyptian Committee in facilitating their work. Both men accepted seats on the Egyptian committee upon their arrival.

The British military and Lieutenant-Colonel James W. Barrett assisted the Australian Commissioners. He, until then, had administered the work of the Australian Red Cross Society under British military administrative arrangements. The Australian General Officer Commanding (GOC), Sir John Maxwell, impressed both men; however, 'the expediency of separating the Red Cross Society from the military organisation' and they soon adopted this policy.[59] The norms of the Red Cross Society were probably accompanied by sanctions under their current arrangements with this military office. This separation contrasts with the YMCA operating their own Army Department in conjunction with military authorities. They also ran their YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry bureaux, discussed previously in Chapter 1. The Association extended their cabling concessions to the public and made several of its secretaries in Egypt who personally followed up on wounded and missing cases; this included enquiries relating to families of New Zealand soldiers.[60] The Red Cross Society in New Zealand cabled to the Australian bureau in London, code-named *Questman*, London, with full regimental particulars that needed to be accurate as the London bureau could not check these soldiers' details.[61] New Zealand soldiers' searches soon yielded satisfactory results, as with most other enquiries.

As the Australian Red Cross Commissioners settled into their roles in Cairo, Lieutenant-Colonel Barrett, although on cordial terms with both men, stepped back from his role as Executive Officer of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society in Egypt.[62] In a report published on his work carried out between March and September 1915, he thought the work undertaken by the Red Cross was entirely ancillary to the military and that they were 'currently undertaking much work which the government should do'.[63] He reasoned that the function of the Red Cross Society was 'to provide those little comforts and things which the government could not provide'.[64] However, he further argued 'it should refrain from embarking on great national undertakings'.[65] This statement might explain why General Maxwell requested that the Red Cross Society be separate from the military

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[59] 'The Red Cross: Report of Messrs Knox and Brookes,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 15 October 1915.
[60] YMCA Inquiry Bureau – Information about soldiers,' *New Zealand Herald* LII, issue 16114, New Zealand, 31 December 1915; 'Papers relating to No. 12513, Private Frank Oliver Tobin, Wellington Regiment, New Zealand,' SRG 76/1/12513 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/frank-oliver-tobin.
[61] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 14 November 1916, SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1916, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[62] James W Barrett, *Report on the British Red Cross in Egypt: from March to September* 3rd, 1915 (Cairo: Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society, 1915), 6.
[63] Ibid, 27.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.

authorities. One wonders if, on reflection post-war, Lt-Col. Barrett realised how short-sighted his view of the Red Cross Society's role was then.

In its enquiry role, the British Red Cross Department aimed to confirm or supplement the official story of a soldier on the war front. This group appointed agents [searchers] to hospitals in Egypt, Malta, or any other country in or about the Mediterranean. This appointment enabled the British and Australian searchers to acquire direct information on wounded or sick Australian Imperial Force soldiers. Searchers were required to commit 'their whole time to their duties as agents'.[66] The man was appointed to two or more hospitals once the workload did not impact the quality of their work. Initially, they were expected to prepare and forward all information obtained to the relevant state bureau. However, this process changed as the war escalated and casualty numbers increased. Before the arrival of the Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, the Australian bureaux on the home front had sent their soldier enquiries to the British Red Cross information bureaux in Alexandria, Malta, and London.[67] By June 1915, as soon as Lady Barker opened the Cairo office, she also received Australian enquiries. While Australian families at home used the British Red Cross bureaux in the first instance, setting up an independent Australian Information Bureau in Egypt was vital to the future success of the bureaux in each Australian state.

An independent Australian enquiry bureau in Cairo

Although the newly appointed Australian Red Cross Commissioners were required to establish such a bureau, it was not the only item on their agenda upon arrival in Egypt. Messrs Knox, and Brookes, set up an office at Shepheard's Hotel, Cairo, and immediately had their hands full establishing an Australian Red Cross Central Goods Depot. They also had to develop despatch routes for large quantities of goods and comfort parcels to hospitals in England, Scotland, France, and Egypt. They were receiving large consignments from Australia and England and attempted to arrange the receipt and despatch of goods and establish branch depots at locations such as Lemnos and Gallipoli. However, on the home front, it was reported in the *Age* that with their arrival in Egypt, 'the work of the Australian [Red Cross] branch became organised, systematised and extended to align with the aims and goals of those who willingly provided their services to it'.[68] In their first year, the Red Cross Commissioners dispatched Red Cross comforts to over 400 hospitals in England and Scotland and large quantities of parcels to France.[69]

[66] 'Scheme of work for the Red Cross Information Bureau, 15 December 1915,' SRG76/32.
[67] 'News about soldiers – Red Cross Bureau,' *Sun*, New South Wales, 9 September 191
[68] 'The New Cairo,' *Age*, 17 June 1916.
[69] 'Red Cross: Work of the Society Abroad', *Northern Miner*, Queensland, 22 November 1916.

As the work of the Australian Red Cross depot increased in Cairo, the Red Cross Commissioners sent a request to the Red Cross Society Head office in Australia in September 1915. They asked for ten men, six to assist with the Central depot and four to work in the enquiry bureau. They quickly had their volunteers, including Messrs. Norman Kater, H. Stuart Osborne, Frank de Villiers Lamb, and Stanley Addison, who were all approved by the Red Cross Central Council.[70]Anthony Horden followed afterwards and put a car at the disposal of searchers at the Australian enquiry bureau. R. W. Walker, a brother and business partner of Fred J. Walker and Co., Australian exporters of frozen and canned meats and famed for creating Vegemite, at his own expense, equipped a motor ambulance and presented it to the military authorities in Cairo. The actions of such men highlight the importance and use of private means by many throughout the war. Walker also volunteered to drive the ambulance from Britain to Egypt.[71] The ten Australian male volunteers chose to pay for their travel and living expenses, and none took any remuneration for their work. Red Cross committee members at home suggested that the Cairo office's efficiency would increase with their arrival.[72]

Tony Cunneen states that these men took up the role of searchers and, once in Egypt, were dispersed to 'the casualty stations on Lemnos and the hospitals in Malta'.[73] In October 1915, Knox and Brookes corresponded with the Australian state bureaux in Sydney and Melbourne to notify them that they had arranged with the British Red Cross Department in Cairo to form a joint enquiry bureau[74]. This bureau would cover the Mediterranean and Britain and liaison with the British Red Cross central offices in Cairo and Malta.[75] The Australian Commissioners outlined that 'all enquiries should be addressed "Enquiry Cairo", the code address for the Australian bureau in Cairo, and should state all known particulars' of the soldier enquired after.[76] They also proposed to confine the work to answering

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[70] 'For Egypt-Patriotic Business Men,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 September 1915.

[71] *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 September 1915.

[72] Ibid.

[73] *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 September 1915; 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 15 December 1915,' SRG76/31 Miscellaneous Correspondence. Sept 1915 – Feb 1920, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); Tony Cunneen, 'Trouble Does Not Exist': The New South Wales Bar and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau,' *Bar News: The Journal of the NSW Bar Association* (2015), 79.

[74] As mentioned previously, in 1915, the Sydney and Melbourne bureaux opened on 13 and 15 September, respectively, the Brisbane Bureau opened in 18 October, while the bureaux in Perth, Hobart and Launceston opened in November 1915; In Adelaide, the bureau opened on 5 January 1916 but was operational by the end of 1915; See 'News about Soldiers,' *Sun*, New South Wales, 9 September 1915; 'Soldiers Abroad: An Information Bureau,' *Argus*, Victoria, 16 September 1915; 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Albany Advertiser*, Western Australia, 10 November 1915; 'Red Cross Information Bureau: Its Objects and Scope,' *Mercury*, Tasmania, 13 January 1916; 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Northern Times*, Western Australia, 6 November 1915; 'Red Cross Extension: Information Bureau in Adelaide,' *Register*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.

[75] 'Australian Red Cross Commissioners, Adrian Knox and Norman Brookes in correspondence with Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson, 2 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917.

[76] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Maitland Daily Mercury*, New South Wales, 4 October 1915; 'Information Bureau, Victorian Division subjoined Statement from John B. Kiddle to the Red Cross Committee, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915.

specific enquiries and requested 'please advise enquiry bureau all [Australian] States immediately'.[77] Using the already established British Red Cross Enquiry Bureau and its networks before having an independent Australian-focused bureau played a crucial role in the Commissioners' aims. In those early days, it contributed to and promoted social solidarity amongst the community engaged in this Australian Red Cross Society work on both fronts.

On 2 October 1915, following the arrival of the new volunteers who had travelled through Adelaide on their way to Cairo, Knox and Brookes sent a cable to Lady Munro Ferguson in Australia. The cable announced the existence of a joint enquiry bureau covering the Mediterranean and England.[78] Knox also notified Lady Munro-Ferguson that the Red Cross Information Bureau in Cairo was again able to deal with enquiries about soldiers from various Red Cross bureaux in Australia regarding soldiers.[79] On the Australian home front, however, due to the rising concerns of the Commonwealth Government and the public throughout most of 1915, regarding the significant delays in garnering information, the methods used in the Australian enquiry work in Cairo needed to change. Establishing a fully functional Australian Bureau was well-timed, necessary, and much needed.

Following Brookes' positive response, Deakin and her friend Winifred Johnson had set sail aboard the P&O Liner, *Arabia,* for Egypt. On Wednesday, 20 October 1915, they arrived in Cairo. Thirty-six-year-old Johnson was a niece of David Syme, Victoria's most potent newspaper man and editor of the *Age* at the time.[80] This period was interesting for many women as they emerged from their domestic private sphere into a public space that men initially constructed. For both women, it was particularly bold to travel from Australia to accept their new roles with the Australian Red Cross Society in Egypt. Deakin's father disapproved of her action, while her mother was her strongest ally. Historian Carmel Shute reminds us that with the outbreak of the First World War, the battlefield became the sole preserve of men while the role of women was plunged back into the old mythical position of one who gilded her cage.[81] The actions of these two young women saw them move from a private sphere into a very public space that not only remained male-dominated but was centred on war. Historian Joy Damousi writes that while such spaces were social constructs, the world of general

[77] 'Cable from Messrs Knox and Brookes, Cairo to Australian Bureaux, 2 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[78] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Maitland Daily Mercury*, New South Wales, 4 October 1915.

[79] 'Red Cross Information Bureau – The Cairo Centre,' *Western Australian*, Western Australia, 5 October 1915.

[80] 'David Syme,' *The Australian Media Hall of Fame*, accessed 11 August 2020, https://halloffame.melbournepressclub.com/article/david-syme.

[81] Carmel Shute, 'Heroines and Heroes: Sexual Mythology in Australia 1914-18,' in *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (Cambridge, UK; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 23.

politics was a masculine one and a world that generally excluded women.[82] Yet, Cairo was vibrant with life, in particular Australian life.

Cairo became a hub where many wounded Australian soldiers found treatment, convalesced, or passed through the city. Australian women were also prevalent; many oversaw Red Cross stores in Australian hospitals. This situation may well be because Australian officers frequently brought their wives to Egypt, and these women wanted to be helpful and occupied.[83] Hence, the Australian Comforts Fund was run mainly by women. In addition, a joint British and Australian Red Cross outings committee operated for recuperating soldiers; cars were provided every afternoon by the Australian branch.[84] In the short time that the Red Cross Commissioners had been in Egypt, their relationships in Cairo and other locations in this region proved very beneficial to the Australian Information Bureau, and no doubt later assisted Deakin in making it an independent Australian operation. However, on the night of her arrival, she was informed 'quite distinctly and briefly' by the Australian Red Cross Commissioners, Knox, and Brookes, that 'she was expected to open the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau the following morning at 9.30 am at the Gresham House Hotel'.[85] Deakin was told that the Australian bureau was next door to the British Red Cross Enquiry Bureau.

Australian bureau open for business in Cairo

On the morning of 21 October 1915, the temperature in Cairo sat at 69.8F (21C).[86] Deakin stated that when she arrived at the Gresham House Hotel, she and Lady Barker immediately took to each other. The latter had been greatly concerned that the Australian bureau's secretary 'would be some stuff of a man', and she was relieved to find a woman at the door instead.[87] Deakin noted this comment 'put them on the right footing from the word go'.[88] Deakin and Lady Barker challenged 'the traditional gendered roles' in society in their respective roles.[89] Historian Joan Beaumont has suggested that women in a similar voluntary organisation on the home front while gaining more 'independent agency and new organisational skills', continued to 'accept patriarchy and male leadership'.[90] The British Red Cross, 'who had managed the Australian enquiries to date', was anxious to be relieved of Australian

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[82] Joy Damousi, 'Socialist women and gendered space: Anti-conscription and anti-war campaigns 1914-18,' in *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (Cambridge, UK; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 256.

[83] 'Life at Cairo,' *Northern Miner*, Queensland, 20 January 1915.

[84] 'The New Cairo,' *Age*, Victoria, 17 June 1916.

[85] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802, National Library of Australia (NLA), accessed 27 March 2019, https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:07:40.

[86] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 'Egypt Climatological Data 1915,' Accessed 23 June 2020, https://library.noaa.gov/Collections/Digital-Docs/Foreign-Climate-Data/Egypt-Climate-Data#o44513570.

[87] 'Vera Deakin quoting Lady Katherine W. Barker in 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40.

[88] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:00:15.

[89] Joan Beaumont, *Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War*, 2nd ed. (Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and London: Allen and Unwin, 2014), 100.

[90] Ibid.

enquiry work as 'they had more than enough to do with the casualties of their men on Gallipoli'.[91] Nevertheless, British and Australian searchers would continue to work and support one another throughout the war on behalf of Australian families. Indeed, to conclude on this point, there is no evidence to support Cunneen's contention that an Australian unit of searchers took over an inadequate service by the British Red Cross.[92]

In those first few days in Cairo, Lady Barker explained to Deakin the network system of the British Red Cross Enquiry Bureau in the Mediterranean. Deakin acknowledged this was a 'tremendous help' and quickly familiarised her with 'all the tricks about the printed lists that were issued'.[93] Lady Barker explained how Australian enquiries would now make up part of the British bureau's enquiry lists. Interestingly, as a forty-year-old woman, who had sadly been widowed the previous year, Lady Barker was further relieved to find the staff in the Australian bureau were predominantly female. In a conversation with Deakin, she described how having a female workforce in the Australian Bureau meant that she 'needn't tremble before you, as I do with some of the men'.[94] Lady Barker also explained to Deakin that 'several Red Cross workers in the field were disgusted to find a woman in charge of the British bureau in Cairo' and did not welcome her advice.[95] As Damousi has suggested, was it that when women in roles of authority were perceived to be challenging masculinity, however implicitly, some women were open to such hostile treatment in this period of history? Nevertheless, the social interactions amongst the women undoubtedly generated trust and, in turn, attracted other women to volunteer their time more easily. In 1915, based on their environment, and formal and informal networks in Cairo, this appears to have given expression to feelings of group solidarity.[96]

On the matter of searchers, Lady Barker reported that she did have 'excellent [male] searchers in the field, and she hoped Deakin would also build up her searching staff'.[97] In a later interview with an Australian newspaper, Deakin stated that 'the Australian searcher is always a male' when asked about female searchers.[98] She clarified this point by saying that a legal man possessed the best qualifications for a searcher as the men [soldiers] were less likely to prevaricate when questioned by a man; 'women are apt to waste too much time in talking'.[99] The searcher also required reason, instinct, a keen analytical mind and some acquaintance with human psychology.[100] Such views partly explain the difficulty in

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[91] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40.
[92] Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' *Australian Law Journal* 92, no. 9 (2018), 698.
[93] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] John Wilson, 'Volunteering,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000), 223.
[97] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40.
[98] '"Searchers Useful: War's New Product,"' *Weekly Times*, Victoria, 30 December 1916.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

finding enough Australian male searchers, preferably of the legal profession, as they were more likely to have the specialist skills Deakin and the honorary secretaries at home required.

A searcher also needed the funds to travel abroad and support themselves in this wartime work. When the ten volunteers previously discussed were accepted, many male and female volunteers who required financial assistance to go overseas were rejected, highlighting the importance of private means.[101] It also shows why the initial number of Australian searchers was lower than their British counterparts in Europe.[102] However, Australian searchers increased in number on both the home front and the war front as the war progressed; this is discussed in Chapter 4. Interestingly, unlike the Australian Red Cross bureaux, the YMCA did avail of female searchers such as Mrs Jessop, the wife of one of the Executive Secretaries of this Association, particularly in hospitals and convalescent hubs around Cairo.[103] The British Red Cross Society also used female searchers like Lucy E. Gleghorn in England.[104] It is also probable that due to the war effort and the nature of the work in the bureau, more women than men were available at that time to assist in administrative duties.

From the outset, Deakin was adamant with everybody, including the Australian Red Cross Commissioners, that she required suitable searchers to go amongst the troops. People 'who would get the information, especially regarding men who were 'missing' or had died of wounds or been 'killed in action".[105] Those she sent out to search for information 'had to gain not only the confidence of the men they were enquiring from, but they also had to be alert and accurate in their reporting'.[106] The discussion Deakin later recalled with Lady Barker and her interview with the Australian journalist highlights that the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was still in its infancy in late October 1915. Her thinking would change as the soldier casualty numbers, hospital locations expanded, and enquiries increased. Deakin and Johnson's arrival in Cairo was a turning point for the Australian Red Cross Commissioners and, importantly, for those Australian families anxious for news on the home front.

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[101] Ibid.

[102] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 298; Aaron Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front* 1916-18 Australian Army History Series, 91.

[103] 'The Y.M.C.A. Inquiry Bureau,' *Rutherglen Sun and Chiltern Valley Advertiser*, Victoria, 21 January 1916.

[104] 'Papers relating to No. 3156, Private John W Thomas, 26th Battalion,' South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau File Series SRG 76/1/5041, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/john-william-thomas-wood.

[105] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40.

[106] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40; Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 13.

Before establishing the Australian bureau, Australian enquiries were received at various British offices '(London, Malta, Alexandria, Lemnos, &c.) and were always dealt with as far as possible'.[107] Soldier enquiries, including those sent by Symon and the League of Loyal Women of Australia in South Australia, were soon sent to Cairo by the state bureaux in Australia once the Australian Red Cross Commissioners had set up offices there. Symon, however, was shrewd in waiting to open the doors of the South Australian Bureau until January 1916. No doubt, like the general public, he was aware of the long delays in postal services and information about casualties being debated in Federal Parliament throughout 1915. Moreover, Symon was conscious of the critical need for a fully functional Australian Red Cross Information Bureau that could independently operate, respond to, and focus on enquiries on behalf of the families and next of kin of Australian soldiers on the home front. Little did he realise just how successful Deakin would be or how quickly she would turn things around when she took on the role of secretary. When Deakin arrived in Egypt in October 1915, she was twenty-four years old; she would have found a male-dominated British and Australian military administrative structure in operation. Yet, she immediately set about forming a rationally organised pattern of activities in which each series of actions was functionally related to the purposes of the bureau and, from the outset, was deeply conscious of the distance between Australian families and the war front.[108]

Cairo opening hours and searchers

The Australian bureau in Cairo opened daily from 8.30 am until 6.00 pm with a two-hour break mid-day. Personnel found 'it paid in the end for that little rest in the middle of the day' as this break, possibly from work and the day's heat, enabled them to work late into the evening.[109] The time difference of approximately eight hours between Egypt and Australia appears to have had little impact on the work.[110] When this bureau later moved to London, out of necessity, the South Australian Bureau staff also 'diligently worked into the late hours of the night' to communicate with Deakin and her staff during London's daytime.[111] From the outset, Deakin showed dedication and determination in the work required of her and her team in Cairo. On her first day in the Cairo office, of the five local clerks appointed to assist with the administration work, Deakin retained only the most senior, Mr Bloom, a Levantine engaged on her behalf. She considered him efficient; he was also a multi-linguist and, therefore 'a necessity in Cairo at the time'.[112] Moreover, she argued that accuracy and attention to detail

[107] 'Lady Katherine W. Barker in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 24 November 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916, and Jan 1917.

[108] Robert Merton, 'Bureaucratic Structure and Personality.' *Social Forces* 18, no. 1 (1939), 560.

[109] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:21:35.

[110] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 7, SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919.

[111] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 16, SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919; Peter Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War* (Australia: Australian Legal Heritage, 2014), 140.

[112] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:07:40.

were required in the work. Such actions run counter to the present understanding in some literature that 'the establishment of an efficient [Information Bureau] organisation in October 1915 relied on the work of civilian searchers' in Cairo.[113]

Indeed, it appears what was required was a resolute Australian-focused secretary who immediately grasped the situation and was able to act quickly in finding the right people to undertake the work. Sitting around 'reading newspapers, smoking and drinking coffee', the other clerks did not fit these requirements.[114] At the end of that first day, Deakin sent them away to collect their wages from the Australian Red Cross Commissioners at their office in Shepherd's Hotel. She did not take the task of firing the four men lightly and, feeling less than brave at her actions, had decided to stay away from the typing room for some hours after the confrontation.[115] Deakin stated that Lady Barker supported her decision although, given her disposition, feared they might return in the night to knife them![116] But, of course, they did no such thing. Deakin replaced the men with two British army wives who volunteered two or three days a week to assist with typing. Another British woman, Miss Moss, also volunteered to work at the Australian bureau as an administrator.[117] Deakin still had to consider how she would expand her team of searchers. This group of men would be a vital component in the bureau's intent to gather information on behalf of Australian families at home. However, Lady Barker's searchers were already undertaking Australian searches and continued to do so until Deakin established her team. She initially recruited two British men who proved to be immensely helpful as searchers, but several men were required to fit her specific requirements.[118]

Alongside some other Australian volunteers, William J. Isbister, another legal man from Adelaide, arrived in Cairo that November as an Honorary Red Cross Commissioner to improve the efficiency of landing times for parcel distribution to the troops.[119] Isbister was known for his 'cleverness as a lawyer, his readiness to grasp and explain legal intricacies, and his ability to quickly apply his technical erudition to the circumstances of a case'.[120] When he had approached Marie, Lady Galway, founder of the South Australian Branch of the Red Cross Society, to offer his services to aid Australians in the war, she had suggested his skills would be best used in Egypt.[121] He spent six months with Deakin in the Australian bureau, where 'he did a remarkable job as a researcher' reviewing documents sent to the state bureaux concerning soldiers classified as wounded, missing or killed in

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113 Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 699.
114 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:02:12.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid, at time 00:07:40.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
119 Moore, A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War, 134.
120 'Mr. Isbister, K.C.,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 6 April 1916.
121 Ibid.

action.[122] In July 1916, Isbister was unanimously elected as a member of the General Committee of the South Australian Division of the Australian Red Cross Society. He would later prove himself as an asset to the bureau in Adelaide when he later returned to South Australia. Upon his arrival, Stanley Addison, the Australian Red Cross secretary in Victoria during the Second World War, also proved to be an admirable searcher at the bureau with Deakin. She has stated that he had a gift of eliciting information from tired and worried men who did not want to speak with Red Cross people. However, when these soldiers heard what the Australian bureaux were doing on the home front 'to relieve the anxieties and fears of the relatives and next of kin in Australia,' they spoke more freely to Addison, Deakin noted 'he sent in some excellent reports'.[123]

Deakin held a similar sentiment in everything she did at the bureau. She soon expanded her team to include typists and checkers; the typists dealt with the searcher reports for Australian soldiers before being checked by a group of elderly missionary lady volunteers against the original reports. Several copies of the final report were produced and distributed to other information bureaux for cross-referencing. These were distributed to the War Office, and the central Red Cross searchers' office in France for filing. Portions of reports were also cabled directly to the Australian bureaux back home.[124] These activities contradict the notion put forward by Eric Schneider that 'reports would eventually find their way to the Red Cross headquarters in London'.[125] The reports soon ran into the hundreds in any given week. In many instances, they revealed intimate details of the fate of a soldier enquired after.[126] Historian Jay Winter notes that in some cases, 'however harsh the imagery, it conveyed reality and finality'.[127] The impact on Australian families receiving the intimate details from a searcher's reports is often revealed in their written replies to Honorary Secretary Charles Edmunds in the South Australian Bureau. They also remind the reader that a family's experience of the war was not peripheral, even with the vast distances that separated them from the battlefield. Historian Bart Ziino's assessment that a family's experiences were 'part of the same processes that sustained the war at its heart' is a reality.[128] For all the 'manipulative and buttressing effects of censorship and propaganda' occurring on the home front, there was no hiding from the details gathered by searchers and passed on by the Australian state bureaux to enquirers.[129]

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[122] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:10:36; Moore, *A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War*, 140.
[123] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:10:36.
[124] Frank Pulsford, 'The Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau.' *The N.S.W. Red Cross Record*, (Sydney, June 1918), 11-12, accessed 11 May 2020, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-78784392.
[125] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 299.
[126] Frank Pulsford, 'The Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' 11-12.
[127] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 2018), 41.
[128] Bart Ziino, 'Total war' *in Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 165.
[129] Raymond Evans, *Loyalty and Disloyalty: Social Conflict on the Queensland Home Front*, 1914-18 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 30.

In those early days of the Australian bureaux' wartime work in Cairo, unbeknownst to Deakin and her team, the foundations were being laid for the intense work that was yet to come. For now, the casualties from the Gallipoli campaign kept them all busy. Deakin noted how 'terribly harrowing the Gallipoli reports were' as they arrived at the bureau.[130] While it continued in its attempts to recruit Australian searchers, the British Red Cross searchers readily assisted with Australian enquiries. Australian searchers later reciprocated this service in Britain and Europe as the war progressed. Meanwhile, in Egypt, the Australian searchers in Cairo focused on the first and second Australian General Hospitals and soldier camps. In some instances, the British Red Cross Society relied on visitors at these hospitals to personally interview the man being enquired about if they found that he was a patient.[131] Sackville-West suggests that a box of cigarettes was likely to come in handy with some interviewees.[132] Within weeks, Deakin had instilled a strong work ethic and efficient systems in the bureau.

Carole Woods suggests that the Red Cross Commissioners in Egypt intended to replace Deakin with someone more experienced, preferably a man.[133] Dr Norman Kater, a medical practitioner, pastoralist, and later a New South Wales Legislative Council member, was considered for the role. However, Deakin was not replaced, possibly due to the letter sent by Lady Barker to the South Australian Bureau on 24 November 1915 confirming that the Australian bureau was now fully operational in Cairo under the charge of Deakin. Lady Barker, no doubt determined to keep the status quo in Egypt, declared that 'all future enquiries were to be dealt with through the Australian bureau rather than the London British Red Cross now that [all] the Australian bureaux were fully established'.[134] Symon and Edmunds, buoyed by this confirmation, moved forward with their plans to open the doors of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in early January.

Home front deliberations

Contemporarily, on the home front, the military authorities were still considering the establishment of an Expeditionary Force Information Bureau in Egypt. An article published in the *Age* argued that this delay was regrettable as a bureau was urgently needed due to the number of ships arriving daily with casualties from Gallipoli.[i] From this statement, it appears the enquiry work of the YMCA, previously discussed in Chapter 1, was not viewed or possibly recognised as being sufficient for the needs of the

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[130] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:15:00.
[131] Frank Pulsford, 'The Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' 12,
[132] Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 13.
[133] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 98.
[134] 'Lady Katherine W. Baker in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds,' November 1915, SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened between July 1915 - January 1916', January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

military. Owen cautioned the other honorary secretaries to ascertain if an enquiry had already been made with another organisation when he put together his *Hints to Members in Charge of Office* [i.e., Red Cross information bureaux] within the legal fraternity.[135] The Red Cross bureaux did not want to cause interference and a duplication of the work. He was probably referring to the enquiry work of others, such as the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureaux already operating in Sydney and Adelaide. The Commonwealth Government always intended to support Australian soldiers' relatives by informing them of a soldier's condition and fate on the battlefield. However, as shown in Chapter 2, systems were yet to be implemented within the military administration or the Commonwealth Government. The proposed conference previously alluded to by Edward F. Mitchell, K.C., from Victoria, who represented the Red Cross Society, and the military authorities in October, eventually took place the following month.

The conference, convened by George Pearce, the Minister of Defence, was attended by various military bodies and Mitchell in November 1915.[136] This gathering happened amidst the ongoing debates about the release of Murdoch's report regarding the situation in Egypt. Those gathered discussed the relative functions of Departmental and Red Cross organisations regarding casualties and condition of sick and wounded Australian soldiers abroad. The attendees concluded that the Officer Commanding (OC.) Intermediate Base should be advised by cable to submit the practicalities of undertaking the recommendations outlined in Murdoch's report regarding wounded and sick soldiers. These recommendations included sending a report by cable from Egypt to the Commonwealth Department of Defence concerning those seriously ill or wounded soldiers. They proposed that a capable official be employed to collate the hospital reports and be responsible for the cabling. The Department anticipated that the Eastern Extension Company would allow the free transmission of up to five hundred words. For less severe cases, the recommendation was to send reports by daily mail to supplement information already received by the Department.[137]

In a follow-up cable, the Department of Defence requested Colonel Sellheim to make suggestions about the above recommendations and collate and despatch similar information from Mediterranean hospitals by suitable officers. Pearce approved obtaining additional staff to undertake the work and suggested using convalescent soldiers who would remain permanently employed in this

135 'Langer Owen's 'Hints to members in charge of office, n.d.' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
136 Proposed attendees for the conference were Lt-Colonel T. H. Dodds, D.S.O. Adjutant General as Chairman, Colonel A. E. Shepherd, D/Director General Medical Services, Captain J. M. Lean, Officer in Charge, Base Records, Melbourne, E. F. Mitchell, Esq., K.C., Law Courts, Melbourne and organiser, Red Cross Inquiry Bureau; See 'Department of Defence Minute Paper, 1 November 1915,' Defence AIF 112-4-1013. File Series MP367/1, National Archives of Australia (NAA).
137 'A cable to the Officer in Command of the Australian Intermediate Base, Cairo from the Australian Imperial Force, Melbourne,' 9 November 1915, Defence AIF 279-1-492. File Series MP367/1, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

duty. He assured Colonel Sellheim that any difficulties that occurred around the interference with regulations of hospitals were to be represented by the Minister to the Imperial Authorities on his recommendations. The cable concluded by instructing Colonel Sellheim to consult with Knox, the Australian Red Cross Commissioner in Cairo, to prevent any overlapping.[138] Colonel Sellheim sent a memo to Major General Ellison stating that the Australian authorities had instructed him:

> to organise a Central Inquiry Bureau […] for the purpose of dealing with certain special information which they desire to be forwarded to them daily. This step had been decided upon at the insistent demand of the Australian Public to get accurate and speedy information regarding casualties in much greater detail than is given in the British Services.[139]

The gathering and disseminating of 'certain special information' were not as straightforward as their intentions suggested, nor was the information 'as neutral as it appeared'.[140] Of great concern to the Commonwealth Government were those issues that had the power to affect the morale of Australians on the home front, particularly those considering enlistment. Such material also provided those in political opposition the ammunition to criticise the government.[141] Regardless of these discussions, the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in Cairo was busily establishing systems and processes to provide answers as early as possible for enquiring families.

Vera Deakin, nationhood, and the military authorities in Cairo

Deakin was fully aware of the importance and value of providing information to Australian families from the Australian bureau in Cairo. As the enquiry work was to be undertaken at the highest level possible, she quickly set about modifying the British Red Cross Department system she inherited in Cairo. Her grasp of the situation for those so far away in Australia was immediate. When Lady Barker informed her that there was a British War Office code, under lock and key, that could help to speed up communications with the home front, she lost no time requesting the code. Deakin noted that 'father's name helped me there and the British Red Cross and Lady Barker'.[142] She then 'attacked' the Australian military headquarters in London and said, 'I have the British War Office code; now I want your codes too'.[143] Deakin suggested they would 'save thousands of pounds to the Australian Red Cross if you give me the code'.[144] The Australian military authorities did give Deakin the code, which she kept under lock and key. Every night after that, she used both codes and 'never failed to send information home to Australia'.[145] These early actions by the War Office and the Australian military authorities offer an

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[138] Ibid.

[139] 'Memo from Colonel Sellheim to Major General Ellison, 30 November 1915, AWM 27 302/36,' quoted in Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative.' Archives and Manuscripts 48, no. 2 (2020), 123.

[140] Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 696.

[141] Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' *Archives and Manuscripts* 48, no. 2 (2020), 123.

[142] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:36:16.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid.

insight into the respect given to Deakin and her team in the Australian bureau. In later life, she noted, the support received from the British Red Cross and Lady Barker, and in respect of the codes, using her father's name to secure them had reduced 'her worries about all that separation' from home.[146]

The British War Office code was beneficial because it enabled Deakin to use a word to sum up statements such as 'progressing favourably', 'almost convalescent' or 're-joining unit soon'.[147] She argued that it was 'extra work on the one hand because you had to check everything carefully, but it saved so much money for the Red Cross Society' on the other hand.[148] She eventually passed this vital work on to Lilian Whybrow, who later arrived from Australia to work in the bureau. Deakin also stated that she left only non-urgent items on her desk of an evening concerning deaths and burials.[149] All other details were cabled to Australia immediately in an attempt 'to relieve the parents or the wives or nearest and dearest'.[150] Deakin and Johnson worked at the Australian bureau on Saturdays 'until quite late in the afternoon'.[151] On Sundays, they assisted in the canteens of the first Australian General Hospital in Heliopolis due to being short-staffed. She described the first hospital as 'an enormous palace of a place where one felt almost at home in Australia because every second person was an Australian in that Australian hospital'.[152] She also remarked that the second hospital at Ghezireh, although not as suitable as the first hospital to staff and patients, resembled a converted Luna Park. These activities brought a sense of familiarity to those coming from Melbourne.[153] Deakin's actions in Cairo reflect an attitude of someone intent on setting up a viable organised bureau that could meet the needs of those on the home front who were making enquiries. It also speaks to someone who had authority and took responsibility for her actions early on; she had a unity of command and direction in the bureau with a disciplined staff.

Both young women volunteered at Ezbekieh Gardens, a notorious spot in Cairo that became a home from home for Australian soldiers when 'the YMCA set up space here for soldiers to have a soft drink and talk with Australian girls'.[154] Deakin noted that 'most of the girls were Australian or New Zealanders'.[155] Australian soldiers wounded or convalescing in Cairo also gravitated to the Gresham House Hotel, where the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau was located. Often, 'important work was willingly stopped' to speak with fellow Australians for a short time.[156] Deakin remarked the soldiers

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[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid, at time 00:37:30.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid, at time 00:33:02.
[151] Ibid, at time 00:16:12.
[152] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:16:12.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid, at time 00:17:38.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid, at time 00:13:39.

'very often and so Australian-like, sat on the edge of their desks, telling them tales of Gallipoli and trying to give them gifts of all manner of things they had collected in the field'.[157] Elderly rail workers also arrived from Australia to assist with the desert railway lines, and when they found the heat and homesickness too much, they too dropped by to chat with the bureau staff. Deakin later noted that they were not so old; it was just that she was so young in comparison.[158]

On another occasion, on a tram ride packed with Australian, British and New Zealand soldiers, two soldiers the worse for wear from drinking began using language that was not considered fit for ladies' ears.[159] Deakin described the moment when 'two great, huge Australians, with their slouch hats on the back of their heads, came up to these two' and told them to be quiet in front of a lady.[160] During their time in Egypt, the Australian bureau staff did not have a uniform. Instead, they wore a Red Cross brassard, fixed to the left arm that was numbered and registered, with their 'ordinary white cotton frocks'.[161] This brassard or armlet, in place of a military uniform, was stamped by military authorities and accompanied by a certificate of identity.[162] The simple uniform would have established their identity amongst the troops when they were out and about volunteering in Cairo.

The myth of the Australian nation being forged on the battlefield has to date neglected that Australians such as Deakin already had a strong sense of nationhood when they arrived in a foreign country. The first seeds of this myth appeared in newspapers across Australia two weeks after Australian soldiers landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. In a newspaper article, the British war correspondent, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, stated that the landings were 'the finest feat of the war'.[163] He described the Australian soldiers who entered this battle as a 'cheerful, quiet, confident, nerveless race of athletes'.[164] Today, many scholars continue debating this militaristic notion of Australian nation-building.[165]

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[157] Ibid, at time 00:20:24.
[158] Ibid, at time 00:17:38.
[159] Ibid, at time 00:40:19.
[160] Ibid.
[161] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, at time 00:03:40.
[162] Great Britain, War Office, and Conference for Revision of the Geneva Convention of 1864, Great Britain, War Office, 'Sick and Wounded in War: Papers Relating to the Geneva Convention, 1906, 18.
[163] 'The Great War. Australia's Brilliant Dash,' *Telegraph*, Queensland, 8 May 1915.
[164] Ibid.
[165] For example, See Eric Montgomery Andrews, *The Anzac Illusion: Anglo-Australian Relations during World War* I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993; Rachel Buchanan, and Paul James. 'Lest We Forget', Arena Magazine, December 1998, Academic OneFile, Accessed 26 June 2020, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A53877600/AONE?u=flinders&sid=AONE&xid=8631e3f9; Marilyn Lake, Henry Reynolds, Joy Damousi, and Mark McKenna, eds. *What's Wrong with ANZAC?: The Militarisation of Australian History*, 1st ed. Sydney: University of NSW Press, 2010; Graham Seal*, Inventing Anzac: The Digger and National Mythology, UQP Australian Studies*, St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press in association with the API Network and Curtin University of Technology, 2004; White, Richard White, Inventing Australia: Images and Identity, 1688-1980, *The Australian Experience*, no. 3. Sydney; Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1981.

In Cairo, Deakin first clarified the distinction between British and Australian searchers and their enquiry lists. When discussing friendly correspondence with a Red Cross secretary in Malta, she was clear that this secretary was part of 'the British Red Cross' system as opposed to the 'Australian Red Cross system'.[166] Indeed, it was 1927 before the Australian Red Cross Society was formally recognised as a national society. Until then, it was officially known as the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society, although Commonwealth Government Hansards and Australian Red Cross Information Bureau documents throughout the First World War use the term Australian Red Cross Society. Moreover, Deakin relied on support from British citizens residing in Egypt at that time. They were familiar with the work of the Red Cross Society, spoke English and wanted to be of value to the war effort. In late 1915, when the British Secretary of State for War, Field Marshall Horatio Kitchener, ordered all the wives of British officers who were not fully employed in Cairo to return home to Britain, this directly impacted the Australian bureau. Deakin stated that their voluntary staff was soon depleted just when the workload intensified with heavy casualties coming from Gallipoli.[167]

The global dynamics of nationalistic humanitarianism

Despite staff numbers, Deakin was fully employed in the bureau and emphasised the advantages afforded to her because of her Australian connections. She visited Colonel Sellheim when she realised that he was the person in charge of army records in Cairo. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Colonel was commissioned to establish an Australian section within the British Intermediate Base in Egypt and oversee the administrative area, pay, finance, ordnance, records, and base details of the Australian Infantry Force there.[168] Deakin had worked in Melbourne with the General's wife, Susan Sellheim when the latter established the Friendly Union of Soldiers' Wives and Mothers branch in 1915. She approached the General to request a copy of all the Australian casualty lists as soon as he received them. She explained that she wanted to add these casualty lists to the enquiry lists currently arriving from London's British Red Cross Department. He agreed to her request once he was assured that Deakin oversaw these lists. She argued that if they added them to the British enquiry lists, 'every searcher would have the names of Australian casualties and the British ones'; Deakin reasoned wherever they then made enquiries, the searchers were likely to get 'the ultimate result'.[169] Colonel Sellheim organised it so that his sergeant, an Adelaide man, delivered the lists 'hot off the press'.[170]

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[166] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:15:00.

[167] Ibid, at time 00:42:30

[168] A. J. Hill, 'Sellheim, Victor Conradsdorf Morisset (1866–1928)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed online 20 January 2020, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sellheim-victor-conradsdorf-morisset-8385/text14721. For a more detailed examination of the administration of the AIF between 1914-1918; See Bruce Douglas Faraday, 'Half the Battle: The Administration and Higher Organisation of the AIF 1914-1918,' PhD thesis, History, Australian Defence Force Academy, University of New South Wales, 1997.

[169] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:25:15.

[170] Ibid, at time 00:25:15.

Effectively, Red Cross searchers were also required to obtain reports on all Australian soldiers reported as missing after action on the battlefront. Frank Pulsford, an official Australian searcher, states that the Australian military considered the work of competent searchers 'as good work for the Army itself, in helping to clear up its official records within the ranks'.[171] Deakin, in correspondence with Owen, in the Sydney Bureau, explained that she was adding the names of the officially missing, of whom she had not yet received enquiries, to the bureau's enquiry lists in Cairo. She explained how they also 'keep a record of all Australian soldiers officially listed as casualties and are able to tell at a glance from which state any of these particular soldiers had enlisted'.[172] The bureaux were afforded more detailed casualty lists from the military office than those given to the newspaper groups on the home front for publication.[173] The Australian bureau in Cairo was 'aware that the London Bureau was not able to do similar, and that on the home front, the Australian bureaux kept only the records of the men who had enlisted from their state'.[174] Henry C. Smart, a civil clerk and publicity officer for the Australian High Commission, had established this smaller bureau-style office in London to assist the state bureaux in Australia and Deakin in Cairo. The bureaux used the code address "Smart Crotonate, London" to send enquires to the Military Records Branch of the Australian High Commissioner's Office in London.[175]

The Australian bureau in Cairo desired to put their advantage at the service of this London-based office and the state bureaux back home.[176] Deakin confirmed that she had cabled Smart to 'suggest your sending in duplicate here all reports of missing'.[177] She confirmed that they would 'forthwith forward them to "enlistment State Bureau"'.[178] Deakin foresaw that such action meant the reports from Cairo would already be on record in each Australian state bureaux when an enquiry was received. This action eliminated 'the expense (if any) and the delay of having the reports sent from London to the bureau on the home front'.[179] The dynamics of humanitarian nationalism exhibited by Deakin extended beyond Australia, as she shared her ideas and assisted 'in formulating the methods of the American Red Cross in Washington and Paris', as noted in Chapter 2.[180] She quite possibly

[171] Pulsford, 'The Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' 19.
[172] 'John B. Kiddle quoting Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 22 July 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[173] Redcross.org.uk/WW1, 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War.
[174] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds regarding a letter from Vera Deakin in Cairo,' 22 July 1916, SRG76/27; 'Langer Owen in response to a letter from Sir Josiah H. Symon, 15 December 1915', SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened between July 1915 - January 1916', January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[175] 'Information Bureau, Victorian Division subjoined Statement from John B. Kiddle to the Red Cross Committee, 25 February 1916, SRG 76/36 SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915.
[176] 'John B. Kiddle quoting Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 22 July 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] 'Vera Deakin's London Report of Work, September 1917,' SRG76/25 Correspondence with the Brisbane Bureau. Apr, July 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

influenced the British Red Cross Department, which later adopted a similar process for the missing as described above.[181]

By now, the Commonwealth Government was fully aware of what the Australian Red Cross information bureaux were achieving. Pearce's response in 1916 to a foreign agency distributing leaflets in Australia claiming to be an enquiry agency confirmed this. A group declared they could provide information on soldiers upon receiving an Australian £1 note. Minister for Defence Pearce quickly issued a press release in Australia warning families against this agency. He informed the public that his department had an enquiry office in Egypt [Central Enquiry Bureau] that worked in conjunction with the [Australian] Red Cross Bureau.[182] Any information required by this agency would have to come through that office; therefore, it was better to use an official bureau instead of an outside agency.[183] This statement shows a clear distinction between the position of the Australian Red Cross Society and the YMCA Information Bureaux in the eyes of the Department of Defence.

Deakin was not typical of other Australian women of her age and class attached to the Red Cross Society at that time. Historian Melanie Oppenheimer has argued that many of these young ladies had chosen to train as VADs who then became 'attached to the Australian Army Medical Department as reserves in case of emergencies'.[184] Others decided to remain on the home front to establish Red Cross societies in their state, with some sitting on Red Cross councils.[185] On the other hand, Deakin showed leadership that drove change at an international level, working from the bottom up while always remaining focused on the aim of the Australian bureaux to assist those families on the home front directly impacted by the theatres of war. Beaumont reminds us that 'for all its humanitarian and internationalist motives, the Red Cross was appropriated for the cause of nationalism'.[186]

Deakin's time in Cairo ended in early 1916, as the war intensified in Europe. The Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Knox, and Brookes considered transferring the Australian bureau to London. Both gentlemen also left Egypt in early 1916; Knox returned to Sydney while Brookes moved to France with the Australian Red Cross Society. Australian troops were allegedly moving into Italy, France and England though it was difficult to separate fact from fiction in Egyptian gossip circles.[187] In March

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[181] 'Vera Deakin's London Report of Work, September 1917,' SRG76/25; 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 14 November 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[182] 'Y.M.C.A. Army Work Abroad,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 12 April 1916.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Melanie Oppenheimer, *The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of Australian Red Cross* 1914-2014, (Sydney, NSW: HarperCollins, 2014), 15.

[185] Ibid.

[186] Joan Beaumont, *Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War*, 2nd ed., (Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and London: Allen and Unwin, 2014), 101.

[187] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, at time 00:00:06.

1916, the first Australian Imperial Force division, the 2nd, moved from Egypt to France's main theatres of war. After the Battle of the Somme on 1 July 1916, the situation for many Australian soldiers worsened. The remaining three divisions in Egypt followed the other divisions by July 1916, while the last, the 3rd Division, arrived from Britain at the end of that year.[188] Only the four Light Horse Brigades remained in Egypt. Deakin and Johnson packed up most of the Australian bureau, leaving Marjorie I. Syme in charge of an almost bare office; they booked passage on a hospital ship to England. Deakin reluctantly said goodbye to Lady Barker until she also returned to London. Upon her later arrival in Britain, Lady Barker turned down the role of the General Supervisor of the British Red Cross Society. Instead, she opted to represent the Australian Information Bureau at the British Red Cross Department and took charge of the British Prisoners' Department.[189]

Conclusion

This chapter set out to argue that the Australian bureau, initially established in Cairo before moving to London in mid-1916, was, in fact, part of a global network of Red Cross Information Bureaux. Each operated throughout the First World War on behalf of families seeking information regarding a loved one who was classified as either 'wounded', 'missing', 'sick' or 'killed in action'. Within the chapter, it was essential to lay the groundwork by examining what the British bureaux were already doing in this area, how their systems initially evolved, and how it came to be the system Deakin was introduced to when she arrived in Cairo. From the outset of her arrival in Egypt, she showed a natural ability to quickly understand what was required in this wartime enquiry work on behalf of Australian families. Deakin operated the bureau independently as an Australian concern within a short period. She readily engaged with the newly formed Australian bureaux on the home front to meet their requirements and the needs of Australian enquirers. The social complexities of being Australian in a foreign land are evident in her need for war codes and her relationships with a blend of people who worked at or called into the Australian bureau at the Gresham House Hotel.

Deakin never lost sight of the fact that the work at the Australian bureau was first and foremost to alleviate the concerns and misery of many Australian families so far away from the battlefront anxiously awaiting news. As the secretary, she worked alongside the British bureaux and assisted other foreign bureaux in formulating their methods. Her dynamic global humanitarian nationalism tied many actors together from all walks of life, yet Deakin was first and foremost an Australian in her decisions. Throughout this early period of the war, she faced many hurdles, yet she created a work environment

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[188] Peter Burness, *Introduction to The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean*, by Charles Bean, 19-45 (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and New South, 2018), 34.

[189] 'Vera Deakin's Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society General Report – London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

and processes that enabled her and her team to do valuable work that would continue successfully throughout the war. In Chapter 4, Deakin's move to London and her work with the Australian bureaux on the home front will be explored in greater detail. With the honorary secretaries attempting to adapt to the growing demands from the Australian public to relieve their ever-increasing emotional turmoil, the work of each of the Australian bureaux began to expand rapidly.

CHAPTER FOUR
'ACCOMPLISHING A LITTLE GOOD'
THE IMMENSE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INFORMATION BUREAU

Introduction

The success of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau depended on 'a capable staff that should regularly be in attendance at its offices so that enquiries may be promptly received and effectively dealt with, and information quickly distributed'.[1] Interestingly, in a newspaper interview published on the day the South Australian Bureau opened to the public in January 1916, Sir Josiah Symon also suggested that the proposed Bureau was 'peculiarly one to be run by members of the [legal] profession'.[2] He further stated that the trained legal mind and the lawyer's experience in investigative matters would be of great advantage in managing a family's enquiries. More importantly, as noted in Chapter 2, Symon understood that the work's success at home depended on the effectiveness of similar work in Egypt and elsewhere.[3] Initially, Symon intimated that the Honorary Secretary in the South Australian Bureau would receive cases where official records conflicted with the 'private advice' from soldiers' relatives or friends. There was also an assumption that the Bureau was well situated to provide more information than was obtainable from the official military records. That morning on the steps of the Verco Buildings, Symon was adamant that this was how the Red Cross Information Bureau would be especially valuable to Australian society.[4]

Symon was quite correct in his assumptions; each state bureaux did 'accomplish a little good' in filling the void with the more intimate details of a loved one's fate on the battlefield in the Ottoman Empire and Europe.[5] In each Australian bureaux, one suspects that the Honorary Secretary little realised the immense significance of the wartime work they were about to undertake to connect the home front with the war front. The state bureaux were already considerably reliant upon the effectiveness of the work conducted by Vera Deakin and her team in Cairo in their first six months of operation. In early 1916, as Deakin prepared to leave Egypt for Britain, she had confirmed that Australian private enquiries were still accepted by the British Red Cross offices in Malta, Alexandria, and Cairo. Responses would be sent to Australia from these offices so that the state bureaux could respond directly to the enquirer.[6] When Deakin departed, the state bureaux soon felt the impact of her absence as delays began to creep in when trying to acquire information from abroad.

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[1] 'Soldiers Abroad – Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 5 January 1916.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] 'Charles Edmunds in correspondence with Vera Deakin, 9 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919 (SLSA).
[6] 'A note from Vera Deakin to the Australian State Bureaux, 2 May 1916,' SRG76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 – Sept 1916, Jan 1918 – July 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

The chapter begins with a focus on the formative work of Henry C. Smart concerning the Australian Red Cross enquiry work before the arrival of Deakin and her team to Britain. Smart's position in the Australian High Commission had enabled him to deploy a range of causal powers. These allowed him to create a more direct communication channel between the Australian Red Cross Bureau in Cairo, the state bureaux at home and the various organisations in London dealing with Australian casualties of war.[7] His wide range of organisational powers corresponded to multiple ways in which he could coordinate productive human action to make a difference in this work.[8] The chapter will then focus on the arrival of Deakin in London, her engagement with various other organisations such as the British Red Cross Society, including its Wounded and Missing Department, and the Australian and British Military administration headquarters. This chapter also examines the vital role of the searchers in their enquiry work to satisfy the many letters and cabled enquiries received from the state bureaux at home. At a societal level, the enquiry issues were not resolved by a single person; they could only be 'effectively addressed through the concerted efforts of scores of people'.[9] As a result, searchers played an active role in shaping the perceptions of the war on the home front.[10] Their position was pivotal to the success of much of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux' work.

Deakin had the immense task of re-establishing the Australian Bureau as quickly as possible in Britain. That said, support was still available in London through the Casualty Bureau, established early in the war and run by Henry C. Smart, the then head of the Publicity Department at the Australian High Commission. Charles E. W. Bean, Australian World War 1 correspondent and historian, suggested that when the casualty numbers escalated in the Gallipoli campaign, the Australian Military Base lost control of its casualty records. In May 1915, Lieutenant-Colonel P. N. Buckley, Official Secretary of the Australian High Commission, explained that as soon as Australian troops received orders to proceed to the Dardanelles, he had recommended an expansion of staff in his office. He intended to deal with the expected increase in questions relating to casualties.[11] Sir George Reid, as the Australian High Commissioner, in agreement with Buckley, later handed control of this bureau work over to Smart.[12] Within the first three days in this role, nineteen extra clerks and typists were engaged to

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[7] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1984), 14.

[8] Dave Elder-Vass, *The Causal Power of Social Structures: Emergence, Structure and* Agency (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 168.

[9] Allen M. Omoto and Cody D. Packard, 'The Power of Connections: Psychological sense of community as a predictor of volunteerism,' *The Journal of Social Psychology* 156, no. 3 (2016), 287.

[10] Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' *Australian Law Journal* 92, no. 9 (2018), 205.

[11] 'Lieutenant Colonel P. N. Buckley, High Commissioner's Military Adviser, report to the Official Secretary, Australian High Commissioner's Office, London, 28 May 1915,' *Matters Concerning the Australian Imperial Force, Egypt*, B539, AIF112/2/648 National Archives of Australia (NAA), accessed 28 September 2020. https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=409225.

[12] Peter Burness, '1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean*, by Charles E. W. Bean, ed. Peter Burness (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and New South, 2018), 55.

ascertain the next of kin of casualties in Australia and locate the wounded.[13] In addition, a separate room was used to display casualty lists to the public. These lists, issued by the British War Officer, were presented to the press five days after receipt to allow time for relatives of soldiers to be officially notified first.[14]

The work of Henry Smart in London

Smart first set about untangling the casualty records of the Australian Military Base in Britain shortly after Australian casualties began arriving in large numbers from the Gallipoli campaign. As the work escalated, he became known as Controller, Australian Military Officer.[15] In his war diaries, Charles E. W. Bean emphasised how Smart rescued the 'records which were headless and tailless'.[16] Smart developed a card system for each soldier who became a casualty, like the one adopted by the Australian Military Base's central office in Egypt, as discussed in Chapter 2. On these cards, he recorded the soldier's movements from arriving at an English port aboard a hospital ship until he left Britain to return to the fighting or sailed home invalided. Smart's office had already answered over 200,000 queries by the time Deakin arrived in London.[17] This large number may have included enquiries from the YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureaux in Sydney and Adelaide. Bean worked this figure out to be two queries for every man in the force.[18] He also noted it was Smart who then 'sent reports of the movement of soldiers to the Red Cross societies [Bureaux] in Australia' to enable them to answer similar queries on the home front.[19]

This line of communication was initiated by Langer Owen when he opened the doors of the Sydney Red Cross Information Bureau in July 1915. It was immediately apparent to Owen that an Australian contact was required in Britain to deal with enquiries about the wounded and invalided soldiers hospitalised or convalescing there. As discussed in Chapter 3, hospitals nearest to the Gallipoli campaign in Egypt, Lemnos, and Malta began to fill quite quickly; therefore, Australian casualties often sailed on to Britain for treatment. In his 1915 progress report to the Australian Red Cross Society's head office, Owen acknowledged he wrote to Smart at the Australian High Commission to establish this contact. He had suggested to Smart that it was 'advisable that arrangements be made with him by cable, through the Australian Red Cross Commissioners at the Australian Branch of the Red Cross Society [in Cairo], to enable information to be obtained about wounded and invalided Australian

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[13] 'Lieutenant Colonel P. N. Buckley, High Commissioner's Military Adviser, report to the Official Secretary, Australian High Commissioner's Office, London, 28 May 1915,' B539, AIF112/2/648.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Burness, '1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* 55.
[16] Charles E. W. Bean, 'January – February 1916,' The Western Front Diaries of Charles E. W. Bean, ed. Peter Burness (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and New South, 2018), 59.
[17] Burness, '1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* by Charles E. W. Bean, 59.
[18] Bean, ''January – February 1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean*, by Charles E. W. Bean, 59.
[19] Ibid.

soldiers'.[20] Unfortunately, missing soldiers were still excluded from the enquiry work of the Australian bureaux at this stage of the war. A fact that would later change as the number of missing soldiers incrementally increased during the Gallipoli campaign and later multiplied on the Western Front.

Smart soon had to increase staff numbers as the workload gathered apace, yet their number was never enough. He temporarily moved his enquiry operations out of the Australian High Commission and into the Wesleyan Methodist Training College on Horseferry Road in London.[21] He was already one step ahead of Owen; earlier, he began building networks and forming committees in Britain to collect information, on wounded and sick Australian soldiers, for distribution to the home front.[22] These relationships were meaningful in establishing an Australian presence concerning the enquiry work. Upon Deakin's later arrival to Britain, the Australian Bureau reached far more significant achievements more quickly because of these foundational structures; individually, it would have been more challenging and slower for Deakin to begin again.[23] Smart also undertook tracing work; significantly, he began reporting on the welfare of Australian soldiers yet to appear on lists. Deakin would continue this practice.[24] Smart readily accepted enquiries from the Australian state bureaux and the families and relatives of Australian soldiers in Britain until Deakin's arrival that May.

As the Australian troops moved to the Western Front, relocating the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau to London was strategic. It allowed Deakin to navigate the internal networks of other important organisations that she had previously engaged with from a distance in Egypt. This move also enabled her to be closer to the organisational and social structures that determined the specific information Deakin was privy to in her work.[25] There was a complement of role relationships with which Deakin could be involved because of the space she occupied after her arrival.[26] The pressures were immense to build a team, establish an office and pick up where Deakin had left the work in Cairo. She was undoubtedly aware that enquiries were continuing to be submitted to the state bureaux at home as she travelled by hospital ship from Alexandria to Britain. The systems already established by Smart would benefit her upon arrival.

[20] 'Langer Owen in his Progress Report to the Red Cross Society, October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916, and Jan 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[21] Burness, '1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* by Charles E. W. Bean, 55.

[22] 'Langer Owen in his Progress Report to the Red Cross Society, October 1915,' SRG76/32.

[23] John Field, *Social Capital*, 2nd ed (London: Routledge, 2008), 215.

[24] Peter Burness, 'Introduction' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* by Charles E. W. Bean, ed. Peter Burness (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and New South, 2018), 34.

[25] Barry Wellman and Stanley Wasserman, 'Social Network Analysis: Concepts, Applications, and Methods,' 7, *American Psychological Association* (2000), 352.

[26] Piotr Sztompka, ed. *On Social Structure and Science* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 113.

From Cairo to London

On leaving Cairo, Deakin travelled alone by train to Alexandria before sailing for Britain. Winifred Johnson was delayed by a few days due to illness but soon followed.[27] Marjorie Syme and Annie Chirnside remained in Cairo until early June; they then joined Deakin and Johnson in London. Syme later took charge of the search reports sent to the Australian Bureau in London. Bean noticed that the female worker was far more evident in England, unlike France, Egypt, and Australia.[28] When Deakin presented a paper to the Catalysts at the Lyceum Club in Melbourne post-war, she stated that 'it was almost impossible to find capable and willing people […] who had a judicial mind to weigh and decide on each case'.[29] She was therefore grateful for the skills Syme brought to the work. As previously mentioned, Deakin welcomed William J. Isbister's presence in the Cairo bureau in November 1915. As mentioned, Isbister assisted the Cairo office with enquiries before returning to Adelaide in South Australia, where he told reporters that he was 'glad to be back' home.[30] He then went on to collaborate with the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau.

Deakin remarked that Mr Bloom, her senior clerk, was 'shattered by the fact that we were not taking him with us' to Britain.[31] Edwin A. Wilcox, a volunteer Red Cross searcher from Adelaide, was also detained for store work in Egypt and thus prevented from moving with the Australian Bureau to London. Wilcox expected to remain longer in 'the East' to do tracing work amongst the Light Horse Regiments if the August fighting on the Canal gave rise to many enquiries.[32] Between 4-5 August 1916, the Battle of Romani took place in the Sinai Desert, thirty-five kilometres east of the Suez Canal. The Anzac Mounted Division suffered 900 casualties out of 1,130 men, including 202 soldiers killed in action.[33] Once Wilcox completed his tracing work in Egypt, he travelled to Britain and was mentioned in the *Advertiser* in Adelaide as continuing in his 'splendid voluntary work among the sick on and near Salisbury'.[34] The Australian Imperial Force had a dermatological unit for soldiers at Bulford on the Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire. There were also training camps in the area with troops from other 'British Dominions', Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

[27] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802. National Library of Australia accessed 27 March 2019. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:15:16.

[28] Burness, '1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* by Charles E. W. Bean, 58.

[29] 'Vera Deakin in her address to the Catalysts at the Lyceum,' cited in Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross* (Melbourne: Royal History Society of Victoria, 2020), 120.

[30] 'Mr Isbister, K.C.' *Express and Telegraph*, South Australia, 6 April 1916.

[31] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802. National Library of Australia accessed 27 March 2019. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:04:05.

[32] 'Vera Deakin's Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society General Report – London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[33] Chris Clark, *The Encyclopaedia of Australia's Battles* (NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2010), 118-19.

[34] 'Red Cross Workers,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 1 November 1917.

When the ship docked in Southampton and Deakin disembarked, she took the train into London. She was surprised to see Australian soldiers reading *The Bulletin*, an Australian magazine focused mainly on Australian culture and politics. When she asked the soldier why he preferred this magazine to the beautiful greenery out the window, the soldier said, 'Oh, we want to get the home news up-to-date'.[35] Unlike this soldier, Deakin noted that 'to see the greenery and lushness after all those months in Egypt was unbelievable'.[36] She was delighted 'to be back in England with all that beauty'.[37] Bean often took the same route and remarked that the journey in a comfortable railway carriage and the coming into London often left a strong impression that many would never forget.[38] It was undoubtedly similar for many soldiers on furlough or, in Deakin's case, a reprieve from Cairo's hot, busy city. Their exchange gives some insight into the distance of home for Australians in Britain and the need of many Australians to stay connected with home news.

Upon arrival in London, Deakin stated that she was a 'very lonely' figure arriving at the private hotel Mrs Syme had recommended.[39] She then met with Australian Red Cross Commissioners Norman Brookes and James A. Murdoch. The latter had also worked as a Red Cross Commissioner in Egypt with Adrian Knox and Brookes. Both men administered Red Cross depots at Boulogne and Rouen during this period. Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel Murdoch (hereafter Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch) was a Scot by birth and, at his own expense, had volunteered with the Australian Red Cross Society. The men confirmed with Deakin that she would assume control of the relocated Australian Bureau. She was, in effect, the Secretary of the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in London and not a searcher as suggested by historian Robert Sackville-West.[40] In addition, the Red Cross Commissioners informed Deakin that Sir George Reid, the Australian High Commissioner, had established a London committee to oversee the welfare of Australian soldiers, particularly those wounded or invalided in Britain.[41] Within a couple of months, the Australian Red Cross Commissioners took over the functions and responsibilities of Reid's committee along with total 'control of the funds of the Society on broad lines'.[42] Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel Edwyn W. Haywood eventually transferred to London with Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch. He was the London director of John Martin & Co., an Adelaide-based

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[35] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, at time 00:24:20.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Charles E. W. Bean, *Letters from France* (1917), (Dodo Press: London, New York, Toronto, and Melbourne, 2007), 108-09.

[39] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, at time 00:24:20.

[40] Robert Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021), 21.

[41] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross,* 113.

[42] Eric E. Lloyd Jones and Australian Red Cross Society, 'Our Work Over-seas,' *The Red Cross Record* 2, no. 9 (September 1916), 11; Australian Red Cross Society, New South Wales Division, 1914, *The N.S.W. Red Cross Record*, The Division, Sydney 2, no. 10 (October 1916), 11, accessed 20 July 2021, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-94207031.

company, and as mentioned previously, this company assisted the South Australian Bureau with furnishings. Hayward was stationed in Egypt and France before arriving in London.[43]

Deakin never met Reid, yet her correspondence with the Australian High Commissioner's office and the High Commissioner himself provides an insight into her character. Her actions also explain why she was a good fit as the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Secretary in London. When the First World War broke out in Europe, Deakin had arrived in Britain from Budapest via Germany following the completion of her musical studies.[44] While staying with an aunt in London, her attention was drawn to the many Australians then unoccupied in the city and 'getting hysterical about getting home'.[45] She telephoned and petitioned the Australian High Commissioner to find gainful wartime employment for these idle Australians.[46] Without hesitation, she confidently suggested to his office that the Australian High Commission follow suit with the British Red Cross Society, which had begun training people in first aid and home nursing. Sewing and knitting circles soon followed in the Society to provide warm clothing to soldiers. Such was her persistence and commitment to this cause that Deakin eventually received an invitation to attend a function at the residence of the Australian High Commissioner. A committee was established, and necessary Red Cross circles were set up following her many 'awkward questions at this event,'.[47] Deakin little realised in 1914 that she would work in Cairo and then London during the war as the Secretary of the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau abroad. Yet, by mid-1916, she had established an independent Australian bureau in Cairo and then prepared for its transfer to Britain alongside the Australian Imperial Force's administrative headquarters, which did similarly.

Strengthening relationships and building networks

In May 1916, Deakin set about establishing bureau rooms in the newly acquired larger offices of the Australian Red Cross at 54 Victoria Street, Westminster. The bureau rooms adjoined the rooms of Hon. Lieutenant Colonels, Murdoch and Hayward, the London-based Australian Red Cross Commissioners. The area around Victoria Street was considered a convenient location for the Australian Red Cross Society as it was close to other Australian organisations. For example, the Australian War Chest Club, a voluntary organisation expressly set up to host Australian troops, was across the road. The YMCA occupied a church just a short distance down the street.[48] The troops

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[43] 'Mr E. W. Hayward Dies in London: Director of John Martin and Co,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 31 August 1933.

[44] 'Mr Deakin's Daughter Traces Missing Soldiers,' *Herald*, Victoria, 22 October 1918.

[45] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, at time 00:29:22.

[46] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 3, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802. National Library of Australia accessed 27 March 2019. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:10:43.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Burness, 'Introduction' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* by Charles E. W. Bean, 61; Elise Edmonds, 'London and the First World War,' (Institute of Historical Research, University of London & Imperial War Museums, 2015), 1, accessed 19 May 2020, https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/3._elise_edmonds_-_london_and_the_first_world_war.pdf.

passing through Victoria railway station were soon dropping by the bureau just as they had done in Cairo.

The Australian bureau lay between Horseferry Road, where the Australian Imperial Force had its headquarters and Carlton House Terrace, in the St James's district of the City of Westminster. At No.10, a hospital was established by Lady Ridley and run by Matron D. C. Buffard for Officers with life-changing injuries.[49] More importantly, the British Red Cross Department, in November 1915, had moved to No. 18 Carlton House Terrace, a property given on loan to the Society by Lord Astor. This location was convenient for searchers working with the British and Australian bureaux. Previously, No. 2 had been the home of Robert Lloyd-Lindsay, founder of the British Red Cross Society. Within a short time of opening, the Australian Information Bureau moved to the third floor of the same building when a vacant flat offered the staff more significant space. The Australian prisoner of war department operated down the hall. This corner of southwest London became a central hub for Australian administrative activities, although the Australian military administration department later expanded to other locations across London and further afield in Britain as the war progressed.[50]

The Australian Imperial Force administration unit moved into the preprepared former Wesleyan Methodist Training College. It was close to Victoria Station, where many Australian troops arrived in London.[51] Smart moved back to the Australian High Commission, but his enquiry work did not end there. He wrote to Charles Edmunds in the South Australian Bureau in June 1916 to clarify his movements, enclosing his address and suggesting to Edmunds that he was still available anytime the bureaux wished to communicate with him. He signed off by 'hoping the work the office had completed so far had been of some assistance at their end'.[52] Edmunds responded by thanking him for his 'diligent attention to the work, which has been of much material assistance to the administration of the affairs of this [South Australian] bureau'.[53]

Deakin and the British Red Cross Department held another critical meeting in July 1916 regarding their respective services. The British Red Cross Department already had 'a complete and efficient system for obtaining information regarding casualties in France, and they were anxious to continue assisting Australia in every way possible'.[54] The Australian and British parties agreed that the

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[49] 'A brief history of 10-11 Carlton House Terrace,' The britishacademy.ac.uk, accessed 30 April 2020, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/brief-history-10-11-carlton-house-terrace; Karen Syrett, Lady Ridley's Hospital for Officers at 10 Carlton House Terrace, British Academy Review 24 (2014), 20.
[50] Burness, 'Introduction' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean,* by Charles E. W. Bean, 61.
[51] Ibid.
[52] 'Henry C. Smart in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 13 June 1916,' SRG76/18 Correspondence with H.C. Smart, Military Records Office, London. Apr - Jul 1916, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[53] Ibid.
[54] 'Vera Deakin in her General Report, London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

Australian enquiry lists should be incorporated into the British monthly and supplementary lists, although in a separate Australian division. Previously, the casualty lists were 'combined for use in the network of the Enquiry Bureau in the Mediterranean'.[55] Both parties were also aware that the military units of British and Australian Forces became mixed on the field, and therefore, the same often applied in the hospitals.[56] Unlike Egypt, where the hospitals were within a limited area, easily accessible to the Red Cross bureau, Australian soldiers were patients in hundreds of British hospitals all over Britain. It was reported in the New South Wales *Red Cross Record* in October 1916 that the Commonwealth authorities attempted to persuade the British War Office to concentrate the Australian wounded in one part of Britain; however, this was too impractical.[57]

Before concluding this meeting, Deakin and members of the British Red Cross Department agreed that the five British enquiry bureaux at Boulogne, Étaples, Le Treport, Rouen and Havre in France included Australian enquiries in their work.[58] More urgent cases were to pass on to the 3rd Echelon through the Rouen bureau, eighty-four miles (135.3km) northwest of Paris.[59] Rouen was safely behind the lines, and it was there that a large concentration of base hospitals was established, including the No. 1 Australian General Hospital, at the racecourse from April 1916. The British Red Cross Department confirmed that the arrangements made the previous year with the British Red Cross in Malta regarding Australian enquiries remained good.[60] British searchers undertook the work in all hospitals on behalf of the Australian bureaux in the absences of Australian searchers in Malta. The decisions made by the British and Australian Red Cross Society personnel running the bureaux were not made in isolation, as highlighted in the outcome of this meeting. They collectively assessed their working environment and made decisions in the context of their formal and informal networks 'that were expressive of feelings of group solidarity' in this war.[61] Again, this significantly contrasts with Tony Cunneen's argument that Australian searchers were superior to British searchers in Europe.[62] Indeed, throughout the war, both groups continued to work closely together. Moreover, the Australian bureau abroad often relied on the British Red Cross Society's network to support its efforts, as discussed in Chapter 2 when Deakin travelled into war-torn France.

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[55] Ibid.

[56] 'Australian Red Cross Searcher Frank Pulsford's report of the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' SRG76/31 Miscellaneous Correspondence, Sept 1915 – Feb 1920, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[57] Australian Red Cross Society, New South Wales Division, 1914, *The N.S.W. Red Cross Record*, The Division, Sydney 2, no. 10 (October 1916), 11, accessed 20 July 2021, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-94207031.

[58] 'Vera Deakin in her General Report, London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] John Wilson, 'Volunteering,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000), 223.

[62] Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 698.

Post-meeting, Deakin reported to the Australian bureaux on the home front that both parties had agreed that British searchers attached to all hospitals in Britain and France were to search amongst the casualties for Australians. Australian searchers were to 'work at any strictly Australian Hospitals in Britain and the Australian Details and Training Camps at Weymouth, Wareham and Salisbury', thereby preventing confusion and overlapping.[63] This fact contradicts Woods's assertion that Australian searchers did not have the time to go beyond Australian hospitals and camps.[64] In the county of Dorset, the camp at Wareham held approximately 7,000 Australian troops with a turnaround of 1,000 soldiers in any given week.[65] It received Australian soldiers discharged from the hospital who were still unfit to return to duty within three months. The intent at this camp was to get these Australian soldiers fit and hardened up to return to the trenches. The base camp was also a training ground for the new 'Kitchener's Army' composed of volunteers. Wareham became one of four Australian Imperial Force Command Depots in Britain.

On the other hand, Weymouth, also in Dorset, a minor camp, held between 2,000 and 3,000 soldiers.[66] The sick, the wounded and maimed men from this camp, who were unfit for duty for six months or more, left for home by hospital ship for treatment and their families. Woods asserts that in 1916 searchers had 'only recently had the time to visit these camps'.[67] Yet, a Sydney solicitor, W. J. Vero Read, who 'specialised in interviewing soldiers' worked in the hospital at Weymouth. Sam Whitmee, in 1916, was also appointed the Australian Red Cross representative at both camps.[68] Whitmee played a significant role in supplementing the bare tidings received through the military in his tracing work. At his own expense, he had travelled from the Tablelands in the Orange region of New South Wales to Britain to connect with soldiers from his district hospitalised there. Surgeon-General Howse and Captain Colvin, acquainted with Whitmee, explained that boys from Orange were scattered in the many hospitals across Britain. They recommended he speak with the Red Cross Commissioner, Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch, about doing official work.[69] As the war progressed on the Western Front, the Australian Red Cross Commissioners received the honorary title of Lieutenant Colonel to enable them to operate more freely within the military zones of France.[70] In his newly appointed role as the Australian Red Cross representative, Whitmee walked through the hospital wards seeking information

[63] 'Vera Deakin in her General Report, London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17.
[64] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 122.
[65] 'Mr Sam Whitmee: His Experiences in England,' *Leader*, 21 February 1917; Greg Stephens, 'Following the Twenty-Second,' accessed 16 August 2021, https://anzac-22nd-battalion.com/training-camps-england/.
[66] *Leader*, 21 February 1917.
[67] 'Wareham in the First World War 1914-1918 – No 1 Wareham Camp.' Accessed 19 October 2020. http://www.greenacre.info/WTM/WW1%20Display%20Panel%2001.pdf; Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 122.
[68] Tony Cunneen, 'Trouble Does Not Exist': The New South Wales Bar and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau,' *Bar News: The Journal of the NSW Bar Association* (2015), 81; 'Mr Sam Whitmee: His Experiences in England,' *Leader*, New South Wales, 21 February 1917.
[69] *Leader*, New South Wales, 21 February 1917.
[70] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 114.

about those Australian soldiers on his casualty lists listed as 'missing' or 'killed in action' on the battlefront.[71] He and Deakin had a very productive reciprocal arrangement regarding the tracing work for Australian soldiers in both camps.[72]

Deakin wrote to Whitmee in April 1917 detailing search results recently received by the bureau for eighteen Australian soldiers. She clarified that the bureau had adopted Whitmee's suggestion to write to the battalion regarding 2nd Lieutenant Henry Dingle of the 1st Battalion; she included unofficial reports from some of the men in that battalion. This approach soon became a familiar process in many Australian enquiries undertaken on behalf of Australian families. Unlike the British Red Cross Department, the London Bureau and the state bureaux at home regularly followed up with another potential witness mentioned in a searcher's report. This task was vital when it was probable that the soldier knew firsthand the other soldier's fate.[73] Deakin, on other occasions, wrote directly to the Officer in Charge or the Adjunct of a military unit for information that would allow them to answer an enquiry in greater detail.[74] In this instance, Deakin informed Whitmee that the bureau in London had unfortunately closed the search for the 'a Gallipoli case' soldier as they were unlikely to hear any further news.[75] However, the South Australian Bureau tended to keep such case files open at home, hoping that something would surface to further the enquiry later. Deakin confirmed with Whitmee that a third soldier had 'never come through on the lists as a prisoner of war'.[76] She ended her letter stating that her bureau was continuing with enquiries in all the previous cases, and she would advise him 'as soon as they obtained further news'.[77] No doubt, soldiers passing through both of these medical camps were also anxious to know the fate of their mates or family members.

[71] *Leader*, New South Wales, 21 February 1917.

[72] 'Papers relating to No. 1912 Private A. E. Watchman, 27th Battalion,' SRG 76/1/790 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/arnold-john-dorling; 'Papers relating to No. 1912 Private A. E. Watchman, 50th Battalion,' File Series 1DRL/0428, Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-1918 War, Australian War Memorial (AWM), https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1405945.

[73] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 120.

[74] 'Papers relating to No. 340, Private C. W. Cussion, 10th Infantry Battalion, SRG 76/1/20 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/christian-walter-cussion; Papers relating to No. 1912 Private A. J. Dorling, 27th Battalion, SRG 76/1/790 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/arnold-john-dorling;

[75] In January 1917, the state bureaux were advised by the Australian bureau in London that Gallipoli enquiries were no longer being pursued. Attention was to be confined to cases on the Western Front; See 'Charles A. Edmunds in his January Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at the Red Cross Depot in Government House, Adelaide, 23 February 1917,' SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[76] 'Letter from Vera Deakin to Sam Whitmee, London, 20 April 1917 in 'Papers relating to No. 3929, Private Alfred E. Watchman, 50th Battalion,' Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-18 War, 1DRL/0428, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1477264.

[77] Ibid.

An army of Australian searchers

There is a misconception in much of the current literature regarding the number of Australian Red Cross Information Bureau searchers working in Britain and France on behalf of Australian enquirers during the First World War. Eric Schneider and Woods are not alone in arguing that only nine Australian searchers officially operated in Europe; therefore, the Australian bureaux depended on the work of British searchers.[78] To focus on this 'official' number limits the achievements of all Australian searchers and, by association, the wartime work of the bureaux. It is also incorrect to suggest that the network of Australian bureaux was solely dependent on the generosity of British Red Cross searchers to do its searching work.[79] Deakin admitted at the time that due to British 'War office regulations and the duplication of work, it was impossible to have Australian searchers attached to all the hospitals in Britain and Ireland'.[80] She also always acknowledged the generosity shown to the Australian bureaux by the British Red Cross Department and its network of searchers. However, the true strength of the Australian bureaux cannot be understood in terms of these formal structures.

A searcher's role, both officially and unofficially, was a matter of choice by the individual. Although it was not a compulsory role, it was vital to the success of a bureau's work on behalf of Australian families. This position enabled Australian volunteers from all levels of society to participate in wartime work at home and abroad that benefited their community. The Australian searcher's network was more far-reaching than has been credited to date. It pulled in many other voluntary workers to achieve the work. One searcher highlighted in 1917 that 'the magnitude of this task [searching] will be realised when it is said that in England alone there are 1,400 hospitals to which Australian casualties are admitted'.[81] He further clarified that there was cooperation between British and Australian searchers as they considered it bad practice 'to pass a bed just because the inmate was a Britisher'; British searchers possibly reciprocated when passing an Australian inmate.[82]

The role was often tricky, as a searcher navigated a tenacious position between the Australian bureaux and military authorities. They walked the hospital wards daily, often with little to show for their efforts. They aimed to extract details from men who were often traumatised from what they had witnessed on the battlefield. Historian Bruce Scates describes a disparity between the news sought and

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[78] Eric F. Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' *War in History* 4, no. 3 (1997), 298; Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 122; Aaron Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front* 1916-18 (UK: Cambridge University Press. 2020), 91.
[79] Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, 122.
[80] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 29 May 1917,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919 (SLSA).
[81] 'Red Cross Searching,' *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, New South Wales, 1 January 1918.
[82] *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, New South Wales, 1 January 1918.

'the grim detachment of the men' who gave the Red Cross searchers witness statements.[83] However, how a soldier articulated an experience depended on his use of language to make sense of what had gone on around him, possibly changing how he 'actually experienced' the combat.[84] Historian Joanna Bourke suggests that a soldier tried to 'make sense' of what he had experienced after being on the battlefield.[85] In telling the event, possibly for the first time to a searcher, the soldier formulated the experience.[86] How soldiers narrated their fears to the searcher altered their subjective experience and, therefore, the statement they ultimately gave.[87] Sometimes witness statements conflicted. This response may have been because 'emotion had entered into their imagination and language to be interpreted, elaborated, structured and restructured'.[88] By the time the soldier spoke with a searcher, they had stored an account of the event they could accept. It took a particular type of searcher to extract the vital details from a witness, often a soldier in a hospital bed dealing with his injuries. As discussed in Chapter 3, Deakin frequently stated that the men were often tired and worried coming off the field and initially 'did not want to talk to Red Cross people'.[89]

A searcher's working arrangements

Frank Pulsford, the official Australian searcher discussed in Chapter 3, explained in detail the practical working arrangements required for this role in an article he wrote for a newspaper.[90] This insight indicates the process involved in verifying the information received from a soldier before the facts were cabled, or forwarded by letter to Australia from London. Pulsford further explained that a searcher's report from France went through a vetting system in the office of the Director of Searching, also located in France. The Director, a British King's Counsel and his staff examined a searcher's report using the principles applied to the laws of evidence, whereby a fact must be proven. They also advised and assisted searchers in the best methods to retrieve the truth from a few points or half an account that a soldier gave; this was the actual value of the evidence gathered.[91] This process contradicts Schneider's suggestion that 'almost all testimony destined for British and Australian enquirers passed through British Red Cross supervision in a London office. As mentioned above, Syme reviewed a searcher's report when the Australian Bureau received it in London.[92] Another official Australian searcher, William Alison, described to the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* how he tended to write out his

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83 Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81 (2001), 42.
84 Joanna Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History,' *History Workshop Journal* 55, no. 1 (2003), 121.
85 Ibid.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid, 120.
88 Ibid.
89 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802, National Library Australia, accessed 27 March 2019, https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:10:36.
90 'The Australian Red Cross: Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' *Journal*, South Australia, 18 May 1918.
91 'Australian Red Cross Searcher Frank Pulsford's report of the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' SRG76/31.
92 Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 298.

notes into a readable format each evening, noting the informant's name, number, and battalion at the bottom of the sheet before countersigning the report himself.[93] He also included the name of the hospital and dated his report before sending or taking the paperwork to the Australian bureau in Victoria Street.[94]

The valuable role of both British and Australian searchers was highly regarded by those they encountered directly and indirectly. In his Australian Red Cross Commissioner's position, Brookes reflected on the work of searchers in one of his regular monthly reports published in October 1916. He stated, ' there is no doubt that this section of the Red Cross organisation has amply justified its existence'.[95] He further specified that a searcher's efforts were appreciated where British Red Cross Society searchers acted for Australian soldiers; amongst them were also Australian searchers.[96] On the home front, in the Sydney Bureau, Owen described searchers' work as 'a mammoth task and one that would be impossible were it not for an elaborate organisation such as the Red Cross Society'.[97] Every volunteer worked for the public good; their purposive action created a bridge between the Australian military authorities, the Department of Defence, and soldiers' families. Sociologist David Gauntlett reminds us that the positions held by various people in society have value 'across all kinds of communities including the powerless and the marginalised'.[98] Due to the lack of official information from the Department of Defence, searchers reduced the widening void. People were bound together through shared values and hard work in this a robust organisational network. It is important to note that the Australian Red Cross Society expected Australian searchers, who volunteered to travel to Europe to undertake the enquiry work, would do so in an honorary capacity. As previously discussed, these men had to self-fund their living expenses abroad.[99] This rule did not prevent more than two hundred applicants from applying for the post discussed in Chapter 3 when the Australian Red Cross Society required only ten people to travel to Egypt in September 1915.[100]

This situation differs from the original 'Scheme of Works' drawn up earlier in 1915 by Symon in Adelaide, Edward F. Mitchell in Victoria and Owen in Sydney. They had initially stated that agents

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[93] *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, New South Wales, 1 January 1918.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Arthur Mason and Australian Red Cross Society, 'Our Red Cross in London,' *The Red Cross Record* 2, no. 10 (October 1916), 11, Australian Red Cross Society, New South Wales Division. 1914, *The N.S.W. Red Cross Record*, The Division, Sydney 2, accessed 20 July 2021. http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-94207031.

[96] Mason and Australian Red Cross Society, 'Our Red Cross in London,' 11.

[97] 'The Searchers: Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 August 1916.

[98] David Gauntlett, *Making is Connecting: The Social Meaning of Creativity from DIY and knitting to YouTube and Web* 2.0. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, accessed 3 April 2019, www.makingconnecting.org.

[99] 'For Egypt-Patriotic Business Men,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 September 1915; 'Missing Men,' *Daily Mail*, Queensland, 24 November 1916; 'Red Cross Searchers Overseas,' *Warrnambool Standard*, Victoria, 9 February 1917.

[100] *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 September 1915.

[their term for searchers] could volunteer or receive pay.[101] In the early 1900s, volunteer work was considered the domain of women in the community with time on their hands.[102] Therefore, the honorary secretaries ventured onto new ground by asking legal men to work voluntarily as searchers. However, the positive uptake by volunteers in the legal profession meant that undertaking the work in an honorary capacity was quickly adopted by Australians in a position to do so. The British Red Cross Society occasionally provided basic living accommodation for searchers in Northern France. In contrast, others found rooms in Australian convalescent camps, such as Wareham in Britain.[103] As noted above, the official Australian searcher working on behalf of Australian enquirers was always a man and generally from the legal profession; the British Red Cross Department used both men and women, as did the YMCA.

Searchers and bureaux inseparable

The work of the searcher and the bureaux was inseparably tied together. There was an intrinsic need for a searcher's detailed report to arrive in London or a state bureau so that the enquirer, often fraught with the stress and strain of the unknown fate of their loved one, could find some relief. In Private Clifford Archibald's case, his mother wrote 'to offer her deepest thanks for all the Adelaide bureau had achieved' when the Bureau provided her with the details of her son's death and subsequent burial.[104] Her son had told her, 'if you should ever want to know anything, go to the Red Cross, and they will find out for you'.[105] Mrs Archibald stated that 'from the Military, the only news we received was that he was killed in action'.[106] Without the work of the searchers and the bureau, 'we should have been in ignorance of anything else'.[107] Deakin has said of the searchers that they varied like everybody else.[108] Their work was punishing, going out daily to deal with traumatised soldiers in many cases and harrowing details from the battlefield. They dealt directly with Australian and British military authorities, the British Red Cross Society in Britain and France, and other organisations in London and further afield. Alison has remarked that it was not unusual to add new enquiries to the bottom of his list as he moved through the hospitals as a searcher. He later took these enquiries to the Casualty Department of the Australian Military Headquarters at Horseferry Road. He gave them to a young lady who then looked up the information for him.[109]

[101] 'Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[102] Wilson, 'Volunteering,' 220.
[103] 'The Australian Red Cross: wounded and missing enquiry bureau,' *Journal*, South Australia, 18 May 1918.
[104] 'Papers relating to Private C. H. Archibald, No. 2783', South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau File Series SRG 76/1/5784, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/clifford-harrold-archibald.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802, National Library Australia, accessed 27 March 2019, https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:27:39.
[109] *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, New South Wales, 1 January 1918.

One work report issued by the London Bureau to the state bureaux indicates the volume of work they and their team of searchers undertook in what Deakin considered a relatively quiet period. She issued the report before the Third Battle of Ypres, the collective name for the campaign fought between September and November 1917.[110] The Allies were attempting to capture the Gheluvelt Plateau in southern Belgium.[111] Deakin noted in early September 1917 that the number of enquiries had decreased recently due to low Australian casualty numbers in the latter half of August and the beginning of September. This outcome, she argued, reflected the fact that Australian soldiers were out of the lines for most of this period.[112] That said, the bureau still dealt with 1,537 enquiry cables received from Australia. In reply, they had despatched 1,626 responses to the state bureaux. She acknowledged receiving 980 enquiries by a letter from home and reported receiving another 114 enquiries directly from France.[113] The bureau received a further 1,413 enquiries from relatives and friends of soldiers with addresses in Britain; for these, they had sent out 1,763 replies.

Deakin reported that searchers separately despatched 2,608 reports to Australia, 938 of which were 'secured by our own searchers in Great Britain and France'.[114] She also reported receiving 340 letters from officers and men on active service in reply to the bureau's enquiries concerning the fate of their comrades.[115] This correspondence highlights that Australian searchers were significantly represented in Europe and at home. Schneider's argument of using the South Australian records as 'a good proxy for Great Britain' does not stand up against the nature of these records.[116] Likewise, Sackville-West suggests that the Australian Bureau was modelled on the British Red Cross Department and dependent on British searchers. The Australian record and its reporting style can therefore be used to represent the way the British Red Cross Department operated.[117] These statements are divisive, particularly considering that some of the procedures discussed by Sackville-West were wholly British and not used in the Australian state bureaux.[118]

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[110] Burness, '1916,' in *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean*, by Charles E. W. Bean, 133.

[111] Ibid.

[112] 'Deakin's Report of Work for the Australian Bureau in London,' September 1917,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war, Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918 (State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 298.

[117] The soldier enquiry files of the Australian bureau in London and the soldier enquiry packets of the South Australian Bureau are readily accessible online and provide insight into some of the processes undertaken in the South Australian bureau during the war; See South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau 1916-1919, https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/; Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau, Canberra: Australian War Memorial Archive, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1414585.

[117] 'Public Library Board,' Register, 20 December 1919; Sackville-West, The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War, 23.

[118] Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 23.

In her September 1917 report, Deakin informed the honorary secretaries that the London Bureau had also issued details of the deaths and burials of fifty-eight Australian soldiers to the bereaved relatives of those who had died of sickness or wounds in hospitals in Britain and France.[119] She also acknowledged receiving 364 reports from the Melbourne and Sydney information bureaux. These reports came from searchers on the home front in response to the different bureaux posting enquiries in local newspapers, CheerUp huts and elsewhere in their communities. Indeed, Deakin was pleased to know that searching amongst returned soldiers in Australia was much more advanced than she had been aware. In correspondence with John Kiddle, Honorary Secretary of the Melbourne Bureau, she asked for confirmation that these reports would continue being sent to London. Many local enquirers were 'deeply grateful for further details concerning their relatives'.[120]

The enquirer's needs were effectively addressed through the concerted efforts of scores of other people in terms of other practical issues concerning searchers and the distance of the Australian home front from the war front.[121] Regarding the valuable work undertaken by the Australian bureaux on behalf of soldiers and their families, word spread quickly 'amongst the troops, the hospitals, the buffets and rendezvous and the convalescent homes across Britain and France'.[122] In 1917, Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch had transferred permanently to Britain as chief commissioner and worked closely with the Australian Red Cross Prisoners of War Department.[123] In June 1917, in his monthly report to the Australian Red Cross Society, he commented that 'matrons, chaplains, officers and men' continually showed their interest and support in the enquiry work 'by sending in reports as to the fate of their "missing" comrades'.[124] Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch also stated that enquiry 'information was repeatedly supplied by the soldiers themselves, even when some of those men were prisoners of war in

[119] 'Deakin's Report of Work for the Australian Bureau in London,' September 1917,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918. (State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[120] 'Vera Deakin quoted in correspondence with John B. Kiddle and Charles A. Edmunds, 15 October 1917,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, (State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[121] Omoto and Packard, 'The Power of Connections: Psychological Sense of Community as a Predictor of Volunteerism,' 287.

[122] 'Australian Red Cross Society, Monthly Leaflet - Federal Government House, Report for June 1917,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[123] Howard Wolders, 'Murdoch, Sir James Anderson (1867–1939),' Australian Dictionary of Biography. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed 11 May 2020, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/murdoch-sir-james-anderson-7691/text13463, published first in hardcopy 1986, accessed 18 May 2020.

[124] Red Cross Commissioner James A. Murdoch was appointed an honorary Lieutenant Colonel in September 1916; See Wolfers, Howard. 'Murdoch, Sir James Anderson (1867–1939).' Australian Dictionary of Biography. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed 11 May 2020, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/murdoch-sir-james-anderson-7691/text13463, published first in hardcopy 1986, accessed 18 May 2020; 'Australian Red Cross Society, Monthly Leaflet - Federal Government House, Report for June 1917,' SRG76/36; Matron M. Aslin Thomas stationed in France wrote personally to Mrs Winchester giving her all the details available of her husband's death. She regretted that she was unable to provide a photograph of the grave as the military graveyard was four miles away from the hospital; See 'Papers relating to Private R. Winchester, Service No. 1929,' SRG 76/1/280, South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/richard-winchester; Sister M bannister wrote a letter to Mrs J. Leopold in Adelaide about her husband, a patient in the 11th Stationary Hospital, as he was badly wounded in the chest and about to undergo an operation that day; See 'Papers relating to Private P. Leopold, Service No. 2692,' SRG 76/1/4851 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/percival-leopold.

Germany'.[125] This assertion contrasts with Historian Aaron Pegram's suggestion that a missing man was only officially declared a prisoner of war after the London Bureau received formal notification.[126]

Deakin and Australian prisoners of war

Indeed, early in the war, when faced with a lack of response from the Australian High Commission office in London and the Ottoman Red Crescent regarding missing soldiers from the Gallipoli campaign, Deakin had taken to writing to the Crescent in French. This action was in direct contrast to an earlier discussion in the Australian Federal Parliament in September 1915, when extraordinarily little was initially known about missing soldiers at Gallipoli. James Fenton, a Victorian member, asked the Minister for Defence, George Pearce if he would endeavour to obtain 'regular information regarding these persons so that the fears of parents and others may be allayed' through the American Ambassador and the Australian High Commissioner?[127] Jens August Jensen, the Member for Bass (Tasmania), responded that 'the High Commissioner was in constant contact with the American Ambassador regarding missing soldiers who may be prisoners of war in Turkey'.[128] He explained that 'the information was then immediately sent to Australia and published'.[129] He argued everything possible was being done as 'they realised the importance of such information to relatives of soldiers reported as missing'.[130] Deakin suggests quite the opposite in this regard. Even when writing in French, she has described how information was scarce 'as the Turkish side often took up to three months or more to reply', if at all.[131]

When establishing the state bureaux, the honorary secretaries in their 'Scheme of Work for the Red Cross Information Bureau' had suggested having agents (searchers) appointed at Constantinople or other locations where the Turks were holding prisoners of war. They were undoubtedly anticipating the outcome for some Australian soldiers from the Gallipoli campaign. The state bureaux agreed that if agents (searchers) were positioned at the bases of the firing line in the Gallipoli campaign, valuable information might be obtained.[132] However, there is no evidence in the South Australian records to suggest this happened. Instead, Deakin found a solution to the Ottoman problem. By chance, she discovered that Mary Chomley, the new Honorary Secretary of the Australian Prisoners of War Department, located down the hall from Deakin's office, had communicated with an Australian

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[125] 'Australian Red Cross Society, Monthly Leaflet - Federal Government House, Report for June 1917,' SRG76/36.

[126] Aaron Pegram, *Surviving the Great War: Australian Prisoners of War on the Western Front* 1916-18, BA Honours Thesis, Research School of Humanities & Arts, ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences (2017), 92.

[127] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session, Thursday, 19 August 1915 (The Hon. Fenton),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates House of Representatives Official Hansard, no. 10 (1915), 5915.

[128] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session, Thursday, 19 August 1915 (The Hon. Jensen),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates House of Representatives Official Hansard, no. 10 (1915), 5195.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

[131] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12, at time 00:22:25.

[132] 'Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau,' SRG76/32.

prisoner of war, Captain Thomas W. White; the Ottomans had captured him in Mesopotamia. When discussing comfort parcels for prisoners, Captain White had informed Chomley that a fellow Australian prisoner had recently died. She mentioned the fact to Deakin, who immediately checked her casualty lists and realised the deceased soldier was reported missing.

Deakin promptly wrote to Captain White and began another line of enquiry for missing Australian soldiers. He often used the one letter he was privileged to write as a prisoner of war to convey information to the London Bureau that he had collected on fellow prisoners. Deakin found several men on the bureau's current lists in London were prisoners of war who had died in captivity, sometimes due to contracting typhus during imprisonment rather than when fighting.[133] Like the Australian military authorities, the bureau sometimes delivered incorrect information about a soldier. The chaos of war impacted searcher far beyond the battlefield when searching for an individual man amongst the casualties. German and Swiss Red Cross societies readily showed their strength and commitment to the enquiry work by supplying the Australian bureau in London with lists of Australian soldiers held in a German prisoner of war camp.[134] In correspondence with Owen in the Sydney Bureau, Deakin remarked that she was wary of German lists as they tended to be inaccurate and misleading. She suggested that 'one is led to suspect purposely so, as regards their lists of Deaths and Personal effects'.[135] This decision made her more cautious when cabling about German prisoners of war classified as deceased. In some instances, supposedly dead soldiers had later contacted the London Bureau. Over time, the Australian Bureau learnt to be 'a little wiser, checking and rechecking the information'. Still, Deakin argued that the data 'on the whole was tremendously helpful' in their searching work.[136]

Deakin and the Australian High Commissioner

The Australian Prisoner of War Department, set up and run initially by Kathleen O' Connor, received all information on Australian prisoners.[137] Due to the increase in German prisoners of war, Brookes and F. R. Fairbairn announced in November 1916 that Mary Chomley was taking over the management of this Australian department.[138] The work of the bureau and this department were deeply entwined through the war. Indeed, it was Deakin who first brought the plight of Australian prisoners of war to the attention of the Australian Red Cross Society. The Red Cross Commissioners initially informed her

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[133] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12, at time 00:22:25.

[134] 'Australian Red Cross Searcher Frank Pulsford's report of the Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,' SRG76/31.

[135] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 28 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[136] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 12, at time 00:22:25.

[137] 'Red Cross Work of the Society Abroad,' *Northern Miner*, Queensland, 22 November 1916.

[138] Ibid.

in Cairo that it was 'the Australian High Commissioner's duty to look after Australian prisoners of war'.[139] Reid's office was also responsible for delivering comfort parcels to the various prisoner of war camps in Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

Deakin became aware that the British Red Cross was doing clever work in this area. It prompted her to do more for Australian prisoners when she arrived in London. She began by petitioning the authorities at the Australian High Commission. When she received little response from this office, she then 'bombarded the Commission with telephone calls and letters to ask what was being done for the Australian prisoners of war' in the Ottoman Empire.[140] When her attempts went unanswered, she started writing letters to Australian officers at their military headquarters around the corner from her office. She also tackled the official secretary, Muirhead Collins, who sent her a 'curt letter' admitting that nothing was done in this area.[141] Deakin immediately 'made representation to the [Australian] Red Cross Commissioners in London that something must be done'.[142] Together they undertook the Australian prisoner of war work themselves. Deakin has stated that Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch had the business acumen to get things done, which meant they worked well together. When the Australian Red Cross in London took on the management of prisoner parcel packing, he asked Deakin to take on the role. She refused and argued that she was not doing as well as she wanted in the Information Bureau but was 'prepared to work hand in glove with them'.[143] She did not want to give up the bureau as it was something very few people wanted to do because it was so detailed. She argued there was much to do as soon as the information came in. As with Cairo, Deakin was inclined to 'stay until everything had gone out by cable to Australia to relieve the parents or the wives or nearest and dearest'.[144]

The results obtained through the efforts of the searchers and the Australian bureaux soon reached the enquirer and no doubt their community, both in Britain and Australia. After receiving many private enquiries from relatives, Deakin wrote again to Edmunds in the South Australian Bureau. She suggested that 'an advertisement be put in the leading Australian papers stating that all enquiries for Prisoners of War should be made at the Australian Inquiry Bureaux, not directly to London'.[145] She explained to Edmunds that the difficulty experienced in gaining information on prisoners of war was because lists from Germany and Switzerland seldom included the unit or number of the captured men;

[139] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 3, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802. National Library of Australia accessed 27 March 2019. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:07:20.
[140] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 6, NLA Oral History: ORAL TRC 4802. National Library of Australia accessed 27 March 2019. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-217479701/listen/4-27, at time 00:27:35.
[141] Ibid, at time 00:07:20.
[142] Ibid, at time 00:27:35.
[143] Ibid, at time 00:33:02.
[144] Ibid.
[145] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 15 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

their names were often misspelt. Their current location was also not stated. Instead, 'the lists merely mention they were patients in such and such a hospital and transferred further East, destination unknown'.[146] Deakin clarified that unless field cards were received from the individual men, it was often difficult to supply the information requested from Australia. The bureau's work was also directly impacted by what was happening in the campaigns involving Australian soldiers before enquiries arrived on their desks. In November 1916, Deakin reported that:

> Unfortunately, we have been told to expect long casualty lists in the near future and are therefore preparing for same, by cancelling the inquiries for casualties which took place in July more quickly than we otherwise should have done.[147]

Searchers on the Australian home front

On the home front, the state bureaux also did their part to relieve enquirers' fears and anxieties. They engaged with large corps of volunteers who collectively worked together to assist the bureaux in its attempts to provide an answer to a family's enquiry.[148] Kiddle had written to Edmunds from as early as February 1916, informing him that the Melbourne Bureau had 'posted missing lists in fourteen hospitals, homes and restrooms about men they had enquiries for'.[149] The Melbourne Bureau also requested any returned soldiers who had information to supply it to the bureau.[150] Kiddle arranged the free publication of such lists in three Melbourne daily newspapers, i.e., the *Argus*, *Age* and *Herald*. He explained to Edmunds that the two-morning newspapers published the lists when they received them, while the *Herald* published the list 'every day in the first edition'.[151] Included in the list were South Australian soldiers enquired about by Victorian relatives. Kiddle suggested Edmunds post similar lists in Adelaide's newspapers. Edmunds responded by confirming that he would immediately take steps to have enquiries made at the various hospitals in South Australia and include the men mentioned on the enclosed enquiry slip.[152] In those earlier days of the bureau's work, Edmunds commented that the South Australian Bureau had had few enquiries about missing soldiers since its inauguration in early January and 'none warranting inquiries such as Kiddle had suggested'.[153] With the South Australian

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[146] Ibid.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Omoto, and Packard, 'The Power of Connections: Psychological Sense of Community as a Predictor of Volunteerism,' 287; See SRG76 Series List – South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-1918 War, File Series 1DRL/0428, Australian War Memorial (AWM), This developing network of searchers on behalf of Australian families is reflected throughout the records of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux that are held in the archives of the State Library of South Australia and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

[149] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 2 February 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[150] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 2 February 1916;' This contradicts Woods's suggestion that 'little search work was being done in Australia amongst returned men'; See Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross* (Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020), 122. Her neglect of the South Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Bureau archives held in the State Library of South Australia has limited her research results regarding searchers.

[151] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds,' 2 February 1916, SRG76/27.

[152] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle,' 4 February 1916, SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[153] Ibid.

Bureau only newly opened, this period was the calm before the storm. The bureau's work in Adelaide to supply information later became 'urgently needful, and amply justified the energy that they voluntarily bestowed upon it'.[154]

Not surprisingly, Australian searchers continued to work on behalf of the state bureaux during and after the war had ended, particularly on the home front. Sydney searcher H. Stuart Osborne, a solicitor, returned from Egypt in 1916 and immediately resumed his role in the Randwick hospital; he worked alongside another solicitor, Vero Read and barrister David Wilson.[155] Kiddle, in mid-1916, informed Edmunds that they had representatives going aboard incoming ships to interview men, courtesy of the Department of Defence. He stated that 'we have found that the arrangement has worked very satisfactorily as much more information was being obtained from the men before they disembarked than can be collected from them at the various hospitals and homes'.[156] In December 1918, the Australian bureau in London took up Owen's suggestion to appoint officers to act as searchers on returning troopships. Soldiers such as Private Philip Greif, returning home aboard one such ship, agreed to work as one of many such searchers. He and other returning men submitted their reports to the state bureaux on the home front once they disembarked.[157] In mid-1919, Lilian Whybrow, who ran the London Bureau after Deakin left for Australia, confirmed with the state bureaux that a searcher, a non-commissioned officer, left on every returning troopship, on the majority of which there were 600 men, so the state bureaux should still expect reports.[158] She remarked to the honorary secretaries that none of these searchers had prior experience of clubs or camps before they boarded a ship, so she warned them to expect the searcher's first efforts.[159] Deakin asked the state bureaux to deal with these reports similarly to those previously received directly from the Australian bureau and searchers in London. Kiddle was pleased to adopt this arrangement even though he found that these searcher reports 'were of varying quality and varying number'.[160]

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[154] 'The half-yearly statement as to the operations of the South Australian bureau from its inception to 30 June 1916 prepared by Charles A. Edmunds, 11 July 1916,' SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[155] Tony Cuneen, 'Solicitors in action at the Battles of Fromelles and Pozieres, France, 1916,' Law Society Journal online (2016), https://lsj.com.au/articles/solicitors-in-action-at-the-battles-of-fromelles-and-pozieres-france-1916/#; Tony Cunneen, 'Trouble Does Not Exist': The New South Wales Bar and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau,' 81.

[156] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 2 August 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1916, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[157] 'Papers relating to Private P. Greif, Service No, 7777,' SRG 76/1/7854 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/philip-greif; 'Red Cross Searchers – Information Bureau's Good Work,' Propeller, 11 July 1919.

[158] 'Lilian A. Whybrow in correspondence with the Australian State Bureaux, 21 July 1919,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1916, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[159] Ibid.

[160] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds,' 7 June 1919, SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

In a quid pro quo move, the reports were sent to the Australian bureau in London to update their records. Kiddle clarified with Edmunds that the bureau staff in Melbourne had recently forwarded the searcher reports from the South Australian Bureau relating to soldiers on the hospital ships, *HMHS Nevasa* and *HMHS Plassy*.[161] He advised Edmunds to send the originals to Melbourne next time to prevent duplication of the work and lessen the need for copying at their end.[162] In New South Wales, Owen acknowledged that the Red Cross Society had '1,400 searchers in the field trying to determine the fate of the missing and the circumstances in which they are missing'.[163] He also mentioned the twelve searchers his bureau had operating on the home front, working amongst the returned men looking for news about those classified as missing. One searcher alone had brought in over 2,000 reports, and he was still hard at work in March 1919.[164]

The missing - bureau work in Britain and France

Throughout the war, on the first day of each month, the Australian bureau in London issued lists to searchers containing the names of those soldiers enquired about privately or through the state bureaux. The volunteers took great care to be accurate when updating the lists; the British Red Cross Department bound the lists into books and included Australian casualty lists. This preparation undoubtedly made the searchers work more efficient as they moved through the hospital wards.[165] The list included the soldier's name, battalion, and regiment. Categories varied for soldiers killed but for whom details of his death were still unknown. Others may have died of their wounds, but families wanted to know how they were wounded and where they had died.[166] In addition, an enquirer regularly requested death and burial details and, if possible, a grave photograph. Therefore, the searcher aimed to answer such requests and undoubtedly bring closure to the grieving family. The Australian military administration also regularly supplied a complete list of 'officially missing' Australian soldiers to the London Bureau for inclusion in their searches. Soldiers classed as 'officially missing' had an M next to their name.

When dealing with missing soldiers' cases, a certain reverence was shown to the bureaux's enquirers. In one instance, Deakin sent many names she had obtained from the German Death Lists for missing soldiers to Owen in the Sydney Bureau. She explained that 'these lists were made up from the discs, gathered by the Germans, from the dead bodies in the trenches'.[167] Deakin suggested to

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[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid.
[163] 'The Searchers – In War Time,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 21 March 1919.
[164] Ibid.
[165] 'The Searcher,' *Echuca and Moama Advertiser and Farmers' Gazette*, Victoria, 13 November 1917.
[166] *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, New South Wales, 1 January 1918.
[167] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 30 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

Owen that care should be taken when forwarding the information to the relatives of these men. She thought it 'would be kind and true, in most cases, to add that the Germans had buried the bodies after obtaining the discs'.[168] She asked that Owen pass this information on to the other bureaux. There were three indications that a man was missing: officially, unofficially, and practically missing if soldiers did not appear on a prisoner of war or German death list. The first category was the soldier who failed to answer his name in the roll call immediately after a battle. The second covered men missing from the trenches; the third referred to those who chose not to correspond with their relatives. One newspaper reporter noted that finding a man listed under the 'wounded' was almost a relief; the 'missing' often left an emptier feeling.[169] One feared 'long suspense, or, worst of all, complete darkness'.[170]

Early in the work of the South Australian Bureau, Deakin had advised Edmunds that 'unofficially missing men belonging to units, not in action' should be taken up with caution, as often these men had merely failed to keep in touch with family or friends.[171] In July and August 1916, the workload of the London Bureau for 'officially missing' due to the heavy fighting in France increased. Cunneen's suggestion, undoubtedly accurate, that the Australian bureau's move from Cairo to London changed the landscape, as did the relocating of the Australian military operations to Europe.[172] Indeed, the change led 'to a new set of rules and locations that needed to be taken into account'.[173] Edmunds wrote in his July report that 'unfortunate delays had been experienced in the receipt of replies to cabled enquiries' in part due to the relocation of the Australian Bureau to London.[174] Three months after arriving in London, Deakin gave Edmunds an account in August 1916 of the work initiated in recent weeks to establish a direct line of contact for enquiries from the bureaux on the home front.

Once again, she highlighted the significance of the work undertaken by all the Australian bureaux and the strong partnerships with other Red Cross bureaux in the field established while in the 'East' meaning Cairo, Alexandria, Malta and Lemnos. As previously discussed, Deakin clarified with Edmunds that 'the British offices at Alexandria and Cairo had kindly consented to deal with the

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[168] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 30 November 1916,' SRG76/17; For example, see 'Papers relating to No. 2011 Private M. Corigliano, 32nd Battalion, SRG 76/1/0970 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/maurice-corigliano.
[169] 'Amongst the Missing: The real meaning of the Casualty List,' *Sunday Times*, New South Wales, 17 January 1915.
[170] Ibid.
[171] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 15 June 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[172] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his July Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at Government House,' 9 August 1916, SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 703.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.

comparatively small amount of Australian work that remained within Egypt' after her departure.[175] While the records of the Horse Brigades currently remained there, she stated the information was easily obtained through the Australian military office in London or by cabling the Alexandria British Red Cross Bureau regarding the sick or wounded in Egypt.[176] Regarding missing men, Deakin reminded Edmunds of the Australian Red Cross Commissioners' prior arrangements with the head of Australian Administrative staff, the newly promoted Brigadier General Sellheim. As previously mentioned, he was the Commanding Officer at the head office of the Australian Imperial Force in Cairo. Red Cross searchers were instructed to obtain reports on all those soldiers officially reported as missing.

Since moving to London, Deakin had begun adding to the list officially 'missing' soldiers for whom they had not yet received enquiries. This action was in line with the practice that Smart had previously undertaken for such cases. As discussed in Chapter 3, before Deakin arrived in London, Smart sent all reports in duplicate on the 'missing' to Deakin in Cairo for circulation to the relevant state bureaux on the home front. Chapter 5 will show that the missing were often the first casualties on the battlefield. In June 1916, Deakin explained to Edmunds that the Australian bureau intended to hold on to these reports until they were asked for by the state bureaux on the home front rather than clutter the current system. Her actions were because she did not know which states should receive the information. Deakin suggested that 'if there was one central Australian Bureau [in Australia], they would be able to forward the reports without delay', and the management of this process would be much easier amongst the network of Australian bureaux.[177]

Deakin reported that the bureau in London was still to arrange its 'hospital indexes' as staff were finding it 'troublesome to obtain admission and discharge sheets from the numerous hospitals to which the Australians are admitted'.[178] Edmunds responded to this letter in early August. He immediately began by commending Deakin and her staff for the work undertaken regarding the 'officially missing' without waiting for an enquiry to be raised by an Australian bureau. Although Edmunds had delayed replying to Deakin, he had acted immediately on her request by corresponding with the other state bureaux to suggest that the Melbourne Bureau become the 'central office' in Australia.[179] Deakin again shows foresight in this work, as such actions assisted the Australian bureaux and other bureaux in their network. She saw advantages in centralising this area of their work. The British Red Cross Department soon adopted a similar process of making reports for soldiers not yet

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[175] 'Vera Deakin's Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society General Report – London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London
June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[176] Ibid.
[177] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 15 June 1916,' SRG76/17.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.

enquired after. They, too, argued it was best to begin enquiries for each soldier as soon as the British War Office supplied them with an annotated copy of the daily casualties' lists.[180]

In his first half-yearly report, Edmunds reported on the London Bureau's inaugurated systematic search and enquiry for every missing soldier when he was officially declared as such. He noted 'the results of such a search will be consistently posted to a central office in Australia, thence to be distributed to the particular State Bureau concerned'.[181] Edmunds was assured that the suggestion put forward to the other state bureaux would be agreed upon, although it was August before arrangements were tentatively in place. He recorded that he was satisfied with the reciprocal relations established between the bureaux in the other states and noted that the current processes were encouraging.[182] He thanked the officers of the military departments, the Press and all the voluntary assistants in this admirable work.

Delays and the establishment of a central state bureau

In correspondence between Edmunds and Deakin in early August, he assured her that he 'understood that tentative arrangements had been made for the undertaking of this work by the Melbourne Division' of the state-based Australian Red Cross Information Bureaux.[183] He had previously suggested Melbourne as the prominent 'central office', as this state bureau was close to the Military Base Records at Victoria Barracks on St. Kilda Road. This arrangement provided the Melbourne Bureau with a direct line of communication with military authorities on behalf of the other bureaux anxious to answer public enquiries. In responding to Deakin's earlier apologies for delayed responses due to transferring the Cairo bureau to London, Edmunds poignantly responded that:

> … as you [Deakin] will readily understand, when one experiences a delay and finds that the relative, in their natural anxiety, has cabled and obtained from private sources the information that they have sought from this Bureau, and we are without a reply, it tends to very greatly discount our efforts in our main direction.[184]

He provided sample cases where delays occurred and argued that 'with such a condition of affairs it was eminently desirable, if possible, to avoid, and with this, we think you [Deakin] will agree'.[185] While the

[180] Redcross.org.uk/WW1, 'Missing and Wounded Service during the First World War,' Redcross.org.uk/WW1, accessed 14 January 2020.
https://vad.redcross.org.uk/~/media/BritishRedCross/Documents/Who%20we%20are/History%20and%20archives/Missing%20and%20wounded%20service%20during%20the%20First%20World%20War.pdf.
[181] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the bureau prepared by Charles A. Edmunds, 30 June 1916,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[182] Ibid.
[183] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 9 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[184] 'Charles A. Edmunds in response to Vera Deakin, 9 Aug 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[185] Ibid.

South Australian Bureau on the home front was aware of the difficulties experienced by the London-based bureau and their searchers, Edmunds suggested that:

> in the absence of a prompt response to a cabled inquiry particularly where it indicates anxiety then a simple reply to the fact of a delay being inevitable or that the matter was being dealt with, no doubt, would go a long way to comfort the anxious enquirers this end.[186]

He continued that 'if anything can be done to remedy these conditions, we feel that we will have accomplished not a little good'.[187] The suggestions put forward by Edmunds also speak to his possible anxiety and distress in such matters. It is important to consider that Edmunds showed great empathy to his enquirers. He often questioned if the state bureaux were doing enough to meet their needs. The legal volunteers in the bureau interviewed family members each afternoon between 2 and 5 pm, while Edmunds dealt with many enquirers by letter. These interactions often exposed him to the heartfelt anguish and profound loss of family members seeking news of a fallen son, father, or husband. Delays were evitable between the Australian bureau in London and the state bureaux on the home front throughout the war. The distance from Europe and the reliance on the cable system were significant factors of concern. Underpinning this was the work undertaken by Deakin and her team to verify searchers' reports, check and recheck information, and then get those details to the relevant state bureau on the home front. The London Bureau was also dealing with the added workload of private enquiries being made directly to them from private individuals.

Working together at home and abroad

Within her first two months of operation in London, Deakin had resolved the issue of delays due to hospital indexes. She confirmed to the honorary secretaries that 'a letter, wire or telephone to Australian Military Headquarters meant bulletins were now obtained quite quickly and lessened the wait on a report'.[188] She also described how the card indexes were filled in using the weekly Nominal Roll supplied by the Australian Military Records office. Admissions supplemented this information with discharge lists from the No.1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, Middlesex and the 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, London.[189] The Commanding Officer of the Harefield Military Hospital was Lieutenant-Colonel William Thornborough Hayward, a medical practitioner from South Australia. At sixty-one years old, he had embarked from Adelaide for France in August 1915 as part of the Australian Army Medical Corps.[190]

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[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] 'Vera Deakin in her monthly general report to the Australian State Bureaux, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[189] Ibid.
[190] 'Hayward, William Thornborough Biography,' Excerpt from *Blood Sweat and Fears: Medical Practitioners and Medical Students of South Australian who Served in World War* 1, Virtual War Memorial Australia, accessed 11 May 2020. https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/338440.

Messrs D. P. Dickson Cunliffe and S. Fairbairn were two Australian searchers assigned to the Harefield hospital. They readily accepted reports, 'when sufficiently definite and detailed, on Australian soldiers, for whom they had not received an enquiry, as the casualty often proved to be a "missing" case'.[191] Messrs Osborne and Wilkinson were two other Australian searchers undertaking similar work in France alongside Stanley Addison, as discussed in Chapter 3.[192] Due to heavy casualties in France, enquiries had increased significantly for those missing. Deakin informed the state bureaux that 'complete arrangements have now been made and are working well concerning such cases'.[193] She highlighted how:

> London pursues their enquiries immediately the official report is posted in respect of missing men, and any definite information that is obtained, it is understood, is then cabled direct to Melbourne, while reports, such as statements of fellow soldiers, were forwarded by the earliest available post to Melbourne, and thence distributed to the various Bureaux.[194]

Deakin also confirmed that not only did 'this arrangement bring relief to anxious enquiries due to the utmost possible expedition, it also greatly facilitated the working of the various bureaux'.[195] Edmunds responded that such arrangements were 'likely to save considerable time and an amount of detailed correspondence' on the home front.[196] He acknowledged his approval of this arrangement to the 'bureaux in neighbouring states and trusted that this suggestion will soon be put into operation'.[197]

Attempts were made by the bureau staff in London 'to obtain similar information from the D.M.S [Director of Medical Services] and hospitals in Cairo'.[198] Deakin pointed out, however, that obtaining this information was proving impossible due to staff shortages in Cairo and the number of hospitals to which Australian soldiers were admitted. Back in London, a small team of four women, led by Mrs G. Ross, took charge of the hospital indexes. Within weeks of opening their doors, Australian Red Cross visitors attached to the various British hospitals were forwarding relevant information concerning Australian soldiers to the London Bureau. In France, Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch availed himself of 'the services of four official visitors with Australian tendencies' who visited several hospitals with Australian patients. He then 'cabled details back to London to be wired to parents in Australia'.[199] There was a consensus amongst the London staff that this made the hospital indexes more complete.

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[191] 'Vera Deakin in her monthly general report to the Australian State Bureaux, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17.
[192] 'Red Cross Executive,' *Daily Telegraph*, Tasmania, 21 February 1920.
[193] 'Vera Deakin in her monthly general report to the Australian State Bureaux, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his August Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at Government House, 1 September 1916,' SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[197] Ibid.
[198] 'Vera Deakin in her monthly general report to the Australian State Bureaux, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/22.
[199] 'Report of Work in France,' The N.S.W Red Cross Record, 2 no. 11 (November 1916),15, viewed 20 July 2021 http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-94215050.

The Australian Military Records Department also began forwarding all casualty lists, including those who were 'officially missing', to the London Bureau. This extra information provided greater detail for the lists issued to the searchers assigned to the hospitals and convalescent camps. A searcher looking for the man also looked for evidence surrounding his fate on the battlefield, particularly in 'missing' cases.

In contrast to the Australian state bureaux staffed predominantly by legal men, the Australian Bureau in London was predominantly staffed by women. In early July, Miss Harnett, a stenographer, arrived from Egypt; another typist was soon employed due to the workload. Briefly mentioned above, Lilian Avis Whybrow, a Victorian, sailed from Australia to join Deakin and the team in the London Bureau that summer. Whybrow, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Melbourne, was considered a competent worker.[200] She wrote letters and dealt with enquiries as they came in from anxious relatives. Deakin later appointed her as head of the bureau's letter section because she managed anxious enquiries well. Her written expression was said 'to exercise restraint and compassion'.[201] When Deakin set sail for home in 1919, Whybrow replaced her as head of the Australian Bureau in London.

The first major test of the systems

Edmunds and Deakin little realised that the new systems being developed and rolled out would be severely tested so soon. The casualty lists of those officially 'missing' were about to increase steadily. The bitter Somme offensive, initially involving the British and the French Forces, began on 1 July as a joint offensive against German Forces on the Western Front. In the third week of July in 1916, Australian troops joined the fighting at Fromelles and Pozières Ridge; the heavy fighting continued into August with battles at Mouquet Farm and Flers.[202] Australian troops were confronted with a different style of warfare on a much larger scale than they had recently experienced in the Gallipoli campaign; they also faced 'the destructive power of artillery'.[203] Along a battlefront of two miles at Fromelles, more than 7,000 Australian casualties were sustained, while 400 soldiers were taken as prisoners of war by German troops.[204] This offensive lasted more than six months, with over one million casualties on both sides. The British surpassed 58,000 casualties, with approximately 20,000 soldiers dead on the first day alone.[205] For Deakin and Johnson, these periods of heavy fighting in Europe entailed long days from 9.30 am until sometimes late into the night. Of her time in London, Deakin later stated that they 'lived

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[200] Philippa Mein Smith, 'Scantlebury, Lilian Avis (1894-1964),' *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, access online 06 May 2020, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/scantlebury-lilian-avis-11622/text20755.

[201] Ibid.

[202] Peter Burness, '1916,' The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean, 108.

[203] Ibid, 35.

[204] Chris Clark, The Encyclopedia of Australia's Battles, 117; Philip Payton, Australia in the Great War (London: Robert Hale Ltd, 2015), 131.

[205] Peter Burness, '1916,' The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean, 108.

uncertain lives and worked uncertain hours' often going home late at night hungry, having had no lunch some days.[206]

Bean has stated of the battle at Pozières Ridge that villages were 'ground almost to powder'.[207] Historian Philip Payton notes that the battle at Mouquet Farm resulted in approximately 23,000 Australian casualties, a number 'not far short of the total at Gallipoli'.[208] Conditions were appalling as the battlefield became a quagmire due to heavy rain.[209] Initial pride for the Australian troops soon turned to despair on the home front for many mothers and fathers as casualty lists steadily grew in the daily newspapers.[210] The impact of this campaign and the confusion it brought to the home front was apparent by the number of enquiries through the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau network. The London Bureau initially received eighty to one hundred daily enquiries, excluding those soldiers classed as officially 'missing'.[211] In his August report to the South Australian Red Cross Depot at Government House, Edmunds initially stated that 'complete arrangements have now been made' and work well concerning the officially missing cases. Between July and November 1916, the South Australian Bureau issued 1,279 letters and 239 cables to the London Bureau.[212] However, by early November, Edmunds added to the pressures already being felt in the London Bureau as the high volume of enquiry work continued.

The London Bureau had been operating for approximately six weeks when the Somme Offensive began, while the South Australian Bureau had been operating continually for about six months. Yet, by November 1916, Deakin came under immense pressure from Edmunds, who questioned the very existence and value of the London Bureau. In sending an enquiry cable abroad, Lieutenant Jennings had immediately responded to Edmunds's enquiry stating that the military records office held the 'whole of the information available in this office regarding the soldiers [enquired about] with the exception of two who have died'.[213] Upon comparing the London Bureau's response to the reply from Lieutenant Jennings, Edmunds suggested to Deakin that the information received from the London Bureau appeared to be 'very meagre and behindhand'.[214] He argued that his understanding of

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[206] 'Vera Deakin White interviewed by Tom Harley in 1970s,' Session 5, at time 00:43:30.

[207] Charles E. W. Bean cited in Peter Burness, '1916,' The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean, by Charles Bean, (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and New South, 2018), 35.

[208] Payton, Australia in the Great War, 138.

[209] Ibid.

[210] Ibid, 135.

[211] 'Vera Deakin's Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society General Report – London, 10 August 1916.'

[212] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his December Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at Government House,' 21 December 1916,' SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[213] Lieutenant C. K. S. Jennings in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 29 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[214] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Vera Deakin, 29 November 1916,' SRG76/17.

'the function of these [state] bureaux, working in conjunction with yourselves [the London Bureau], was to supplement the bare tidings received through the Military'.[215]

Edmunds asked for further guidance as to 'whether the London Bureau was limited to the information supplied by Military HQ, London, which is generally forwarded and obtainable at the Base Records Office, Melbourne, or whether you [Deakin] can pursue these enquiries through your own searchers or agencies'.[216] He suggested that due to the nature of the enquiry block he had sent from Adelaide, further information should have been 'readily forthcoming' in the ordinary course of the London Bureau's enquiries.[217] Edmunds wanted assurance from Deakin that this would happen in these and similar cases. He proposed that 'Military HQ, London forward their information to the London Bureau and be supplemented by the bureaus enquires as the necessities of the case demanded'.[218] Edmunds was misguided in this understanding of the position of the Red Cross information bureaux and the military authorities in their wartime work, and this would become clearer to him soon enough when cabling issues emerged. For now, it is sufficient to say that when engaged with the Australian military administrators, failure to follow military protocols often generated military animosity towards the Australian Red Cross bureaux. Deakin responded to Edmunds's letter of late November 1916, stating that 'she cannot understand how he confused the functions of this bureau [London] with those of the Official Military Offices as all reports sent from the London Bureau were marked as coming from that source'.[219] She 'trusts therefore in future' that Edmunds will note where the information was coming from and understand the many serious difficulties they experience'.[220] She confirmed that the London Bureau was processing the enquiries that they had only just received in early January and trusted answers would be satisfactorily.[221]

Unfortunately, Edmunds did not respond to Deakin's letter until late March 1917. When he did, he put the unfortunate position that had arisen down to the Postal Authorities, as the South Australian Bureau had addressed the package to the London Bureau. Therefore, how it came 'to be delivered at the A.I.F HQ was difficult to understand'.[222] Edmunds 'assumed it went to the London Bureau and was then passed on to Military HQ'.[223] He was 'glad to know that this was not so' and pointed out that it was on this understanding that they had 'ventured the remarks contained in the

[215]Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid.
[219] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 11 January 1917, SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Vera Deakin, 20 March 1917,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Jun 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[223] Ibid.

letter', which he argued 'in the circumstances had no application'.[224] He clarified that they had known 'the response came from the Australian military headquarters without any further report from the London Bureau'. [225] Naturally, they were anxious 'to know whether the enquiries were proceeding and whether they could anticipate supplementary reports on the subjects of enquiry'.[226] He also noted his team's appreciation of the London Bureau's work and the difficulties its staff encountered. He reminded Deakin that they were 'only anxious on their part to facilitate the easy carrying out of the functions of their respective offices'.[227] This exchange highlights something of the impact of distance between bureaux and the confusion that sometimes followed because of it; no doubt underlining exhaustion was also present in each of the bureaux as the demands of this wartime work expanded.

Conclusion

Deakin's network of relationships with the British Red Cross Society in Britain and France and those in Germany and Switzerland enabled the London Bureau to function more effectively than in Cairo. She successfully navigated a complex militaristic environment consisting of cultural and normative patterns that defined the expectations of each other's behaviour. This result ultimately organised and predefined their enduring working relationships with one another. The British Red Cross Department quite possibly followed her lead when enquiring about those missing soldiers not yet privately enquired after. Probably, the core team that followed Deakin from Cairo to London did so not only because of the work; but also, because she was a strong leader and a friend to her fellow Australians. The success of the Australian Bureau in London enabled the state bureaux on the home front to be just as effective in their work.

Even the most straightforward social structure is complex; the social arrangements integrated into the expectations of those in the various role sets had little to do with how they managed all their demands. Each task enabled the women in the London Bureau to build their support network within it, regardless of how they came to be there.[228] However, Deakin and her team met Symon's expectations that the Australian bureau abroad needed to provide more than was officially obtainable for an enquiry. Their effectiveness went far beyond resolving conflicts between private and official records. In most cases, there were no official records; the searchers bridged the gap between the London Bureau and the war front. Their role was pivotal in functioning all the Australian bureaux to answer enquiries. With the London Bureau on the opposite side of the world, dependent on postal and cable services, the staff in the London Bureau developed and adapted their systems to accommodate the honorary secretaries on

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[224] Ibid.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Robert Merton, *On Social Structure and Science,* ed. Piotr Sztompka (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 114.

the home front and the Australian Military Records Department in London. Yet, primarily, they kept the enquirers at the forefront of everything they did.

In Chapter 5, the work of the Australian bureaux on the home front is considered from an organisational point of view in both a local and global context. Importantly though, this is more than just an administrative history. The work undertaken on the home front affords an understanding of how this example of civil society played a crucial role in the First World War. The following chapter will examine how the Australian state bureaux bridged the gap between the Australian military authorities and the Commonwealth Government to become an intimate connecting point between Australians at home and soldiers on the battlefront.

CHAPTER FIVE
"THE WORK WAS URGENTLY NEEDFUL AND AMPLY JUSTIFIED"
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CABLING SYSTEM

> Doubt is the worst of all,
> When a soldier goes missing,
> Doubt maddens those who loved him,
> Who love him still,
> For they cannot help hoping that
> someday…perhaps...?[1]

Introduction

In a report on their inaugural meeting in July 1915, the League of Loyal Women, discussed in Chapter 1, stated that 'the theory of the macrocosm and the microcosm may be applied to the League'.[2] In this statement, the League clearly showed that the Military Information Bureau, operating in Adelaide before the Red Cross Information Bureau opened its doors, was a resource that bridged the gap between civil society at a micro-level and state institutions at a macro level. Similarly, the value of the wartime work undertaken by the legal profession was reflected in their ability to use their social position to create, nurture and manage the exchange of information between all levels of society.[3] Operating as they did at the meso-level of society, the state bureaux dissolved barriers and 'opened out the languages of both official and unofficial levels' through various forms of correspondence that ultimately reordered the lives of many families on the home front.[4] Examining the work carried out by the state bureaux during the war exposes the key tenets of nationality, efficiency, productivity, and central administration at home and abroad.

On one level, this chapter reveals an organisational history that shows how the enquiry work of the South Australian Bureau was undertaken on behalf of a soldier's family or friends. It will also reveal how Charles Edmunds, as its honorary secretary, was a team player instigating change and collaborating with the other honorary secretaries. In his interactions with the other bureaux, he contributed to this wartime work and developed systems that benefited all the Australian Red Cross Information Bureaux. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, Deakin, in London, and the legal men in each state bureau were

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[1] Kitty Hauser, Bloody old Britain: O.G.S Crawford and the archaeology of Modern Life (London: Granta Books, 2008), 55.
[2] 'League of Loyal Women of Australia Report of the Inaugural Meeting, 20 July 1915, SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915.
[3] Kaisa Still, Jukka Huhtamäki and Martha Russell, Relational Capital, and Social Capital: One or two Fields of Research? At the Conference on Proceedings of the 10th International Conference on Intellectual Capital, Knowledge Management and Organisational Learning, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA, 24-25 October 2013. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260259631_Relational_Capital_and_Social_Capital_One_or_two_Fields_of_Research.
[4] Bart Ziino, 'Total war' In Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts, ed. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan (2017), 170.

situated in 'a social system that framed their behaviour in both obvious and understated ways'.[5] Each individual also had a general awareness of the constraints and opportunities created 'by the norms, values, beliefs and expectations of the social structures that surrounded them'.[6] Yet, the honorary secretaries did not operate as one entity. The tensions, cracks, and contradictions became more apparent when they interacted with one another and different institutions on various matters.[7] In particular, the cable system that was vital to their efforts in 'trying to get at the truth about the fate of Australian soldiers' problematised the incompatibilities. In their 'doing', the parties resolved the contradictions and put new arrangements and practices in place.[8]

This chapter will examine the events that unfolded at a state and national level when the reliable, cost-effective cabling system between the state bureaux and Europe was threatened by government intervention and hindered by lengthy delays. It will explain how the Australian Red Cross information bureaux, situated between the families and the Commonwealth Department of Defence, bridged the gap at a meso-level of society to provide and verify final answers to family enquiries. As casualty lists became more frequent in the local press, an 'extraordinary emotional mobilisation' was undertaken amongst Australians at home.[9] The cable service was an essential requirement if the bureaux were to alleviate the anxiety and fear of families on the home front. Between 1916 and 1917, the honorary secretaries needed to invest time and effort in the discussions and negotiations required to maintain this service. In so doing, they clearly indicate where they precisely positioned their bureau in society as they undertook this wartime work.

In many ways, the work of the Red Cross information bureaux involved looking for a needle in a haystack. On the home front, the priority of the bureaux within each state was to conduct local and global forms of collective action, governance and leadership; this approach enabled each state bureau to provide wherever possible the details of the whereabouts and welfare of a sick or wounded soldier.[10] The bureaux also aimed to give more information about those soldiers classified as 'missing' and supplement an official pink telegram with the more intimate details of a soldier's death and burial.[11]

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[5] Jakomijin Van Wijk, Charlene Zietsma, Silvia Dorado, Frank G. A De Bakker, and Ignasi Martí. 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory.' *Business & Society* 58, no. 5 (2019), 893.

[6] MIchael Smets, Tim Morris and Royston Greenwood cited in 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' eds. Jakomijin Van Wijk, Charlene Zietsma, Silvia Dorado, Frank G. A De Bakker, and Ignasi Martí, *Business & Society* 58, no. 5 (2019), 893.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 36; Morris Smets and Royston Greenwood, 'From Practice to Field: A Multilevel Model of Practice-driven Institutional Change,' *The Academy of Management Journal* 55, no. 4 (2012), 892.

[9] Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1 (2015), 9.

[10] Laia Balcells and Patricia Justino, 'Bridging Micro and Macro Approaches on Civil Wars and Political Violence: Issues, Challenges, and the Way Forward,' *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 8 (2014), 1348.

[11] Australian War Memorial (AWM), 'Pink telegram informing relatives of the death,' accessed 20 January 2020, https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/memorial_scroll/letter4.

However, the social relationships and networks of the bureaux were challenging to transfer abroad. Having an Australian-run bureau in a prime location in Europe, close to the Australian troops and military hospitals in the Mediterranean and Britain, their social ties and networks were effectively far-reaching and shared to the benefit of all involved.[12]

The crucial meso-level

During the war, establishing the state bureaux within Australian society produced a more apparent social stratification comprising three social tiers: macro, meso, and micro levels.[13] This prominent structure, previously mentioned in Chapter 1, was supported by society due to the nature of the wartime work evolving at 'the crucial meso-level' within the community.[14] As discussed, the macro-level account for institutions that shape culture through their systems and hierarchies. For example, during the First World War, the Commonwealth Government and the Australian military authorities occupied this position. At a micro-level, small-scale interaction occurred amongst kinship groups, individuals, and households through conversations or group dynamics in local or regional social groups. Negotiating the space and creating a dialogue between the macro and micro levels was the information bureaux at the meso-level. The state bureaux, situated in this space between the institutions and the public, operated as a vital conduit between the other two tiers of society. This position enabled the many voices of enquirers to be heard and given responses.

Without official information about casualties on the battlefront in the Ottoman Empire and Europe, each bureau aimed to alleviate the distress felt across Australia. When a soldier's next of kin received meagre official information, they were often left wanting more. Soon after the Sydney Bureau commenced operations, Langer Owen reported that 'in cases where the particulars supplied by the Defence Department were exceedingly meagre', the Red Cross Information Bureau 'fulfilled a very useful purpose'.[15] With the passing of time and the realisation that no further official information was forthcoming, it was often to the state bureau that a family member or friend turned to seek clarity, solace, and comfort. When Mrs H. Smith received an official cable notifying her that her son was wounded for a second time, she wrote to the bureau in Adelaide. She stated that the second cable 'gave me rather a shock' as she had mistakenly thought this cable would give her an update on her son's condition following his first wounding some months prior.[16] She hoped the bureau could provide a

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[12] Thomas Faist, 'The crucial meso-level,' in *Selected Studies in International Migration and Immigrant Incorporation*, ed. Marco Martiniello and Jan Rath, 1st ed (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 60.

[13] José López and John Scott, Social Structures (England and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), 3.

[14] Faist, 'The crucial meso-level.' in Selected Studies in International Migration and Immigrant Incorporation, 67.

[15] 'Soldier Sons – Mothers' Enquiries,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 October 1915.

[16] 'Papers relating to No. 742, Private H Smith, 43rd Infantry Batallion,' SRG 76/1/3061 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/harry-smith.

quick response as 'the anxiety of waiting is awful trying'.[17] The London bureau's response took some time, but eventually, Edmunds was pleased to provide a satisfactory report on her son.

There was a self-appointed obligation on the part of the Red Cross bureaux to meet the public's expectations and generate information flow for both those enquiring, and the soldiers enquired after. Their actions contrast with Peter Stanley's statement that the Red Cross learned to be sceptical, investigating only claims they regarded as promising. On the contrary, when sufficiently definite and detailed, the official Red Cross searchers accepted reports on soldiers for whom they had not received an enquiry as the casualty often proved to be a 'missing' case.[18] In other instances, the service was reciprocated by soldiers, who used the cabling channel of the bureau to contact family from a hospital bed or prisoner of war camp. Soldiers also enquired about the fate of a brother or a mate after the recent chaos of a battle.[19] The information passed on was important in benefiting and providing family members and others with a basis for further action.[20] Be that to rejoice, comfort, allow grieving, or just know the finer details about the situation that had unfolded so far from home. This voluntary wartime work was undoubtedly beneficial for the helped and the helper.[21]

As early as September 1915, the Department of Defence held discussions with the Eastern Extension Company, following Keith Murdoch's report from Egypt, as discussed in Chapter 2. In Appendix D of this report, Keith Murdoch stated that the cable company had granted the New Zealand Department of Defence a code address. He argued that this had 'made cabling so cheap that it probably explained why they [New Zealand] could send 300 private cables to Egypt weekly'.[22] In contrast, 'with nearly twice the population in New South Wales, and with more soldiers at the Mediterranean front, only 150 cables or less went weekly'.[23] Keith Murdoch had unofficially approached the cable company and found they were agreeable to granting the concession to Australia. While his report from Egypt was withheld from public scrutiny, it appears the Commonwealth Government used his recommendation. Following discussions between the Department of Defence and the cable company, a telegraphic code indicator addresses manual was issued to the Department of Defence to reduce cable costs.[24] The code words in the manual replaced the long regimental addresses

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[17] Ibid.

[18] 'Vera Deakin in her General Report from London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17.

[19] 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H Wiese, 48th Infantry Batallion,' SRG 76/1/3525 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/eyewitness/carl-herman-wiese.

[20] James S. Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,' *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), S104.

[21] John Wilson, 'Volunteering,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000), 215.

[22] 'A report on postal services and allied subjects connected with the A.I.F. in Egypt by Mr Keith Murdoch,' Appendix D, File Series MP367/1, 13 September 1915, National Archives of Australia (NAA), 1-2; Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative.' *Archives and Manuscripts* 48, no. 2 (2020), 128.

[23] Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' 128.

[24] 'A report on postal services and allied subjects connected with the A.I.F. in Egypt by Mr Keith Murdoch,' 1-2.

for different military units. Although code words were prohibited in Expeditionary Force Message (E.F.M.) cables, an exception was made for the state bureaux to enable them to also provide descriptive information for soldiers enquired after.[25]

The cabling system continually tested and challenged the honorary secretaries, particularly between 1916 and 1917. While this process, above all others, posits the Australian Red Cross information bureaux operating at the meso-level, interestingly, this process also highlights the fact that the bureaux did not work together cohesively. Significantly, their social innovation, defined here as a sequence of activities that sought solutions to their specific challenges, reduced the physical distance separating the state bureaux. Sending enquiries and receiving vital information from the Australian and British Red Cross bureaux abroad was paramount in the work of the state bureaux on behalf of enquirers. Historian Bruce Scates has suggested that the bureau's purpose was 'to locate the men posted as killed or missing or to confirm that they had not been taken prisoner'.[26] In the early days of this wartime work, each Australian bureau aimed to assist those in society 'anxious to seek news of sick, wounded or [officially] missing men' enlisted from its state.[27] The bureaux and society expected that the Department of Defence would officially deal with the details about those killed on the battlefront. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, delays became inevitable given the chaos of the battlefront and the issues that emerged due to inefficient communication channels. While each honorary secretary initially aimed to supplement the meagre tidings from the Department of Defence, the men running these bureaux soon realised that the official information received by next of kin was 'not wholly true and was always incomplete'.[28]

To assist the Australian bureaux from the outset, Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson, as the President of the Australian Red Cross Society, had negotiated with the Postal Authority and the Eastern Extension Company to allow the state bureaux to cable their agents in Britain, the Mediterranean and Egypt. At the same E.F.M. rates and under the same conditions as weekend cable letters for families, these rates were at 'one-fourth of the ordinary rate'.[29] The bureaux were permitted to cable enquiries at any time, but family members could only send an E.F.M. cable to a soldier at the

[25] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the Victorian bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915.
[26] Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81 (2001), 42.
[27] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Register*, South Australia, 10 April 1916.
[28] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.
[29] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the Victorian bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36.

weekend. The expectation was family cable letters were to be delivered to the recipient on a Monday.[30] As previously discussed, Lady Munro Ferguson clarified that while:

> the Pacific Cable Board were also agreeable to similar arrangements, the Atlantic Companies, whose cables form part of the route of messages sent via "Pacific" would not agree, consequently such messages cannot be sent via the Pacific route.[31]

The service provided by the Red Cross information bureaux was free to all wishing to use it; cable costs were never demanded of the enquirer, although the bureau gratefully accepted the donation when offered. Edmunds stated that he was always 'glad to receive the cost or whatever portion of it the enquirer could afford to pay'.[32] However, there was an awareness that not everyone enquiring was financially viable, even for the price of a cable. Consequently, the South Australian Bureau stamped its letters to inform enquirers that there was no charge for the service, although donations were welcome. The average cost of cabling an inquiry was approximately ten shillings.[33] Generally, people paid the cable cost and occasionally included a small donation to the Red Cross Fund or Prisoner of War Fund. Others noted that they volunteered in their local Red Cross circle to contribute to the wartime work of the Australian Red Cross Society.

Cabled responses from the London Bureau tended to arrive at regular intervals with tracing updates or details about a soldier's recovery; this was compared to those official military cables only issued when the soldier's condition underwent a definite change.[34] In June 1915, Mrs Cussion was informed by the military in Keswick Barracks that her son, Private Christian W. Cussion, was 'unofficially reported wounded and missing from 25 to 29 April 1915'.[35] A returned soldier stated that he last saw Private Cussion on 28 April 1915 at Gallipoli, while an extract in a local newspaper listed the soldier as being wounded. Enquiries made by the YMCA were passed on to Mrs Cussion, stating that her son was 'reported dead, but the military did not confirm'.[36] Finally, in January 1916, the soldier

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[30] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the Victorian bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36; In 1915 Senator George Pearce, Minister for Defence acknowledged in a Senate parliamentary session that the concession of a free cable for relatives to enquire about wounded soldiers in Gallipoli was of considerable value. He stated that 'if thousands of men are wounded, franking all the cables of inquiry every week-end from Australia to Egypt and by return from Egypt to Australia should be acknowledged;' See 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Thursday, 13 May 1915 (Senator Pearce & Keating).' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 19 (1915), 3073.
[31] 'Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson in correspondence with Marie, Lady Galway, 4 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened. Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917.
[32] 'Red Cross Information Bureau South Australian Branch – Statement of enquiries relating to soldiers' sick, wounded, missing or killed in action which can be undertaken by the Red Cross Information Bureau, n.d., SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915.
[33] 'Papers relating to No. 2602, Private W.A.T. George, 5th Pioneers,' SRG 76/1/6784 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/william-alfred-teague-george.
[34] 'War Cable Work,' *Register*, South Australia, 29 April 1921.
[35] 'Papers relating to No. 340, Private C. W. Cussion, 10th Infantry Battalion,' South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau File Series SRG 76/1/20, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/christian-walter-cussion.
[36] Ibid.

was officially classified as 'wounded and missing'. This state of confusion must only have added to his mother's distress; her doubts about the situation prompted her to contact the Red Cross Information Bureau in Adelaide. Following receipt of her first letter, Edmunds, throughout 1916 and 1917, in his attempts to gather further details, corresponded with the Military Base Records Offices in Adelaide and Melbourne, the bureau in Cairo and then London. He also wrote directly to other soldiers in the military unit, who provided Red Cross searchers with witness statements. He passed the information on to Mrs Cussion, noting that the reports were 'unofficial and should be received with some caution'.[37] Importantly, and in contrast to the Department of Defence, he continually informed her of the bureau's progress throughout the enquiry. In October 1917, an official slip from the London Bureau confirmed that Private Cussion had been 'killed in action on or about 2 May 1915'.[38]

The code word *Redcib* was assigned to the Red Cross information bureaux to assist the bureaux in expediting information to and from Europe.[39] The code word acted as both a cable signature and part of the return address for each of the state bureaux operating under the Australian Red Cross Society to reduce costs.[40] In early 1916, John Kiddle in the Melbourne Bureau confirmed with Edmunds that arrangements were made with authorities granting a concession to register the code word *Redcib*. In mid-June, the Department of Defence also gave the state bureaux permission to use the 2nd edition of the Telegraphic Code Indicator Manual discussed above.[41] When later prohibited from using the *Redcib* code, Edmunds immediately wrote to the Chief Censor at Parliament House on North Terrace in Adelaide. He also interviewed the Deputy Postmaster-General, who made 'exhaustive enquiry' into the issue on his behalf.[42]

Working under significant time pressures and dissatisfied with the response from either office, Edmunds wrote to Kiddle asking him to 'please advise how your cables are signed, as he understood that *Redcib*, *Stralis* (Australia) and *Questman* (London) were all registered for use'.[43] He argued that franking this part of the message was not difficult as the bureaux had already paid or tendered payment

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson previously asked to register the code address of the Red Cross as *Redcib* in October 1915, to which the Postmaster General remarked that such a request came within the province of the military authorities, however, he did approach the Department of Defence on her behalf and had every confidence that the use of the word *Redcib* would be approved within a couple of days; See also, 'Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson in correspondence with Marie, Lady Galway, 4 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916, and Jan 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[40] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his October monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 18 November 1916,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the Victorian bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916.

[41] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with the Postmaster General, Melbourne (G13069/16),' 15 June 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[42] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B Kiddle, 14 August 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[43] Ibid.

for this word as part of the message.[44] Edmunds further suggested that 'in order to avoid possible confusion on the other side [Britain] the various [Australian] Bureaux should adhere to the use of this word *Redcib* as the official signature on all messages from the bureaux to guarantee bona fides of the message'.[45] Kiddle spoke with the Deputy Chief Censor for Australia and confirmed that 'the whole matter had been a misunderstanding'.[46]On behalf of Edmunds, he then contacted the Chief Censor in Adelaide and instructed him to send out cable messages signed *Redcib* by the South Australian Bureau. Having resolved the immediate issue of using the code word, Kiddle suggested to Edmunds that 'if there was any further trouble to contact the Adelaide Censor to instruct those officials to pass your cables'.[47]

By mid-1916, the Australian bureaux saw an increase in the workload for those soldiers classified as 'officially missing' due to the first heavy fighting described above involving the Australian Imperial Force at Fromelles and three days later at Pozières in the Somme offensive.[48] This change impacted the volume of cables transmitted between the state bureaux and the London Bureau. In August, Deakin sent a report to Kiddle outlining that 'the Commonwealth Government found it impossible to allow the Bureaux free cabling facilities' and therefore had 'very generously acceded to the Bureau's request for copies of their Government Telegraph code'.[49] She suggested that 'money will thus be saved by using the code'.[50] Deakin asked that the Australian bureaux advise the bureau in London of receipt of these codebooks.[51] In contrast, Kiddle explained to Edmunds that while it was agreed between the Eastern Extension Company and the London Bureau to send urgent cables free of charge, the Commonwealth Government had refused to allow this particular service to be free. As the volume of the cables increased, the government required their percentage of the cost.[52] Kiddle informed Edmunds that the matter was being discussed between the Commonwealth Government and Lady Munro Ferguson on behalf of the Red Cross Society.[53]

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] The Australian War Memorial, London, 'Formelles: The Battle in Brief,' accessed 19 April 2021, https://www.awmlondon.gov.au/battles/fromelles.
[49] 'Vera Deakin's General Report from London to the state bureaux, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 3 August 1916,' SRG76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); In September 1917, NSW Labor Senator Josiah Thomas, raised the issue of expenditure on cabling to and from England, France, and Egypt. He stated that he was a strong advocate of the nationalisation of cable communications between Australia and Great Britain. Thomas regretted that the Atlantic Cable service (used by the public and the bureaux) unlike the Pacific Cable Board was not also under Imperial control; he suggested that if action had been taken earlier the cable costs could have been reduced considerably. Although, he argued that in some ways he wished the figure had been more by including more details in cables about wounded soldiers to allay a great deal of anxiety to relatives. His son fell in France the previous year. The Pacific Board was at that time paying its way due to the considerable use of this cable route by the Military Authority; See 'Seventh Parliament – Second Session Wednesday, 26 September 1917 (Senator Thomas),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard, no. 39 (1917), 2720.
[53] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 3 August 1916,' SRG76/14.

A network of relationships

The network of relationships available to the legal fraternity at a meso-level of society facilitated the passing of information between the military authorities at a macro-level and next-of-kin at a micro-level more easily. Rather than family members grappling with bureaucracy more focused on war logistics, the public approached the information bureau as an organised resource, strategically positioned between them and the institutions within society. As a result, the Red Cross information bureaux often provided a more detailed outcome than the answers received through official channels.[54] The volunteers operating the state bureaux soon witnessed daily 'how people experienced war materially, and how they felt about it emotionally'.[55]

When Mrs E. McDonald wrote to the South Australian Bureau in October 1916, she sought an answer to the whereabouts of her husband, who she stated had enlisted 'leaving me and the family in destitute circumstances'.[56] Edmunds responded that although the soldier was officially reported as wounded, his whereabouts were unknown.[57] He directed her to communicate with the Paymaster, Expeditionary Forces on North Terrace, Adelaide. Similarly, Mrs N. Stipek, unable to work due to illness and desperate to receive financial support from her soldier son, was heartbroken that he did not respond to her letters. She worried that he was incapacitated.[58] Although the bureau responded that the latter enquiries were outside the remit of the bureau's functions, they nonetheless assisted this mother by writing to the Base Records Office in Melbourne on her behalf. Correspondence between Mrs Stipek and the bureau continued over twelve months before concluding that her son was fit and well and had chosen not to respond to her for unknown reasons.[59]

In this normative organisation, people who chose to do the work pursued 'a goal that they considered morally worthwhile'.[60] Edmunds was bureaucratic in his methods by assigning specialised duties to men such as William J. Isbister when he returned from his role as an Honorary Red Cross Commissioner in Egypt. Isbister was already familiar with the documentation required in dealing with soldier enquiries, as he had previously reviewed this material for Deakin in the Cairo bureau.[61] Edmunds sent Isbister to Melbourne in August 1916 to confer with a representative from each state

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[54] Van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí, 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 890.

[55] Bart Ziino, 'Total war' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan (2017), 170.

[56] 'Papers relating to No. 4173, Private J McDonald, 48th Infantry Batallion,' SRG 76/1/1160 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/john-mcdonald.

[57] Ibid.

[58] 'Papers relating to No. 1542, Private A Stipek, 52nd Infantry Batallion,' SRG 76/1/1841 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/albert-stipek.

[59] Ibid.

[60] John J. Macionis and Kenneth Plummer, *Sociology: A Global Introduction* (New York: Prentice Hall Europe, 1998), 190.

[61] Peter Moore, A Legal Cohort: South Australia's Legal Community and the First World War (Australia: Australian Legal Heritage, 2014), 140.

bureau. Beforehand, he had sent a telegram to Owen in the Sydney Bureau requesting a representative be sent to Victoria for the meeting. Owen responded that they were 'too rushed with work to send a representative although they would like to speak with him' [Isbister].[62] Edmunds's actions suggest that he wanted to operate his bureau similarly to the others. In monitoring the performance of the South Australian office, he was also cross-checking the working methods of the other state bureaux to see that his office had the technical competence required to perform its volunteer duties independently and collectively. Edmunds's actions enabled the South Australian Bureau to operate on a par with the standards and efficiencies of the other bureaux and allowed him to contribute suggestions concerning processes.

The informalities that Edmunds adopted for some situations allowed him to meet a legitimate need that might otherwise have been overlooked if he had used more formal regulations.[63] For example, Isbister spent three days in Melbourne before reporting back to Edmunds on the 'practices in vogue in each state', which was 'considered to be of great importance' by Edmunds.[64] In contrast, the honorary secretary in Queensland, George Scott, travelled to Sydney in December 1916 to study the system 'in vogue at the bureau where this wartime work had originated under the guidance of Langer Owen'.[65] On receipt of an invitation from Melbourne, Florence Saunders, rather than Edmunds, also visited the Melbourne Bureau to understand that bureau's administrative methods and processes. Again, Edmunds did not enforce the conventional voluntary labour gender roles in the South Australian Bureau that Scates has suggested regarding other wartime work undertaken by men and women.[66]

When establishing the Melbourne Bureau, Kiddle had little idea what work was required and the best system to assist them. Therefore he sought advice and assistance from F. J. Brient, Managing Director of Wabash Systems Pty. Ltd., who devised and established a system for the bureau that was considered efficient and sufficient for the purpose.[67] Following Saunders' visit, Kiddle had been 'only too pleased if they [Adelaide] imitated his methods' as he considered 'this the sincerest form of flattery'.[68] Edmunds noted in that month's report to Head Office that it was Saunders' work that

[62] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 15 August 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[63] Macionis and Plummer, Sociology: A Global Introduction, 191.

[64] 'Charles A Edmunds in his August monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 1 September 1916,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[65] '3rd Annual Report for the Red Cross Information Bureau, Honorary Secretary: Mr George Scott, August 1917,' British Red Cross Society, Queensland Division, Annual Report of the Queensland Division of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society., 1916, State Library of Queensland (SLQ).

[66] Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' 43.

[67] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the Victorian bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36.

[68] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 8 August 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), 2.

'largely contributed to the success of the [South Australian] bureau'.[69] In a letter to the Red Cross South Australian Central Committee post-war, Edmunds stated that Olive Croft, his sister, had worked alongside Saunders and Edmunds from the bureau's inception. He noted that each lady 'have devotedly given their whole time and attention to this voluntary work with eminently satisfactory results'.[70] Once again, this highlights that the roles within the South Australian Bureau were relatively egalitarian.

The importance of cables

A sense of urgency sometimes undermined the groundwork in place early in the workings of the bureaux. For example, Edmunds questioned the arrangements by which the bureaux pursued enquiries for soldiers on various occasions with Kiddle. In 1916 both men turned their attention back to the issue of those soldiers who were officially reported as missing after Kiddle had enquired about a South Australian soldier with a response still pending on the cabling situation. In August, Edmunds had asked him 'why the Melbourne Bureau had departed from the original arrangement, that each State should strictly limit its operations to men enlisted from their state, except in special cases'?[71] At the time, Kiddle responded that it would be highly unsatisfactory to those in the Melbourne Bureau to inform an enquirer who came in that they would not be able to take up their enquiry and refer them to a bureau in another state.[72] He argued that:

> We rather think that there are more cases of relatives in Victoria of soldiers who have enlisted from other states than apply in the case of the other bureaux, but whether this is so or not we have the means of answering information about all soldiers.[73]

However, the Melbourne Bureau did notify the state bureau where the man had enlisted whenever they did send an enquiry to London about a soldier from another state; on receipt of information from London concerning the man, they then forwarded the information to the relevant state bureau.[74] Later in the war, Kiddle refused to preference enquirers who could pay total cable costs over those who could not afford to when congestion on the lines meant the bureaux had to use the Pacific Cable Company. This nationalised company could only accept fully paid rates. Instead, he chose to suspend all cable Enquiries as he understood the Military Base Records Office would report on highly urgent cases.[75]

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[69] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the bureau prepared by Charles A. Edmunds, 30 June 1916,' SRG76/22.

[70] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with the South Australian Red Cross Central Committee, January 1920,' The Red Cross Record South Australia periodical 1916-1920 1, no. 1 (July 1916) to 4, no. 48 (June 1920), State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[71] 'Charles A. Edmunds's question to John B. Kiddle during William Isbister's visit to Melbourne in August 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 24 October 1918,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

Kiddle reminded Edmunds that as the Melbourne Bureau was now the central administration for all the state bureaux regarding officially missing men, the London Bureau sent all reports in duplicate to Melbourne for those soldiers formally reported as missing but not enquired about from a state bureau. He reaffirmed with Edmunds that the Melbourne Bureau did not issue a cable enquiry to Deakin for such men, as a rule, as any definite reports came through the Department of Defence.[76] Instead, upon receipt of a report, his bureau passed it on to the relevant state bureau, who then dealt directly with the London Bureau. In this way, Kiddle and Deakin had reasoned that upon receipt of an enquiry about an officially missing soldier, time and expense were saved as the report was already to hand in Australia.[77] Official notifications for soldiers classified as missing were eventually sent directly from the London Bureau to the state bureau where the soldier had enlisted to relieve some of the pressure for the Melbourne Bureau as the work intensified. Kiddle retained a duplicate report to enable this central office to maintain a complete record of all casualties. The bureaux continually sought collective order in the paperwork by coordinating and centralising some of their processes.[78]

By late 1916, delays became so aggravated that the South Australian Red Cross Executive Committee argued that their bureau 'was not doing justice to the enquirer who was relying entirely upon our efforts to relieve natural anxiety'.[79] As part of the wider community, the volunteers in the bureau shared their concerns about the soldiers abroad.[80] There was a consciousness amongst the staff and volunteers at the meso-level that anxiety levels were exceptionally high for family groups at the micro-level in cases such as those soldiers classified as missing. Edmunds argued that:

> it was a particularly distressing class of enquiry and demands our best efforts to alleviate the natural anxiety of the relatives, and it is from this point of view that we feel some little difficulty in the light of the experience of cases where sufficient time had elapsed for those men if prisoners of war to write to their families.[81]

As discussed in Chapter 2, the same concerns were raised at a macro-level in the Senate in early May 1915. The three chief items of complaint discussed in those earlier parliamentary debates related to the delays affecting cables, information regarding wounded soldiers and the delivery of letters to and from the troops. George Pearce, Minister of Defence, remarked that he received complaints from honourable members, the Press, and the public. Unlike the bureaux at the meso-level, Pearce had failed to observe how the government might negotiate, adapt and assist in creating new opportunities for

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[76] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with the Postmaster General, Melbourne (G13069/16),' 27 October 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[77] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 22 July 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[78] Smets, Morris and Greenwood, 'From Practice to Field: A Multilevel Model of Practice-driven Institutional Change,' 896.
[79] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his December monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 22 December 1916,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[80] Allen M. Omoto and Cody D. Packard, 'The Power of Connections: Psychological sense of community as a predictor of volunteerism,' *The Journal of Social Psychology* 156, no. 3 (2016), 273.
[81] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 22 September 1916,' SRG 76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

social innovation between the macro and micro levels of society.[82] Instead, he had argued that 'the Defence Department was only connected with it [communication delays] in a secondary way'.[83] He further stated that 'the conduct of the war is not the responsibility of the Defence Department in Australia, but is the responsibility of the [British] War Office'.[84] Pearce put the onus back on family members to correctly address letters to the troops.[85] In Adelaide, the League of Loyal Women of Australia provided a service for a nominal fee of thruppence (3d) whereby 'strong envelopes with a plainly typed address could be ordered' for men on active service in an effort to reduce the risk of letters going astray.[86] Indeed, this problem was continually addressed in the newspapers and parliamentary debates throughout the war. But unfortunately, the situation worsened rather than improved as the war progressed.

In an attempt 'to get accurate and speedy information regarding casualties' from the war front for Australian families, as discussed in Chapter 2, a 'Central Casualty Bureau' had by late 1915 been established by the Australian military authorities abroad.[87] On the home front, charges were waivered by the Eastern Extension Company for cabled enquiries made through the Department of Defence by relatives of dangerously or seriously wounded soldiers. This approach initially proved an enormous benefit to the next of kin.[88] However, in May 1916, Senators again raised questions in parliamentary debates about some families having to wait more than twelve months before they received official news of a casualty. West Australian Labor Senator Edward Needham suggested asking 'the Imperial Government to expedite news of casualties'.[89] The Senator referred to those previously reported cases as missing and later changed to killed in action. Pearce acknowledged that mistakes occurred occasionally, and casualty lists got republished as soon as they were updated.[90] However, he continued to argue that regardless of the action undertaken by the Commonwealth or Imperial Government regarding missing men, neither would be able to overcome that state of affairs because 'so long as a

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[82] Van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí, 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 895.

[83] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard no. 27 (1915), 4625-4626.

[84] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Pearce),' 4626; Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' 130.

[85] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Wednesday, 7 July 1915 (Senator Pearce),' 4627.

[86] 'League of Loyal Women,' *Register*, South Australia, 21 September 1915.

[87] 'Memo from Colonel Sellheim to Major General Ellison, 30 November 1915, AWM 27 302/36,' quoted in Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' 123.

[88] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session, Wednesday, 26 May 1915 (Senator Jensen).' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates House of Representatives Official Hansard, no. 21 (1915), 3382; 'Information Bureau Report from George Scott, The British Red Cross Society, Australian Branch, Queensland Division, Third Annual Report and Balance Sheet, 1916-17,' British Red Cross Society, Queensland Division, Annual Report of the Queensland Division of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society, 1916, State Library of Queensland (SLQ).

[89] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session, Monday, 22 May 1916 (Senator Needham),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard, no. 21 (1916), 8189.

[90] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session, Monday, 22 May 1916 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard, no. 21 (1916), 8189.

condition of war existed, that difficulty must continue'.[91] He also remarked that 'when no information has been obtained to rebut the presumption of death or stating that they [soldiers] were prisoners of war, they are officially declared to be dead'.[92] Pearce's denial of the government's responsibility for the problem avoided acting upon it.

In contrast, the Australian Red Cross information bureaux and their searchers, situated between the national institutions and family groups, were generating, promoting and sustaining interactional, emotional and reflective dynamics to assist enquirers.[93] Owen stated in a Sydney newspaper that 'it is surprising what a small portion of their enquiries remained unanswered' from 'their weekend enquiry "packet" cables to London'.[94] He also remarked that 'occasionally there is a man who cannot be traced, of whose history as a soldier nothing seems to be known, but such cases are rare'.[95] Owen suggested to the reporter that 'the letters filed in the office bear eloquent testimony to the work of this bureau'.[96] This argument also applied to the other state bureaux. Kiddle also confirmed the value of the vital cable service in the case of missing soldiers. In correspondence with Edmunds, he explained that in several instances, on the express wish of relatives, the Melbourne Bureau had cabled the London Bureau regarding missing men and 'had satisfactory replies while no word has been received through the Defence Department'.[97] He argued that 'this leads us [Melbourne Bureau] to the supposition that it is desirable to cable in some instances'.[98] Kiddle further stated that 'following reports that two soldiers had been blown up and killed in action; in both cases, cable enquiries soon dispelled the uncertainty when it was established that they were prisoners of war, wounded and in hospital in Germany'.[99] In light of these experiences, and contrary to the comments by Pearce above, Kiddle noted that 'it is desirable in such cases to correct the effect of these unofficial reports with as little delay as possible'.[100]

Free of charge urgent cables

Following negotiations with Lady Munro Ferguson, the Postmaster General's Department, in October 1916, confirmed that the Eastern Extension Company was willing to send 'free of charge messages between the Red Cross Societies of Australia and Great Britain regarding wounded (ill) soldiers'.[101]

[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí, 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 895.
[94] 'The Searchers: Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 August 1916.
[95] *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 August 1916.
[96] Ibid.
[97] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 30 October 1916,' SRG 76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] 'The Postmaster General's Department in correspondence with John B Kiddle, 31 October 1916,' SRG 76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

However, Kiddle immediately raised concerns with Justinian Oxenham, Secretary of the Department, regarding 'wounded or ill soldiers' as opposed to 'wounded and missing soldiers'.[102] Oxenham clarified that missing soldiers were not expressly excluded, but they were not included in his department's communications from the cable company. He asked Kiddle 'what checks would be put in place regarding free cable enquiries'.[103] Kiddle assured Oxenham that 'the cable service would be used no more with the concession than it would be without by all the bureaux'.[104] He reasoned that sending unnecessary cables to London would be 'throwing more work at the London Bureau and, therefore, would delay their work in answering the genuine cases for cabling'.[105] He also stated that cables about 'Wounded and Ill men' would be sent as 'W.S.M. [Wounded, Sick, Missing] Messages' and not 'E.F.M. (Expeditionary Force Message) Messages'.[106] Paid E.F.M. cables about missing men were still to issue as E.F.M; however, Oxenham conceded that no one would take objection if the bureaux continued cabling the odd cases of missing men under the concession.[107]

As a general rule, the bureaux did not cable enquiries regarding missing soldiers because 'the London Bureau instigated inquiries as soon as they were reported missing rather than by receipt of a cable from the Bureaux'.[108] However, as the theatres of war escalated in Europe, these cables came to represent the most urgent requests from enquirers; Kiddle, therefore, had asked that the concession be included.[109] Oxenham assumed that he was acting for the other bureaux and asked him to supply the names and addresses of the responsible officers of each of the six bureaux to the Postmaster General's office, which he duly did. This information enabled the Department to differentiate authorised from unauthorised cables. While Lady Munro Ferguson informed the Red Cross Commissioners in London of developments, Kiddle told Edmunds that the Commonwealth Government and the Eastern Extension Company had 'agreed to transmit all cables regarding wounded, sick or missing soldiers free of charge'.[110] He then followed up with L. Webster, the Australasian Manager of the cable company, and 'made satisfactory arrangements for the transmission of these cables'.[111] The allocation of resources to this issue and the coordination undertaken between the Cable Company, the Department of

[102] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Justinian Oxenham, 6 November 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Justinian Oxenham, 3 November 1916, SRG 76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[108] Ibid.
[109] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with the Postmaster General, Melbourne (G13069/16),' 3 November 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[110] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 11 November 1916,' SRG 76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[111] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with the Charles A. Edmunds, 25 November 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); Julia Martinez, 'Asian Servants for the Imperial Telegraph: Imagining North Australia as an Indian Ocean Colony before 1914,' *Australian Historical Studies* 48, no. 2 (2017), 241.

Defence, the Australian Branch of the Red Cross Society and the Melbourne Bureau established a 'common language' that enabled the necessary changes to be facilitated quickly and passed on to the other bureaux.[112]

In December, Kiddle again wrote to Edmunds concerning the Government Cable Code for use in the cables between the bureaux in London and Australia. Due to the current postal regulations regarding code words in cablegrams set at E.F.M and Deferred rates', Kiddle had applied to use codes in cables for 'wounded' and 'missing' soldiers. He confirmed with Edmunds that the Postmaster-General had no objects to the codes being used from Australia to London as London was already using the codes to Australia.[113] His understanding from previous correspondence had been that generally, such cables, if sent, would be subject to the restrictions imposed by the postal regulations. However, in South Australia, they were already using the codes. This move had 'enabled the cables both to and from London to be considerably condensed'.[114] Indeed, Deakin had initially asked the Australian bureaux to advise the bureau in London upon receiving these codebooks in August.[115]

Throughout their detailed correspondence on the cabling issue, Edmunds had been unaware that Kiddle had experienced difficulties using the code, 'otherwise, he would have advised him of same'.[116] He informed Kiddle that the South Australian Executive Committee was 'of the opinion all the bureaux would use the code immediately upon its receipt as they had done'.[117] This exchange again highlights that the state bureaux were operating independently daily. Owen suggested that the Australian Red Cross Society Central Council should, for three months, subsidise the cabling cost in cases where the enquirer could not bear the expense. This generous concession from the Red Cross Fund allowed urgent cables to be sent at L.C.O., [Deferred Telegrams in plain English] rates through the chain of radiotelegraph stations that linked Australia via Ceylon [Sri Lanka] and South Africa to the European theatres of war.[118]

Collective cabling issues

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[112] Smets, Morris and Greenwood, 'From Practice to Field: A Multilevel Model of Practice-driven Institutional Change,' 896.

[113] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 5 December 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[114] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 5 December 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[115] 'Vera Deakin's General Report from London to the state bureaux, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, June 1916 - Jan 1919.

[116] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 8 December 1916,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[117] Ibid.

[118] Ann Moyal, *Clear across Australia: A History of Telecommunications*, Victoria: Thomas Nelson (1984), 113.

Throughout January and February of 1917, Edmunds recorded that 'enquiry numbers tended to be a little less owing, no doubt, to the winter conditions obtaining on the principal Western Front'.[119] By late February, when the Allies discovered that the German troops had withdrawn from the northern end of the old battlefield towards Cambrai and the Hindenburg Line, the battlefields in Europe had become a scene of mud and fog.[120] On the home front, Lady Munro Ferguson had proposed holding a meeting with the honorary secretaries from each state in January. The intention was to 'discuss matters arising out of the general working of the various bureaux'.[121] Unfortunately, Lady Munro Ferguson postponed the conference when Symon could not attend due to other commitments.[122] Edmunds later stated that he 'regretted the necessity of postponing the conference recently convened by Her Excellency'.[123] Indeed, no further meeting was scheduled due to the expanding workload within the state bureaux and the physical distance that separated them.[124]

Cabling decisions made at the macro-level by the government and postal authorities immediately impacted the work of the bureaux at the meso-level and, therefore, families at the micro-level. The cancellation of the meeting was unfortunate as cabling issues were once again impacting the work of the bureaux. Both the honorary secretaries at home and Deakin in London depended on a prompt and efficient cabling service to send and receive vital information. These new delays were soon 'causing much inconvenience and dissatisfaction' in each state bureaux.[125] They knew that the official statement received by many of the next of kin was inadequate. Winter suggests that the truth requested by family members needed to be 'more detailed and in many cases less anodyne or strictly formal' than the standard formal messages received.[126] The Australian Red Cross Society and the Red Cross bureaux negotiated this space with assistance from Lady Munro Ferguson. They continually strived to obtain a reliable, cost-effective cabling service to provide details from the war front on those urgent cases where soldiers were classified as 'wounded', 'sick', 'missing' or 'killed in action'.

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[119] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his February monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 22 March 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[120] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his February monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 22 March 1917,' SRG76/22; Bean, Charles E. W. Bean, *The Western Front Diaries of Charles Bean*, ed. Peter Burness (Canberra: Australian War Memorial and New South, 2018), 225.
[121] 'The February 1917 Monthly Report for the South Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau prepared by Charles A. Edmunds, 22 March 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[122] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Henry Greig, 5 October 1917,' SRG76/28 Correspondence with the Perth Bureau. 28 Oct 1917 - July 1919.
[123] 'Charles A Edmunds in his February monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 22 March 1917'; Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Langer Owen, 4 April 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[124] Ibid.
[125] 'Charles A Edmunds in his March monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 23 April 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[126] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 35.

The importance of cables in the enquiry work of the state bureaux throughout the war cannot be overstated. The state bureaux collectively sent approximately 36,950 enquiries abroad by cable or letter to the London Bureau.[127] This bureau also sent about 30,453 cabled replies to the state bureaux by cable or letter.[128] Cabling was an essential requirement in the work of each of the bureaux. It slowed down the responses and heightened emotions in the bureaux and amongst the next of kin when delays occurred. Cables were only used in the most extenuating circumstances and more often when emotions ran high with families fearful of the possible outcome for their loved ones. The cable service and what constituted best practice to assist the bureaux in expediting answers to urgent enquiries from next of kin soon became a collective process. It provides a clear indication of the meso-level in operation. The timing for these new discussions was fortuitous when one considers what was about to happen on the battlefront in France at Bullecourt and in Flanders at Messines and Ypres. The Third Ypres became the collective name for the campaign fought between September and November 1917 to capture the Gheluvelt plateau in Southern Belgium.[129]

Institutional dynamics and family interactions

As briefly discussed above, missing soldiers were probably the most significant source of anxiety for loved ones on the home front. When a London reporter asked Deakin 'what generally happened to the missing men', she replied, ' they were mostly dead'.[130] The military authorities in Australia tended to wait six months before they declared the soldier officially dead. Yet, many missing soldiers remained on the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau's list for extended periods, particularly in the absence of an official notification received by family members.[131] However, the British and New Zealand bureaux removed the 'missing' from their lists earlier. Throughout the wait, the Australian bureaux, unlike the Department of Defence, kept the relatives regularly informed by letter and, where possible, included a short searcher's report or witness statement(s) in their correspondence.

Although these reports were unofficial and arrived intermittently from the London Bureau into the South Australian bureau, the reports were generally sent on uncensored to the enquirer. The highly expressive state of many of the enquirers was immediately recognised, understood, and accepted by the Australian bureaux at home and abroad. For example, Mary Howie wrote to the South Australian Bureau in March 1916 about her cousin Private William Baker last heard of as being in the firing line before complete silence fell on the situation. Miss Howie wanted to relieve the fear and anxiety of his

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[127] 'War Cable Work,' *Register*, South Australia, 29 April 1921.
[128] *Register*, South Australia, 29 April 1921.
[129] Chris Clark, *The Encyclopaedia of Australia's Battles*, NSW: Allen & Unwin (2010), 130.
[130] 'Missing – the Searchers' Instinct,' *Sun*, New South Wales, 16 December 1916.
[131] Ibid.

parents as they were getting on in age and had two other sons at the front.[132] As he enlisted in New South Wales, Owen and Edmunds worked with the London Bureau to gather information. When Owen sent a witness statement to Edmunds, he advised him 'to warn her that these statements must be received with caution although they have been carefully tested'.[133] Edmunds did as suggested and also added, 'we cannot guarantee the absolute accuracy of this information, but forward it on to you so that you may have all that reaches us' in his response to Miss Howie.[134] For many families, the relief came in having some detail rather than enduring the silence. In this work area, the bureaux 'amply justified their existence'.[135]

The institutional dynamics of the bureau, alongside family interactions at the meso-level, further highlight their position as the vital linchpin that connects the micro and macro levels.[136] In many instances, the London Red Cross Information Bureau issued information ahead of the Australian Military Records Department about the fate of a missing soldier. This approach eventually led to tension between Deakin and the Australian Military Records Department in London. By mid-1917, a meeting was called between both parties to try and resolve the issue. Deakin has stated that Colonel Tom Griffiths attempted to force the London Bureau 'into promising to withhold information about prisoners until they had cabled' the families.[137] She agreed to this on the understanding that her outstanding request to supply the Australian Bureau with the next-of-kin lists of soldiers was to be confirmed.[138] Deakin was familiar with this approach, often having to stand her ground with those in charge in the Australian Military Records Department. Nevertheless, she was always prepared to concede if she could extract some service that benefited the bureau's work when confronted with such situations.

Before the meeting with Griffiths, Deakin had previously reiterated with Captain Neale, officer commanding records, Australian Imperial Force Headquarters, in April that the next-of-kin lists would greatly assist the bureau. In particular, when applying to the Graves Registration Department of the

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[132] 'Papers relating to No. 13, Private William R. Baker, 13th Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/william-robert-baker.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Edmunds commonly included such statements in letters sent out to a family member enquiring about soldier who was missing or killed in action, see 'Papers relating to No. 2802, L/Corporal F. H. Dealy, 6/4th Battalion,' SRG 76/1/7424 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/frank-henry-ough-dealy.

[135] 'Red Cross Commissioner Norman Brookes' Report, Information on Australian Red Cross work in Egypt and France, September 1916,' 7, Australian Red Cross Society, New South Wales Division, 1914, The N.S.W. Red Cross Record, The Division, Sydney viewed 20 July 2020, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-73519713.

[136] Van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí. 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 892.

[137] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with her family, 20 July 1917,' in Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross* (Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020), 137.

[138] Ibid.

War Office for photographs of Australian burials in registered cemeteries in France.[139] In June, Deakin suggested to Owen in Sydney that in each case 'in which a near relative is anxious to obtain a photograph', the state bureau should forward the full name, address and relationship of the person requiring the photograph to the bureau in London.[140] Ziino shows that photographs were intended to aid relatives 'in visualising the reverent care of graves' that they would never visit.[141] By July, the London Bureau and the military personnel reached an agreement; the Australian Military Records Department also began using the London Bureau's reports. Colonel Griffin moved to have a clerical assistant appointed to the Military Records Department's verification section, 'whose principal duty is to verify data for the Red Cross' before the Information Bureau issued the details to the state bureaux in Australia.[142] This assistant was to be 'always at the disposal of the Red Cross for such duty'.[143] The London Bureau continued introducing processes to provide more to the families than was officially obtainable. However, it was not always understood or immediately appreciated by all the honorary secretaries on the home front.

Why are delays continuing?

In early 1917, each Australian Red Cross State Bureau and its Executive Committee, unlike the government, had created an interactive space to address issues impacting enquiries as soon as they arose. This move enabled the committees to take immediate action following recent delayed cable responses of three weeks. Sustainability and Management academic, Jakomijn van Wijk et al. argue that such spaces are crucial in allowing organisational change while providing a platform for debate and discussion.[144] When cabling issues resurfaced, an Eastern Extension Company representative informed Edmunds that concession cables were charged at weekend rates. The public were already aware '[the cable company] could give no guarantee of such cabled messages being despatched'.[145] Edmunds immediately put this issue before the South Australian Red Cross Executive Committee, and they agreed that he would write to each of the honorary secretaries inter-state.

Edmunds proposed that the state bureaux make a concerted effort to demonstrate to the Federal Authorities their desirability for some arrangements with the cable company 'by which sick,

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[139] Ibid.

[140] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 18 June 1917, SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[141] Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley, W.A: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 85.

[142] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with her family, 20 July 1917,' in Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross* (Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020), 137.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí. 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 896.

[145] Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Langer Owen, 4 April 1917, SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

wounded and other urgent messages might be treated on the basis of deferred messages'.[146] He explained to his colleagues that the South Australian Executive Committee had been 'feeling the inconvenience and disappointment that has become very frequent, if not invariable under the present system'.[147] As Chairman of the South Australian Executive Committee, Symon suggested that 'the incessant delays had rendered their efforts, on behalf of anxious relatives, more or less abortive'.[148] However, following careful consideration, the Committee in Adelaide had, in brief, 'recognised the great importance of satisfying enquiries by the use of the cable in cases proper for prompt cable information'. [149]

The South Australian Executive Committee proposed that the solution lay in appealing to the Commonwealth Government to bear the bureau cabling costs at deferred rates to enable cabled enquiries to proceed as before.[150] Edmunds further stated that the Red Cross state bureaux were part of the military administration and 'without their undertaking of this work the Military would have a heavy additional burden, both of work and expense that would fall upon the Department of Defence'.[151] This argument was possibly related to the fact that when the bureaux began their work, they proposed supplementing the work of the Department. As discussed in Chapter 1, in South Australia, the Red Cross bureau had also taken over an intimately associated initiative with the military when they replaced the Military Information Bureau run by the League of Loyal Women. Moreover, the South Australian Executive Committee suggested that the cabling matter be brought to the attention of 'the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, or other Minister, by deputation by the other bureaux, the Red Cross Society, and the South Australian Branch'.[152] The Committee further suggested that 'the [Red Cross] General Council meeting be informed later that day of this resolution, and a copy be furnished to all the other bureaux'.[153] Edmunds closed his correspondence by stating that Symon, as the South Australian Chairman, was 'happy to put a deputation together to put [this resolution] before the Government'. [154]

The response was immediate from Kiddle in the Melbourne Bureau. He 'thought it doubtful that the government would adhere to the suggestion given his own experiences with the Postal

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[146] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with the Australian State Bureaux, 30 March 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[147] 'Correspondence between Charles A. Edmunds and the various state bureaux related to cabling arrangements, 20 April 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[148] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Langer Owen, 4 April 1917, SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[149] 'Correspondence between Charles A. Edmunds and the various state bureaux related to cabling arrangements, 20 April 1917,' SRG76/24.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

Department to waiver their charges'.[155] He also noted that 'the Defence Department's Casualty cables were not charged for either by the Eastern Extension Company nor the Pacific Cable Board'.[156] Therefore, Kiddle considered it 'unlikely that the government would pay Red Cross cables in duplication of the Department's cables or in cases that the Department did not consider justify a cable inquiry'.[157] However, he did not concur that the bureaux were part of the "Military Administration". As discussed in Chapter 3, he argued that 'we are a department of the Red Cross Society and in no way under the control or the direction of military administration and it was inadvisable to claim to be so'.[158] While he did agree that they relieved 'a heavy additional burden from the Base Records Office', the Melbourne Bureau did not expect that office to admit to this.[159] Kiddle reaffirmed to Edmunds that 'the Bureau was doing work supplemental to the Defence Department' and concluded by saying he 'did not think a deputation to the government was useful until the elections were over'.[160] When Kiddle later put the suggestion before the Victorian Red Cross Executive Committee, their response was 'unanimously opposed to the suggestion made by the South Australian Executive Committee' and agreed with his point of view.[161]

This disrupting action on the part of the South Australian Executive Committee created a space for reflection on the more traditional models of work being used and enabled the honorary secretaries to volunteer alternative modes of action.[162] In the Queensland bureau, George Scott informed Edmunds that while they sympathised with his proposal, the Queensland Executive Committee was prepared to await a decision by the Sydney Red Cross General Council in early May.[163] Henry Greig, in the Western Australian Bureau agreed that 'the usefulness of our work is being altogether impaired by the inordinate delay in the cables'.[164] From his enquiries, he had ascertained that 'the cause was the practical monopoly of the lines through the Government messages'.[165] He argued that 'the Government should take steps to have bureaux cables given the same precedence as Government cables given bureaux work is of such material assistance to the Government'.[166] However, Greig cautioned about

[155] 'John B Kiddle in response to Charles A Edmunds, 27 April 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Van Wijk, Zietsma, Silvia Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí. 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 898.
[163] 'George Scott in response to Charles A. Edmunds, 28 April 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[164] 'Henry Grieg in response to Charles A. Edmunds, 12 May 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.

asking the government to pay for the cables, arguing that his Executive Committee had found the enquirer was happy to cover the cost in most instances. Importantly, Greig was:

> loath to ask the Government to pay, for the reason that if the Government did agree to pay these cables, we might find that they might put restrictions on the cables, restrictions that might then impair the efficiency of bureau work.[167]

He reiterated that 'his committee was prepared to pay the cost of the cables; however, they did feel the assistance of the government should be invoked to expedite these cables when sent'.[168] Like the Queensland Committee, the Executive Committee in Western Australia was prepared to await advice following the Sydney Red Cross Central Council meeting in May.

In Tasmania, as the Honorary Secretary of the Hobart Bureau, Sergeant A.V. Giblin argued that he did not consider all the delays were due to the cable company. Indeed, Giblin stated that all the replies from the London Bureau were at the W.S.M free rate, which was a slow service. He acknowledged that free cables could not go as fast as deferred ones, which were slower than L.C.O. [Deferred Telegrams in plain English] cables, and that full-rate messages should travel the fastest. Therefore, in one case of a wounded soldier, they could find no excuse for the failure of the London Bureau to answer their cables when the case was already known to them. His committee was entirely in accord with Owen's suggestions and did not consider that deferred rates would improve the situation for the above reasons. He squarely laid the blame on the London Bureau and approved of the suggestion to have a special commissioner appointed to oversee the London Bureau's work.[169] In Melbourne, Edward F. Mitchell, who represented the Red Cross Society in Victoria, sent a telegram to Owen after a special sitting by the Central Council. He stated that the Council could not endorse their assistance plan due to the great expense that the deferred rate suggestion would impose on Red Cross funds. However, Lady Munro Ferguson had sent 'a request to the cable company in London to give bureaux cables better priority writing', and upon receipt of a reply, the Council would make its decision.[170]

Interestingly, each bureau considered itself to be a part of the larger Australian Red Cross Society. Yet, when interviewed by a reporter from the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper the previous year, Owen had offered a different insight into his understanding of the Australian Red Cross Information bureaux. He stated that 'this bureau [Sydney], the first to be started in Australia has from

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[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.
[169] 'Sergeant A. V. Giblin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 21 March 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States. Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[170] 'Edward F Mitchell in correspondence with all the Australian state Bureaux, 4 April 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

the beginning been an actual part of the Red Cross work'.[171] This comment was possibly due to his appointment to the role of Honorary Secretary in the Sydney Bureau by the Australian Red Cross Society. He further explained that:

> in the other states where similar bureaux have been established by the legal profession, they are conducted independently of the Red Cross Society, but the Red Cross machinery has been at their disposal. Without this machinery, it would be impossible to carry on the work.[172]

Nonetheless, in early 1917, Owen was heavily invested in the cabling discussions. Pending the meeting, the New South Wales Executive Committee asked that Lady Munro Ferguson invite representatives from each state bureaux to attend; she duly did this, but each honorary secretary declined due to their workload. They all agreed to leave the matter in the hands of the Central Council. They expected that everything possible that could be done would be done on their behalf 'to improve their present unsatisfactory results regarding cable matters'.[173] They also agreed that 'each Division should assist the bureau of its state by making a grant to enable cables to be sent at deferred rates in urgent and approved cases'.[174] The Queensland Council generously acceded to this proposal. However, they later reported that it was gratifying to find that the bureau 'found it unnecessary to call upon their Division to any great extent'.[175]

A move in the right direction

The Central Council met as planned; each State Division representative of the Society represented the Information Bureau in their state. In taking the lead on recent discussions with the other bureaux, Owen had submitted the three main concerns to his Executive Committee for discussion before the Central Council. First, he suggested that the Central Council provide funding to assist with urgent cables at deferred rates in Australia. While in the London Bureau, Owen requested the Red Cross Commissioners take all possible steps to expedite collecting and transmitting information in existing and future sick and wounded cases regardless of the rate. Finally, he advocated that an assistant or separate Australian Red Cross Commissioner be engaged to supervise the enquiry work in London.[176] On this last point, Owen was calling into question the work efforts of Deakin and her team in the

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[171] 'The Searchers, Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 August 1916.

[172] *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, 25 August 1916; In 1915, Langer Owen sent Sir Josiah H. Symon a copy of Annexure "A" drawn up when the NSW bureau was being established. In point one of twelve it states, 'The work of this Office is essentially a branch of the work of the Red Cross Society, the Bureau having been established by the New South Wales Division of the Australian Red Cross Society and being subject to the Executive Committee of that Division'. Indeed, each of the bureau's followed suit and were operated in a similar manner; See 'Annexure "A", Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened. Jul 1915, Jan 1916, and Jan 1917.

[173] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with the Charles A. Edmunds, 5 May 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[174] 'The Australian Red Cross Society, Queensland Division, Information Bureau Second Annual Report presented at the meeting of subscribers on 23 October 1917 by Arthur Feez, Chairman,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[175] Ibid.

[176] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with the Australian State Bureaux, 30 March 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

London Bureau. The Council agreed that the Red Cross Commissioner, Hon. Lieutenant Colonel Murdoch would furnish Lady Munro Ferguson with a report; they also decided to hold off appointing a new Commissioner to the London Bureau until after his report was submitted.[177] Owen's point exposes cracks and tension as the state bureaux grappled with external entities and the 'tyranny of distance' both at home and abroad. However, on the home front, the men willingly understood each other's standpoint while negotiating shared perspectives in this interactive space.[178] Van Wijk et al. have shown that at the meso-level, one can observe how the different individuals 'begin to jointly renegotiate the structures, patterns, and beliefs that constitute their social worlds' because it is where their actions are most highlighted.[179]

This humanised bureaucratic approach by Owen 'fostered a more democratic organisation atmosphere that recognised and encouraged the contribution' of all the bureaux on the home front.[180] The South Australian Executive Committee 'heartily agreed' with Owen's cabling suggestions, and they especially agreed with the point about appointing a separate Commissioner to supervise the enquiry work in London.[181] Edmunds acknowledged that Symon had considered the delays, especially in regards to 'the more urgent class of enquiries received tended to render their efforts, on behalf of anxious relatives, more or less abortive'.[182] Following a hold-up of three weeks for some enquiries, Edmunds had spoken to a cable company representative who confirmed that concession cables were treated at weekend rates. He also confirmed that members of the public were already informed that 'they [the cable company] could give no guarantee of such cabled messages being despatched'.[183] Edmunds suggested that the bureaux make a concerted effort to demonstrate to the Federal Authorities their desirability for some arrangements with the cable companies 'by which sick, wounded, and other urgent messages might be treated on the basis of deferred messages'.[184] If they failed to reach a solution, he proposed that each bureau resort to the previous arrangements of collecting costs from the enquirer. If their efforts were to be of value to enquirers, something 'had to be done to overcome the exasperating delays with cables'.[185]

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177 'Langer Owen in correspondence with the Australian State Bureaux, 9 May 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
178 Van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, De Bakker, and Martí, 'Social Innovation: Integrating Micro, Meso, and Macro Level Insights from Institutional Theory,' 891.
179 Ibid, 896.
180 Macionis and Plummer, Sociology: A Global Introduction, 196-197.
181 'Charles A. Edmunds quoting Sir Josiah H. Symon, in correspondence with Langer Owen, 4 April 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
182 'Charles A. Edmunds quoting Sir Josiah H. Symon, in correspondence with Langer Owen, 4 April 1917,' SRG76/24.
183 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Langer Owen, 4 April 1917,' SRG76/24.
184 'Langer Owen in correspondence with all the Australian state Bureaux, 30 March 1917,' SRG76/24.
185 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 4 April 1917,' SRG76/24.

The London Bureau made arrangements with the YMCA branches in Australia to feed their soldier enquires through the state bureaux, 'instead of the usual practice of forwarding them directly to London' to reduce the volume of cables from Australia to Europe.[186] Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch's report indicated that plans were also underway to supplement the searching work by combining the efforts of Red Cross Officers with those of the YMCA.[187] In 1917, between late March and early April, the first battle at Bullecourt took place to capture a strong point in a string of defences in Northern France. Known by the Allies as the Hindenburg Line, fighting had intensified when the Australian soldiers encountered the German rear-guard, who was left to impose a delay on the advancing Allies.[188] Barely 660 men out of 3,000 survived or were uninjured, with over 1,170 men taken prisoner by the Germans.[189] The German army took on twenty-three battalions, four of which were Australian. The casualties numbered 1,010 Australian soldiers and the capture of 300 prisoners of war.[190] In his April report, Edmunds stated that the inordinate delays in outgoing and incoming cables tended to 'seriously prejudice the work of this bureau'.[191] Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, Honorary Secretary to Lady Galway, the founder of the South Australian branch of the Red Cross Society, replied to Edmunds from the Red Cross Depot in Government House. She reminded him that Lady Galway was hoping he could attend the proposed meeting in May as 'there was to be a good deal of discussion on the payment of deferred rates cables for enquiries'.[192] However, the bureau's workload meant Edmunds did not attend the meeting. However, in his May report, he acknowledged that the abovementioned changes had already assisted the state bureaux 'to have greater promptitude in obtaining desired information' for families.[193]

In fairness to the London Bureau, they maintained their workload as their working methods and the cabling issues were being discussed at home. In April, the London Bureau had dealt with a record 1,502 enquiries by cable from the Australian state bureaux, and in response, they had sent 1,523 cables.[194] They also received 550 enquiries by mail from the state bureaux and as many again from enquirers in Britain and France; in response, Deakin sent out 620 written replies.[195] Hon. Lieut-Colonel

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[186] 'Australian Red Cross Society, Monthly Leaflet - Federal Government House, Report for May 1917,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); See 'Papers relating to No. 1885, L/Corporal Joseph Hurtle Blake, 50th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2555 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/hurtle-joseph-blake.

[187] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his May monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 22 June 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[188] Clark, *The Encyclopaedia of Australia's Battles*, 125.

[189] Ibid, 125-26.

[190] Ibid, 126.

[191] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his April monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 18 May 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[192] 'Kathleen Kyffin Thomas in correspondence with Charles A Edmunds, 24 May 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[193] 'Charles A. Edmund's May Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at the Red Cross Depot in Government House, Adelaide, 22 June 1917,' SRG76/22.

[194] 'Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Murdoch report of work in London in the Australian Red Cross Society Monthly Leaflet Report for June 1917,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[195] 'Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Murdoch report of work in London in the Australian Red Cross Society Monthly Leaflet Report for June 1917,' SRG76/36.

Murdoch included 'extracts from the continual receipt of appreciative letters from relations to whom we have been able to give comfort'.[196] Deakin's requests to Edmunds and the other honorary secretaries the previous year to redirect private enquires through the state bureaux to reduce the burden of work in London had failed. Enquirers paid little attention to the request; their distress and need for answers meant that they often wrote to both the Australian Red Cross and the YMCA Soldier Enquiry Bureaux. Henry Wheeler, General Secretary of the YMCA in Adelaide, wrote to the editor of the *Express and Telegraph* in 1915, questioning the need for a second enquiry bureau network. He little realised the demand for such a service would become so great as to justify the need for both organisations to run information bureaux in the First World War.

As an outcome of those discussions in London, Owen wrote to Edmunds to confirm the Sydney branch of the Eastern Extension Company had received instructions 'to allow the British Government Code to be used in all cables to and from the [Sydney] bureau, including those sent at deferred rates'.[197] He also verified that the cable company had validated that the London Bureau was permitted to send messages at deferred rates, concluding with the word 'Rtp' (receiver to pay). The London Bureau had arranged with the cable company that the amount due on the message was to be collected by the receiving bureau. Owen appears to have continued to operate independently in the Sydney Bureau rather than collectively with the other bureaux. Regardless of the state bureaux collectively seeking a resolution to their cabling issues at the start of the year. Prompted by Owen's letter, Edmunds wrote to Webster at the Adelaide office of the cable company to ascertain if he had received similar confirmation of the above arrangement. Edmunds confirmed that he was 'desirous of obtaining the same arrangements'.[198] He also suggested arranging a weekly or monthly statement for such cables to assist the Eastern Extension Company. Edmunds understood that all non-urgent cables 'would proceed under the existing arrangements and methods'.[199]

The urgent need for further collaboration

In South Australia, Webster confirmed with Edmunds that the Secretary of the Commonwealth Administration, responsible for assisting the Governor-General, had no objections to the Australian Red Cross information bureaux using words from the British War Office Code Book. Accordingly, Webster instructed the Company's offices to accept such messages from the Red Cross Society. When 'Langer Owen of Sydney' enquired about the arrangement for his bureau, Webster duly advised the

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[196] Ibid.

[197] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds 19 May 1917,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, June 1916 - Jan 1919.

[198] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Mr L. Webster, 29 May 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[199] 'Mr L. Webster in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 30 May 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

cable office in Sydney to proceed under the updated terms.[200] Nevertheless, there is a sense that Webster was somewhat exasperated with the way the state bureaux were operating. He asked Edmunds:

> If in cases like the foregoing, would it not be better to first consult some Central Authority in order that the privileges might be arranged to cover the Red Cross in all States please? It would certainly avoid duplicating the arrangements by wire.[201]

Webster further requested confirmation whether the concession should be applied to all 'deferred' rate messages arriving at the Adelaide bureau. Notably, he stated that he would be glad if Edmunds would advise that the concession was desired for all states in the Commonwealth. Edmunds, in defence of the bureaux, informed Webster that the current changes resulted from a decision made by the Central Council of the Red Cross Organisation to finance the cost of urgent messages for three months as an experiment for facilitating the work of the bureaux.[202] He could not speak for the bureaux collectively but agreed with Webster's suggestion that it would be best to consult a central authority. As the head office of the Eastern Extension Company was in Adelaide, Edmunds took it upon himself 'to communicate to the other bureaux asking them if I can arrange the matter collectively as suggested'.[203] He also requested the repetition of 'L.C.O.' and 'Replyrtp' be removed to reduce further costs on urgent cables.[204]

In May, cabling was further impeded between London and Australia due to interruptions in European waters where necessary repairs to three or four cable lines could not be affected. The English branch of the Eastern Extension Company notified the London Bureau, who recommended that the bureau post messages to Australia via Gibraltar and the British Isles until the matter was resolved. Unfortunately, the Australian branch of the cable company failed to inform the state bureaux about the change.[205] This outcome led Owen to write to Deakin, immediately questioning further delays. In response, she authored a detailed report outlining the workings of the bureau in London since its transfer from Cairo. She also explained the difficulties her bureau experienced in getting information to Australia and obtaining some of the relevant information asked for by the state bureaux. To calm rough waters, perhaps, Deakin concluded by stating that 'it was with the greatest pleasure they received any criticism or suggestion that could help their system'.[206] She regretted that Owen had failed to highlight

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[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] 'Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson in correspondence with Charles A Edmunds, 11 May 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[203] 'Charles A Edmunds in correspondence with Mr L Webster, 5 June 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[204] Ibid.
[205] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A Edmunds, 29 May 1917,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, June 1916 - Jan 1919.
[206] Ibid.

'specific cases to illustrate the faults in question'.[207] However, she trusted that her report had 'assisted in explaining their position satisfactorily to him'.[208]

In a letter to Edmunds, Owen considered it 'only fair to send a copy of the report to each of the other state bureaux so that the difficulties of their work may be fully understood'.[209] He argued that 'this report allowed each bureau to understand the difficulties in obtaining more prompt and satisfactory information about sick and wounded cases'.[210] Not surprisingly, Owen later retracted the suggestion to appoint a new Commissioner to oversee the work of the Australian bureau in London. Following his investigations on the home front, he soon realised that the issue was not at the London end of the process. Deakin later wrote to Owen, thanking him for his 'very generous acknowledgements' of the explanations of the difficulties the London Bureau experienced in recent months.[211] She magnanimously suggested that 'delays are inevitable at either end, especially due to staff shortages in London's summer months'.[212]

Although Owen acknowledged the dissatisfaction each bureau had regarding the delays in receiving responses to enquiries, he realised that the issue related to the type of message sent from Australia. He confirmed Giblin's statement that W.S.M. free messages did not go as fast as deferred messages. Yet, deferred messages went slower as L.C.O. messages, while full rate messages should have travelled the fastest.[213] Owen further stated that better productivity and efficiencies were required within their systems if the state bureaux were to be of use to Australian enquirers on the home front.[214] This statement is quite contradictory when considering how Owen had been operating his bureau up to this point. Highlighting his independent rather than collective approach to the work, he stated that 'they did not include the other Bureaux in their [cabling] arrangement as they considered the other states would make their own arrangements'.[215] He pointed out that care was required if any joint

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[207] Ibid.

[208] Ibid.

[209] Ibid.

[210] Ibid.

[211] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 7 August 1917,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, June 1916 - Jan 1919.

[212] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 7 August 1917,' SRG76/17; Deakin needed more volunteers to assist with the work during the summer months when many of the existing volunteers took a break. In her General Report in August 1916, she highlighted that staff assistance was hard to come by between the end of July and throughout August to such an extent that it was Stroud Green High School, mistresses, and pupils, along with the Principal Miss Jamieson, who provided support in the bureau at this crucial time. With their assistance she was able to achieve a certain level of work that would otherwise have been unachievable; See 'Vera Deakin's Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Australian Branch, British Red Cross Society General Report – London, 10 August 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[213] 'Sergeant A. V. Giblin in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[214] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with all the Australian state Bureaux, 30 March 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[215] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A Edmunds, 9 June 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

arrangements were made between the other bureaux so that 'each State Division was only debited with its own cable costs'.[216] The Red Cross Central Council now understood that 'each State Division was to finance its own Bureau'.[217] Owen confirmed that the Sydney Bureau was using 'the British Government Code by arrangement with the [Eastern Extension] Cable Company and the Postmaster-General in all messages'.[218] Edmunds confirmed that the position had been made quite clear to the General Manager of the Eastern Extension Company in Adelaide that all charges were to be collected individually through each state bureau. He stated that he was awaiting a response from Tasmania and Western Australia before approaching Webster to finalise the details.[219]

Kiddle later confirmed with Edmunds that Western Australia and Queensland had applied to Webster for the same concessions as agreed with Sydney. Once he had all their replies, Webster stated he would advise the London office and settle the question, although the L.C.O. was still to be used under the rules and regulations governing the acceptance of deferred rate messages. He confirmed that 'Replyrtp' might be omitted on completion of the proposed arrangements, and the cable company would 'simply collect on this side [Australia] the charges due on messages from London' on whatever correspondence the concession applied.[220] Webster's question of whether there was a central authority to consult regarding privileges for all Red Cross in all states was a good one, and Kiddle was in accord with this. However, he was quite surprised that the Sydney Bureau had 'taken in hand' this matter for sending cables at deferred rates and that 'they had acted alone in their dealings with the Eastern Extension Company on concessions and not for all the bureaux'.[221]

Interestingly, Kiddle had a different attitude and approach to deferred cable rates. In June 1917, he was pleased with the significant improvement of the W.S.M. cables to and from London following recent discussions with the Australian Red Cross Central Committee. However, they had made no changes in Melbourne regarding cables sent at a deferred rate. Kiddle stated that in their bureau, 'no inquiries were given preference as they treated all their inquiries as urgent'.[222] He continued that 'they would not, therefore, have arranged to send any cables at deferred rates unless they sent all at those rates'.[223] In a previous bureau report, Kiddle had stated that it was conducted voluntarily and subject to a few exceptions; no charges were made. This rule was applied as 'a condition of any enquiry being answered, or the necessary information obtained by cable for answering it', but donations were

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[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid.
[219] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Langer Owen, 16 June 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[220] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 7 June 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.

accepted from enquirers.[224] He considered it good, however, to have the option available when a need arose.

Kiddle asked Edmunds to inform Webster in the Adelaide branch of Eastern Extension Company that the Melbourne Bureau also wanted the concession of paying for deferred cables from *Questman*, London to *Redcib* Melbourne available to them.[225] The South Australian Red Cross Committee accepted the proposal of deferred rate cables and granted for three months a weekly amount of £10 to be used in cases where enquirers could not pay.[226] In July 1917, Kiddle reported that the Melbourne Bureau had issued 8,965 cables and received replies to 8,742 of them.[227] In South Australia, the bureau sent 1,184 cables to London in the same period.[228] While the figures are proportionally different in both bureaux, they also indicate the enlistment numbers based on the population of each state. Webster confirmed 'he had advised his head office in London of the arrangements desired by the Red Cross Society for the payment on this side [Australia] of the deferred rate messages handed in at London addressed to *Redcib*, 'Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart'.[229]

With this assistance, Edmunds, in his monthly report, stated that they had been able to despatch all reasonably urgent cables at deferred rates. 'Very satisfactory and expeditious replies had been received' in several instances.[230] Notably, each bureau published a monthly report to its respective State Red Cross Head Office at a local level. The South Australian State War Council requested the bureau's annual reports and balance sheets at the end of June each year. Aimed at 'dealing with all the various matters, in concert with the Federal War Committee, which is submitted from time to time', the Council was established in 1915.[231] The Secretary of Lady Galway, Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, was asked by the State War Council to make up the South Australian Red Cross Society's annual report and balance sheet at the end of June. Therefore, she submitted an eleven-month report in 1917. When the Repatriation Board took over the duties of the State War Council in 1918, Thomas informed Edmunds that the Board had given them 'permission to act in conformity with the other states' and formally end

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[224] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36.

[225] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 7 June 1917 SRG76/24.

[226] 'The South Australian Red Cross Society in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 5 June 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[227] 'Information Bureau, Honorary Secretary: Mr John B. Kiddle, The British Red Cross Society, Australian Branch, Victorian Division, Third Annual Report and Balance Sheets 1916-1917,' State Library Victoria (SLV).

[228] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his July report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 29 August 1917,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[229] 'Mr L. Webster in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 7 July 1917,' SRG76/24 Correspondence with Bureau in other States, Mar to Jun 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[230] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his May monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 22 June 1917,' SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau 22 June 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[231] 'Letter to the South Australian Premier from the Federal Parliamentary War Committee,' GRG26/6/1915/116, State Records of South Australia (SRSA).

their fiscal year at the end of July.[232] Edmunds was requested to return a thirteen-month report for the current year by 1 August 1918.

Conclusion

The work undertaken by the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau and the network of state bureaux discussed in this chapter should be considered on a local and global basis. This examination shows how the Australian state bureaux, their volunteers, and much of Australian society were closely tied to events unfolding on the battlefield during the Gallipoli campaign and later on the Western Front. The quality of the work undertaken in the Red Cross bureaux on behalf of families during the war is well known. However, what is less well known are the successes achieved by this group after overcoming impediments and blockages at home and abroad. Such as their use of the cabling system operated by the Eastern Extension Company and monitored by the Commonwealth Government.

As each bureau attempted to fulfil its obligation at the meso-level of society towards the public, the 'tyranny of distance' at home and abroad impeded each state bureaux's work on the home front.[233] The cabling discussions reveal the hierarchal nature of the bureaux relative to their State Executive Committees and the National Red Cross Central Council. The honorary secretaries were not always cohesive in their methods; the enquirer was always at the forefront of what the state bureaux attempted to achieve on their behalf. The Commonwealth Government was not operating similarly at a macro level of society. The Federal government was so focused on gathering resources for the war effort that the parties neglected the relations with their smaller neighbour, New Zealand and were also inattentive to the public at the micro-level of civil society.

In Chapter 6, the work of the Australian bureaux on the home front will be considered through a quantitative analysis of the epistolary exchange between the South Australian Bureau and a group of enquirers seeking news about loved ones fighting in Europe. As Ziino rightly observes, 'a letter was not read or written in a vacuum, or without reference to what was going on at home and abroad'.[234] An examination of the written correspondence between the bureau and the enquiring families affords an understanding of the communication patterns that emerged in this example of civil society where the Red Cross information bureaux played a crucial role in providing answers where only silence prevailed.

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[232] 'Kathleen Kyffin Thomas in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 2 July 1918,' SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau 22 June 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[233] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, London, New York: Macmillan; St. Martin's P., 1968).

[234] Bart Ziino, 'Total war,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 176.

CHAPTER SIX
THE BUREAU, SOCIETY AND THE WAR
MEANING BEHIND THE WORDS

> Here in the present… is that vibrance of human
> life which only a great effort of the imagination
> can restore to the old texts[1]

Introduction

In today's world, where the cacophony of new modes of communication is virtual and instantaneous, historian Cécile Dauphin reminds the reader that there is a quality still to be found in the study of epistolary traditions, particularly when researching those written more than 100 years ago.[2] Indeed, using this medium to bring this quality to the fore can convey personal experience more authentically than official or administrative records.[3] Consequently, archives such as those of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau have the potential to be used for a purpose not previously contemplated when its administrative records were drawn up and preserved in December 1919.[4] In this thesis, the preceding chapters have explored the institutional history of the South Australian Bureau and the evolution of their work during the First World War. However, these last two chapters examine the epistolary exchange contained within the soldier enquiry packets using two methods within the LIWC text analysis tool discussed above.

The word count text analysis adopted in this chapter is defined as a statistical study of word frequency used in a group of letters, in this instance, between the Honorary Secretary, Charles Edmunds and the many enquirers who wrote to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. The program uses a quantitative analysis method to establish a measurement of themes within the letters.[5] The output enables an interpretation of communication patterns and engagement between the enquirer and the bureau's honorary secretary regarding the fate of a soldier. The results also offer insight into how the bureau performed its functions through its responses to enquiries. The results of the quantitative method were generated using LIWC with the *IBM SPSS* statistical program.

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[1] Marc Bloch, *Memoirs of War*, 1914-15 (New York: Cornell University Press, 1980), 67.

[2] Cécile Dauphin, 'Correspondences as a historical object: A work on the limits.' *Societies & Representations* 1, no. 3 (2002), 49.

[3] Martyn Lyons, 'French Soldiers and Their Correspondence: Towards a History of Writing Practices in the First World War,' *French History* 17, no. 1 (2003), 81.

[4] Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration Including the Problems of war Archives and Archive Making* (United States: Scholar Select - Franklin Classics, 2018), 12.

[5] Ryan Nichols, Introducing the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count. The University of British Columbia accessed 25 August 2021, https://hecc.ubc.ca/quantitative-textual-analysis/qta-practice/linguistic-inquiry-and-word-count/.

Unlike discourse, text is a product rather than a process, but it is still a part of the whole process of the social interaction that unfolded on the home front.[6] A detailed examination of the soldier enquiry packets revealed that the archival record held in the State Library of South Australia is currently classified based on the outcome of an enquiry on the war front rather than on the nature of the initial enquiry on the home front. Yet, an enquirer's letters, written at the micro-level of society, were socially determined and therefore had a social effect based on the nature of the enquiry. The contents of the soldier enquiry packets represent the collective patterns of activity between the enquirer and the bureau at the micro and meso levels of Australian society during the war. Therefore, the enquiries should be reclassified based on the nature of the enquiry to bring the focus back to this wartime work on the home front. The original classification system employed by the bureau volunteers when managing the soldier enquiry packets highlights the functional approach of the bureau's engagement with the enquirer. Importantly, for the scholar, such actions undertaken by the Australian Red Cross information bureaux during the war provide insight into how civilian life was managed emotionally and materially and how the gap was filled when trying to find answers about loved ones at war in Europe.

The material held at the State Library of South Australia contains 8,033 individual soldier enquiry packets alongside the organisational paperwork representing the South Australian Bureau's wartime work. Each packet provides a unique timeline of an enquiry from its initiation to its conclusion on the home front. Many individual enquiry packets contain an index card; the legal volunteer filled in this card, known as Form C, during an interview with the enquirer or by using the initial enquiry letter. These volunteers were lawyers from the South Australian legal fraternity who dedicated a couple of hours a week to work at the bureau on behalf of enquirers. Also included in the enquiry packet are further correspondences from the enquirer, the bureau's Honorary Secretary, other state bureaux, and military authorities. Importantly, for those classified as 'killed in action' or 'missing', there are generally three or more uncensored witness statements from fellow soldiers of the man enquired after. These statements from the field reveal aspects of the soldier's fate at the battlefront; no two packets are the same.

The communication between the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary affected their social structure and determined the correspondence of both parties in their informal and formal letters, respectively. Historian Martyn Lyons suggests that private letters are continually reconstituted fragments of an experience.[7] Language is a social practice determined by the patterned social

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[6] Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*: *Language in Social Life Series*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 20.
[7] Lyons, 'Love Letters and Writing Practices: On Écritures Intimes in the Nineteenth Century,' 236.

arrangements in society that both emerge from and determine individuals' actions.[8] Such actions contributed to South Australian society's social continuity and social change during the First World War.[9] Therefore, what if these correspondences could tell the reader more about the pattern of engagement between both groups? Letter writing is not a static process, so how did the epistolary exchange evolve between both parties through the war? Who were the enquirers, and what was the relationship of the enquirer to the soldier? What was the nature of their enquiry, and did their letters change over time? Such analysis provides a more detailed understanding of the activities of those on the home front from both sides of the enquiry.

The archival collection of the South Australian Bureau currently held in the State Library of South Australia has 8,033 soldier enquiry packets pertaining to 8,079 soldiers. In contrast, the archival collection from the Australian bureau abroad, now held in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, has 32,000 soldier enquiry files. Another previously discussed study was conducted in 2015 using the first 250 soldier enquiry packets from the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. Historians Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig examined those enquiries 'explicitly related to soldiers involved in the Gallipoli campaign'.[10] The authors discussed the effects of this campaign on the home front while also 'exploring the broader social and familial effect of the war generally'.[11] Their study differs, however, from this thesis because it ultimately pursued different research questions.

On one level, the importance of the South Australian Bureau's organisational history required a detailed examination of how their wartime work was undertaken and managed, given it related to both the home front and events unfolding on the war front in the Ottoman Empire and Europe. On another level, the relationship between the Honorary Secretary and the enquirer became apparent in reading their letters. The emotional tone of the language used within the correspondences between both parties allows their behaviour to be related to the complex background in which it was enacted. In so doing, it makes these human actions or patterns intelligible.[12] Psychologist John Greenwood makes the point that 'human emotions are socially constituted, that they are intrinsically social'.[13] Emotion words, such as anxiety, fear, and anguish, set the action to be explained, not merely in the context of an individual's total behaviour but also in a social context. Using LIWC on the selected letters has revealed communication patterns related to the intricate scenes in which the letters were enacted on the home

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[8] Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephan Hill, and Bryan S. Turner, 'Social Structure,' The penguin Dictionary of Sociology, 4th ed. (London: Penguin), 326-7.

[9] Fairclough, Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series, 2nd ed. 10.

[10] Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig. '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' First World War Studies 6, no. 3 (July 2016), 283.

[11] Ibid, 277.

[12] Errol Bedford, 'Emotions and Statements about Them,' in The Social Construction of Emotions, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1986), 30.

[13] John Greenwood quoted in Margaret Scotford Archer, Being Human: The Problem of Agency (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 215.

front and the battlefront. This outcome makes the human actions of the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary intelligible on both sides of the enquiry.[14]

In this chapter, a comparative analysis of the 804 selected soldier enquiry packets was undertaken to add to Oppenheimer and Kleinig's research discussed above. The analysis results of similarities and differences between both sets of records are found in Table 6.1 below using a larger quantity of enquiry packets.[15] The difference in number between replicated and different files within both collections was minor in this more extensive group of enquiry packets. Still, the more considerable number of files that only exist in the South Australian archival collection was also of interest. This result confirms that the extant South Australian Information Bureau soldier enquiry packets, rarely used by scholars, offer a unique insight into this wartime work carried out on the South Australian home front during the First World War.[16] Notably, the contrast between both archival collections also highlights that while the Australian bureaux followed a similar process in their daily soldier enquiry work, each bureau had an independent record management system.[17] Those files that are unique to both collections do provide, in many instances, an added rich contextual layer to a soldier's story, an example of which will be discussed in the case of Private Allen Ivy in Chapter 7.

Table 6.1: Comparative Study of the South Australian and London bureau's soldier enquiry packets

South Australian Information Bureau (SA) Vs Cairo and London Bureau (CLB) Soldier Enquiry Files					
Year	Total No. of Packets	SA Packets only	In both Collections	Replicated Information Files	Different Information Files
1915-16	159	95	64	33	31
1917	334	231	103	49	54
1918	255	187	68	27	41
1919	56	46	10	6	4
Total Packets	**804**	**559**	**245**	**115**	**130**

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[14] Bedford, 'Emotions and Statements about Them,'30.

[15] Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig. '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 278.

[16] For recent examples of this see, Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*, Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020; Robert Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021.

[17] A further comparative study between the entire South Australian Bureau's 8,033 soldier enquiry packets and the 32,000 soldier enquiry files housed in Canberra is nearing completion. To date this study has revealed that the number of replicated files overall remains small between both collections. While more than two thirds of the South Australian soldier enquiry packets are not represented in the archival collection in Canberra. This outcome highlights the fact that both archival collections hold unique stories about individual soldiers and about the enquiry work undertaken by the network of Australian bureaux through the First World War. The datasets will be returned to each institution with links to corresponding files.

While an evaluation of such records can yield a variety of details and insights into the personal communications of enquirers and the workings of the bureau, care needs to be taken in explaining a letter's content. These documents are subject to the social and cultural conditions of their production. Their 'habit of mind' and use of language differs significantly 100 years on.[18] Sociologist Steph Lawler notes that the story that is told is selected for its 'meaningful place in the narrative'.[19] Caution must be taken, however, as 'archives can and do expose active choices behind the very nature of the memories that are preserved there'.[20] Historian Bart Ziino makes the point that the First World War drew Australia closer to the British Empire's embrace.[21] Indeed, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, Eric Schneider dared to argue that 'the Australian Red Cross was but a subsidiary of the British parent society' in his attempt to use the South Australian records as a British equivalent.[22] However, the distinct relationship between South Australian families and the bureau staff differentiates these Australian records from other documentary resources today. The difficulties experienced by Australians during the First World War cannot be repositioned as part of a common model.[23]

Letters and the Bureau

Within this archival record, national and family history coincide most powerfully.[24] According to historian Tom Griffiths, historical records are constantly 'misplaced and destroyed without purpose or import, randomly, carelessly or deliberately, but what is kept is kept with purpose and what is made public has import'.[25] Interestingly, historian Barbara Brookes et al. have also observed that archives do not house what has been left but what has been kept.[26] The experience recorded in this archive of an Australian family enquiring about a loved one, however distant from the main theatres of war, was never peripheral to events unfolding in the Ottoman Empire and on the Western Front.[27] This fact is in contrast to a statement made by the Prime Minister of Australia, William Morris Hughes (1915-1923), who, in an address to the public following the showing of official war 'moving pictures' at West's Olympia, stated that:

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[18] John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Longman, 1991), 32.

[19] Steph Lawler, 'Stories and the Social World,' in *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*, ed. Michael Pickering (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 33.

[20] Joanna Sassoon, 'Phantoms of remembrance: libraries and archives as the collective memory,' *Professional Historians Association of NSW* 10 (2003), 41.

[21] Bart Ziino, 'Why Australia is still grappling with the legacy of the First World War,' *The Conversation*, 11 November 2019.

[22] Eric F. Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' *War in History* 4, no. 3 (1997), 298.

[23] Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley, W.A.: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 6.

[24] Jay M. Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies 1914 to the Present*, 4th ed. (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 169.

[25] Tom Griffiths, *The Art of Time Travel: Historians and Their Craft* (Melbourne: Black Inc, 2016), 146.

[26] Barbara Brookes & James Dunk. 'Bureaucracy, archive files, and the making of knowledge.' *Rethinking History* 22, no. 3 (2018): 282.

[27] Bart Ziino, 'Total war,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan (2017), 169.

> We, who dwell in this lotus land, whose joys perhaps have filled our imaginations, cannot see the war, but what has been thrown upon the screen helps us to know something of what the war really means to those who go and fight in it.[28]

The Prime Minister had clearly never read an enquirer's letter to the Information Bureau nor examined a soldier's witness statement received by next of kin from the battlefield that detailed the last moments of a loved one's life. While the language used in related newspaper reports suggested that the 'most inspiriting aspect of all is the cheerfulness of the wounded brought back from the raids'.[29]

For family members, the imagined horrors and conditions of war made all the more visible on the cinema screen must have been concerning; many no doubt returned again and again in the hope of capturing sight of a loved one.[30] At variance with the Prime Minister's statement above and the newsreel reports was the often-descriptive reports supplied by volunteer organisations such as the Australian Red Cross information bureaux and the Young Men's Christian Association Soldiers' Enquiry bureaux. Through their efforts, a more personal written account of vivid and disturbing set of images about the battlefront experience was received. In contrast to the Commonwealth Government's lack of empathy to enquiring families, Edmunds and those who directly assisted him throughout the war understood the meaning and the structure of their progress through the war and made history by the very nature of their voluntary work. Yet, as Wishart and Carney have stated 'they did not write the history books'.[31]

Importantly, the analysis here is not about labelling emotional states or how enquirers appropriated labels to describe their emotions. Instead, it is about the collective nature of these social relationships, however brief, within society through the war. In this select group of transcribed correspondence between 1915 and 1919, the enquirers sent 514 letters to the South Australian Bureau, while the Honorary Secretary replied with 791 letters to their enquiries. There was insufficient variance in the expressions of emotions of enquirers in this selected group to enable a detailed examination of their collective emotional state during the war. Each letter writer frequently used the same emotional expression of feeling anxious about the situation that had or was unfolding around them. Indeed, the bureau's press notice welcomed all those "anxious" to seek news of sick, wounded, or missing men enlisted from the state to call or write to the bureau to enquire.[32] Therefore, the word count for

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[28] 'Australians at Pozières,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 4 August 1917.

[29] *Sunday Times,* Western Australia, 4 August 1917.

[30] One Sydney mother returned four or five times to the cinema after seeing a young soldier who resembled her son being stretchered off the battlefield. In Melbourne, more than 400 soldiers were recognised by the mothers during the first two days of the screening; See 'Australians at Pozières,' *Advertiser*, South Australia, 4 August 1917; 'Australians at Pozières,' *Brisbane Courier*, Queensland, 28 July 1917; in Western Australia audiences were informed their 'boys' featured prominently in the reels; See 'Australians at Pozières,' *Sunday Times* (Perth, WA), 4 August 1917.

[31] Alison Wishart, & Michael Carney, 'An archive of humanity: the NSW Division of the Australian Red Cross, 1914–2014,' *Archives and Manuscripts* 47, no.2 (2019), 266-68.

[32] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Register*, South Australia, 10 April 1916.

individual emotions was exceptionally minor in this relatively small sample to show any significant variance.[33] Nonetheless, the words used in daily life still reflect what one pays attention to, thinks about, tries to avoid, uses to express feelings and reveals how one organises and analyses the world around them.[34] Therefore, as previously outlined, this group of letters was statistically analysed using the LIWC word count method to understand the collective communication patterns that developed in the social relationships of enquirers and the bureau's Honorary Secretary at the micro and meso-level of society during the war.[35]

Language forms mediate the process of socialisation implied by the epistolary act.[36] It varies according to people's social identities in interactions, their socially defined purposes, and various social settings.[37] For example, military language is defined as a dialect rather than a conversation, influenced as this institution is by social and political conditions in a nation-state. Yet, enquirers wanted and needed to converse at an everyday level about what was troubling them regarding a loved one on the battle front.[38] The formal interaction between the enquirer at the micro-level and the military authorities at the macro-level of society was unequal in face-to-face contact. At the same time, the formality of the Department of Defence was a further contributory factor in keeping access to information restricted or limited.[39]

When a legal volunteer interviewed an enquirer in the bureau, it was expected that the enquirer could work out what was required and provide, where possible, the official notifications and personal letters received from the front to assist the enquiry. The language undoubtedly ebbed and flowed as the meeting progressed based on the questions and responses. When writing to the bureau, some enquirers used the correct grammar and vocabulary. In contrast, others appeared to have spontaneously written, which may also reflect their education. Yet, no letter ever occurred in isolation as each was written as social interaction.[40] For example, in an enquirer's letter to the bureau's Honorary Secretary, the correspondence was generally more informal, respectful, and deferential. Often a letter began with 'I am sorry to trouble you'. In contrast, Edmunds's response was generally formal; for example, he often began with "We are in receipt of your letter". Regardless of this, each interaction established a social relationship between the participants.[41]

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[33] James W. Pennebaker, Two Questions, Email, 29 October 2021.
[34] Tausczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 30.
[35] Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou, 'Analysing Narratives as Practices,' *Qualitative Research* 8, no. 3 (July 2008), 383.
[36] Dauphin, 'Correspondences as a historical object: A work on the limits,' 43.
[37] Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 17.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid, 54.
[40] Barbara Kamler and Pat Thomson, *Helping Doctoral Students Write: Pedagogies for Supervision*. (London: Routledge, 2006), 21.
[41] Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 91.

The South Australian Bureau and the more extensive network of the Red Cross Society at home and abroad during the war was a 'tangled temporal knot of agencies', personalities, connotations, systems, committees, volunteers, and so much more.[42] In keeping with the ideas of sociologist Bruno Latour, when an amalgamation of social entities such as the bureau and the enquirers is studied, described, and analysed, they rapidly tend to lose any sense of their constituent connections and associations.[43] Those who wrote letters of enquiry to each of the Australian state bureaux represent the process of binding together all the parts that constituted a society, one directly affected by a war on distant shores. Each time an enquirer established a connection with the bureau, a new channel of communication and collaboration emerged. As discussed in Chapter 5, a broader community and social network also developed beyond the individual bureaux that spanned the globe to work collectively towards the common good of everyday people.[44] The soldier enquiry packets compiled within the South Australian Information Bureau between January 1916 and January 1920 make it physically possible to obtain a collective link between the letter writers, the bureau, Australian society, and the war front through the variety of correspondence within.

The focus of the First World War has, according to Ziino, been more on the 'divisions occasioned by the war' rather than on the nature and expression of it through 'civilian will in prosecuting the war'.[45] As a result, there is a void that is apparent in ones understanding of the level of personal interaction between both fronts through the letters between the enquirer and the bureau's Honorary Secretary. Especially when one considers that everything from people to parcels to correspondence passed back and forth between sites throughout the war and beyond.[46] Linguists David Barton and Nigel Hall remind the reader that because letters are carriers of text, they can be used 'to mediate a vast range of human interactions'.[47] Importantly, letters are embedded in specific social situations. The activity of letter writing gains its meaning and significance from being situated in the values and practices of the surrounding events.[48]

While such actions might seem local, the personal letters of enquiry triggered a set of far-reaching events and activities, first in Cairo and then later in London, France and Belgium. The continuous connections between the sites were preserved in each soldier enquiry packet. Particularly

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[42] Anne Taufen Wessells, Review of Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory, by Bruno Latour,' International Public Management, *Journal* 10, no. 3 (2007), 352.

[43] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory*, Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2007), 219-20.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Bart Ziino, 'Total War,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 165.

[46] Bart Ziino, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1 (2015), 9.

[47] David Barton and Nigel Hall, 'Introduction,' in *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, eds. David Barton, and Nigel Hall (Netherlands & North America: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2000), 1.

[48] Ibid, 1.

important are those enquirers that required assistance further afield in Europe, as these enquiries provide greater context to how far-reaching the wartime work of the state bureaux was.[49] The gap between 'interaction and context' hides the complex machinery established by the Australian Red Cross Information Bureaux network at home and abroad. The South Australian Information Bureau was a tangible hub of particular people at the meso-level of society who dealt with various individuals, agencies, and services throughout its wartime work at both a macro and micro level. To limit the 'shape, size and heterogeneity and combination of associations' that characterise their collective endeavours would fall short in explaining this social model.[50]

An official notification informing a family about the fate of a soldier killed or missing in action often initiated a letter of enquiry or a visit to the State-run Red Cross Information Bureau. In many instances, days, weeks, or months had elapsed before the family realised that no further information would be sent from official quarters.[51] As discussed in Chapter 2, once an enquiry was received, a soldier enquiry packet was immediately opened by bureau staff and numerically recorded in a systematic fashion. Form B mentioned above not only captured the personal details of the soldier and his next of kin; over time, all correspondence sent out and received for the soldier was itemised on this card. This form represents a dated precis of all the activities and results of enquiries made. This process contradicts the suggestion that Form B and Form A are the same item.[52]

Keeping the bureau's records 'thoroughly and completely up to date' also necessitated establishing another careful record management system of carding all casualty lists. This process included a brief reference to the nature of the casualty reported.[53] As previously mentioned, Form A with the latest 'data from official casualty lists (and lists of returning men) issued by military authorities' was often the first point of reference for Edmunds and his volunteer staff when an enquiry was made.[54]

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49 Latour, *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory*, 222.
50 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), quoted in Anne Taufen Wessells, 'Review of Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory, by Bruno Latour.' *International Public Management Journal* 10, no. 3 (2007), 352.
51 As discussed in Chapter 4, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) ran a 'Y.M.C.A Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau' at Gawler Place in the City of Adelaide and many families also turned to this Association in the quest for more information on the fate of a soldier.
52 Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,'283; See 'Forms for Taking and Transmission of Enquiries,' 'Scheme of Work for Red Cross Information Bureau,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
53 Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 13-14, SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau Jun 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
54 Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 13-14, SRG76/22; Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 283; In the New South Wales Bureau, Langer Owen used a card index to record the whole of the history of the man enquired about as well as everything the bureau was doing to assist him, the cards were also used as an index to the official casualty lists rather than the shorter lists printed in newspapers; See

Furthermore, he could quickly confirm whether the soldier appeared on any casualty lists and request further details from the enquirer if he did not. Previously discussed in Chapter 2, Form C recorded the enquiry details from an enquirer's letter or interview in the bureau. Some people phoned the bureau, but this was extremely rare in the packets examined. The legal volunteer recorded when available the casualty list details for the soldier in the 'official information' box; importantly, Form C concluded with instructions on how the enquirer wished the bureau to proceed. If the matter was urgent, a cable was sent on their behalf, generally, for ten shillings. Donations were welcome but not essential; those unable to contribute received assistance through the Red Cross Fund, although this rarely occurred across the initial group of 804 soldier enquiry packets examined. An alternative and slower method of correspondence were to write to the Australian bureau abroad. This practice was the preferred option to prevent the cable system from becoming congested with less urgent cases.

The current classification system

The bureau records were considered important enough to be preserved at the end of the war as first-hand evidence because they form part of the corpus of the facts of the event.[55] Today this collection also plays a significant role in providing the potential for deeper engagement into 'people's understanding of what war was', and how people reacted to it at home relative to their enquiries.[56] Maureen Healy suggests that no action or deed was too small or insignificant during the war not to be considered valuable in the state.[57]Sociologist Piotr Sztompka labels social agency as the point where two influences come together 'in the undivided flow of social change'.[58] He defines these two influences as 'social existences and social becoming'.[59] The former drives the latter, and their meeting constitutes what is 'really real'.[60] By examining how lives at home were affected by the First World War in this period of South Australian history, the scholar is a step closer to understanding what Ziino describes as the totality of war. Historian Roger Chickering writes that 'total war left nothing, absolutely nothing

SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the bureau was opened, Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA). In the London bureau, Deakin maintained four series of card indexes; a) Enquiries filed in battalion order, b) Enquiries filed alphabetically, c) Admissions and discharges of the Australian Imperial Force in hospital in Great Britain, d) All Prisoners of War. The Australian Military Headquarters Office in London kept a card index of all soldier casualties, Deakin argued to do similar was a duplication of work and required staff greater than she had available at the time; See SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA). In Melbourne, John B. Kiddle did not profess to keep a man's casualty history as that was kept by Base Records; See John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Vera Deakin, 2 October 1918,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[55] Hilary Jenkinson, A Manual of Archive Administration Including the Problems of war Archives and Archive Making (United States: Scholar Select - Franklin Classics, 2018), 4.
[56] Deborah Thom, 'Making Spectaculars: Museum and how we remember Gender in Wartime,' in *Evidence, History and the Great War*, ed. Gail Braybon (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 50; Bart Ziino, 'Total War,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 170.
[57] Maureen Healy quoted in Bart Ziino, 'Total War,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 170.
[58] Piotr Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniya*, no. 8 (2009), 4.
[59] Ibid, 3.
[60] Ibid.

untouched'.[61] Indeed, the correspondence between the bureau and enquirers shows how ordinary people tried collectively to change their situation 'which at any moment threatened to crush them'.[62]

The work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux was generated and determined by the actions of families, next of kin and friends of a soldier seeking answers. The letters between the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary are viewed here as cultural artifacts rather than private correspondence.[63] Therefore, it was essential to understand the 'situations, conditions and networks of sociability that brought these letters into existence' and allowed them to survive.[64] As previously noted, the index card in an enquiry packet provides a unique timeline of the Bureau's wartime work undertaken on behalf of the next of kin of a soldier. As noted above, a detailed examination of the enquiry packets found that the State Library of South Australia currently classifies the archival record based on the outcome of an enquiry on the war front rather than on the nature of the enquiry at home. The State Library also grouped 1915 and 1916 as the former year had only a small number of enquiries. This classification system defines only two soldier enquiry categories within the 8,033 packets; soldiers who were 'dead' or those 'wounded/sick' (Table 6.2). As a result, the potential for a deeper engagement with the record is lessened locally, nationally, and internationally. Interestingly, the current system also omits those enquiries about soldiers deemed to be officially or unofficially missing or miscellaneous.

Table 6.2: Current Classification system of soldier enquiry packets[65]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiries					
Enquiry Outcome	**1915/16**	**1917**	**1918**	**1919**	**Total Across the War**
Dead	770	866	657	22	**2,315**
Wounded & Sick	1058	2387	1942	377	**5,764**
Total enquiry per Year	**1595**	**3253**	**2599**	**399**	
Total enquiries					**8,079**

[61] Roger Chickering, 'Why Are We Still Interested in This Old War?' *History of Warfare* 62 (2011), 12-13; Bart Ziino, 'Total War,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*,), 170; Jay M. Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies 1914 to the Present*, 4th ed. (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 169; Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (2003), 1342.
[62] Winter and Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies* 1914 *to the Present*, 167.
[63] Martyn Lyons, 'Love Letters and Writing Practices: On Écritures Intimes in the Nineteenth Century,' 232.
[64] Ibid, 233.
[65] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.

Indeed, in the soldier enquiry packets examined, 'miscellaneous' cases were the third highest group of enquiries; 'wounded' enquiries were highest while 'killed in action' enquiries were third highest. Edmunds himself has stated that:

> While the Bureau was predominantly intended only for the purpose of supplying information and furthering enquiries as to sick, wounded, and missing, enquiries of a very miscellaneous character were also made personally and by letter and every effort was made to assist the enquirer by suggesting a suitable channel through which further enquiry could be made.[66]

The details were often meagre in an official notification; therefore, the bureau staff attempted to 'supplement the bare tidings received through the military' about the men on the battlefront.[67] When official notifications were not conveyed to the soldier's family, many people approached the bureau 'anxious to seek more detailed news of sick, wounded or missing men'.[68] Miscellaneous enquiries covered almost everything, from a request for a soldier's address to a complaint about the lack of mail from the front. Edmunds chose not to record those enquiries of a 'very miscellaneous and varied nature'; these included questions about a deceased soldier's property or belongings, but such queries were outside the bureau's remit.[69] Regardless, he reported that when 'genuine anxiety was felt' by next of kin, 'no pains are spared to obtain reliable and definite information as quickly as possible'.[70] Oppenheimer et al. have suggested that the enquiries fell under six main categories. Indeed, Edmunds' listed six main groups in his Annual Law Society Report of December 1917.[71] They have also listed the type of genuine enquiries that Edmunds was happy to accept at the bureau instead of those enquiries borne out of 'curiosity, morbid or otherwise' that he chose to avoid.[72] There were, however, many

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[66] 'Charles A. Edmund's January Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at the Red Cross Depot in Government House, Adelaide, 23 February 1917,' SRG76/22 Monthly and Annual Reports for Publication in Red Cross Journals June 1916 – June 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[67] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Vera Deakin, 25 November 1916,' SRG76/17 Correspondence with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London June 1916 - Jan 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA)

[68] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' *Register*, 10 April 1916.

[69] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 15, SRG76/22; It was the Military Department of the YMCA who assisted with this task of property and belongs at the end of the war.

[70] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 13, SRG76/22; For an example of the South Australian's commitment to a case relating to property, see 'Papers relating to No. 807, Private James E Gibson, 27th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/7814 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); For an example of the South Australian's commitment to a case relating to tracing a returned soldiers sister in Australia, see 'Papers relating to No.7456, Private Francis C. Briscoe, 15th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6064 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[71] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 13-14, SRG76/22; See Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 283; Discussions are ongoing with the State Library of South Australia in relation to their current classification system.

[72] The genuine enquiries included those 'Soldiers officially reported to be wounded or ill; officially reported to be seriously, severely or dangerously wounded or ill; reported missing or wounded and missing; those killed in action; special cases and prisoners of war'; See 'Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917. (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 13-14,' SRG76/22; Oppenheimer and Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' 283.

unofficial enquiries requesting details about a soldier's fate, which form a significant part of the South Australian Bureau's soldier enquiry work.

Reclassifying the System

Quantitative research requires a larger sample than qualitative; therefore, from the outset, a systematic and objective manner was used to randomly select one in every ten packets from the complete collection of 8,033 soldier enquiry packets to make them easily identifiable and clearly defined. Social researcher Sotirios Sarantakos shows that sampling a smaller portion of the target material provides a better option as it entails less time and produces quicker answers.[73] The sampling method adopted enabled an in-depth detailed study of a relatively small number of enquiry packets and gave each new category an equal opportunity of selection. This approach provided an initial group of 804 soldier enquiry packets. While the sample is uniform in that the contents of each packet deal with an individual enquiry about a particular soldier, each enquiry packet is independent of the other and varies in content size. Individual enquiry packets appear only once in the sequential list of packets, although a few soldiers appear twice because they had more than one packet opened on their behalf.

Early in this wartime work, the honorary secretaries made attempts to prevent such occurrences by introducing Form B discussed above. Nonetheless, duplication of some soldiers occurred in the filing system, possibly due to human error or miscommunication during hectic periods within the bureau. Where two or more soldiers was listed, the first soldier was chosen for examination in an enquiry packet. Regardless of the enquiry or lack of material no soldier enquiry packet was discarded. This decision eliminated bias, errors and distortions as each case is representative of the overall enquiry packets.[74] The wartime work undertaken by the Australian state bureaux was first about assisting civilians at home to obtain more detailed information about the fate of their next of kin on the battlefront. From its inception, in late 1915 through to early 1920, bureau staff in South Australia opened 8,033 soldier enquiry packets, as noted above. Following a close reading of the randomly selected 804 soldier enquiry packets, seven categories have emerged in each year of the war based on the nature of the enquiry received by the South Australian Information Bureau (Table 6.3)

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[73] Sotirios Sarantakos, *Social Research,* 2nd ed. (Australia: Charles Stuart University, 1998), 140.
[74] Ibid.

Table 6.3: Proposed classification system of soldier enquiry packets[75]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packets					
Enquiry Type	**1915/16**	**1917**	**1918**	**1919**	**Total packets across the war**
Killed	21	42	43	4	**110**
Wounded	49	165	108	3	**325**
Missing	31	42	19	0	**92**
Sick	21	24	29	11	**85**
Absent Without Leave	1	2	2	3	**8**
Prisoner of War	8	16	11	0	**35**
Miscellaneous	28	43	43	35	**149**
Total packets per year	**159**	**334**	**256**	**56**	
Total Packets examined					**804**

The word count statistical analysis approach to the selected group of letters was undertaken as a cognitive and social process to generate knowledge in a significant way.[76] The individual stories within this group of soldier enquiry packets are not understood in this instance as factual accounts of experience; instead, they are sources of insight into the discursive construction of the incident within society.[77] When an enquirer expressed their anxiety, it was constituted by their evaluative representation of the unfolding situation as threatening, not by their representation of their emotional state as anxiety.[78] Daily, Edmunds attached importance to each individual who enquired with the bureau. If no importance was attached to enquirers' concerns, the result might have been just another 'over socialised view' of the social subject.[79] Those who were parties to the social emotions displayed, constructed, or created them out of 'the joint commitment to certain arrangements, conventions, and agreement'.[80] The cluster of social emotions constituted within the records is representative of actions on both sides of the enquiry. Insight is gained from exploring those taken for granted and typically un-explicated methods through which much of the bureau's history has been written to date. In this new form of

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75 Upon receipt of the complete dataset of the South Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau soldier enquiry packets, from the State Library of South Australia, this number of 804 packets was arrived at by selecting one in every ten soldier enquiry packets. While there are 8,033 packets listed in the total dataset, in some instances there are duplicate enquiry packets for a small group of soldiers, but these were treated as individual packets. Fortunately, no soldiers are duplicated in the selected packets.

76 Phil Benson, 'Narrative Inquiry in Applied Linguistics Research,' *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 34 (2014), 15.

77 Ibid, 161.

78 Margaret Scotford Archer, *Being Human: The Problem of Agency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 218.

79 Ibid, 217.

80 Ibid.

analysis, the practical methods through which an enquiry was assembled, contested, and stabilised were given consideration.[81]

Enquiry packet selection

The soldier enquiry packets selected for the word count statistical analysis contained letters back and forth between both parties concerning the fate of a soldier. This selection reduced the initial group from 804 to 345 enquiry packets; the correspondence between enquirers and the bureau amounted to 1,233 letters across all seven redefined enquiry categories (Table 6.3). The number of packets in 1915 and 1919 was small; therefore, in keeping with the State Library's grouping of these years these years were combined as shown in the tables below to give more meaning to the collective findings. In addition, three groups of enquiries with similar requests were grouped together to give more value to the data output. This group of 'other enquiries' includes soldiers who were 'absent without leave', prisoners of war and miscellaneous cases seeking similar details about a soldier's address, comfort parcels, lack of communication or repatriation shipping information (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Soldier enquiry packets for language analysis by enquiry type

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packets				
Enquiry Type	**1915/16**	**1917**	**1918/19**	**Total Quantity across the war**
Killed	7	18	13	**38**
Wounded	24	66	35	**125**
Missing	18	19	8	**45**
Sick	7	11	11	**29**
Other Enquiries	21	35	52	**108**
Total packets per year	**77**	**149**	**119**	
Total Packets examined				**345**

The transcribed letters of the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary were collated across each year of the war. Inclusive of the nature of the enquiry, other defining information included the soldier's rank, the enquirer's gender, and their relationship to the soldier. It is often not about what someone is saying but how they are saying it that can drive the enquiry. Psychologist James Pennebaker suggests that if the writer is emotional, the attention is more on the self because they are perhaps physically or emotionally in pain. He further notes that others, in this instance Edmunds, who show care for others,

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[81] Andrea Whittle and John Wilson, Ethnomethodology and the production of history: studying 'history-in-action,' Business History 57, no.1 (2015), 43.

have a strong social engagement, and pay particular attention to others.[82] Therefore, were Edmunds and the enquirer in tune with one another? Were they looking at events in the same way? In his role as honorary secretary, Edmunds always argued that the primary function of the bureau was to do justice to enquirers who relied upon its efforts to relieve their natural anxiety and supplement the necessarily meagre official reports.[83] Yet, in conjunction with its network at home and abroad, the South Australian Bureau was in practice looking for a needle in a haystack, particularly in those cases relating to the 'missing'.

Applying LIWC (pronounced LUKE)

Quiet words can sometimes tell us more about a person than more meaningful ones. In addition, how people choose to speak or write can also reveal meaningful personality clues. Pennebaker suggests that not all words are equal and argues that some words provide basic content and meaning in any given sentence, whereas others serve quieter support functions.[84] The text analysis program LIWC has two parts: the main word count module identifies and categorises words. It has a built-in group of approximately eighty dictionaries that tell the linguistic inquiry module which words to identify and classify into over eighty linguistic, psychological, and topical categories. These categories indicate various social, cognitive, and affective processes. There is a corresponding dictionary entry for each dictionary word that defines one or more word categorises. The language categories in the program were created to capture peoples' social and psychological states.[85] In this analysis, the preferred language used was Australian English. Pennebaker notes that:

> The word categories, or dictionaries, can be based on standard linguistic definitions, such as articles, or by agreement of independent judges. Some of these categories include function or closed class words, which are the smallest yet most common words in the English language. Function words generally include pronouns, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, negations, and many common adverbs.[86]

The module reads a given text and counts the percentage of words that reflect different emotions, thinking styles, social concerns, and even some speech. For example:

> The LIWC anxiety dictionary is made up of 116 anxiety words (e.g., anxious, anxiety, worry, worrying, fear, afraid, etc). If you are looking at a text with 70 total words, the LIWC program will

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82 James W. Pennebaker, 'The Secret life of Pronouns', YouTube Video, 17:58, TedX Talk, 19 February 2013, accessed 16 August 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGsQwAu3PzU.

83 'Charles A. Edmunds's December Monthly Report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas at the Red Cross Depot in Government House, Adelaide, 22 December 1916,' SRG76/22 Monthly and annual reports from the Adelaide Bureau 22 June 1916 - Jun 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

84 Pennebaker, *The Secret Life of Pronouns*, 18.

85 Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count.' Accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

86 James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne, David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays,' *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 2. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0115844.

count all anxiety words in the document. If it catches 3 anxiety words, the output for anxiety will be 3/70 x 100 or 4.29% of total words.[87]

In this analysis, a study was undertaken using the previously discussed word count method of a combined group of letters to understand the epistolary exchange between enquirers and the bureau's Honorary Secretary.[88] Pennebaker has shown that the words used in everyday language reveal individuals' thoughts, feelings, personalities, and motivations. He also asserts that language as a fundamental social behaviour can tell us lots about social processes because word use can be associated with almost every dimension of social ways of thinking.[89] Therefore, examining language style makes it possible to gain a far more precise sense of the social processes that affect individual behaviours.[90]

Social engagement and everyday life

If one considers that the central dimension of existence is 'togetherness' in the human species, then neither societies nor individuals are separate or autonomous entities; each resides close to others.[91] Sztompka suggests that one can use the changes in language, the vocabularies with which people describe their world, as a good indicator of social changes.[92] This approach creates a duality intrinsic to the social fabric that is made up of the 'individual in society' and the 'society of individuals'.[93] For example, the military authorities, the Australian Red Cross information bureaux at home and abroad, and the enquirers are a combination of individuals and institutions that made up a particular element of Australian society during the First World War. Those enquiring at the bureau discovered a social existence within this structure where actions towards others, established bonds and relationships of various forms newly emerged or already existing. Here, 'social existence manifested itself best' on multiple levels because the interactions included everyday life and relationships with others.[94]

No community is above or beyond its participating individuals.[95] Sociologist Anthony Giddens has shown that action depends upon the individual's capability to 'make a difference' to a pre-existing situation or course of events to exercise some form of power.[96] That power is often defined as intent or will, as the capacity to achieve a desired and intended outcome.[97] The network of state bureaux did precisely this in their attempts to assist those in society enquiring about the unknown fate of a soldier.

[87] James W. Pennebaker, Reading calculated percentages in LIWC, Email, 20 November 2021.
[88] De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 'Analysing Narratives as Practices,' 383.
[89] Ryan L. Boyd and James W. Pennebaker, 'A Way with Words: Using Language for Psychological Science in the Modern Era,'in *Consumer Psychology in a Social Media World*, eds. Claudiu V. Dimofte, Curtis P. Haugtvedt, Richard F. Yalch, London: Routledge Publishers (2015), 235.
[90] James W. Pennebaker, *The Secret Life of Pronouns*. New York, Berlin, London, Sydney: Bloomsbury Press, 2011.
[91] Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' 7.
[92] Ibid, 8.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' 5.
[96] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1984), 14.
[97] Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' 15.

Everyday life occurs in various locations, and the site significantly determines these social events' character, style, form, and content.[98] Then and now, one can see the many routines of daily life in society if they look around them because most of them appear precisely at a level of everyday existence. It is not synonymous with private life and opposed to public life; it comprises both, although the participating actors may differ. It is probable that there were also spontaneous but 'culturally tainted gestures, body language and face work' in interviews held at the bureau with enquirers.[99] Sztompka further notes a whole 'spectrum of visibility' is available to the individual at the level of everyday life. Although at a macro level, 'macro-objects, social classes, states, institutions, or nations' are not directly observed by them.[100] This outcome was certainly the case with next of kin who soon lost heart trying to obtain answers from the Department of Defence. This department fell short in providing sufficient information to the next of kin of soldiers, in the immediate aftermath of an event on the battlefront, particularly for those men classified as 'missing' or 'killed in action'.

As discussed above, a group of participants in any social interaction relate to one another. Each embodies a social role; both parties' connection may have been face-to-face, but it may also have been distant, mediated, or completely anonymous. Not everyone could travel to the bureau in Adelaide, and many enquiries were from parents, siblings, extended family, or friends. Some enquirers wrote on behalf of a parent, while others did not disclose their relationship to the soldier. In cases of a severe nature, the bureau provided the more intimate details of a witness statement to the soldier's next of kin. Nonetheless, each interaction occurred in some immediate situation, with the most substantial influence exerted by those who focused actively on the occurrence. The legal volunteers and the Honorary Secretary involved in each case conducted specific procedures, which followed an order that gave meaning to the encounter with an enquirer.[101] The letters used in this chapter are a collective record of the interactions between both parties. In analysing these letters, the questions raised about soldiers in the Gallipoli campaign and Europe add to examining these social interactions at the most fundamental, obvious, and banal level of everyday life on the home front.[102]

Letters in reply to enquirers followed a templated format, particularly concerning those soldiers 'killed in action', 'missing' and a 'prisoner of war'. However, a sentence or two in closing the letter frequently offered a more personal and empathic response to the recipient. For example, in response to J. Westley in April 1917, Edmunds assured her that a letter had been despatched to London asking for the manner of the soldier's death, his burial place and that they obtain a photograph of his grave. He

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[98] Ibid, 10.
[99] Ibid, 5.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid, 12.
[102] Ibid, 13.

signed off, asking if 'we might offer our sincere sympathy in her great sorrow'.[103] Similarly, in September 1917, Edmunds replied to Naomi Farrell's enquiry following the death of her grandson in France due to septic wounds and gas gangrene. He assured her that 'the best medical attention' had been administered. Edmunds closed by stating that 'we hope it will comfort you a little to know your grandson died in hospital and had everything possible done to alleviate his sufferings, although his life could not be saved'.[104] Such responses were often triggered by a particularly distressing witness statement, mainly if the enquirer was the soldier's wife, sister, or mother.

When setting up the South Australian Bureau in 1915, as discussed in Chapter 2, a stipulation was put in place by Sir Josiah Symon that the Honorary Secretary was the sole signatory of any letters issued by the bureau.[105] A question emerged early in this research as to whether Edmunds was the author of all the letters. Historian Bruce Scates states that men were generally more sparing in their sympathy during the First World War. Still, he suggests 'a different tone pervades the correspondence of the Adelaide Bureau'.[106] In a follow-up conversation, he indicated that the 'tone' of the letters assured him the Honorary Secretary was the author. Edmunds, throughout the war, was an extremely busy man inside and outside the bureau; he ran two legal practices, was on the boards of other organisations, and had a young family. Nevertheless, he always credited Florence Saunders's work as having 'largely contributed to the success of the [South Australian] bureau'.[107]

Indeed, in 1920, Saunders, referred to by Edmunds as his 'first-lieutenant', received a Member of the Order of the British Empire Award (M.B.E.) for her honorary work in the South Australian Bureau.[108] Some years later, a reporter asked Saunders about this award at an event in Sydney with her sister. She stated that she had gained the decoration for her wartime work 'in charge of the Red Cross Information Bureau' but admitted that she no longer actively participated in social movements.[109] This comment provides insight into Saunders's effective running of the administrative side of the bureau. A statistical study of the word count in LIWC showed consistency of style and flow to the bureau letters,

[103] 'Papers relating to No. 3957, Private Richard Westley, 50th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2131 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/richard-westley.
[104] 'Papers relating to No. 3741, Private Dudley S. Evans, 50th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2301 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/dudley-sydney-evans.
[105] 'Marie, Lady Galway in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon, 18 October 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916 and January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[106] Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81(2001), 43.
[107] 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the bureau prepared by Charles A. Edmunds, 30 June 1916,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[108] 'Empire Honors,' *Chronicle*, 23 October 1920; 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, Melbourne,' SRG76/22 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the bureau was opened, July 1915, January 1916, January 1917, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[109] 'Tribute to Singer: Molly de Gunst Embarrassed,' *Daily Telegraph*, Tasmania, 18 May 1932.

as do the handwritten edits on various carbon copies of correspondences in the selected packets. The word count outcome suggests that all correspondence issued from the bureau was consistent throughout in tone and language style. However, it is impossible to say one way or the other if that writer was male or female. The consistency of edits and wording strongly suggests that Edmunds had the final word on what he signed and sent out to an enquirer regardless of who drafted the initial correspondence. In his report to the South Australian Law Society in 1917, he noted that each letter produced within the bureau 'related to a specific enquiry and therefore required particular care as it differed from all others dealt with'.[110] Like Scates, the sense is that the tone is male in the many bureau letters examined for this thesis.

Importantly, the soldier was virtually present in the thoughts, memories, and dreams of those enquiring about their loved ones at the war front.[111] The enquirer's internal conversations became 'a crucial component in shaping their motivations and actions' to write or call into the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. More broadly, the same activities were also occurring in the other state bureaux.[112] The letters used in LIWC are a material artefact unedited or uncensored within the research. The intention was to decipher the socially constructed forms of the letters rather than reduce them to the most obvious forms of discourse.[113] The transcribed text was uploaded to LIWC, which produced word count outputs for the letters of the enquirers and the bureau; this data was then run through the *IBM SPSS* software program. The word count output of the Honorary Secretary and enquirers were then compared against the new categories that emerged based on the nature of the enquiry on the home front. These categories listed in Table 6.4 above include: killed, wounded, missing, sick, and other enquiries.

Communication patterns found in an analysis of letters

As previously outlined, the word count of the Honorary Secretary and the enquirers' letters were analysed using 1,233 transcribed letters between parties in the selected group of 345 soldier enquiries packets opened in the bureau between 1915 and 1919. Interestingly, in this sample of soldier enquiry packets, letters to the bureau did not increase or decrease after a significant battle; regardless of the nature of an enquiry, the flow of letters from enquirers across all five categories remained consistent throughout the war. Table 6.5 lists the number of soldier enquiry packets opened in the bureau based on the relationship of the enquirer to the soldier.

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[110] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 16, SRG76/22.

[111] Ibid, 9.

[112] Margaret Scotford Archer quoted in Piotr, Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' 7.

[113] Cécile Dauphin, 'Correspondences as a historical object: A work on the limits,' 43.

Table 6.5: Enquirer's relationship to the soldiership to the soldier[114]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packets	
Relationship to Soldier	**Number of Individual Enquiries through the war**
Parents	131
Sibling	80
Friend	78
Wife/Fiancée	35
Extended Family	21
Total Packets examined	345

In the same sample group, the bureau most frequently received an enquiry about soldiers of low rank, defined here as Privates, Signallers, Troopers and Gunners. The middle level of Quarter Master Sergeants, Corporals and Lance Corporals were second highest, while the third group included soldiers of high rank, Lieutenants and Captains.[115] This pattern also reflects the Australian Imperial Force's structure, with many lower-ranked soldiers and few Officers at the top. Two hundred and eighty-eight enquiry packets represented the low rank; the middle rank had forty-five enquiry packets, while those soldiers of a high rank consisted of seven enquiry packets. There was also a group of five enquiry packets that referred to enquiries for those men who had told family members they had enlisted; however, the Australian Imperial Force had no such records.

In 1915 enquiries about 'missing' soldiers following the Gallipoli campaign in the Ottoman Empire were driven by siblings (Table 6.6). This trend continued in 1916, following the Battle of the Somme. Why siblings dominated this line of enquiry is unknown; on occasion, they suggested it was for elderly parents, some of whom could not read or write, but more generally, it appeared to be for their own peace of mind. For example, Ida Campton wrote to the bureau on behalf of her mother to acknowledge receipt of the bureau's letter regarding a brother's death. In her response, Ida also requested details about her second brother, previously reported as missing and was now deemed to

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[114] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.
[115] Australian War Memorial, 'Rank,' accessed on 10 December 2021, https://www.awm.gov.au/learn/understanding-military-structure/rank.

have been killed; her mother could not read or write.[116] Parents were the predominant enquirers about 'wounded' soldiers, particularly following the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917. Interestingly, the 'other enquiries' category (absent without leave, prisoners of war and miscellaneous) dominated the enquiries in 1918 but declined in 1919. Some enquirers in this group requested addresses for prisoners of war as they wished to send a comfort parcel. Still, for many, they were trying to reconnect with a soldier following long silences, so they wanted to clarify an address with the bureau. Others questioned if requests for money were to be trusted, while a few asked about the timing of returning troopships with repatriated soldiers.

Table 6.6: Enquirer driving the enquiry type 1915-1919[117]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packets				
Enquiry Type	**Relationship**	**1915/16**	**1917**	**1918/19**
Wounded	Parents		**44.3%**	
Missing	Siblings	**23.4%**		
Other Enquiries	Friends			**43.7%**

In general, all enquirers tended to keep their letters simple and to the point; they repeatedly asked comparable questions and most refrained from burdening the bureau with their woes. In the case of Private Samuel Megaw, his brother Tom asked to be forgiven for the liberty of asking for assistance but wished to know about the facts of his brother's death and burial.[118] Family enquirers generally wrote similar length letters regardless of their enquiry. Friends and extended family wrote the shortest letters, yet Edmunds consistently wrote similar length letters in reply showing that he treated all enquirers with the same respect and attention. Often, these enquirers followed on from a previous enquiry made by an immediate family member or were simply curious about their friend or relative. Breaking it down further, in this group of 1,233 letters, the average length of an enquiry letter to the bureau was 120 words. In comparison, and not surprisingly, the response from Edmunds was slightly longer overall, with an average of 196 words. The Honorary Secretary tended to provide more details about those soldiers classified as 'killed in action' or 'missing'; such letters averaged 300 words for soldiers who had died and 240 words for those who were missing, while correspondence about wounded soldiers tended to average 166 words. Edmunds's letters regarding sick men and other miscellaneous enquiries tended to be of a similar length, which supports the templated letter system in

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[116] 'Papers relating to No. 1920, Private Gerald G. Campion, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/4741 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/gerald-gordon-campion.

[117] These percentage figures are based on the wordcount of an enquirer's letters versus the category of the enquiry across each year of the war.

[118] 'Papers relating to No. 2205, Private Samuel G. Megaw Preece, 8th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/3241 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/samuel-george-megaw-0.

widespread use (See Table 6.7 below). The content of Edmunds' letters lessened closer to the end of the war when less detail was requested, or people were inclined to enquire more about shipping timetables and dates of returning soldiers. Interestingly, the flow of letters did not change before or after a battle. In each year of the war, letters between the enquirer and the bureau's honorary secretary followed a consistent pattern and remained at a similar length.

Table 6.7: Wordcount of Enquirer and Bureau Letters[119]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packets		
Word Count	**Year**	**Mean Average**
Enquirers Letters	1915/16	**141.43**
	1917	**123.21**
	1918-19	**106.24**
	Total	**121.43**
Bureau Letters	1915-16	**208.25**
	1917	**198.56**
	1918-19	**178.61**
	Total	**193.84**

The five new classification categories provided an opportunity to examine the frequency of enquiries in each group. Friends predominantly made miscellaneous enquiries in this group of 345 soldier enquiry packets; this is reflected in the number for 'other enquiries' (Table 6.8). No responses from a soldier to their regular letters sometimes caused alarm or piqued the curiosity of these enquirers. For example, if the soldier was sick or wounded, those writing to the bureau frequently asked for the details of a hospital or convalescent centre where he was a patient. There was also a possibility that a death had occurred when the regular flow of letters ceased. More frequently, the soldier had become indifferent to maintaining the connection. Or, as historian Martha Hanna has shown, a soldier's immediate family often became more important to him as the war went on, while his extended family became more irrelevant.[120]

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[119] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.
[120] Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 5 (2003), 1357.

Based on the nature of the enquiry, the second-highest category enquired about in this sample was those soldiers reported as 'wounded', and the group who enquired most frequently were parents, particularly in 1917 (Table 6.7). Next of kin generally received an official notification for a soldier seriously or dangerously wounded, although this sometimes failed to happen. In these cases, an enquirer tended to see the soldier on a casualty list in the local newspaper, prompting an enquiry with the bureau. They wanted the precise nature of the wound, address details of the hospital and an update on the soldier's condition. Unlike the military authorities, the bureau sent regular updates to the family until the soldier was shipped home or returned to his unit.

The third group most enquired about was those soldiers classified as 'missing'.[121] As mentioned above, siblings enquired more frequently for this category, sometimes on behalf of an elderly parent. These enquiries were often the more harrowing of cases. Margaret Jolly wrote to the bureau on behalf of her mother, who could not read or write. The latter was grieving for one son killed at Lone Pine and worried about another at the front when the military authorities instructed the bank to close her account and retrieve monies, they claimed were overpaid her from her son's military pay. This circumstance left her mother almost destitute. The status of a soldier was often left in limbo if he was unaccounted for or had gone missing on the battlefront. It generally took six months before military officials held a Court of Enquiry to determine his fate. Yet, the outcome of their deliberations was not immediately available to the family for some time. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the bureau accepted unofficial missing cases with caution. Often these soldiers just failed to stay connected with loved ones at home. Edmunds regularly responded to an enquirer in this regard that as the soldier was not on any of the bureau's casualty lists, the enquirer could be assured that the soldier was most likely with his unit.

For those soldiers classified as being 'killed in action', enquirers in this sample showed no significant difference in pattern through the war years. Official notifications in the form of a cable were sent to the next of kin when a soldier died. Parents then wrote to the South Australian Bureau requesting further details about their son's fate, how he died, where he died, and importantly, where he was buried. Military authorities did not notify next of kin for those classed as sick unless the soldier's condition was severe. Instead, enquirers sometimes received the second of four-field cards, as discussed in Chapter 3, from the soldier through the Australian bureau in London, notifying them of his ailments. Or the soldier sent the card directly to his family, which prompted an enquiry for further details on his condition. With the long turnaround time of these correspondences, the soldier was often already

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[121] 'Papers relating to No. 746, Private Allan Preece, 8th Light Horse Regiment,' SRG 76/1/746 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/allan-preece

convalescing or back with his unit when Edmunds received updates from abroad. As discussed in Chapter 4, soldiers went through different camps in their recovery; it depended on the nature of their wounds or their illness. In some instances, Edmunds followed up with the Military Base Records Office in Melbourne rather than the London Bureau. He regularly received similar advice from the Officer in Charge there.

Table 6.8: Frequency of enquiry type and by whom 1915-1919[122]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packets		
Enquiry Type	**Relationship**	**Driving Enquiry Through the War**
Other Enquiries	Friends	**65.4%**
Wounded	Parents	**47.3%**
Missing	Siblings	**20.3%**
Killed	Parents	**15.5%**
Sick	All	**8.4%**

This sample group of 345 soldier enquiry packets offered an opportunity to see who Edmunds was most consistent with in his responses across the five categories. The word count analysis showed that he consistently wrote long letters to parents, particularly for soldiers classified as 'killed in action'. In this category, parents frequently requested details of their son's death and subsequent burial and, where possible, a photograph of their son's grave. As previously discussed, these bureau letters tended to be of a templated format and included witness statements gathered by searchers from soldiers in the field. As discussed in Chapter 5, a minimum of three statements were requested to verify events on the battlefront by searchers on the ground amongst the Australian troops in Europe. The witness statements invariably arrived at the South Australian Bureau at various times throughout the enquiry, as searchers obtained reports in Britain, France, and Belgium. In some instances, the searcher sent word directly to the enquiring state bureau in Australia.

Once the correspondence was recorded on Form B, Edmunds had the statement(s) transcribed into a letter; with parents listed as next of kin, the probability is these soldiers were unmarried. Edmunds's prose reveals something of the dynamic and evolving response to recurring rhetorical situations. The emphasis of his letters was often reflected in how the bureau managed the gap between what the enquirer may have expected and what was possible in communicating details.[123] His letters

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[122] The percentage figures are derived from the wordcount of an enquirer's letters versus the closeness of the enquirer's relationship to the soldier.
[123] Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou, 'Analysing Narratives as Practices,' *Qualitative Research* 8, no. 3 (July 2008), 383.

often articulated a situation related to a specific battlefield event.[124] Therefore, Edmunds always cautioned the recipient that while the information was 'purely unofficial, being the statement of a fellow soldier', he assured them that 'the report had been carefully tested'.[125] It was these letters that were the most descriptive and informing.

As the ratio of parents is greater in this sample group, it follows that Edmunds wrote longer detailed letters to a soldier's parents than anyone else. Such correspondences often included witness statements from Europe about a killed soldier, which determined the letter's length. These statements ranged from the mandatory three to several in any one enquiry. The bureau letters followed a format reflected in the templated letter Edmunds was advised to adopt by the honorary secretaries in the Melbourne and Sydney bureaux when issuing witness statements. These letters' last line or two always reached out to offer sympathy, condolences, or acknowledge the news's sadness. For example, in December 1919, Edmunds expressed deep sympathy with the enquirer, Greta Roberts, after Captain Mills had exhausted all possibilities of tracing her missing brother 'through various foreign agencies and official or other available records in Germany and elsewhere'.[126] He offered her their sincere regret that their efforts on her behalf had not been more satisfactory or fruitful before the bureau closed at the end of that week. Still, he wished to include people like Mrs Roberts in his last circular letter and provide what detail he could.

As the war ended, many of those enquiries that had no definite result became active once again as the Australian War Graves Department began tracing details for missing and deceased soldiers; this brought a definitive closure to those enquiries in the bureau that had remained open. In his final letters, Edmunds acknowledged to enquirers that they had probably already received official notification, but he wished to pass on the information. The recipient was directed to contact the War Graves Department if any further questions arose, and Edmunds enclosed an address. This process differed from the British system discussed in Chapter 5, where their Red Cross Wounded and Missing Department tended to close missing enquiries much earlier in the war. This element of the work was conducted in association with Captain Mills in Germany through the London Bureau but without searchers. However, they were still available in Europe to assist if required.

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[124] De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 'Analysing Narratives as Practices,' 384.

[125] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 5 April 1916,' in Papers relating to No 13, Private William R Baker, 13th Battalion, SRG 76/1/476 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/william-robert-baker.

[126] 'Papers relating to No. 6816, Private John Roberts, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6184 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/john-roberts.

Captain Mills' work brings closure to some Enquiries

In 1919, following discussions between the Australian Red Cross Society and military authorities, Captain Mills, an Australian officer attached to the British Military Commission in Germany, was sent into German prisoner of war camps post-war to discover the fate of 120 Australian prisoners of war unaccounted for.[127] He succeeded in tracing all but two of these men.[128] As temporary captain and graves registration staff officer, Quentin Shaddock Spedding was tasked with organising the war graves of Australian soldiers in France; he would later move this operation to Britain. Spedding also laid out cemeteries at Villers-Bretonneux and the Somme and was responsible for arranging Divisional war memorials.[129] Like the state bureaux, Ziino states that the Australian Graves Detachment showed an awareness of the distance separating mourners from the battlefields in Europe through its methods 'to consolidate its relationship with them'.[130] Captain Mills discovered 'that the Germans held most detailed information of a varied nature about men whom they have picked up as dead or whose effects they have found'.[131] He also discovered the collective names of Belgian, Italian, French and English soldiers within a sizeable alphabetical index. In consultation with the Australian bureau in London, Captain Mills suggested that the bureau might find this information helpful in solving the problem of some of the missing Australian soldiers.[132] Kiddle would also have found this information helpful with his deceased soldier cards discussed above.

In late May 1919, Lilian Whybrow consulted with Deakin, who was about to sail for Australia. Whybrow, now in charge of the London Bureau, was advised to write to Kiddle in the Melbourne Bureau regarding the services of Captain Mills in Germany. Whybrow raised her concerns with Kiddle that the Australian military authorities in London considered continuing the work of Captain Mills as inadvisable owing to the possibility that his results would contradict decisions previously made by their Courts of Enquiry.[133] She reasoned that this decision was made because his work could lead to 'future enquiry, discussions, and possibly the re-opening of a man's pay account'.[134] Captain Mills was 'keen and interested to keep going as he had already begun working in the *Burials Buro*, Berlin, enquiring about the graves of Australian soldiers in Germany'.[135] She stated that due to his work, the Australian

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[127] Jonathan Langton, '100 years of Annual Reporting by Australian Red Cross: Accountability amidst Wars, Disasters and Loss of Life.' PhD thesis, Federation Business School, Federation University Australia (2018), 99.

[128] Philadelphia N. Robertson, *Red Cross Yesterdays*, (Melbourne: J. C. Stephens Pty. Ltd., 1950), 28-29.

[129] David Clune, 'Spedding, Quentin Shaddock (1891–1974)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, accessed 1 December 2021, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/spedding-quentin-shaddock-8598/text15015.

[130] Bart Ziino, *Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley, W.A: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 85.

[131] 'Lilian A Whybrow in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 20 May 1919,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

military authorities in London had already restricted the London Bureau's access to certain information relating to the Courts of Enquiry about those men classified as 'missing in action'.[136]

While the official military policy was unclear to Whybrow, she understood that this information was now considered 'army property'. Unless the public demanded access to the data, it was not available for publication.[137] Whybrow explained that any information received by the London Bureau now had to go through the Officer in Charge, but only for exceptional cases and after the Warrant Officer had viewed the files.[138] She intended to reintroduce the names of officially missing men previously removed from the London Bureau's list when the military authority had declared them officially 'killed in action' and where no reports existed from Red Cross searchers. The London Bureau decided to publish only one further inquiry list with the war over. To keep control of this, Whybrow chose to eliminate those cases where some burial information was recorded and for which the Australian military headquarters had held a Court of Enquiry. She also proposed to 'dovetail' any new enquiries into the existing list in a Battalion order.[139]

The significance of the Australian bureaux at the meso-level of society was more important than ever with the bureaucratic events unfolding at a macro-level in London, mainly as enquiries were still being submitted by next of kin on the home front. Importantly, Whybrow noted that the state bureaux were more closely in touch with the Australian public than the bureau was in London; therefore, she wanted their opinion as she reasoned that they, more than anyone else, understood the needs and requirements of those at home. Regardless of whether they supported or opposed the views held in the London Bureau, she was adamant that their opinions would be invaluable in helping her in the future course of action concerning Captain Mills.[140] With fewer searcher reports now being received into the London Bureau, although searchers were still keen, Whybrow informed Kiddle that the bureau work was more focused on the list of burials supplied by Captain Mills. The London Bureau had begun 'supplementing, correcting, and comparing unofficial information where necessary'.[141] She stated that these lists held much more information than about the burials of men 'killed in action' of which, before September 1918, military authorities had never received advice. After four years of operations, the honorary secretaries, unlike their British counterparts, understood that their efforts were still required to make a soldier's death real and provide certainty in missing cases for those families left in limbo at home.[142] Owen, Kiddle and Edmunds concurred with her sentiment, and their cabled reply in July 1919

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136 Ibid.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid.
140 Ibid.
141 Ibid.
142 Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, 1st Vintage Civil War Library Ed. Vintage Civil War Library, (New York: Vintage Books, 2009), 145.

stated, 'we consider completion [of] Captain Mills inquiries most essential in [the] interests of relatives'.[143]

Conclusion

The first step in this chapter was redefining the current classification system in the State Library of South Australia. This action returned the focus to those individuals on both sides of the enquiry at home to reveal more clearly their collective patterns of communication and engagement. Surprisingly, it was not the battles in the theatres of war but the enquirer who defined the nature of the work of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. Using the LIWC text analysis tool to examine communication patterns within the letters in the soldier enquiry packets, the social interaction between the enquirer and the bureau became more apparent. This outcome provided invaluable insights into the engagement of both parties throughout the war and highlighted how familial relationships hampered by long-term absence were maintained through the bureau's work.[144] The program's word count statistical analysis element was designed to answer a particular set of questions. The results are summarised as follows: in the sample group of 345 soldier enquiry packets and 1,233 transcribed letters, it was (Table 6.5) the parents of soldiers rather than wives who were more prominently represented in this sample group. They drove the story concerning those soldiers classified as being killed in action or wounded. In contrast, siblings and friends followed closely behind. The rank most enquired about was that of low-ranking soldiers; this was expected as they were the majority in any unit.

At the same time, siblings were the most dominant group of enquirers concerning a brother who was officially or unofficially missing. Siblings also highlight a difference in how the Australian bureaux managed such enquiries compared to their British counterparts; missing cases remained open in Australia throughout the war and after the end of the work. In many incidents, Captain Mills' actions eventually provided the necessary details to enable each Honorary Secretary to bring closure to many outstanding cases. His work also highlights different approaches undertaken by institutions at the macro-level and the bureaux at the meso-level of society at home. Whybrow was correct in her assessment that the state bureaux had a finger on the pulse regarding the enquiring public of Australia; the legal men running the state bureaux listened to and understood the needs of those who enquired with them. The significance of the bureau's work in South Australia is reflected in the management of enquiries by its Honorary Secretary, Charles Edmunds, and his group of volunteers. It took a team effort at home and abroad to produce his lengthy responses to those more trying cases. Nevertheless,

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[143] John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Lilian A Whybrow, 20 May 1919,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).
[144] Martyn Lyons quoted in Martha Hanna, 'A Republic of Letters: The Epistolary Tradition in France during World War I,' 1342.

Edmunds treated even those enquiries of a miscellaneous nature with the same respect and diligence as more complex cases regardless of a soldier's rank or the relationship of the enquirer to the soldier.

The last chapter will undertake a close reading and exegesis of a small number of letters between the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary, Charles Edmunds, using three distinctive soldier enquiry packets from the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau records. The abundant use of anxiety and fear in many letters merely highlights that these words were socially acceptable emotional labels used by most enquirers in the correspondence examined for this thesis. This next chapter will show how it is possible to move a step closer to understanding the emotional trends of the many in the few through the evidence of what people physically did rather than what they said. Adopting a novel approach to the letters through the language analysis of three select case studies will show what was unique and familiar in that lived experience.[145]

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[145] Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (USA: SAGE Publications, 1995), 44; Allan Kellehear, *The Unobtrusive Researcher: A Guide to Methods* (Australian: Allen & Unwin, 1993), 67.

CHAPTER SEVEN
FINDING THE NEEDLE IN THE HAYSTACK
A STUDY OF CASES

> Doubt is the worst of all,
> When a soldier goes missing,
> Doubt maddens those who loved him,
> Who love him still,
> For they cannot help hoping that someday….
> perhaps…[1]

Introduction

While the other state bureaux proposed destroying their records post-war, in South Australia, the Red Cross Information Bureau material assembled and preserved by Charles Edmunds, Florence Saunders, and Olive Croft in Adelaide was handed over to the Archives Department of the Public Library on 19 December 1919.[2] These records are the only known extant set of soldier enquiry packets in Australia from the First World War and, more broadly, in what was once the British Dominions. In the Melbourne Bureau, John Kiddle, however, was inclined to grant the request of the Government Statist and pass on the card system concerning deceased soldiers; much work remained post-war in this area.[3] Langer Owen, in the Sydney Bureau, was approached by the Mitchell Library Trustees to see if that bureau's records were going to them. Indeed, the Red Cross Executive Committee of the New South Wales Division was inclined to accede to the Trustees' request, but there is no evidence that such files exist today. In line with other honorary secretaries, Kiddle mistakenly did not see value in preserving the other files. He considered the London Bureau, 'whose records are now being sent to Australia' would duplicate the material.[4] Lilian Whybrow returned 32,000 soldier enquiry files related to the wartime enquiries of the state bureaux on the home front; these records are held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

In this chapter, close reading, and exegesis of a small number of letters between writers and recipients will follow using three distinctive soldier enquiry packets from the South Australian Information Bureau records. Close reading is defined here as a literary analysis of specific details within the text to discern some deeper meaning on the page. While the exegesis element was derived using LIWC to measure four summary variables of analytical thinking, clout, authenticity, and the emotional

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[1] Laurence Deonna, 'The War with Two Voices,' in Leon Stubbings, *look what you started Henry!: A history of the Australian Red Cross 1914-1919* (East Melbourne: Australian Red Cross Society, 1992), 296.

[2] 'Public Library Board,' *Register*, 20 December 1919.

[3] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 1 August 1919,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[4] Ibid.

tone of the family correspondence through the letter-writing style of three enquirers and the Honorary Secretary, Edmunds.[5] Psychologist James Pennebaker states, 'analytical thinking captures the degree to which people use words that suggest formal, logical, and hierarchical thinking patterns. He further explains that people low in analytical thinking tend to write and think using language that is more narrative, focusing on the here and now and individual experiences.[6] Those 'high in analytical thinking perform better academically; Clout refers to the relative social status, confidence, or leadership that people display through their writing or talking. Authenticity relates to when people reveal themselves authentically or honestly, making them more personal, humble, and vulnerable; Emotional tone includes both positive and negative emotion dimensions'.[7] This innovative analysis of the writing reveals something about the writer's characteristics and the circumstances in which the letters were composed.[8] Those from the bureau demonstrate the epistolary pact and the rules followed by Edmunds that determined their production.[9]

The material held at the State Library of South Australia contains 8,033 individual soldier enquiry packets and the organisational paperwork representing the bureau's wartime work. Previously discussed in Chapter 2, each soldier enquiry packet includes a unique enquiry timeline of the efforts made on the home front to obtain details about the fate of individual men on the battlefront. As mentioned previously, Form A was used to index the information obtained from the relevant official casualty lists within the bureau.[10] This form later enabled Edmunds, or a bureau volunteer to quickly check for a man's regimental number and particulars when an enquiry was received. In addition, many individual enquiry packets contain Form B used to record all information in the form of the precedents of communication about a soldier throughout the enquiry. At the same time, the legal volunteer used Form C to capture the particulars of the pending investigation during an interview with the enquirer. Under other circumstances, the volunteer filled in this form following a telephone conversation or using the contents of the original enquiry letter sent to the bureau. These volunteers were lawyers from the South Australian legal fraternity who dedicated a couple of hours a week at the bureau to assist enquirers. Also included in many enquiry packets are further correspondences from the bureau's Honorary Secretary, the enquirer, other state bureaux, the London Bureau, and military authorities. Importantly, for those classified as 'killed in action' or 'missing', there are three or more uncensored witness statements gathered by searchers from fellow soldiers of the man enquired after. These

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[5] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc, 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Martyn Lyons, 'Love Letters and Writing Practices: On Écritures Intimes in the Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of Family History* 24, no. 2 (1999), 236.

[9] Ibid, 237.

[10] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Sir Josiah H. Symon,23 August 1915,' SRG76/32 Papers relating to the formation of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau with some enquiries about soldiers received before the Bureau was opened. Jul 1915, Jan 1916 and Jan 1917.

statements from the field, reveal intimate aspects of the soldier's fate at the battlefront; no two packets are the same.

A qualitative analysis of the epistolary exchange between three enquirers and the South Australian bureau's honorary secretary was adopted to understand how the writers on both sides of the enquiry conveyed meaning in their letters through their language. This form of analysis is defined here as using three particular case studies to represent the many across types.[11] The first study will be divided into two parts as it looks at the letters of a South Australian father concerned about one of his two sons at the front. This case highlights how a family managed their grief without a body to mourn when their oldest son was 'killed in action'. The second set of letters to the London Bureau before this soldier's death also hints at his retreat from 'meaningful exchange' after surviving the Gallipoli campaign and moving to the Western Front.[12] In the second study, Hilda Clark, in her newly formed status as an 'orphaned widow', her relentless struggle for information and the ultimate acceptance of her husband's death offers insight into women's experience in the British Empire.[13] Her correspondence to the bureau provides further insight into her fight against the inevitability of her situation. Mrs Clark's coming to terms with the immediate change of social status and loss of her beloved is laid bare. The final study examines the determination of a mother to reduce the gap between home and the front when her son, declared missing, became a prisoner of war while a second son remained missing. Mrs Weise was a sock knitter like many women during the war, although her efforts were perhaps deeply heartfelt for her sons. The act of knitting socks for soldiers during the war to ward off trench foot was often viewed as an act of patriotism on the part of women. This study offers a profound expression of a mother's determination to comfort her son(s) by preparing a parcel she so desperately wanted to reach her boy(s). It is contended that each of the studies selected can provide a connection to the lived experience of other families in a similar position during the war. The evidence of what people physically did rather than what they said enables one to see the many in the few and shows what was unique and familiar in that lived experience.[14]

Those involved in the decision-making about the South Australian records considered that the documents and files would 'form a valuable addition to that historical collection'.[15] In establishing the South Australian Archives Department in 1919-20, the first of its kind in Australia, one of its founders,

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[11] John Gerring, 'What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?' *The American Political Science Review* 98, no. 2 (2004), 342.
[12] Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley, W.A: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 7.
[13] Andrekos Varnava, *Serving the empire in the Great War: The Cypriot Mule Corps, imperial loyalty and silenced memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 180.
[14] Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (USA: SAGE Publications, 1995), 44; Allan Kellehear, *The Unobtrusive Researcher: A Guide to Methods* (Australian: Allen & Unwin, 1993), 67.
[15] 'Red Cross Information Bureau Report, January 2020,' The Red Cross Record South Australia periodical 1916-1920 1, no. 1 (July 1916) to 4, no. 48 (June 1920), State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

Professor George C. Henderson, as Chairman of the Library and Archives Committee, rightly considered that 'original documents have a value far beyond that of compilations'.[16] Political scientist Ranabir Samaddar has observed that in examining such contents, one is studying an operation whose core 'lie the relationships between testimony, and documentary proof'.[17] More significantly, what follows through this exercise is 'the passage from memory to history'.[18] What was once in part oral in origin and contemporary in nature is now present in sentiment.[19] Professor of Law David Sugarman further suggests that it is 'the fractured lives of individuals and societies that expose the rents in conventional life histories'. These lives provoke a reworking of the past through the narratives of families and family life. This group also includes those other civilians who stepped in to assist and alleviate the grief and sorrow so often noted in times of war.[20]

In this instance, the records of the South Australia bureau provide a direct connection to many of those in Australian civil society which the First World War directly impacted. The bonds between the bureau volunteers and the enquirer were often heartfelt and possibly of comfort on both sides. Historian Cécile Dauphin states that records in the form of correspondence have the power to intrigue, arouse curiosity, or capture what it carries with mystery and implicit.[21] When letters are examined, one already enters into the illusion or participates in the idea that 'the hidden is more instructive than the visible or the apparent'.[22] The family letters contained within the soldier enquiry packets of the South Australian Bureau are digitised and readily available for public scrutiny. Yet, this material offers the historian an opportunity to investigate further how many civilians were confronted by the effects of the war in their everyday lives and how they responded.[23]

Examining a case study in greater depth constitutes one of the primary virtues of the case study method.[24] The experiences surrounding the letters and their writers in the soldier enquiry packets speak to events whose character changed after receiving a response from the state bureau. Through the information gathered, received, and passed on, the family and bureau each, in turn, shared in these

[16] George C. Henderson and Public Library, Museum Art Gallery of South Australia, *The Archives Department of South Australia: An Appeal on Behalf of the Board of Governors of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery of South Australia, to All Who Have in Their Possession Original Documents Relating to the History of South Australia* (Adelaide: G Hassell & Son, 1920), 11.

[17] Ranabir Samaddar, 'The Historiographical Operation: Memory and History,' *Economic and Political* Weekly 41, no. 22 (2006), 2238.

[18] Ibid, 2238.

[19] Ibid, 2237.

[20] David Sugarman, 'From Legal Biography to Legal Life Writing: Broadening Conceptions of Legal History and Socio-legal Scholarship,' *Journal of Law and Society* 42, no. 1 (2015), 31.

[21] Cécile Dauphin, 'Correspondences as historical object: A work on the limits,' *Societes & Representations* 1, no. 3 (2002), 46.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Bart Ziino, 'Total war,' in *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 169.

[24] Gerring, 'What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?' 345.

events.[25] Sociologist Michael Pickering regards such experiences as evidence of distinctive forms of social life integral to relations and everyday encounters. Still, he cautions that understanding how this is so is never straightforward.[26] Structured around expectations was the experience of the person who enquired about a soldier. Edmunds and the enquirer, for a time, were caught between ways of being and ways of knowing after contact was made.[27] Today, the gap between these interactions and their context reveals a piece of the complex machinery established by the state bureaux and the broader global network that ensued. The process laid down by the Australian bureaux at home and abroad created a physical link between the letter writer, South Australia, Gallipoli, Britain, the theatres of war, and ultimately the soldier. While the enquiries were local, the wartime work surrounding a bureau's efforts was broader than that, as it provided a network of continuous connections between each site in their collective endeavours.[28]

On the one hand, these case studies highlight how Edmunds, and his administrative staff went about their duty of communicating and managing their relationship with those who enquired after soldiers. Their actions are crucial to understanding the work of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau at an intimate level and, importantly, how they went about the work from an Australian perspective. On the other hand, using family letters will be undertaken as 'actively creating' rather than 'passively reproducing' meaning.[29] Language forms mediate the process of socialisation implied by the epistolary act.[30] Historian John Tosh reminds the scholar that what they will ultimately achieve in interpreting texts is determined first and foremost by the 'extent and character of the surviving sources'.[31] Through various works, historians such as Joy Damousi, Jay Winter and others have discussed 'the bonds that were so effectively severed by the war, bonds that are our most intimate and fundamental' in the death of a soldier and the subsequent grief that followed in the First World War.[32] However, examining the impact of war on these bonds can be extended to include other human

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[25] Jay Winter, 'Thinking about Silence,' in *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Ben'Se'ev, Efrat, Ruth Ginio and Jay Winter (United States: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 7.

[26] Michael Pickering, 'Experience and the Social World,' in *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*, eds. Michael Pickering and Gabriele Griffin (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 19.

[27] Ibid, 30.

[28] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory*, Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2007), 222.

[29] Joanna Sassoon, 'Phantoms of remembrance: libraries and archives as the collective memory,' *Professional Historians Association of NSW* 10 (2003), 41.

[30] Cécile Dauphin, 'Correspondences as a historical object: A work on the limits,' 44.

[31] John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History,* 30.

[32] For example, Joy Damousi, The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1; Jay Winter, 'Communities of Mourning,' in *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 29-53; Bill Gammage, *Broken Years*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1917; Andrekos Varnava, *Serving the empire in the Great War: The Cypriot Mule Corps, imperial loyalty and silenced memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 181-84; Peter Stanley, *Lost Boys of Anzac,* Sydney: New South Publishing: University of New South Wales Press Ltd. 2014; Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81 (2001), 29-49; Tony Cunneen, '"Judges' Sons Make the Final Sacrifice": The Story of the Australian Judicial Community in the First World War,' *Australian Law Journal* 91, no. 4 (2017), 302-12; Tony Cunneen, '"What has happened to our dear boy?" The New South Wales Lawyers and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War One,' *War Time*, no. 54 (October 2011), np.

emotions of curiosity, comfort, hope, love and even happiness surrounding the families and friends impacted by a soldier's circumstances on the battlefield in this reassessment of the original material.[33] To hope, in this instance, implies a vague estimate of the probability that something more will be revealed and shared about the situation.[34]

Derived from the material embedded in a particular social situation during and immediately after the First World War, the meaning and significance of the correspondences in the records of the South Australian Bureau are exposed.[35] Each correspondence had a different purpose, was written by an assortment of people on a variety of paper and followed various generic conventions.[36] Notably, the sending and receiving of such correspondences had consequences, it evoked discussion and negotiation of their meaning, and generally, this resulted in a response.[37] Letters were often written by next of kin or by a friend on behalf of a parent. This action resulted from a family or group discussion when a soldier's name appeared on the newspaper's casualty list. Or a rumour emerged in the community; an official notification was received with minimal details or, more generally, when silence prevailed of a soldier's fate. The South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau's daily advertisement was always placed at the foot of a published casualty list in the South Australian newspapers prompting family and friends to request assistance and support.

Meaning in Letters

To date, little effort has been made to explore a range of other perspectives in the wartime work of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. Glimpses of their private turmoil are exposed in many letters from a broken-hearted mother, a worried father, or a grief-stricken wife. Yet, as mentioned above, what is also contained within the various soldier enquiry packets is the presence of hope, comfort, a desire to know more detail, and gratitude at having a complete account of an event in Europe that had directly impacted lives at home. South Australian citizens were at times forced to face dreadful new realities on an everyday basis upon receipt of letters that often-included detailed witness statements from the front.[38] Yet, not all was sad or tragic; people also had their fears allayed and calm

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[33] Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 1.

[34] Errol Bedford, 'Emotions and Statements about Them,' in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1986), 23.

[35] David Barton and Nigel Hall, 'Introduction,' in *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, eds. David Barton, and Nigel Hall, John Benjamins Publishing Company (2000), 1.

[36] Ibid, 3.

[37] Ibid, 4.

[38] Michal Shapira, *The War Inside: Psychoanalysis, Total War, and the Making of the Democratic Self in Post war Britain,* New York: Cambridge University Press (2013), 26.

restored with continual updates on an illness or through sharing information about the finer details of a soldier's wounds or whereabouts.[39]

Many of the letters sent by enquirers to the South Australian Bureau on examination may appear humble, yet they are nonetheless tied to the writer and the receiver; these letters reflect a human sociality of the period in which they were written.[40] Deborah Thom suggests that the memories of war have often been presented to the public using material objects.[41] However, she argues that the physical suffering that has occurred is rarely shown in public exhibitions or displays, emphasising that the bodies and the blood are omitted, as are other sensory perceptions.[42] Catherine Moriarty and others have also suggested that how people privately faced grief differed from its representation in 'ceremonies, words and behaviour of grief in public spaces'.[43] Individuals' emotional and behavioural propensities found in the soldier enquiry packets were not socially constructed; instead, their correspondence reveals socially constituted properties that emerged from the internal relationship between the enquirers' concerns and society's normativity.[44]

The numerous witness statements from the front dispel the nuances surrounding the final hours or minutes of a soldier's life. On earlier advice from Owen in Sydney, Edmunds regularly cautioned the recipient that the information was 'purely unofficial, being the statement of a fellow soldier'; he also assured them that 'the report had been carefully tested'.[45] Letters sent to the enquirer from the state bureaux relating to those soldiers officially classified as killed in action, missing, or prisoners of war tended to be of a templated format that originated from the Sydney and Melbourne Bureaux, respectively. The wording used depended on the situation and shaped the social relationship between the participants. The language in the face-to-face interviews at the South Australian Bureau differed because it was determined and adapted as the legal volunteer interviewed and recorded details from the enquirer.[46] In either event, the communication was determined socially and therefore had

[39] 'Papers relating to No. 19349, Private Montmorency S. Clark, 27th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/0790 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/montmorency-sydney-clark.

[40] Charles Bazerman, 'Letters and the Social Grounding of Differentiated Genres,' in *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, eds. David Barton, and Nigel Hall, (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2000), 27.

[41] Deborah Thom, 'Making Spectaculars: Museum and how we remember Gender in Wartime,' in *Evidence, History and the Great War*, ed. Gail Braybon (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 50.

[42] Thom, 'Making Spectaculars: Museum and how we remember Gender in Wartime,' 50.

[43] Catherine. Moriarty, 'Review Article: The Material Culture of Great War Remembrance,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 4 (1999), 661; Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*; Alistair Thomson, Anzac Memories: Living with the legend (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994); Bart Zinno, 'At Home with the War: The Great War in Victorian Private Life,' *Victorian Historical Journal* 86, no. 1 (2015), 7-25; Ken S. Inglis, Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2008); Zinno, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War*.

[44] Jon Elster, 'Social Norms and Economic Theory,' *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 3, no. 4 (1989), 102; Margaret Scotford Archer, *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2000), 215.

[45] 'Langer Owen in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 5 April 1916,' SRG 76/1/476.

[46] Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 41.

social effects.[47] Although many respondents wrote from 'within the bosom of the family' about a family member or friend, they used language subject to social conventions, an example being the repeated use of the words fear and anxiety to describe their experience.[48] These words represent the emotion but what was present were anxious people, upsetting scenes, and grieving families.[49]

Shared Concerns

In many cases, Edmunds's correspondence with an enquirer spanned weeks, months or sometimes years during and immediately after the war. It often depended on the nature of the enquiry and the delivery of information from the London Bureau or elsewhere. Social bonds maintained and extended in these interactions changed the relationships enacted in the letters by the enquirer beyond the formal and official to the personal.[50] Interestingly, the next of kin often switched from an initial standard signature to adopting first name terms in their correspondence with Edmunds as the more intimate details of their loved one's fate were revealed. Historian Martyn Lyons suggests that the specific forms of address and farewell define the tone of the relationship between correspondents as they encourage familiarity or establish distance.[51] The bureau volunteers and the enquirers, through their connection, in effect found a community that shared concerns about the immediate issue at hand for next of kin.[52] The delivery of details to a family member often took place long after the event had occurred on the battlefront. This outcome reveals 'a strong sense of social interdependence that manifested itself' in the bureau's commitment to cooperate and participate with the public throughout their volunteerism.[53] In contrast to the Military Base Records Office in Adelaide and Melbourne, Edmunds, whenever possible, maintained regular contact with an enquirer as the individual awaited news from Europe. Next of kin's engagement with the bureau saw the pain shift from a state of a contained isolated entity into one of 'interactions with other bodies and social environments'.[54]

Historian Joanna Bourke's observation is that the social norms in the expression of pain differ according to the gender, class, occupation, and age of the person experiencing pain.[55] Edmunds and his staff attached importance to the varying concerns of all enquiries, particularly those of a complicated nature. This approach often led to an emergence of emotionality at the close of a particularly revealing

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[47] Fairclough, *Language and Power*: *Language in Social Life Series*, 19.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Rom Harré, 'Introduction,' in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1986), 4.
[50] Charles Bazerman, 'Letters and the Social Grounding of Differentiated Genres,' in *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, eds. David Barton, and Nigel Hall, (John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2000), 18.
[51] Martyn Lyons, 'Love Letters and Writing Practices: On Écritures Intimes in the Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of Family History* 24, no. 2 (1999), 236.
[52] Allen M. Omoto and Cody D. Packard, 'The Power of Connections: Psychological sense of community as a predictor of volunteerism,' *The Journal of Social Psychology* 156, no. 3 (2016), 273.
[53] Ibid, 275.
[54] Joanna Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 18.
[55] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 16.

letter destined for the recipient.[56] While many letters followed a templated format discussed above, Edmunds often closed a letter by extending the bureau's deepest sympathy, great sorrow, or great anxiety to the recipient for the situation they were experiencing.[57] Bourke writes that pain events are inherently social, and therefore such things are integral to creating communities.[58] The painful experiences revealed in letters and witness statements from the bureau expose fragile connections to other people. It also reminds us of a person's need for other participants in their event, particularly in times of suffering. In every instance, sympathy shared with those suffering is a painful emotion, as Theodore Clapp (1792-1866), an early American Unitarian preacher, writes.[59] He considered it a divine part of human nature that prompts people to do deeds of the magnanimity of heroic sacrifice. Still, importantly, it can make people strangely 'happy in being able to offer help.[60] The wartime work of the state bureaux on the home front profoundly influenced and facilitated social interaction in and across each state.[61]

The central social aspect of our existence as humans is our relationships with other human beings. All the other social aspects of society found within macrostructures, macro processes, organisations, and institutions also exist within rather than outside that social existence; they permeate in simple everyday events that we routinely participate in.[62] Yet, after the tragedy at Gallipoli, when many families were unable to grieve by a graveside or found themselves waiting indefinitely for news about a soldier deemed to be 'missing', a different mood began to settle over communities. Historian Philip Payton has described Australian society in this period as one that gave way to 'a more subdued and reflective stoicism'.[63] The public mood, argues Payton, was gradually replaced by 'a more sober estimation of the nature of war'.[64] Everyday life was continually disrupted for enquirers at the micro-level and the bureau volunteers at the meso-level of society. Each was constantly trying to make sense of the information that flowed back and forth through bureau channels in Australia and Europe.

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[56] Scotford Archer, Being Human: The Problem of Agency, 217.

[57] For example see 'Papers relating to No. 2139, Private Cyril F. Ede, 27th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1731 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/cyril-francis-ede; 'Papers relating to No. 3447, Private Albert C. Prentice, 50th Battalion, SRG 76/1/1270 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/albert-charles-prentice.

[58] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 46-7.

[59] Theodore Clapp cited in Joanna Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 46; Clapp graduated from Yale and entered the Andover (Calvinist) Theological Seminary near Boston in 1816. His church established itself as the First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans and associated with the Mississippi Presbytery; See 'From the biography of Theodore Clapp written by John Buescher in the Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography, an on-line resource of the Unitarian Universalist History & Heritage Society', accessed 20 November 2021, https://uudb.org/articles/theodoreclapp.html.

[60] Clapp cited in Bourke, The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers, 46.

[61] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 46.

[62] Piotr Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniya*, no. 8 (2009), 8.

[63] Philip Payton, *Australia in the Great War*, London: Robert Hale Ltd., (2015), 89.

[64] Payton, *Australia in the Great War*, 89.

For the Commonwealth Government at a macro-level, Hansard reveals that discussions continued throughout the war about the possibilities of providing more information to allay the mounting fears of families. However, with the Minister of Defence, Senator George Pearce, continually focused on the prosecution of the war and the provision of more recruits for Europe, the government never reached a satisfactory outcome in this area. Yet, Brigadier-General Robert Carruthers, Deputy Assistant Adjutant, and Quartermaster General of the Australian Imperial Force, had, as early as December 1915, warned the government that the people of Australia demanded to be kept in the closest touch with their men in the field. They would want to be informed immediately should any member [of the Australian Imperial Force] go into hospital. He issued orders that 'every admission to hospital and progress returns for all serious cases shall be cabled to Australia'.[65] Carruthers advocated for an organisation to collect and transmit information. He noted that to achieve this, an office 'must keep a record of every individual member of the Force'.[66] In effect, the Central Military Office in Cairo and Melbourne's Military Base Records Office in Victoria Barracks attempted to do this. Operating as the central office for the Australian bureaux on the home front, the Melbourne Red Cross Information Bureau maintained a complete record of each soldier listed as a casualty. This bureau did not retain the casualty history of each soldier, as Kiddle saw this as a duplication of work.

The delays in or lack of official notifications to next of kin also adversely affected recruitment as rumours in the community became more exaggerated.[67] While the state bureaux grappled with the increased enquiries due to heavy casualty numbers in France, Senator George Pearce was, in September 1916, focused on the requirements of the Army Council and the British Government. The Council had recently requested that 32,500 men be made available that month. They also asked for a monthly reinforcement 'from 12,500 to 16,500 for a sufficient length of time'.[68] The Commonwealth Government was asked to ensure that those units already in the field 'be kept up to their full strength'.[69] Before this, the British Government had never requested a single soldier be sent from Australia, nor had the Army Council ever asked the Commonwealth Government 'to provide a single additional unit to those which the country had already voluntarily placed in the field'.[70] In parliament, these discussions tended to reduce the troops to a commodity. On foot of this latest discussion, the first of two conscription referendums were expected to be held in early October, as discussed in Chapter 1. In

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[65] Brigadier-General Robert Carruthers cited in Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' Archives and Manuscripts 48, no. 2 (2020), 133.

[66] Brigadier-General Robert Carruthers cited in Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' 133.

[67] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Friday, 29 October 1915 (Senator Massey-Greene),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates House of Representatives Official Hansard, no. 43 (1915), 7040-41; Paul Dalgleish, 'Recordkeeping in the First Australian Imperial Force: the political imperative,' Archives and Manuscripts 48, no. 2 (2020), 130.

[68] 'Sixth Parliament – First Session Friday, 1 September 1916 (Senator Pearce),' Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates Senate Official Hansard, no. 35 (1916), 8408.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

parallel, within the state bureaux, complete arrangements had been made with the London Bureau to obtain information for those men officially reported as missing, as discussed in Chapter 4.[71]

Edmunds and his volunteers emphasised the anxiety, fear, heartache, and pain in many enquiries. He regularly reassured an enquirer that the bureau would do all it could to assist them, although the process took time, particularly for those men classified as missing. Enquirers loved ones were undoubtedly always present in their thoughts, memories and possibly even dreams. This crucial component would have shaped a family's motivations and actions and is in keeping with the ideas of Sociologist Margaret Scotford Archer.[72] As the theatres of war escalated in Europe, Edmunds gradually showed a greater dispositional empathy within his correspondence to those enquiring.[73] How the bureau volunteers dealt with concern, compassion, consequences and experiences of the enquiries in the bureau reflect what Allen Omoto et al. argue is positive volunteerism expectations and activism.[74] The social emotions emerging in society amongst next of kin and the state bureaux were created out of a joint commitment to the arrangements, conventions and agreements by those who were party to them.[75] For family or next of kin, their actions evolved from a more personal stance of seeking to be heard and listened to in the silence and vacuum experienced through the prolonged absence of a son, brother, husband, or father.

Letters & Censorship

Letter writing is not a static process; the writer is present within the letter when the pen is put to paper with a specific reader in mind. They are highly personal, richly diverse and in many cases provide longitudinal data that allows one to observe the thoughts of the writer over time.[76] When an enquirer sat down to write a letter to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, distinct roles were established. Linguists David Barton and Nigel Hall write that letter-writing can be viewed as a social practice by examining the texts, the participants, and the activities in their social context.[77] This approach enables the observer to narrate experiences, describe situations, and offer explanations. Various letters occur within many of the South Australian Information Bureau soldier enquiry packets. These include official military correspondence, diverse bureau letters, personal family letters, and cabled slips with extracts from a soldier's field service card, as discussed in Chapter 3. In contrast, the more

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[71] 'Charles A. Edmunds in his August monthly report to Kathleen Kyffin Thomas, 1 September 1916,' SRG76/22 Annual Reports for publication in RC Journals, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[72] Scotford Archer, *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*, 215; Sztompka, 'The Focus on Everyday Life: A New Turn in Sociology,' 8.

[73] Omoto and Packard, 'The Power of Connections: Psychological sense of community as a predictor of volunteerism,' 274.

[74] Ibid, 273-274.

[75] Scotford Archer, Being Human: The Problem of Agency, 217.

[76] Allan Kellehear, *The Unobtrusive Researcher: A Guide to Methods* (Australian: Allen & Unwin, 1993), 53.

[77] Barton and Hall, 'Introduction,' in *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, 1.

urgent cable slips contain detailed soldier witness statements from the battlefront. Kiddle did not think these slips added any further information to the cable already received by an enquirer. He argued that:

> in a very large majority of cases, these slips contain no further information than has been cabled nearly two months previously and are really too late for the purpose of confirming the cable when the enquirer had in some cases heard by letter direct from the man himself.[78]

Deakin and Edmunds differed with Kiddle, stating that 'in nearly every case there is some detail which is not cabled and which the enquirer is probably glad to have'.[79] Moreover, they argued that the slips often explained the cable, the unit change, or the discrepancy in a regimental address. Edmunds noted that the bureau received 'grateful letters and acknowledgements' for the slips forwarded in many such cases.[80]

Searchers were required to obtain at least three witness statements from Australian soldiers to corroborate a soldier's death. Historian Robert Sackville-West writes that the British Red Cross Department required an average of five statements for a missing soldier.[81] As discussed in Chapter 3, a searcher's report was issued by the London bureau or sent directly from a searcher to the state bureau. Because of the nature of acquiring these short reports for a soldier, the slips from Europe were often sent to the relevant state bureau weeks or months apart; the statement about a particular soldier and event quite often occurred long after the moment had passed on the battlefield. As discussed in Chapter 5 in the South Australian Bureau, Edmunds initially paraphrased these statements. Still, as time passed, he tended to add the details verbatim within the content of a follow-up letter to the enquirer. In the South Australian Bureau, this act differs from Historian Bruce Scates' suggestion that the task entailed reworking cold accounts of soldiers on the field into gently amended narratives.[82] Scates also suggested that it took considerable skill to fashion such statements into something consolable for a family.[83] Yet, as previously discussed, Edmunds's actions in his letters provide a clear example of his empathy towards an enquirer when he required a decision as to what to include when some things were unspeakable. In other words, what Edmunds put into a letter was carefully thought out and far more important than what he left out of the correspondence. While no single definition is consistently cited

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[78] John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 2 October 1918,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[79] 'Charles A. Edmunds and Vera Deakin in correspondence with John B. Kiddle, 2 October 1918,' SRG76/27 Correspondence with the Melbourne Bureau. Jan 1916 – Dec 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[80] Ibid.

[81] Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021), 15.

[82] Bruce Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' *Labour History*, no. 81 (2001), 42.

[83] Ibid, 42.

or empathy, the term is used here to describe how Edmunds objectively imagined how the recipient would feel or react to the details at hand upon opening his letter.[84]

Of the 804 soldier enquiry packets examined from the collection of 8,033 individual records, 108 packs include 149 witness statements. Edmunds adopted self-censorship in only six of these enquiry cases and often only chose to omit a single sentence from a group of witness statements for a soldier.[85] His actions contrast with Schneider's suggestion that 'the Adelaide Bureau had no consistent policy of self-censorship'.[86] In his report to the South Australian Law Society, Edmunds noted that each letter produced within the bureau 'dealt with information specific to a particular enquiry, and therefore differed from all others'.[87] He also stated that 'particular care was therefore required, and consequently, the work of this correspondence was heavy'.[88] The accusation by Schneider that the South Australian Bureau was haphazard in its censorship is misleading.[89] Briefly mentioned in the Introduction chapter, his argument that for 'every report slip divulging 'painful details' that was toned down or altered in some way, another was sent out unhindered from the Information Bureau' is also overly generalised.[90] In examining a large group of soldier enquiry packets for this thesis, no evidence was found whereby the South Australian Bureau "reverse edited" some cases. Nor was any evidence

[84] David L. Neumann, Raymond C. K. Chan, Gregory J. Boyle, Yi Wang, and H. Rae Westbury, 'Measures of Empathy: Self Report, Behavioural, and Neuroscientific Approaches,' in *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Constructs*, eds. Gregory J. Boyle, Donald H. Saklofske, Gerald Matthews. (Academic Press, 2015), 257.

[85] 'Papers relating to No. 2632, Private John Law, 1st Australian Remount Unit,' SRG 76/1/7754 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA); https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/john-law; 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/allen-gordon-holmes-ivy; 'Papers relating to No. 627, Private William T. Baker, 43rd Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/4161 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/william-thomas-baker; 'Papers relating to No.2438, Private Percy H. Towill, 27th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/4711 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/percy-henry-towill; 'Papers relating to No. 2489, Private Frank H. Trebilcock, 27th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/4751 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/frank-herbert-trebilcock; 'Papers relating to No. 235, Sergeant Alfred N. Bishop, 43rd Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/4821 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/alfred-norman-bishop.

[86] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 302; In Melbourne, each case regarding a 'missing' soldier was carefully considered where a witness statement was received for those soldiers officially classified as missing. In this bureau, they deemed it that considerable discretion was required, in some instances, particularly where a witness had declared or pointed to the missing soldier's death. This bureau considered it better to leave the fate of a soldier in doubt under the report "Missing" than to forward to a family when doubt still existed, see 'The subjoined half-yearly statement as to the operations of the Victorian bureau from its inception to 25 February 1916 prepared by Theyre à Beckett Weigall, 25 February 1916,' SRG76/36 Publications relating to or used by the Bureau 1915.

[87] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 16, SRG76/22.

[88] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 16, SRG76/22.

[89] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 302.

[90] Ibid.

found that Edmunds "flip-flopped" [sic] by substituting one phrase for another in his correspondence to the enquirer as suggested by Schneider.[91]

Sudden and Swift – Killed in Action

When a soldier was killed in action, his actual death was often sudden and swift, comprising just a moment in time.[92] Yet, the grieving process had only begun for those on the home front. While a soldier's work was over, for his family, their work had just started in such circumstances, so writes Historian Drew Gilpin Faust.[93] When the official notification arrived at the home of the Ivy family in mid-February 1917, it simply confirmed that Private Allen G. H. Ivy had been 'killed in action'.[94] Such minuscule details about a soldier's death contributed to the sometimes fraught relationship between the Department of Defence at the macro-level of society and the family situated at the micro-level. To find solace in such trying circumstances, the family often turned to their friends, others in the community, or their church.[95] This official notification affirmed a set of assumptions for the parents of Private Ivy about their son's death but little else.

In early March, Ivy senior (hereafter Snr.,) in George Street, Solomontown, turned to the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in the hope of finding some answers (Appendix A). Not unlike other families in receipt of a similar cable and coming to terms with the absence of a son, he requested 'any available particulars on where he was buried or any other particulars whatsoever that the bureau might ascertain'.[96] While Private Ivy's mother was listed as his next of kin on his attestation form, the bureau noted his father's details on Form B in the newly opened packet as he was considered to be immediate family.[97] His request, though not unusual, was different in that fathers generally dealt directly with the office of the military authorities. At the same time, a soldier's mother usually wrote to

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[91] In the two cases referred to by Schneider in his article, the initial enquiry for each soldier began at the South Australian Bureau in 1916, Private Perry was officially reported as 'missing' in July 1916, while Trooper Andrews was officially reported as 'killed in action' in August 1916. Edmunds's diligence and consistency in his communications in each enquiry is like all other cases examined here. Upon receipt of the two reports, Edmunds followed up with both families by providing the searcher's details collected in 1919 from a released Prisoner of War and from a returning soldier aboard a troopship bound for Australia, respectively; See 'Papers relating to No 234, Trooper Stanley G. Andrews, 10th Light Horse Regiment,' SRG 76/1/687 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/stanley-gordon-andrews; 'Papers relating to No, 2095 Private Andrew M. Perry, 32nd Battalion,' South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), SRG76/1/614 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/andrew-murray-perry; Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 303.
[92] Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, 1st Vintage Civil War Library ed. New York: Vintage Books (2009), 144.
[93] Ibid, 144.
[94] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/allen-gordon-holmes-ivy.
[95] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 34.
[96] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651, South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau.
[97] Ibid.

the Red Cross Information Bureau. Perhaps, the Australian Red Cross Society and its local Red Cross Circle branches were more associated with being the domain of charitable women undertaking patriotic endeavours within the community. Indeed, some letters to the bureau began with 'Dear Madam' although Edmunds always signed the daily newspaper advertisement for the bureau.[98]

The reliance of the Ivy family on assistance from the South Australian Information Bureau is consistent with many other such enquiries. The lack of details about the death or burial of a soldier meant that the family could not enact the loss they immediately felt. Some other effort was required to make the situation real and allow the family to accept their loved one was gone.[99] Enquirers regularly mentioned the soldier's religion in their letter to the bureau and requested a photograph of the grave. Ziino points out that in the absence of a funeral, such sites enabled the rite of passage that separated the living from the dead. They allow the bereaved to recall and keep their memories of the deceased alive.[100] A photograph 'delivered the specificity sought by relatives in their relationship with particular graves'.[101] For those enquiries relating to Australian soldiers 'killed in action', the London Bureau registered the enquiry at the Military Grave Registration Department in London for particulars and a grave photograph.[102] This process reduced the need for next of kin to communicate directly with this department. Ziino writes that the Australian authorities understood the necessity to supply such images and post-war, set up an Australian photographic section to undertake this task.[103] On the home front, civil sensibilities did not comprehend the chaos of the battlefield nor the fact that the Padre, if present at the soldier's burial, looked after the souls of all religions. There was also the likelihood that the family's loved one lay where he fell or was buried with his comrades in a shell hole grave marked with a temporary makeshift cross inclusive of the names of the dead. Their paybooks, discs and other identifying objects were collected beforehand for return to the unit's Officer in Charge.

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[98] 'Red Cross Information Bureau,' Observer, 23 September 1916; 'Papers relating to No. 2424, Private Norman S. Holthouse, 50th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/7464 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.gov.au/soldier/norman-stanley-holthouse.

[99] Faust, This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War, 153.

[100] Ziino, A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War, 7.

[101] Ibid, 87.

[102] Australian Red Cross Information and Enquiry Bureau (South Australian Division) Annual Report for Year Ending 31 December 1917 (Adelaide: A & E Lewis, 1918), 15, SRG76/22.

[103] Ziino, A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War, 87.

Table 7.1: LIWC Summary Variables Analysis for Ivy and Edmunds[104]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packet Letters		
LIWC Summary Variables	**Ivy Snr.**	**Charles A. Edmunds**
Analytics	77.59%	85.74%
Clout	99.00%	88.43%
Emotional tone	94.75%	36.28%
Authenticity	27.19%	30.64%

Edmunds, in October 1917, received details about the death of Private Ivy from the London Bureau. The volume of enquiries that month may have impacted the delayed response from London due to recent activities on the battlefront or by the various other delays such as cable issues discussed in Chapter 5. Edmunds began his letter by stating, 'Our Commissioners in London have now forwarded us the following information'. While the information was 'purely unofficial, being the statement of a fellow-soldier, we feel sure you will be anxious to have every possible detail, and so pass the report on to you'.[105] Based on the four summary variables discussed above, the LIWC analysis reveals that Edmunds's writing overall, in this enquiry, is formal and logical but high in authenticity and honesty, showing him to be quite personable in his letter (Table 7.1).[106] He concludes his correspondence by stating, ' We will continue to make enquiries re: burial, and should same come to hand we will again write you'.[107] However, his tone is emotionally low, perhaps because of the sad news he sent to this parent.[108]

The enclosed witness statement to Ivy Snr., revealed that stretcher-bearer, Private Louis Ricci, was with his son when the latter was 'hit by a shell in a trench on a ridge looking down on Transloy' in

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[104] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.

[105] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G H Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/allen-gordon-holmes-ivy.

[106] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[107] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651.

[108] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

France.[109] He had attempted to dress the wound, but Private Ivy had been 'hit in the body'.[110] In Boulogne that August, at the 2nd army rest camp, Private Ricci had informed the Searcher that 'Private Ivy died within a quarter of an hour without saying anything'.[111] Unlike other families who found themselves in a similar situation, this father did not request an address for Private Ricci so that he might write to that soldier directly. Edmunds regularly took the time to write to other possible witnesses mentioned in a witness statement to assist the enquiry and extract further information about the events that unfolded on the battlefield. His correspondence to Private Ivy's father indicates confidence relative to his social status. On this occasion, he closed his letter by assuring this father that enquiries were continuing regarding burial details, and 'should the same come to hand; he would again write him'.[112]

Private Ivy's enquiry packet is one of the six soldier enquiry packets in which Edmunds humanely used his self-discretion to spare a family the harrowing details about their loved one's fate. Edmunds, in this instance, chose to remove from the first witness statement the line stating, 'a lot of dead bodies lying about the trench that day' and to clear the trench 'all the bodies, including Ivy, were put over the parapet'.[113] Private Ricci could not confirm if the dead were later buried. A second shorter witness statement, also taken in August, seven months after the event, arrived at the South Australian Bureau and conflicted with the first statement. Like other cases, Edmunds chose not to send this statement to the family. Contrary to historian Peter Stanley's suggestion that 'again and again files contain two or more versions that could not be reconciled', this was not the case in the soldier enquiry packets examined in this thesis.[114] Indeed, witness statements differed in many instances, as the reports were often taken from individuals long after the traumatic event and possibly other battles. However, in contrast to those contradictory witness statements, many more short statements were almost identical in information.

As discussed in Chapter 4, there was an initial period after being on the battlefield when a soldier tried to make sense of what he had experienced.[115] Historian Joanne Bourke suggests that such language in a soldier's witness statement sometimes reveals much more about the witness's experience and how he chose to conduct himself in making sense of the chaos around him.[116] Sackville-West also suggests that, after a battle, soldiers often talked together to 'concoct and confirm' their accounts to make sense of the fight and provide a collective, authorised, though often inaccurate, version'.[117] In the

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[109] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Peter Stanley, *Lost Boys of Anzac,* (Sydney: New South Publishing: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2014), 201.

[115] Joanna Bourke, 'Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History,' *History Workshop Journal* 55, no. 1 (2003), 25; Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 15.

[116] Ibid, 121.

[117] Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War,* 15.

mental anguish regularly present after a battle, it is understood that one soldier was easily mistaken for another. This outcome was especially true when several soldiers had the same or similar names, roll calls were hastily taken and misheard after the event, or the witness's story had originated as someone else's story.[118]

On 1 November 1917, Ivy Snr., responded to Edmunds. His prose consists of everyday formal language and is well ordered, while his penmanship is clean and his copperplate writing elegant. The structure of his letter shows him to be an analytical thinker, while his emotional tone, both dignified and deferential towards Edmunds, was highly positive in the circumstances.[119] His writing reveals that similar to Edmunds, he approached his letter with formality and logic and was a man of relative social status with confidence and leadership qualities (Table 7.1).[120] By way of an explanation for his late reply to the news above, he shared with Edmunds that he had been to Victoria for the funeral of his 'dear father Brigade Sergeant Major Ivy of the old Victorian Volunteer Staff and an old Crimean veteran'.[121] He thanked Edmunds and 'through him the Society, on behalf of my wife, my family and myself, for the great trouble the bureau had taken and the information already received'.[122] Ivy Snr., wrote, 'we are all very anxious to obtain all information that we possibly can, respecting our darling boy'.[123] However, a burning question remained unanswered; he and his family 'would very much like to know if our dear boy was buried and where'.[124] In contrast to his father's recent funeral, as with so many other families in the same situation of having a lost 'boy', there was no consoling certainty about his son's body and final resting place. The distance between Solomon town and the battlefront, 'between mourners and the bodies of their dead' became a central defining element of their grief.[125] The formality of his writing does not disguise the fact that Ivy Snr., and his family were anxiously waiting in painful suspense if the dreaded void of uncertainty remained.[126] Their pain was surely double-edged as they had lost touch with their older boy long before he perished; they also had a second younger son still fighting at the front.

Unbeknown to the South Australian Bureau, the London Bureau already had a file on Private Allen G. H. Ivy following a request from May M. Reynell, an Honorary Secretary of the League of

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[118] 2nd Lieutenant H. Barbour noted in his witness statement about a missing soldier after a raid on German lines that 'we were pretty sure it was Sampson but of course everyone was more or less excited and, in the darkness, mistakes may be made'; See 'Papers relating to 2261 Lance Corporal Harry Perce Sampson, 37th Battalion,' Australian Red Cross Society wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-1918 War 1 DRL/0428.

[119] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019, http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651.

[120] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[121] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/1651.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War*, 7.

[126] Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, 132.

Loyal Women of Australia in Adelaide (Appendix A). Knowing Deakin personally from her time in Cairo in April 1916, and on behalf of Ivy Snr., she had asked Deakin for assistance on the family's behalf. Letters to and from the family's older son were going astray, causing anxiety among his family in South Australia, extended family in Melbourne and his friends. Private Ivy's father soon became one of those 'private individuals' mentioned in Chapter 5 who bypassed the state bureau system by writing directly to Deakin in the London Bureau. With Ivy Snr., in South Australia and Deakin in London, she did not know his gaze, nor could she interpret his gestures or facial expressions. Her understanding of this family's situation was derived from the contents of his letter. The letter provided Deakin with a detailed narration of family life at home impacted by the absence of a son from that family, not dissimilar to many other enquires by the same means. The formal but limited vocabulary used by Ivy Snr., to express the family's emotions only hints at the possible feelings beneath. Something within this father's letter compelled Deakin not to dismiss Private Ivy as one of those soldiers, previously discussed in Chapter 4, who merely failed to keep in touch. Where Edmunds regularly classified these enquiries as miscellaneous and instructed the enquirer to write to the Officer in Charge of the army unit (address included), Deakin took it upon herself to write to the Adjutant directly.

Interestingly, in her letter to Captain E. Parks, the Adjutant of the 16th Infantry Battalion, Deakin stated that Private Ivy's 'mother is nearly distracted and has begged us to make inquiries as to whether anything is amiss'. She chose not to admit the truth that it was his father who had written to her. Would such a plea from the soldier's mother provide 'a different voice and a distinctive form' that would perhaps prompt the Adjutant to act more swiftly?[127] Their world experience during the First World War depended on letters sent back and forth to maintain bonds. Indeed, the act was embedded in many soldiers' daily routines.[128] Deakin also wrote directly to Private Ivy about his next of kin's great distress on the home front due to 'practically no mail from you'.[129] She acknowledged that it must be very distressing for him 'besides all his other hardships' to be so far from his friends, and she closed by stating, 'anything we can do to help you to reknit communications we would gladly do'.[130] In such uncertain times, gentle pleas and continued communication were not out of place when it was vital to keep in touch and remain tethered to home and family. With so many soldiers dropping into the bureau in Cairo and then London, maybe Deakin sensed that not all was well emotionally with Private Ivy. Fighting for weeks on end with little rest, perhaps as one reporter noted in the *Sunday Times*, 'neither his friend's life nor his own seems to him of the same importance' as those at home awaiting news.[131]

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127 Ken Plummer, *Documents of Life: an invitation to a critical humanism* (London: SAGE Publications, 2001), 91.
128 Don Longo, ed., *Pens and Bayonets: Letters from the Front by soldiers of York Peninsula, South Australia during the Great War* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press), 4.
129 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy,' File Series 1DRL/0428, 'Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-1918 War,' Australian War Memorial (AWM), https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1414585.
130 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy,' File Series 1DRL/0428.
131 'Amongst the Missing,' *Sunday Times* [Sydney], 17 January 1915.

The Adjutant replied in September following an examination of Private Ivy's kit while he was on 'evacuation sick to hospital'.[132] He discovered several letters from Ivy's mother within the soldier's pack. He was at a loss to understand the present issue as all mail went through one channel, from the Field Post Office to Base Post Office.[133]Although the Commonwealth Government received numerous complaints early in the war relating to administrative matters, particularly the mail service and the difficulties in quickly forwarding accurate information about casualties, that was not the case in this instance.[134] Deakin duly forwarded the Adjutant's letter to Private Ivy's father. It does not mention whether Private Ivy had opened and read the letters from home nor his father's understanding of the information received from London.

Before Private Ivy left Australia from the West Australian port of Fremantle in July 1915, he had sent a short cable to his parents. In August, a letter from the military Zeitoun Camp, Egypt, followed a postcard from Gallipoli in December before all communication stopped.[135] Bourke notes that different emotional reactions adhere to pain events; the impact of Private Ivy's war experience is perhaps embodied in his failure to write home after the Gallipoli campaign and connect emotionally with those closest to him on the home front.[136] In December 1916, Deakin once again reached out to Private Ivy, suggesting he write to his mother through the London Bureau; she asked that he let her know how he was so that she could send a cable to 'set their minds at rest' back home.[137] The requests in Deakin's letters appear to have remained unanswered. Like so many other families, the fate of the Ivy family was later compounded with a belatedly frequent and familiar slip arriving at the South Australian Bureau on North Terrace from Europe. This slip simply stated, 'No Trace Germany Cert. by Captain Mills', dated 1/11/19'.[138] In the end, his family were as much victimised by the war as Private Ivy had possibly been.[139]

The Long Wait - Missing in Action

In the case of Private Eardley A. Clark, the clearest example of the disjuncture between the approaches of the state bureaux at the meso-level and the Australian Military Authority at the macro-level of society is exposed (Appendix B). Representative of circumstances experienced by many Australian families in the First World War, Hilda E. Clark's outpouring of emotional turmoil perhaps reflects her

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[132] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy,' File Series 1DRL/0428.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Bruce Douglas Faraday, 'Half the Battle: The Administration and Higher Organisation of the AIF 1914-1918,' PhD thesis, History (Australian Defence Force Academy, University of New South Wales, 1997), 54.
[135] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy,' File Series 1DRL/0428.
[136] Joanna Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 16-7.
[137] 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy,' File Series 1DRL/0428.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War,* 142.

escalating frustration with the immeasurable wait and no firm news about her missing husband. At thirty-five years of age, Private Clark enlisted at Keswick Barracks, Adelaide, on 26 October 1916. He worked for the Hydraulics Engineering Department of South Australia as a miner and was a father of five children; with four children listed on his attestation form, the fifth child was likely born after his enlistment.[140] Following a September visit to the South Australian Bureau, Mrs Clark wrote to the bureau in November 1918 when no news had followed. She states, 'I have made myself ill with worry', and she wanted news 'as soon as possible as I cannot stand the strain much longer'. The LIWC summary variable results show that she is both personal and honest with her words and displays high vulnerability (Table 7.2).[141]

Like Ivy Snr., Mrs Clark's writing reveals someone of relative social status who was confident in herself. She is also quite analytical in her thinking, as is shown in her correspondence with various other agencies.[142] Possibly grasping at straws, she had already despatched numerously typed and handwritten letters to the Officer in Charge at Base Records, Melbourne. The latest one to the bureau was in a similar vain. Her husband, Private Clark, serving with the 10th Infantry Battalion, had been officially declared missing on 30 July 1918. Not dissimilar to other wives on the home front, she faced difficulty comprehending the meaning and possibility that her husband no longer existed through the meagre official correspondence. Faust notes it is a circumstance many civilians have found difficult to fathom in a war.[143] Mrs Clark's position and standing in the community immediately changed as a wife or mother. So too did her circumstances materially and emotionally as she became what Elengou Toouli Pezidianou termed herself to be in 1920, an 'orphan widow'.[144]

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[140] 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).
[141] 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 26 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/eardley-austin-clark; Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.
[142] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.
[143] Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, 128.
[144] Varnava, *Serving the empire in the Great War: The Cypriot Mule Corps, imperial loyalty and silenced memory*, 182.

Table 7.2: LIWC Summary Variables Analysis for Clark and Edmunds[145]

South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau Soldier Enquiry Packet Letters		
LIWC Summary Variables	**Hilda Clark**	**Charles A. Edmunds**
Analytics	61.86%	66.41%
Clout	72.32%	99.00%
Emotional tone	10.88%	41.28%
Authenticity	50.08%	8.80%

In her letter to the South Australian Bureau, Mrs Clark was critical in her complaint that her expectations of the bureau had not been met. She wrote, 'it had been a considerable time since I called at the bureau for information'.[146] Emotions are a guide to individual intentions and action; her outward expressions, therefore, allow the reader to infer the existence of her inner feelings.[147] She had exhausted all other official avenues when she sought support from the Information Bureau. Her letters reveal, in some measure, her experience of the fraught relationship between negotiation and resistance. Mrs Clark pointed out that 'a considerable time had passed' since her visit in September to the bureau in the Darling Building, Franklin Street, Adelaide.[148] The language adopted in family letters such as this reveal a great deal about how such experiences were lived when individuals attempted to overcome the obstacles created by the war in Europe.[149] Someone probably stepped in to look after the children to allow Mrs Clark's visit to the bureau. Previously living in the coastal town of Port Elliot, located towards the eastern end of the south coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula, she had since relocated to a small suburb just north of the city of Adelaide.

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[145] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.

[146] 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 26 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874.

[147] Bedford, 'Emotions and Statements about Them.' In *The Social Construction of Emotions*, 15.

[148] When the South Australian bureau ran out of space due to their enormous collection of papers and files, Mr T. E. Barr Smith, a prominent South Australian businessman, assisted the bureau in obtaining rooms free of charge in the Darling building located on Franklin Street in the heart of the city of Adelaide; See SRG76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919; 'Information Bureau,' *Register*, 15 February 1919.

[149] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 24-5.

In her most recent letter that November, the flow of her scrawled writing suggests urgency and panic as she made her private issue public by putting the responsibility squarely back on the bureau. The LIWC summary variable for authenticity shows Mrs Clark to be authentic and honest while exposing some of the possible vulnerability and humility in her busyness (Figure 7.2). She states 'any information I await eagerly a reply. I shall soon hear from you about him as I hear that the Red Cross will find out for me as regards prisoners etc'.[150] Women like Mrs Clark expressed their anger and unresolved loss in voicing protest.[151] To understand what it is to feel angry, one must understand what it is to be angry.[152] In this instance, she looked to Edmunds to reassure her that the husband was coming home. She was keenly looking to others to act for her in what she knew but had not accepted, the non-repatriation of her husband's body, as Ziino writes.[153] Her writing reveals extreme negative emotions with a hint almost of underlining dreadful fear, perhaps experienced by other wives in similar circumstances when she categorically told Edmunds that 'she ought to hear something about him now at once seeing that the war is over'.[154] Like so many others who had consoled themselves with the possibility of their loved one being a prisoner of war, she now deduced that 'if he was a prisoner I think I ought to hear'.[155] Perhaps it was easier to challenge the assumptions that he had just vanished rather than the possibility that an exploding bomb had blown her beloved to smithereens or buried him on the battlefield.

Mrs Clark provides insight into a familiar scene during the war when she shared with Edmunds that 'I have made myself very ill worrying and any information I await eagerly'.[156] In sharing this, she described how she experienced the absence of her loved one rather than what she was experiencing; this pattern was like other women writing to the bureau. Edmunds possibly perceived her pain through the prism of the entirety of his lived experience within the bureau since late 1915. He regretted that the London Bureau 'have not been able to gain any definite information as to your husband's whereabouts'.[157] Interestingly, LIWC results showed Edmunds was quite formal and logical in his responses to Mrs Clark and displayed little authenticity or honesty, making him less personal in his

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[150] 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 26 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874.

[151] Damousi, *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia*, 27.

[152] Bedford, 'Emotions and Statements about Them,' in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, 16.

[153] Ziino, *Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War*, 83.

[154] 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 26 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874; Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Ibid.

[157] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Hilda Clark, 27 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/eardley-austin-clark.

approach (Figure 7.2). [158] His experience in this line of work by 1918 no doubt informed him of the situation's futility. Still, he assured her that should such information come to hand at a later date, we will again communicate with you'. [159] Indeed, the London Bureau did open a file for this soldier. However, the file contains only the official slip certified by the Australian military authorities in London, stating that the soldier was officially missing, 'dated 16 September 1918'. [160] The uncertainty that was perhaps controlling Mrs Clark's life is revealed more obviously in the follow-up letter to the bureau, sent seven months later in July 1919. As shown in Chapter 6, this coincided with the Australian military authorities in London beginning to restrict the London Bureau's access to military information. The vividness of her despair is perhaps derived from how she was experiencing her life as it was happening in her husband's absence. He had enlisted in October 1916 and set sail from Outer Harbor in South Australia to Salisbury training camp in Britain by December. [161]

Within rural and suburban communities' women consoled one another, supported families, and passed on news through word of mouth as letters arrived from the front. Mrs Clark's letters suggest that her pain was inherently social and profoundly influenced and facilitated by her interactions. [162] Historian Pam Maclean has shown that society reinforced the notion that the masculine attributes of strength and physical courage were pivotal during the First World War. This point of view tends to omit the impact of the emotional investment required by a mother, father, or wife on the home front to sustain hope until their kin returned or the news was final. [163] A glimpse into Mrs Clark's determination for answers is provided by a letter she sent to the Australian High Commission in Australia House, London, newly opened in August 1918, rather than the Australian Red Cross Bureau in London as Ivy had done. [164] The effort required to make her husband's death real and accept the cruel fate of her new identity as an 'orphan widow' appears to have been too great a burden to bear quietly. Her experience of pain and the pain of many other individuals in similar circumstances can be understood in how it disrupted, alarmed, authenticated, and cultivated their state of being in the world. [165]

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[158] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Hilda Clark, 27 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874; Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[159] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Hilda Clark, 27 November 1918,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874.

[160] 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/eardley-austin-clark.

[161] Ken Plummer, *Documents of Life: an invitation to a critical humanism* (London: SAGE Publications, 2001), 53; 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

[162] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 46.

[163] Pam Maclean, 'War and Australian Society,' in *Australia's War* 1914-1918, ed., Joan Beaumont (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1995), 78.

[164] The High Commissioner in 1918 was former Prime Minister, Mr Andrew Fisher.

[165] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 9.

Like so many others awaiting news about the fate of a loved one, it appears Mrs Clark was not only reacting to the pain and frustration of her situation but was also continually responding to it within her letters to the various offices previously mentioned.[166] She informed Edmunds that since their last correspondence, her husband, previously reported as 'missing', was reported as 'killed in action'.[167] Edmunds did not request a copy of this second notification, nor did he ask her to confirm that it was an official report. By now, fully aware of the military Court of Enquiry process that followed six months after a soldier went missing, Edmunds accepted that the current notification was official. Therefore, in this instance, he chose not to follow up with the Base Records Office in Melbourne. As with many other such cases, the Officer in Charge would simply have reaffirmed that this was the latest information available and that there was nothing more to report. Nevertheless, Mrs Clark thought her current situation 'exceedingly strange' and wrote a letter to Major Lean at Base Records, Melbourne, in December. She simply asked, 'where on earth is he [Private Clark]?', reasoning that the Major must 'understand that under such suspense, I am exceedingly ill and am unable to look after my five children'.[168] Her emotional expression was in response to her passive participation in a highly emotive event; it was part of the social strategies by which emotions and passionate declarations were used by people like this wife and mother in such interactions.[169]

Mrs Clark, in March 1919, informed Edmunds that returned soldiers had since told her that they saw Private Clark in England. Indeed, her mother-in-law included this information in her letter of enquiry to the South Australian Division of the Salvation Army in Adelaide. This group duly sent that letter to Base Records, Melbourne, noting how upset Private Clark's mother was at the rumours her son was alive in London. In her hopelessness, Private Clark's wife told Edmunds that 'it is believed he is suffering from loss of memory and shell shock and unable to write'.[170] She was reacting to her emotional pain and responding to it as a life experience.[171] It appears she wanted Edmunds to 'go further into this matter and try and find out where he is in England'.[172] Being thwarted by everything around her, Mrs Clark restated his name, service number and battalion, almost defiant in the face of adversity that he still existed. She trusted that she would get some news of him through the Red Cross and was willing to provide a photograph for identification; Edmunds 'just had to let her know'.[173]

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166 Ibid, 7.

167 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 22 July 1919,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874.

168 Eardley Austin Clark, Service No. 6986, Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

169 Rom Harré, 'Introduction,' in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed., Rom Harré (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1986), 5.

170 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 22 July 1919,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874; Indeed, the Joint War Committee report of the British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Department concluded that it was 'an unhappy and unfounded rumour that hundreds of men were lying unidentified in hospitals suffering from loss of memory;' See Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 23.

171 Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 7.

172 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 22 July 1919,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874.

173 Ibid.

The South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau continued to approach the work in 1919 as they had done throughout the war.[174] Edmunds reassured Mrs Clark that searches were continuing in hospitals to which Australian soldiers were admitted and, on every Transport, coming to Australia. Yet, it could be said that many more hours were also spent heart-searching in the family home.[175] On the other hand, Major Lean had informed Mrs Clark that there was little possibility that an error had occurred. He also mentioned that if the Graves Registration Working Parties recovered the body of Private Clark, it would be removed to the nearest Military Cemetery, with a cross erected over the grave.[176] Edmunds, however, hoped to furnish Private Clark's wife with some further information, no doubt uncensored, as to her husband's whereabouts or fate. He asked for the names and addresses of any man who asserted that they had seen her husband since the date he was officially reported as 'missing'; the Base Records Office in Melbourne had made a similar request.[177] He explained that the bureau would get the returned men 'to give sworn declarations to that effect as this would assist them [the London Bureau and official and unofficial searchers] in their work of tracing him'.[178] While Mrs Clark, in her grief, not only sought to convey information, she also encouraged collaboration in a public way.[179] The LIWC results for clout show that through his actions, Edmunds attempted to provide support and take some control of the situation on her behalf through the established network of the Australian Red Cross Information Bureaux.[180]

There is no further correspondence to be found in the Red Cross soldier enquiry packet. Interestingly, in Private Clark's military service file held in the National Archives of Australia, Mrs Clark's correspondence to the Base Records Office is plentiful; she appears argumentative and adamant that another soldier should know something.[181] She did not understand how 'any soldier within her husband's battalion did not have some detail'. Mrs Clark also confirmed that she had viewed the Honour Roll for the 10th Battalion, and her husband's name was not among those listed as 'killed in

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[174] Robert Sackville-West describes how the British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Department provided enquirers with a general picture of battle conditions around the time of the soldiers' disappearance, leaving only unreasonable doubt with the enquirer. In contrast, the Australian state bureaux never did this. While they shared the details of witness statements with an enquirer, they never made a judgment on the situation and continued to seek answers up to and after the Armistice as shown by the arrangements made for the work of Captain Mills; See Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 21.

[175] 'Amongst the Missing', *Sunday Times*, Sydney, 17 January 1915.

[176] 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA); The YMCA Soldiers' Enquiry Bureau, discussed in Chapter 1, continued to assist parents and relatives into the 1920's to locate men unheard of for some time, to secure photos of graves of fallen men and unlike the Australian state bureau, the YMCA bureau also assisted families to obtain the private effects of those men killed in action; See J. W. Daly, *The Adelaide Y.M.C.A.* 1879-1934: *some aspects of its development*,' Honours Degree in History, University of Adelaide, 1972, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), 38.

[177] 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/6874 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*, 18.

[180] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[181] 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

action'.[182] Six months after Private Clark disappeared, the Military Court of Enquiry, held in Châtelet, France, reviewed an official witness statement never released to Mrs Clark. In January 1919, the military court 'deemed that the information received was not sufficient to give a definite opinion as to what actually happened to No. 6986, Private Clark'.[183] Instead, they 'communicated within a context that did not mention the gruesome and grisly truth of death in war'.[184] In contrast, the Australian Red Cross Information Bureau in South Australia passed on many unofficial witness statements from fellow soldiers to allay the fears of those enquiring.

The Australian military authorities had taken six months to declare Private Clark as being 'killed in action', and a further four months passed before they informed Mrs Clark of their decision. Those in the Australian Red Cross information bureaux, in contrast, understood the significance of the smallest detail relayed to family members to enable them to make sense of their situation. This small act by the military might have allayed Mrs Clark's fears and allowed her and countless others in similar circumstances to accept the inevitable outcome sooner rather than later. Some considerable time after, she received her husband's personal effects via Germany rather than France, adding another layer of complexity to her situation.[185] Once more, a letter was despatched to the Base Records Office asking if she could now have the truth of the matter, given she was told that he had died in France; poignantly, she wrote that 'while it did not matter to others, it did matter to those to whom he belonged'.[186] The time allocated to her search for answers is evident through her many letters to distant, faceless military official bureaucrats. Her struggle to resign to the situation that had befallen her is apparent and is not dissimilar to other women in similar circumstances. The Information Bureau was unable to assist Mrs Clark with any detailed information; ultimately, this left her without the consolation of a burial and, more importantly, a husband, a breadwinner, and a father for her children. By 1923, Mrs Clark had remarried. Today, Private Eardley A. Clark is commemorated on the Port Elliot War Memorial, situated

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[182] 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with the officer in Charge, Base Records, 19 July 1919,' 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

[183] Corporal Roy H. Jones, No. 3786, confirmed that Private Clark was in his section located in a strong post on the front line when he was permitted to return to a vacated post in the rear to retrieve his haversack which he had forgotten as the platoon moved forward, towards Merris, in Northern France. Immediately following the explosion of a German bomb, he heard someone cry out, but no search was made as the Battalion was timed to attack Merris at 12.15 am on 31 July 1918. At dawn the 'Moppers up" covered all the ground over which they had advanced and Private Clark was not seen; See 'Witness statement of Corporal Jones from the Court of Enquiry held on 21 January 1919, France in 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

[184] Tanja Luckins, 'Collecting Women's Memories: The Australian War Memorial, the next-of-kin and Great War soldiers' diaries and letters as objects of memory in the 1920s and 1930s', *Women's History Review* 19, no. 1(2010), 27.

[185] The Officer in Charge replied to Hilda Clark enclosing a copy of letter from the British Military Authority in Berlin who explained the German Military Authority had wrongly labelled the property and upon receipt and examination of the items, they proved to be the property of Private Clark, see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

[186] 'Hilda Clark in correspondence with Base Records, 9 February 1920,' see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA); Private Clark's belongings had been wrongly labelled as the property of another soldier and were forwarded by the German Military Authority post-war to London. The Officer in Charge provided proof of the transfer of the property from the British Military Mission at Berlin, see 'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley A. Clark,' Service File Series B2455/1966686, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

on The Strand, as one of eighteen soldiers from this small coastal town who did not return home from the First World War.

Hand Knitted Socks – Prisoner of War

Situated approximately twenty-nine miles (47km) north of Adelaide, Gawler is the oldest recorded country town in South Australia. Named after the second Governor of this colony, by 1911, it had a population of just under 4,000 people. The Wiese family resided in the 'Bungalow' by Gawler railway station. In June 1917, Miss Wiese wrote to the South Australian Bureau following two official notifications from military authorities (Appendix C). Her actions reflect the word count analysis results found in the 345 soldier enquiry packets where siblings were the most prominent enquirer about soldiers who were missing. She noted in her letter that the first notification stated that her brothers were declared officially missing on 11 April 1917. Their disappearance occurred during the first battle at Bullecourt when the Australian troops got inside the Hindenburg line but found themselves fighting without any support and cut off from reinforcements.[187] It was the most significant German capture of Australian soldiers in a single battle during the First World War.[188] The second notification was sent to the South Australian Bureau from London. It stated that Private Carl H. Wiese was wounded and a prisoner of war in Lazarett Verden, France, before being moved to Soltau, Germany, while his brother Private Reinold G. Wiese remained missing. When the brothers enlisted in early 1916, they joined the 48th Battalion; both were in their early twenties and employed as stonemasons before the war. Their sister's letter was short and brief; she wrote, 'we would be very pleased if you could help us to find out where they really are, as we are all very anxious' and included official contact details of her brothers abroad.[189]

In early July, Edmunds responded to Miss Wiese and included a pamphlet that he stated gave the family 'full directions with regard to our work relative to Prisoners of War'.[190] This pamphlet also provided all the necessary information regarding food parcels, the addressing of letters, etc, Edmunds assured Miss Wiese that her other brother, Private Reinold Wiese, had been included 'on our cable of enquiry to the Red Cross Commissioners in London, requesting them, if possible, to endeavour to trace him'.[191] As was his pattern, he signed off, stating that any updates would be forwarded upon receipt.[192]

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[187] Chris Clark, *The Encyclopaedia of Australia's Battles* (NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2010), 125.
[188] Ibid, 126.
[189] 'Miss Wiese in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 29 June 1917,' see 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese,' 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2981 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/carl-herman-wiese.
[190] Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Miss Wiese, 4 July 1917,' see 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese,' 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2981 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/carl-herman-wiese.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.

In parallel with this particular case, the London Bureau came under fire with Australian military authorities at their London headquarters regarding unofficial notifications cabled out to the state bureaux. That same month, Hon. As a Red Cross Commissioner in London, Lieut-Colonel Murdoch reported to Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson, President of the Australian Branch of the Red Cross Society. He stated that regardless of the 'repeated requests from Headquarters for the names of new prisoners, the names [held by the bureau] should not be cabled out until they were verified'.[193]

The London Bureau, however, did not wish to change their current system, although they were aware that 'it was creating a certain amount of friction between Defence in Australia and Headquarters in London'.[194] The Commissioner was at a loss to understand the current situation. He was aware that 'the War Office in London welcomed and encouraged the British Red Cross Society to provide any firsthand information to those interested'.[195] However, Edmunds also noted that 'the Defence Department in Australia seemed to consider it a reflection upon them if the information reaches Australia before it was conveyed to them through Headquarters in London'.[196] Hon. Lieut-Colonel Murdoch concluded that, in his opinion, it was 'trivial behaviour'. He noted that information concerning prisoners of war, in many instances, 'came through the Society first and the London Bureau in turn heartily cooperated in every way with Headquarters here [London] affording them all the information in their possession' as discussed in Chapter 4.[197] In October, Deakin wrote to Owen in the Sydney Bureau concerning his query about dealing with 'the somewhat vexed question of prisoner messages and bulletins as to their health'.[198] After discussing with the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London, Deakin suggested that 'the only satisfactory solution was to judge each case on its own merits, and cable accordingly'.[199] In enquiry cases where friends and family had a reason 'to be really anxious about a prisoner', she suggested that 'it was advisable to send an enquiry by cable' and the London Bureau would 'do their best to send a satisfactory reply'.[200]

[193] 'Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel Murdoch in correspondence with Helen, Lady Munro Ferguson, 27 July 1917,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.
[198] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 10 October 1917,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918.
[199] Ibid.
[200] 'Vera Deakin in correspondence with Langer Owen, 14 August 1917,' SRG76/14 Correspondence with Red Cross Commissioners in Cairo, Dec 1915 - Sept 1916, Jan 1918 - Jul 1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

Table 7.3: LIWC summary variables analysis for Wiese and Edmunds[201]

	South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau	
	Letters from the Soldier Enquiry Packets	
LIWC Summary Variables	**Anna Wiese**	**Charles A. Edmunds**
Analytics	51.68%	93.84%
Clout	76.64%	96.58%
Emotional tone	53.09%	62.24%
Authenticity	25.73%	1.79%

In November, Anna P. M. Wiese wrote to Edmunds about a food parcel destined for her son, Private Carl Wiese, in the prisoner of war camp in Soltau, Germany. Likely, she was somewhat bewildered as she sat down to write the letter, perhaps glancing at the parcel in front of her. This package, sent in the previous week to the Red Cross Depot in Government House on North Terrace in Adelaide, was returned to her home in Gawler within a few days. Her letter, although legible, is peppered with spelling errors and perhaps reflects an immediate response to the situation in which she found herself. She wrote, 'I thought it would be so nice to receive a Parcel from his mother, so I decided and send [sic] one last week one day and I had it returned to me today'.[202] The LIWC result for analytics shows that her writing is more narrative in structure, while her focus is on the present about her current predicament. Her emotional tone is neither high nor low as she tries to solve the presented problem.[203] Results also suggest that Mrs Wiese exhibited low social status and confidence in her correspondences (Figure 7.3). Mrs Wiese was firm in her letter, 'I addressed it c/o Australian Red Cross Commissioners, 54 Victoria Street, London S.W., and 'this worried her'.[204] She stated, 'I know what pleasure it would mean to my son [Carl] to receive something from his home, packed by his mother, socks knitted with her own hands'; this was opposed to the previously mentioned unpaid or unknown

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[201] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; James W. Pennebaker, Cindy K. Chung, Joey Frazee, Gary M. Lavergne and David I. Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays, *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 12 (2014), 1-10; Ewa Kacewicz, James W. Pennebaker, Matthew Davis, Moongee Jeon, and Arthur C. Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 33, no. 2 (March 2014), 125-43; Matthias Mehl and James Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 4 (April 2003), 857-70; Yla R. Tausczik and James W Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 29, no. 1 (2010), 24-54.

[202] 'Anna P. Wiese in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 12 November 1917, 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese, 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2981 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/carl-herman-wiese.

[203] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019, http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/.

[204] 'Anna P. Wiese in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 12 November 1917.

sock knitter.[205] Mrs Wiese asked Edmunds to kindly let her know what she needed to do in the matter as she wanted the parcel sent and included a list of its contents.[206]

Mrs Wiese's uttering of the items within her parcel allowed her to construct and confirm the material and social reality that she held dear at that moment.[207] Her actions were intensely personal in her task of gathering and packing these objects for the son whose whereabouts she did know, while her other son, Private Reinold Weise, was still 'missing in action'. As suggested by Ziino, such a process was 'a matter of constant thought and conjecture'.[208] The socks from her hands to his speaks of a mother reaching out to comfort her child and herself, embracing him, nurturing him, and keeping him warm, quite possibly a symbolic gesture to let him know that his absence was felt, that he and his brother were loved and missed. She had followed common-sense assumptions that treated authority and hierarchy as natural, only to be knocked back.[209] Having observed what she understood were the rules, her possible confused state must have significantly perplexed her.

Edmunds was prompted to consult with Kiddle in Melbourne as Mrs Wiese was not alone in her attempt to send a private parcel. A visitor to the South Australian Bureau had recently suggested that the Melbourne Bureau was forwarding parcels to prisoners of war from relatives in Australia via the London Red Cross Commissioners. Kiddle assured Edmunds that 'the lady was under a misapprehension'.[210] In December, Henry Lambert, Official Secretary for the Commonwealth of Australia, wrote from London to confirm that introducing a 'personal parcel' from next of kin or a nominee to a prisoner was being approved, but civilian parcels would be censored.[211] Kiddle wisely cautioned Edmunds to keep the details away from the press until everything was approved. As anticipated, further conflicts did arise when Australian newspapers reported that 'quarterly parcels may be sent by relatives to prisoners'.[212] No doubt, enquiries increased as quickly in each state bureau as they did in the South Australian office. Kiddle understood that the Department of Defence had no

[205] 'Anna P. Wiese in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 12 November 1917; Scates, 'The Unknown Sock Knitter: Voluntary Work, Emotional Labour, Bereavement and the Great War,' 29; Stanley, 'Part III Society - Mobilising: Volunteers and Censorship,'168.

[206] The content of the parcel included: 1 cocoa and milk, 2 sardines, 2 small tins of rolled meat, 1 small plum pudding in tin, 1 cake chocolate, 1 tin butterscotch, walnuts and peanuts, spearmint, 1 pack dried fruit, 1 bible, 1 pipe, 2 tins tobacco, 1 tin cigarettes, a few mixed lollies and 2 pairs of knitted socks; See 'Anna P. Wiese in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds,' 12 November 1917, 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese, 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2981.

[207] Claire Kramsch, *Language as Symbolic Power* (Key Topics in Applied Linguistics) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 5.

[208] Bart Ziino, 'Always thinking in the other part of the globe': Australians and Meanings of Wartime Correspondence.' In *Proximity and Distance: Space, Time, and World War* I, eds. Romain Fathi and Emily Robertson (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2020), 151.

[209] Fairclough, *Language and Power*: *Language in Social Life Series*, 2nd ed., 2.

[210] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 15 October 1917,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[211] Ibid.

[212] Edmunds included several the newspaper articles in a letter to Kiddle; See 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 11 January 1918,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

updates on the subject, although they had received objections that extra parcels were sent to Officers.[213] The honorary secretaries also received a circular letter from Philadelphia N. Robertson, as secretary to Lady Munro Ferguson, in January 1918 notifying the honorary secretaries of the new address for the London Bureau and confirming that the Commonwealth Department of Defence was still contemplating the issue of parcels.[214] Nevertheless, the prohibition remained in place, with no individual parcels allowed through the postal system. Kiddle argued 'it was a complication of an already complicated situation'.[215]

Edmunds responded to Mrs Wiese, stating that food parcels were strictly prohibited, and it was 'quite impossible' for her to forward a parcel to her son. His extremely low LIWC results for authenticity indicate that he was quite formal and matter of fact in his actions, taking a more businesslike approach to the issue with solid confidence in expressing how the process worked (Figure 7.3). Edmunds appears to show nothing of his personality, although his overall tone is slightly more positive than negative.[216] He explained that the British Food Controller allowed each prisoner's maximum amount of food. Therefore, the Australian Red Cross Commissioners in London had to abide by this quota. Edmunds further informed her that, as part of the day-to-day practice, concerning prisoner of war parcels, families and sponsors generally donated 10 shillings to the Red Cross Prisoner of War Fund on a regular monthly basis.[217]

A prisoner was entitled to draw up to 10 shillings on their 'drawing allowance for privates'; the soldier could also obtain 'extra comforts other than food, or he could remit the funds through other

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[213] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 15 October 1917.

[214] The London Bureau eventually moved to larger premises at 38 Grosvenor Square; See Philadelphia N. Robertson was secretary to Lady Munro Ferguson in the Australian Branch of the Red Cross Society, see 'Philadelphia N. Robertson in correspondence with the state secretaries, 14 January 1918,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[215] 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 14 January 1918,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA). In February, Kiddle received a letter informing him of a Personal Parcel Scheme for prisoners, in operation since 1 December 1917. The next of kin could receive a coupon and every three months they could send a personally packed parcel to a prisoner. Mrs Cornelius also informed Kiddle that although she was not next of kin, the Red Cross had provided her with said coupon; See 'John B. Kiddle in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 28 February 1918,' SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war. Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

[216] Pennebaker Conglomerates Inc. 'The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count,' accessed 16 August 2019. http://liwc.wpengine.com/how-it-works/; Pennebaker, Chung, Frazee, Lavergne, Beaver, 'When Small Words Fortell Academic Success: The Case of College Admissions Essays,' 1-10; Kacewicz, Pennebaker, Davis, Jeon, and Graesser, 'Pronoun Use Reflects Standings in Social Hierarchies,' 125-43; Mehl and Pennebaker, 'The Sounds of Social Life,' 857-70; Tausczik and Pennebaker, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods,' 24-54.

[217] This payment was made payable to the 'Australian Red Cross Commissioners, 36 Grosvenor Place, London, Southwest.,' as the Postal Authorities did not allow the Order to be made payable to Miss Mary Chomley 'free of exchange;' See SRG76/16 Correspondence relating to prisoners of war Jul 1917 – Mar 1918, May – Nov 1918, State Library of South Australia (SLSA). For examples of families sending these money orders, see 'Papers relating to No. 1822, Private Alfred V. Simmons, 16th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2401 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/alfred-victor-simmons; 'Papers relating to No. 2288, Private Henry Heddle, 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/3111 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/henry-heddle.

instructions'.[218] Edmunds also explained that an Australian prisoner received a parcel of clothing as soon as the Red Cross Society located him. Irrespective of any donations made by relatives to the general funds, three food parcels were distributed fortnightly. He closed by offering help if she desired further information on the subject. In this instance, she soon replied, ' I am sorry to trouble you but as I am still anxiously waiting about sending my parcel to my son'.[219] She responded to Edmunds, stating, 'thank you very much for the kind enquirys [sic] about my other Son Pte G.R.W Wiese missing'.[220] Mrs Wiese enclosed a newspaper clipping related to 'civilian Australian prisoners' receiving parcels through the Australian Red Cross Commissioners, stating, 'I do not quite understand the slip!'[221] She was aware of the Red Cross parcels he described as her son had sent some letters. Although, Mrs Wiese was reluctant to let the issue of her parcel go and questioned the difficulty of 'me sending something from home sweet home to the boys over there'.[222] At this moment, she perhaps was willing her other son to be located, particularly as two pairs of socks were put into the parcel and possibly hoped both sons might share the contents. She concluded her letter by thanking the bureau for continuing enquiries about her missing son, Private Reinold Wiese.

The tone of Edmunds's response, briefly mentioned above, suggests his patience was somewhat stretched, possibly with the parcel issue rather than Mrs Wiese. He soon changed his tactic, stating how impossible the situation was to send food parcels to German prisoners of war as 'same being strictly prohibited by the Defence Department'.[223] Edmunds later sent Mrs Wiese an extract from a soldier's field postcard sent to the London Bureau by Private Carl Wiese. Although still invalided, the soldier stated that he was 'gradually improving' and acknowledged that Red Cross' parcels were fairly regular'.[224] In July 1918, a 'personal parcel' concession for prisoners of war was approved. The adjustment allowed private individuals to send a parcel once every three months. They were permitted to include a few extra comforts, and the senders' details for a cost was fifteen shillings. There is no record of Mrs Wiese availing of this service.

Searchers obtained several witness statements about her second son Private Reinold Wiese, and Edmunds forwarded these to the family. Captain Mills later certified that there was 'No trace Germany,

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[218] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Anna P. Wiese, 16 November 1917,' see 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese, 48th Infantry Battalion,'SRG 76/1/2981, South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/carl-herman-wiese.
[219] 'Anna P. Wiese in correspondence with Charles A. Edmunds, 26 November 1917,' see 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese, 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2981, South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/carl-herman-wiese.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.
[223] 'Charles A. Edmunds in correspondence with Anna P. Wiese, 28 November 1917,' see 'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese, 48th Infantry Battalion,' SRG 76/1/2981 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), https://sarcib.ww1.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/soldier/carl-herman-wiese.
[224] Ibid.

10/10/19'.[225] Language is a part of society, and according to Professor of Linguistics Norman Fairclough, it is a social process that is socially conditioned by non-linguistic parts of society.[226] In 1921, the military authorities wrote to Mrs Wiese as the registered next of kin for her son, Reinold. The Officer in Charge wished to dispose of the war medals of her son. However, to properly comply with the 'Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918', the Officer in Charge asked if there were any nearer blood relations other than herself that were still alive.[227] In contrast, the bureau would never have dealt with Mrs Wiese in such a manner. Yet, the language used by each group was representative of the nature and social world they inhabited, their values, beliefs, and assumptions.[228]

Conclusion

It is impossible to 'transmute the tingle and smack of lived experience into language' without losing something essential to it.[229] Yet, Pickering shows that experience is not wholly encompassed by language and narration and is worth attending to it as a category.[230] This chapter intended to subvert expectations and challenge existing assumptions about the evidence available concerning the soldier enquiry packets held in the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau archive. The work of this bureau on behalf of the families who enquired there is an entirely Australian story. The soldier enquiry packets offer insight into how South Australian families and the Australian legal fraternity in each state navigated the war experience so far from the battlefields in Europe. The narrative about how family and next of kin experienced and reacted to the impact of such events on the home front is complex. While the South Australian Bureau was the only state bureau post-war to retain a complete linear record of its interactions with each enquirer, these records represent similar activities undertaken in the other state bureaux. Each operated at both a local and global level within its state.

The records for Private Ivy, Private Clark and Privates Weise do not reflect the British experience of interacting with their Red Cross Wounded and Missing Department in London. This chapter shows that the Australian and British Red Cross bureaux approached aspects of their work differently. Sackville-West highlights that many of the British processes differed from those of the Australian state bureaux, particularly around the decision by the British office to provide information on the battle surrounding the demise of a loved one. The British Red Cross Department's approach would have significantly contrasted with the Australian process, whereby enquiries for the 'missing'

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[225] Ibid.

[226] Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 20.

[227] The military procedure stated in order of preference, Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister, eldest surviving half-brother, eldest surviving half-sister; See 'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Reinold Gustave Wiese,' Service File Series B2455/8389060, National Archives of Australia (NAA).

[228] Fairclough, *Language and Power: Language in Social Life Series*, 20.

[229] Pickering, 'Experience and the Social World,' 29.

[230] Ibid.

[230] Ibid.

remained open until they had obtained information one way or the other. Schneider misrepresented the South Australian Bureau's work with censorship; the records show that Edmunds always dealt with each case individually and used self-censorship to ease the burden on behalf of the enquirer. When he questioned the best steps to take, he was not averse to consulting with Kiddle in Melbourne for a second opinion. Bureau staff went to great lengths to obtain the smallest detail for a family member, as shown in the case of Private Ivy.

The innovative linguistic inquiry analysis in this chapter is in its infancy. However, it has the potential for deeper engagement and insight into other elements, such as the emotional state of the letter writers within the 8,033 soldier enquiry packets held in the archive. This type of analysis offers new possibilities in the future when exploring language in letters. Evidence suggests that the everyday experiences of hardship experienced during the war were not dissimilar to those described by others across the British Empire despite differences in societies. There is potential to explore the story of the First World War from 'the point of view of civilians on both sides of the conflict' using similar methods.[231] Mr Ivy's stoicism was typical of other fathers during the war. Yet, the letters sent to the London and South Australia bureaux offer insight into his need for answers in losing his beloved son. The case of Private Clark highlights the suggested anguish and terror that underlined instances of the 'missing'. Unlike the actions undertaken within the state bureaux, the military's refusal to disclose even the smallest detail only added to the turmoil experienced in households similar to Private Clark's. While Mrs Wiese had a son in a German prisoner of war camp, he was still beyond her immediate mothering. Like other mothers with multiple sons at war, she also had to contend with the absence of her missing son, Reinold, as she navigated a bureaucratic minefield. Each study discussed in this chapter offer insight into similar cases dealt with on the Australian home front throughout the war. Each also highlights the significance of the work undertaken by the Australian Red Cross information bureaux during the First World War to obtain the smallest detail in their effort to ease the worries and fears of a soldier's next of kin. The final act of Edmunds, Saunders, and Croft to preserve the bureau's record in an archive for future generations created a 'memory from which the material can be woven into the garment of history'.[232]

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[231] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 36.
[232] Sassoon, 'Phantoms of remembrance: libraries and archives as the collective memory,' 55.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the history of an organisation whose activities during the First World War have been largely forgotten or, at best, misunderstood. In the existing historiography of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, there is no definitive work on the organisational structures or decision-making processes it put in place on behalf of enquirers during the First World War. Nor has its work been examined in the context of other organisations or groups at home or abroad. To date, the focus has been on the supposed anxieties and fears alluded to in personal letters of enquiry sent to the bureau about the fate of particular soldiers.[1] Less has been written on the Australian Red Cross information bureaux men who volunteered for home service than those who served on the front line. The men who served on the home front filled a large void in society as acquiring information on the fate of growing numbers of Australian soldiers became more imperative for family members when the Commonwealth Department of Defence struggled in this task.

Moreover, in the absence of destroyed British Red Cross Wounded and Missing (Department) records, others have attempted to use the Australian record as a proxy for the lost British record.[2] Interpretations about the role of Australian searchers tend to suggest that the network of Australian bureaux was solely dependent on the British Red Cross Department in this line of work.[3] The current thinking on censorship within the South Australian Bureau is based on a misunderstanding that the Honorary Secretary, Edmunds, adopted a mechanical and sometimes haphazard method on information to enquirers. The thesis corrects these assumptions and adds to the historiography by using the extant archival record of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau to expand our understanding of the work of the bureau and its broader network of bureaux during the First World War. It discusses how the bureau, and the broader network of bureaux were positioned at an intermediate meso-level of society, engaged with families at a micro-level and state institutions at a macro-level to bridge the gap and reduce the void when information was so desperately needed on the

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[1] For example, see Tony Cunneen, 'Searching for the Searchers: The Australian Legal Profession and the Operation of the Australian Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War I,' 695-707; Tony Cunneen, '"Judges' Sons Make the Final Sacrifice"; The Story of the Australian Judicial Community in the First World War,' *Australian Law Journal* 91, no. 4 (2017), 302-12: Tony Cunneen, '"What has happened to our dear boy?" The New South Wales Lawyers and the Red Cross Missing and Wounded Enquiry Bureau in World War One,' np; Melanie Oppenheimer and Margrette Kleinig, '"There is no trace of him": the Australian Red Cross, its Wounded and Missing Bureaux and the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign,' *First World War Studies* 6, no. 3 (July 2016), 277-92.
[1] Eric F. Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' *War in History* 4, no. 3 (1997), 296-315; Robert Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2021.
[1] For example, see Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 296-315; Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*; Carole Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross* (Melbourne: Royal Historical Society of Victoria Inc, 2020),
[2] Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 296-315; Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*, 2021.
[3] For example, see Schneider, 'The British Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau: A Case of Truth-Telling in the Great War,' 296-315; Sackville-West, *The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War*; Woods, *Vera Deakin and the Red Cross*.

home front. Crucial to the success of their work on the home front was the work of the Australian bureau abroad in Egypt and then Britain alongside Red Cross and YMCA searchers. This thesis also adopts a novel approach to our understanding of the pivotal role an army of unofficial Australian searchers held in this wartime work, providing insight into the discretion and self-censorship adopted by Edmunds in passing on sensitive information to family members.

This thesis examined the self-appointed role and aims of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau. It did so in two parts by reviewing the invaluable hitherto underutilised records of the South Australian Bureau held in the State Library of South Australia. This record is unique in Australia and, more broadly, in what was once the British Dominions. Two crucial questions arose when preparing to work with this archive: what was the purpose of the record, and why was it kept? It was essential to understand the approach Edmunds and his administrative assistants, Florence Saunders, and Olive Croft, took in laying down this archival record. By doing so, one then had an opportunity to move beyond their actions to examine 'the material histories of this archive and their functioning in time and place' during the Great War.[4] Those material histories include details about the organisational running of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, located at the crucial meso-level of society. They also include the global humanitarianism of the Australian bureau abroad, the army of unofficial searchers that came forth to support the network of bureaux and fill the void exacerbated by the inefficiencies of the Commonwealth Department of Defence. It was also essential to understand the South Australian bureau's place in society closer to home during the war when two other information bureaux run by the League of Loyal Women and the YMCA were already operating in Adelaide.

In the first part of this thesis, a careful reading of the South Australian bureau's archival records provide insight into the organisational history of the South Australian bureau and its interactions with the other Australian bureaux at home and abroad. Importantly, this thesis emphasised that the network of bureaux fulfilled their societal role at the crucial meso-level, understood here to be that level positioned between the grassroots micro-level and the institutional macro-level of society. The state bureaux and the bureau abroad, in Cairo and then London, collectively provided a tangible flow of information for those enquiring about the fate of Australian soldiers on the battlefield. While the six honorary secretaries at home were never to meet in person during the war, the records show that representatives from Queensland and South Australia did travel to Melbourne and Sydney to see what systems were established there. It was, therefore, essential to characterise the collective endeavours of

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[4] Bart Ziino and Anne-Marie Condé, 'Engaging with war records: archival histories and historical practices,' *Archives and Manuscripts* 48, no. 2 (2020), 100.

the bureaux network to explain this social model.[5] This thesis discussed their opinions, highlighted their views on critical issues that directly impacted outcomes for enquirers, and presented various operational aspects of the bureaux run by this group of legal volunteers. It exposed the fact that the 'tyranny of distance' that separated these volunteers from the theatres of war in the Ottoman Empire and Europe ultimately shaped the workings of these distinctively Australian bureaux.

While the story of the South Australian Bureau reveals an organisational account of its workings, it was immediately apparent that this office did not act alone; their wartime work is not solely a local history narrative. Each state bureau established a dynamic rather than a static role in society in this period of Australian history. The bureau's work in Adelaide as part of an Australian Red Cross information bureaux network spanned the globe, stretching as far as the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Europe throughout the war. The records reveal that Edmunds, as honorary secretary, was a team player, continually instigating change and collaborating with the other honorary secretaries across Australia to undertake this wartime work. Indeed, the success of each bureau was bound up in its working relationships with each other; their interactions shaped how they ran their operations. The dynamism exhibited by Edmunds and his administrative team allowed the South Australian bureau to remain steadfast in fulfilling its brief in the societal role that initially proposed supplementing the particulars supplied by the Department of Defence concerning casualties.

This thesis shows how, as the war progressed, the Department of Defence at home and Australian military authorities in Egypt and Britain struggled to maintain control of their records and provide vital information to families about the casualties on the battlefield. In response, the state bureaux and the bureau abroad collectively stepped into the breach, supported by an army of searchers to fill the widening gap. It was vitally important to correct the misconception that the Australian bureau abroad was merely a 'clearing house' for the reports of British Red Cross Department searchers. The thesis has highlighted how the Australian bureau operated by Deakin in Cairo and later London was a wholly Australian affair that shaped how the bureaux worked at home. It also explored some of the different working methods of the Australian and British bureaux. Deakin's efforts abroad exposed the social complexities of being an Australian in a foreign land. She never intended to part ways with the British establishment once the Australian bureau abroad was fully operational. Instead, she worked closely with them to achieve the desired results. Contrary to assertions by other scholars, this thesis has brought to the fore the work of Australian searchers at home and abroad. They were not minimal in number and solely reliant on the network of British searchers to succeed in this area. A concerted Australian effort combined with the British Red Cross Department saw an army of Australian searchers

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[5] Bruno Latour quoted in Anne Taufen Wessells, 'Review of Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory, by Bruno Latour,' *International Public Management Journal* 10, no. 3 (2007), 352.

from all walks of life bring resolution to many Australian families on the Australian home front. Deakin and her team of volunteers in Egypt and Europe more than met Langer Owen's and Sir Josiah Symon's expectations.

The South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau archive also contains 8,033 soldier enquiry packets. Each packet represents a dated precis of all correspondence and outcomes of enquiries about a soldier. Therefore, this thesis looked at the letters as material artifacts and read them as part of an ongoing epistolary exchange. The intention was to subvert expectations and challenge existing assumptions about how the evidence concerning the soldier enquiry packets is currently perceived. The selected 804 soldier enquiry packets were reclassified to return the focus to the nature of the enquiry rather than the war front. The thesis has shown that this approach represents how the bureau managed the packets and is more in keeping with the bureau's original classification system. These packets offered insight into how South Australian families navigated the war experience so far from the battlefields in Europe. It also exposes how enquirers experienced and reacted to the impact of such events on the home front.

The second part of this thesis, therefore, looked to further correct the current understanding of the bureau's wartime work by turning attention to the close examination of the epistolary exchange between those on both sides of the enquiry on the home front. This innovative interdisciplinary approach to these letters' views language as a form of social practice rather than labelling emotional states or examining how the enquirers appropriated labels to describe their emotions. Of interest was how the honorary secretary engaged with next of kin, especially when despatching some of the more harrowing reports from the front. Using LIWC made it possible to interpret the patterns of social interaction between the enquirer and the bureau secretary about the fate of a soldier and reveal something about the writer's characteristics and the circumstances in which the letters were composed. Applying this methodology to the correspondence provided an opportunity to examine how people collectively experienced and responded to the impact of the war at home regarding enquiries. Combining the output from LIWC with the IBM SPSS program to explore the epistolary exchange further broadened the approach to interpreting, evaluating, critiquing, and explaining the discourse differently. Listening to those who experienced the war first-hand expands on current understandings of the impact of war on Australian society during the First World War.

The quantitative statistical word count study used 1,233 transcribed letters sent between the enquirer and the Honorary Secretary in the South Australian Bureau to understand the epistolary exchange better. Using the LIWC program to analyse the letters provided ways of understanding and explaining the collective communication patterns between enquirers at the micro-level and the

Honorary Secretary at the meso-level of Australian society throughout the war.[6] The aim was to subvert expectations and challenge existing assumptions about how the evidence concerning the soldier enquiry packets is currently perceived. In addition, the content of these packets offers real insight into how South Australian families navigated the war experience so far from the battlefields in Europe; it also revealed how family and next of kin experienced and reacted to the impact of such events on the home front.

Close reading and exegesis of letters between the Honorary Secretary and the enquirer also produced a qualitative assessment of three case studies using similar analysis methods within LIWC. These studies represent the many across types for soldiers classified as 'killed in action', wounded and missing, a prisoner of war or who failed to correspond with home. The exegesis element was derived using LIWC as an effective method for studying the various emotional, cognitive, and structural components present in individuals' verbal and written speech samples.[7] The methodology established for this thesis to undertake this innovative linguistic inquiry and word count analysis is in its infancy. The letters transcribed, examined, and analysed are only a tiny proportion of the abundant number of letters available within the 8,033 soldier enquiry packets of the South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau.

This new analytical method offers possibilities in the future when exploring language in letters. It is work that should be of national interest when exploring new social histories about the First World War on the Australian home front. The wartime work of the Australian Red Cross information bureaux was as much a part of the global phenomenon as the Australian troops on the war front.[8]

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[6] Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou, 'Analysing Narratives as Practices,' *Qualitative Research* 8, no. 3 (July 2008), 383.
[7] James, W. Pennebaker, Ryan L. Boyd, Kayla Jordan and Kate Blackburn, '*The Development and Psychometric Properties of LIWC2015*,' Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin (2015), 1.
[8] Bart Ziino, 'Total War,' In *Australians and the First World War: Local-Global Connections and Contexts*, eds. by Kate Ariotti and James E. Bennett (NSW: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 178.

APPENDIX A:

'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen G. H. Ivy, 16th Infantry Battalion.' SRG 76/1/1651 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919. State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy.' File Series 1DRL/0428, 'Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-1918 War.' Australian War Memorial (AWM).

A.G.
NO. 2348 ̭IVY
16TH BATTALION.

				[FORM B.]
No. 2348 NAME A. G. Ivy		REG. &c 16ᵗʰ Battln	RANK Private	

ADDRESS

NEXT OF KIN Mr G. J. H Ivy
ADDRESS George Street
Solomon Town S.A.

4. 3. 17	1/p	
18 4 .17		P/ Letter sent Commers – London.
19. 10. 17		"Slip" received from " " – copy sent Inquirer.
1 . 11. 17		Letter of thanks from Inquirer.

FORM C.

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

No.	Surname.	Christian Names.	Date.
2348	Ivy	Ellen G.	4.3.17.

Rank.	Regiment, &c.	File No.
Private	16th Battalion	

C/L 277-30.

OFFICIAL REPORTS:

"Killed in action, 6th February. 1917."

Other Information:

Inquirer's Name and Address.	Relation.
Mr. G. J. L. Ivy, George Street, Solomontown.	Father.

Instructions:

Write Commissioner endeavor ascertain any available particulars regarding soldier's death (nature of wound etc.) where buried & any particulars whatsoever procurable

Call Again.
YES.
NO.

Cost of Cable, &c.

251

1651   19th October 1917.

MR. G. J. IVY,

    GEORGE STREET

        SOLOMONTOWN.

Dear Sir,

            re 2348 Private Allen G. Ivy, 16th Bttln.

            Our Commissioners in London have now forwarded us the
following information re the death of the above soldier. Same is
purely unofficial, being the statement of a fellow-soldier, but we
feel sure you will be anxious to have every possible detail, and
so pass the report on. It reads:--

            "Ivy was a signaller for D Co., and came from S.A. I was
        "alongside of him when he was hit by a shell on the 6th February
        "in a trench on a ridge looking down on Transloy. I went over
        "to dress his wound and found that he was hit in the body. He
        "did not say anything, and died in a quarter of an hour. The
        "same shell killed a man called MacKenzie and wounded a corpor-
        "al.   I do not know whether they were buried."
            (Informant - Private L. Ricci, No. 294,
                    Stretcher Bearer, 2nd Army Rest Camp)

            We will continue to make enquiries re burial, and should
same come to hand we will again write you.

                            Faithfully yours,

                            HON. SECRETARY.

A.I.F. 16th Battn   IVY
7th Rfts   Pte Allen Gordon H2348

WHEREABOUTS

No report of casualty
        Cert. by A.I.F.Headquarters 10-8-16 - 1-9-16

Suffering from Synovitis Knee

Discharged to Base Details 3-11-16 ex 1est Convalescent
Depot
        Cert. by A.I.F.Headquarters 13-12-16.

London   A.
18-12-16.   &.P.I.

16th Battalion.   IVY
                                      No 2348.

Cable received from Commissioners 28/12/16

     "Inform Next if kin 2348 Ivy 16th Battalion, Base Depot
     November 1916.

No enquiry.

16 A.I.F.   <u>IVY A.G H.2348.</u>

K.Feb.6/17. Det.D/B.   1651
                                                   277-30

He was a signaller for D. Coy. and came from South
Australia.   I was along side of him when he was hit by a   she
shell on the 6th Feb. in a trench on a ridge looking down on
Transloy.   I went over to dress his wound, and found that
he was hit oin the body.   He did not say anything, and died
in a quarter of an hour.   The same shell killed a man called
MacKenzie, and wounded a corporal. #There were a lot of
dead bodies lying about the trench that day, and as it was
necessary to clear itall the bodies including Joys were put
over the parapet. I do not know whether they were after-
wards buried.
                    Infprmant.Pte L Ricci. 294. S/B. D.Coy.
                         2nd Army Re st Camp.
                              BOULOGNE.11.8.17.
                                                   BMH.

                    sent 19/10/17

16th_A. I. F.   <u>A. G. H. IVY. 2348.</u> 1651

Killed 6.2.17. Det.D/B.

        At Flers, he was in his dug out whilst we were holding

the line. A shell burst killing him instantly. I saw his body

being carried away on a stretcher.

                Reference: Pte.S.J.Payne, 4887, B.Coy.

                No.11 Con.Camp, Buchy nr. Rouen, 17.8.17.

                              FS.

                        contradict
                        earlier
                        report

254

George Street
Solomontown Nov^r 1st 1914

Chas: A. Edmunds. Esq.   Hon: Sec^y Information Bureau. Red Cross Society

Dear Sir.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter (File N° 1651) of Oct: 19th re' our son N° 2348 Private A. G. Ivy killed in action, & in so doing I beg most sincerely to thank you for the information contained therein, for your great kindness in prosecuting enquiries on our behalf, & for your kind intimation of still instituting further enquiries for us – Naturally, we are all very anxious to obtain all information that we possibly can, respecting our darling boy, & we feel deeply indebted to your for the trouble you & your Society have taken on our behalf – I would have replied earlier, & must apologise for not having done so, but I was called away to the death bed of my dear father Brigade Serjeant Major Ivy of the old Victorian Volunteer Staff & an old Crimean veteran – He passed away at Kew, Victoria on Oct: 8th, hence the delay in replying –

Any other information concerning our dear son will be gratefully acknowledged – We would very much like to know if our dear boy was buried & where – Once again returning to you, & through you to your Society, for the great trouble you have taken & for the information already received – On behalf of my dear wife, my family & myself,

I have the honour
To be, Dear Sir.
Most sincerely & respectfully yours
T. J. H. Ivy
Father of the late Private Allen. G. Ivy N° 2348

16th Btn.
A.I.F,

IVY
2348 Allen Gordon.

"Killed in Action 6.2.17 "

NO TRACE GERMANY
CERT. BY CAPT. MILLS.

1651

London.
1.11.19.

A

2348 Private
Allen Gordon Holmes
Ivy

16th Battalion
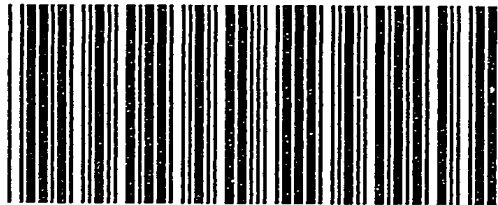
1410714I

Reynella. South Australia
June 5 1916.

Dear Miss Deakin.

The Father of Private. Aitken. G.H. Ivy.
No 3348 7th Reinforcements, 16th Battalion. 4th Brigade
is in great distress, not having heard from his
son since Dec. 7th 1915: His letter having been written
from the Peninsular. His son has complained to
friends that he also has received no letters
from his people who have written regularly.
It is possible - of course - that he. has been
transferred to some other Battalion - and. had
forgotten to mention the fact. - or. his letter
had gone astray. I. should be so much
obliged if you would. addressed. the enclosed letter
to his new address - which I suppose you
could get from the Base - and also. send
a card to the father giving the correct
address. The Father's name is T. J. Holmes Ivy.

George St. Solomontown. South Australia.

I have told him to enclose his letter to his son - in an envelope addressed to you I hope. This will not trouble you much. They are such a dear old couple - and terribly distressed - as you see from his letter - which I have decided to enclose. to make things clearer.

I wish I had seen you again before I left Cairo. I was very busy up to the last day - though nothing in law seemed to want me. Otherwise I should have stayed on - and possibly gone on to England.

My kind regards to you - and. your friend.

Faithfully yours,

Maj. James Reynell.

George Street
Solomontown Sth Aus: May 25th 1916

The Secretary - League of Loyal Women - Adelaide

Madam

I trust you will kindly pardon me for thus troubling you with this personal matter - The facts are these: My son, Private H. Clem. G. Hadby, No 1348. 4th Reinforcements, 16th Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade, at present somewhere in France, left Australia for Egypt on Thurs: June 21st 1915 & since that time we have only received two Post Cards & one letter from him - One Post Card was dated from Freemantle, W. Aus: on July 1st 1915 the other P.C. from Gallipoli bearing date Dec 7th 1915 & the letter from Zeitown Camp, Egypt dated August 14th 1915 - These are the only correspondence we have received from our boy although several of his mates, when writing home to their parents & friends, all say, that our boy very seldom misses a single mail, in writing to his parents at home, as well as to his other relatives in Melbourne & elsewhere, none of whom have heard one single word from him - We are also informed that our son is complaining of never hearing from home nor getting any letters although not only his mother, his sisters & myself (his father) are frequently writing but also his married sisters & also his Aunts, Cousins & other relations are writing from the different States - It is only natural that all his relations, especially his mother & myself are very anxious concerning him & would dearly like to hear from him & how he is getting on - Would you kindly, therefore, dear Madam, instruct us what steps we should take to ascertain what becomes of all the letters, & how we can secure their safe delivery both to ~~~~~~~~ him & also to ourselves - It has been rumoured frequently that, if any letters written by the boys at the Front to their relations or friends, are too long, the Censor simply throws them into the waste-paper basket & troubles no more about it or them - If this is true, it is a

downright disgrace & a burning shame for the relations are almost breaking their hearts for news of their dear boys — Please find enclosed stamped addressed envelopes for early reply — Thanking you most sincerely & once again apologising for thus troubling you

I have the honour

Madam

Most respectfully yours

George Street
Solomontown South Australia June 18th 1916

Miss Deakin — Red Cross Enquiry Office — Cairo
Madam
        Mrs Carew Reynell — Sec. League of Loyal Women — Adelaide,
has recommended me to ask, if you will kindly oblige, by trying to find our boy's address for
us, & kindly forward enclosed letter to him — I daresay you have, ere this, received a communication
fro Mrs Reynell, as she told me, in her letter, that she was writing you re' this matter — The facts
are, dear Madam, that we have two sons at the Front — the elder one in Egypt — the younger in France —
We receive letters or Post cards fairly regular every mail from our younger boy, but, although the elder
says he is writing home nearly every mail, we cannot get any letters from him & he is not receiving
any letters from home, which are also being sent regularly — The only communications we have received
from Allen, is, a Telegram dated July 1st 1915 from West Australia as he was leaving for Active Service — a Post
card from Zeitoun Camp, Egypt dated Aug 12th 1915 & a letter from same place dated Aug 14th/15. These
are the only communications received from him by us — Now & again, but not often, we hear about him
from friends to whom he writes, & last week his sister in Broken Hill, New South Wales, received her first
letter from him — I am awfully sorry dear, Madam, to have to trouble you, for I know, & realize, that your
time, & energies, must be fully taxed, but we are very anxious indeed to hear of, & from, our boy — Will
you please find enclosed, two Stamps (Australian) which, will you kindly use, if of any use, on Allen's letter,
or, in any way you may deem fit — Thanking you, most sincerely, in anticipation
                I have the honour
            To be, dear Madam
        Most respectfully yours
            J. J. Holmes. Ivy
                George Street
                Solomontown
                Sth Australia

This is the way we always
address his letters

The Secretary
Australian Branch,
B.R.C.S. London.

re No. 2348, Pte. Allen, G.H. Ivy.

In reply to your letter of
enquiry, dated 19th August,
we have to state the following:-
Pte. Ivy evacuated sick to
Hospital on 26th ulto.
The Officer Commanding
this soldier's Company states
having examined his "pack"
& having found a number
of letters received by Ivy
from his Mother.
Regarding the non-receipt
of letters by this soldier's
Mother. We are at a loss
to understand this, as all
our mail goes through
one channel - the Field
Post Office to Base Post
Office. Trusting this information
will assist you.

Capt. & Adjutant
15th. Battalion
A.I.F.

8958.

Capt. E. Parks,
    The Adjutant,
        16th Battalion.

Dear Sir,

We wish to thank you for the trouble you have taken
in getting us information about No.2348, Pte. Allen G.H.IVY,
16th Battalion. We are glad to hear that he had received
some of his letters from home and cannot explain the non-deliv-
erance of his own letters to his people. We shall send a
copy of your letter to his parents, whom we are sure will be
very glad to hear of their boy.

Again thanking you for your kindness,

Yours faithfully,

V. O.

Secretary.

20th December.

Dear Sir,

      We hear by cable from Melbourne that you get no letters from home, and that they do not hear from you. The last news they received was a post card from Gallipoli on December 7th 1915. Headquarters state that you went to Base Details on Novr. 3rd. 1916, from the 1st. Convalescent Depot. We suggest that you write to your Mother and send the letter to us. We shall,in turn, send it to our Adelaide Bureau, which is in communication with your father, and so it will be certain of reaching them. At the same time will you let us know how you are, so that we may cable out the news and set their minds at rest.

      With best wishes and thanking you in anticipation,

      Yours faithfully,

V.D

No.2348,
  Pte.Allen Gorden H.Ivy,
    16th Aust
      B.E.F.

                             SECRETARY.
                             A.AW.

16 A.I.F.   IVY A.G.H.2348.   ✓

                                            Allen Jordan
              K.Feb.6/17. Det.D/B.

        He was a signaller for D. Coy.and came from South
Australia.   I was along side of him when he was hit by a   she
shell on the 6th Feb.in a trench on a ridge looking down on
Transloy.   I went over to dress his wound, and found that
he was hit oin the body.   He did not say anything, and died
in a quarter of an hour.   The same shell killed a man called
MacKenzie, and wounded a corporal.   There were a lot of
dead bodies lying about the trench that day, and as it was
necessary to clear itall the bodies including Joys were put
over the parapet.   I do not know whether they were after-
wards buried.
                      Informant.Pte L Ricci. 294. S/B. D.Coy.
                          2nd Army Re st Camp.
                             BOULOGNE.11.8.17.
                                          HMH.   A

                              266

Allen Jordan

16th A. I. F.   A. G. H. IVY, 2348.   ✓

Killed 6.2.17. Det.D/B.

At Flers, he was in his dug out whilst we were holding
the line. A shell burst killing him instantly. I saw his body
being carried away on a stretcher.

Reference: Pte.S.J.Payne, 4887, B.Coy.

No.11 Con.Camp, Buchy nr. Rouen, 17.8.17.

FS.

_a._

7th September 1916

Private Allers-O.H.Ivy,
2348,
16th Batt.
7 Rfts.

Dear Sir,

Your friends in Adelaide are greatly distressed
at getting they say practically no Mail from you, although
they are sure you write regularly.   Their last news they
write was a Postcard from Gallipoli dated December 1915. And
they say you also were getting no letters.   In case it may
help I enclose this official letter card, as there may be some-
thing wrong with your Mail.   It is very distressing for you
besides all your other hardships to be thus cut off from your
friends, and anything we can do to help you to reknit communi-
cations we would gladly do.

I am,

Yours truly,

8858.

August 19th 1916.

To.
    The Adjutant,
        16th Battalion. A.I.F.,
            B.E.F.' FRANCE.

Dear Sir,

We regret to trouble you in this matter,but believe you may
be willing to help us. It appears that No.2348,,Private Allen.G.H.
Ivy,16th Battalion, 7th Reinforcements., who sailed for Egypt in June
1915 from Australia,has been unable to get through to his Mother
any communication beyond a post-card from Gallipoli in December last.
His friends say he writes regularly but his Mother receives no word
from him; also her letters do not seem to reach him. The Mother
is nearly distracted,and has begged us to make inquiries as to
whether anything is amiss. No casualty is reported at Headquarters.

We should be most grateful if you could have this
intelligence conveyed to Ivy; or, if he has been transferred to
another battalion advise us of the change.

                                I am,

                                    Yours faithfully,

                                        U.D.

                                            pu Fm.

                                        Secretary

APPENDIX B:

'Papers relating to No. 6986, Private Eardley Austin Clark, 10th Infantry Battalion.' SRG 76/1/6874 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919. State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

'Papers relating to No. 2348, Private Allen Gordon Ivy.' File Series 1DRL/0428, 'Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-1918 War.' Australian War Memorial (AWM)

No. 6986 Private E. A. Clark,

10th Battalion.

No. 6986 NAME Eardley. A. Clark. REG., &c. 10th Battln RANK Pte.

ADDRESS

NEXT OF KIN Mrs H. E. Clark.
ADDRESS California Street.
Nailsworth FILE NO.

				"Missing, 30th July 1918"
5.	9.	18.	1/P	
20.	9.	18.		P/Cable confirmed - forwarded Commr. London.
27	11.	18.		Letter received from Mrs Clark. Acknowledged
30.	7.	19.		further letter from Mrs Clark. Acknowledged.

FORM C.

No.	Surname.	Christian Names.	Date.
6986	Clark	Eardley Austin.	5.9.18.

Rank.	Regiment, &c.	File No.
Private	10th Battalion	

C/
/L   340-66 W.

OFFICIAL REPORTS :

"Missing 30th July, 1918."

Other Information :

Inquirer's Name and Address.	Relation.
Mrs. L. E. Clark California Street, Tailsworth	Wife

Instructions :

Cable Commissioner

Call Again.
YES.
NO.

Cost of Cable, &c.

273

California Street
Nov. 26th 1918.

To. The. Red Cross. Information Breaue
Hantline St. Adelaide

It is now. a considerable time since
I called at. the. above. place. for
Information about. Private E. A Clark
10th. Batt (698.6) reported missing July
30th. I think Sought. to hear something
About him now at once. seeing that the
war. is over. & also. if he is a prisoner
I think I ought to hear I have made
myself very ill worrying & any information
I await. eagerly Hoping I shall soon
hear from you about him As I
hear that the Red Cross will find
out for one. as regards Prisoners ect.

Kindly let me know as soon
as possible as I cannot stand
the strain much longer

Yours truly Mrs A. E Clark

M

27th November, 1918

No. 6874

Mrs. A. E. Clark,
    California Street,
        Nailsworth,
            SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dear Madam,

No. 6986 Private E. A. Clark, 10th Battalion

We are in receipt of your letter of 26th inst.

We regret that up to date our Commissioners have not
been able to gain any definite information as to your husband's
whereabouts, but should such come to hand at a later date, we will
again communicate with you.

Yours faithfully,

Honorary Secretary

California Sheet
Narworth
July 22nd 1919

To the Red. Cross.

Some time ago. I wrote + also called
about my husband who was reported
Missing. on July 30th 1919. Since then
reported Killed in Action. (on that date) I have now
been informed by soldiers who have
come back. that he was seen in England
in March 1919 It is believed he is suffer-
ing from loss of memory + shell shock
I unable to write I wish you to go further
into this matter + try + find out where
he is in England. Name of Soldier
No 6986 Private E. A. Clark (D) company
23rd 10 Battallion. Trusting I will get
some news of him though the Red
Cross. if you need a Photo. for
Identification will you let me Know
                    Yours truly Mrs H E Clark

California Sheet
Nailsworth
July 22nd 1919

To the Red Cross.

Some time ago. I wrote & also called
about my husband who was reported
Missing. on July 30th 1919. Since then
reported Killed in Action. (on that date) I have now
been informed by soldiers who have
come back. that he was seen in England
in March 1919 It is believed he is suffer-
ing from loss of memory & Shell Shock
& unable to write. I wish you to go further
into this matter & try & find out where
he is in England. Name of Soldier
No 6986 Private E A Clark ② Company
23rd 10 Battalion. Trusting I will get
some news of him through the Red
Cross. if you need a Photo. for
Identification will you let me Know

Yours truly Mrs H E Clark

OLC

30th July 1919

No 6874

Mrs H. E. Clark,
   California Street,
      NAILSWORTH.

Dear Madam,

      .No 6986 Pte. E. A. Clark, 10th Inf. Battalion.

            We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the
22nd instant, and have noted its contents.
            On receipt of your initial enquiry, Fifth September last
we cabled our Commissioners in London with the request that they
should forward us any such information, relative to his ultimate fate,
they were able to gather, and while we regret to state that to date
nothing to this effect has reached this office we would advise that
the enquiry is still being pursued, searches being made at every
Hospital to which Australian soldiers are admitted and on every
Transport coming to Australia.   Therefore we hope at a later date to
be able to furnish some definite information as to your husband's
present whereabouts or fate.
            If you would furnish us with the names and addresses
of any men who asserts that he has seen your husband since the date
on which he was officially reported as "missing", we would get them
to give us a sworn declaration to that effect and so assist us in
our work of tracing him.
                  Yours faithfully,

                        Honorary Secretary.

6986 Private
Eardley Austin Clark

10th Battalion
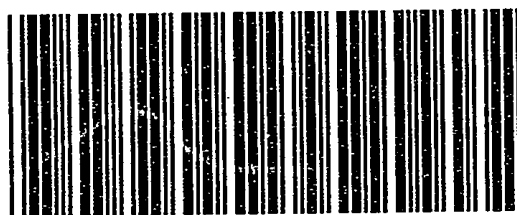
0740105H

A.I.F. 10th Battn.

<div align="right">CLARK
Pte. E.A.6986</div>

"MISSING"

Missing 50/7/18 not 20/7/18
     Cert. by A.I.F.Hqrs 26/8/18

London
16/9/18.

OFF.A.

APPENDIX C:

'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese, 48th Infantry Battalion.' SRG 76/1/2981 South Australian Red Cross Information Bureau, 1916-1919. State Library of South Australia (SLSA).

'Papers relating to No. 2294, Private Carl H. Wiese.' File Series 1DRL/0428, 'Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau Files, 1914-1918 War.' Australian War Memorial (AWM).

No 2294 Private C. H. Wiese,
    48th Battalion.

No 2507 Private R. G. W. Wiese,
    48th Battalion.

No. 2294   NAME Wiese. C.H.   REG. &c. 48th Batt.   RANK Pte.

ADDRESS

                            NEXT OF KIN Miss Wiese,
                            ADDRESS The Bungalow,
                            Gawler Railway. S.A. No.

29. 6. 17	91L	Reported Prisoner in Germany. Letter acknowledged enclosing pamphlet.
16. 11. 17		Letter received from Inquirer. Acknowledged.
28. 11. 17		Further letter " " "
26. 1. 18		"Slip" received from Commee. Information sent Inquirer.
19. 1. 18		Further "slip" " " " "
4. 9. 18		Later " " " "

48th Batt,
A.I.F.

Wiese,
C.H.   2294.

"Missing 11. 4.17"

Prisoner of War, - Interned at Res Laz Verden A/Aller,
    Cert, by Post-Card from Man dated 1.5.17. - Post-Card from
man not dated Post Mark 15.5.17 sent to A.I.F.Headquarters

London
21.6.17

Off M

4

48th Battn.
    B.Coy. 7th Pl.
        A. I. F.

Wiese.
C. H.   2294.

"Missing 11.4.17."

Saw him in a dug-out, his leg was broken at Bullecourt. Ground was ~~held~~ *lost.*
I knew him very well. His brother was in same Battn. Cannot give any
further information.

        Witness:-
            Pte. C. Howe.
                48th Battn. B. Coy. 7th Pl.
                    3rd Aust. Aux. Hpl.
                        Dartford.

W.Oman

London.
    27.6. 18.

Off.M.

"The Bungalow"
Gawler Railway
June 29th 1917

To the Red Cross

We have received word
from the Military Authorities that my
two brothers were reported as missing since
April the 11th, but since then we have
received other information saying that
one No 2294 Pte C. H. Wiese is now reported
wounded & Prisoner of War in Germany.
So far we have heard nothing regarding
the other brother. We would be very
pleased if you could help us to find
out where they really are, as we are all
very anxious. I am sending addresses as
followers.

No 2294
Pte C. H. Wiese
B. Company
48th Battalion
12th Brigade
4th Division
Australian Imperial Force
Abroad.

No 2507
Pte R. G. W. Wiese
5th Rein
48th Battalion
Australian Imperial Force
Abroad.

Trusting to hear shortly.
Yours faithfully
Miss Wiese.

To PK1-
300-40

To PK1-
300-41

284

FORM C.

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY.

No.	Surname.		Christian Names.	Date.
2294	Wiese		C. H.	29-6-17

Rank.	Regiment, &c.	File No.
Private	"B" Company 48th Infantry Battalion	

C/
/L   3**0 - 40

OFFICIAL REPORTS :

Missing since 11th April
Wounded and Prisoner of War previously reported missing.

Other Information :

Inquirer's Name and Address.	Relation.
Miss Wiese "The Bungalow" Gawler Railway. S. A.	Sister

Instructions :

Call Again.
YES.
NO.

Cost of Cable, &c.

4th July 1917

Miss Wiese,
     "The Bungalow"
          GAWLER RAILWAY. S. A.

Dear Madam,

   re 2294 Private C. H. Wiese, 48th Battalion

    We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the
29th ultimo, relative to the abovenamed soldier, who is now reported
to be a Prisoner of War in Germany, and enclose herewith a pamphlet
giving you full directions with regard to our work relative to
Prisoners of War.

   re No 2507 Private R. G. W. Wiese, 48th Battalion.

    We have included this soldier's name on our cable of
enquiry to the Red Cross Commissioners in London, requesting them
if possible to endeavour to trace him.   Immediately we are in receipt
of any information from them we will   promptly forward same to you.

       Yours faithfully

      Honorary Secretary.

48th.Battn,
A.I.F.

Weise,
C.H.   2294.

"Prisoner of War"

Interned Reserve Lazarett Verden - "Still in Hospital but

doing well"

    Extract from Post-Card received from Man dated 22.8.17

London 24.9.17

Off M

2981
3.17-53.

φ

48th Batt,
A.I.F.

Wiese,
C. H.   2294.

"Prisoner of War"

Transferred Soltau from Lazarett Verden,

   Cert, by German List dated 19.10.17

2981
3.17-53.

London 6.11.17

Off M.

Sent 26/1/18

φ

Gawler Railway Nov 12. 11. 1917.

To The Hon. Secretary of The
Australian Red Cross Society.
North Terrace
Adelaide.

Dear Sir.

As I have a Son Private C. H. Wiese No 2294
48th Battalion a wounded Prisoner in Germany
since April 11th 1917, I thought it would be so nice
to recieve a Parcel from his Mother So I decided
and send one last week one day, and I had it
returned to me today, I addressed it c/o Australian
Red Cross Commissioner's 54 Victoria Street, London S.W.
this worries me, I know what pleasure it would
mean to my Son to recieve something from his
home, packed by his Mother, Socks knitted with
her own hands, Would you kindly let me
know what I can do in this matter, I would
be awfully thankfull to you if it could go
The Parcel Containes 1 Cocoa & milk, 2 Sardines, 2 small
Tins potted meat 1 Small Plumpudding in tin, 1 Cake Chocolade,
1 tin butterscotche wallnuts & Peanuts Spermitt 1 pac dried fruit
1 bible, 1 pipe 2 tins Tobacoa, 1 tin Ciggeretto' and a few mixed
Lollies' and two pair of knitted Socks,
                    Kindly Oblige
                    Yours faithfully Mrs A. P. M.
                              Wiese.

48th Batt,
A.I.F.

Wiese,
C. H.   2294

"Prisoner of War"

Interned Soltau

"Am now in good health"

Extract from Post-Card received from man dated 9.IO.17

2981
317-53

London 15.11. 17

Off M

Sent 19/2/18

Y

16th November, 1917.

Mrs. A.P.M.Wiese,

"The Bungalow,"

Gawler Railway? S.A.

Dear Madam,

No. 2294 Private C.H.Wiese, 48th Battalion.

Your letter of the 12th inst. is to hand and contents
noted.

The despatch of parcels from Australia to Prisoners of
War is strictly prohibited, we regret therefore that it is quite
impossible for you to forward a parcel to your son.

Our Red Cross Commissioners forward to every prisoner
the maximum amount of food allowed by the British Food Controller
therefore these food parcels cannot be augmented.   Prisoners may
authorise the Commissioners to draw on their "drawing allowance" up to
10/- for privates, and this money is expended either in extra comforts
other than food, or remitted to the prisoner as directed by him.

Should relatives so desire they may assist by contribut-
ing towards the general funds for Prisoners of War, but every prisoner
is supplied with a parcel of clothing immediately he is located as

such, together with three food parcels fortnightly irrespective of any donation from relatives to the general funds, but any assistance to such fund is, as above stated, acceptable.

Should you desire any further information on the subject and will so advise us we will be pleased to assist you to the best of our ability.

Yours faithfully,

Honorary Secretary.

PRISONERS OF WAR

PETITION FOR PARCELS.

LONDON, November 20.

Mr. Tom Govett, secretary of the civilian Australian prisoners at Ruhleben (Germany), has petitioned Mr. Fisher to arrange for the dispatch of parcels similar to those sent to New Zealand prisoners. Mr. Fisher has asked the Australian Red Cross Society to undertake the work.

Mr. Murdoch, the Red Cross Commissioner, states that he is willing to do this provided that the Commonwealth bears the cost, which is estimated at £2,300 per annum. He points out the great number of German names among the petitioners (22 out of 46 prisoners). These include Messrs. Wagner, Fritsch, Rosenstaegel, Johannson, Kahle, Reuther, Ludwig, Stormer, Lehmann, Issberner, Koschave, Lozenz, Brambach, Leruschow, and Steitz.

Mr. O'Connor, who was recently released from Ruhleben, states that the majority of the men are of German parentage, who have been temporarily resident in Australia. One of them claimed that his birthplace

Gawler Railway Nov 26. 1917

To The Secretary
Red Cross Society
Adelaide

Dear Sir

I am sorry to trouble you but as I am
still anxiously waiting about sending my
Parcel to my Son Pte C. H. Wiese. Germany
I saw something in the paper regarding
Parcels to Prisoners of war but I do not
quite understand the slip' I am sending
the Cutting along and I do hope there is
a possibilty' yet' in sending Parcel I know
they get Parcel from the Red Cros's for my
Son has told me in his letters but me
sending a Parcl simply means something
from home sweet home to the 'boys overthere
I also thank you very mutch for the
Kind enquirys about my other Son Pte G. B. W
Wiese, missing,

Yours sincerly
Mrs A. P. M. Wiese.

Gawler Railway Nov 26. 1917

To The Secretary
Red Cross Society
Adelaide

Dear Sir

I am sorry to trouble you but as I am
still anxiously waiting about sending my
Parcel to my Son Pte C. H. Wiese. Germany
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they get Parcel from the Red Cross for my
Son has told me in his letters but me
sending a Parcel simply means something
from home sweet home to the 'boys overthere
I also thank you very mutch for the
kind enquirys about my other Son Pte G. B. W
Wiese, missing,

Yours sincerly
Mrs A. R. M. Wiese.

No. 2981.   28th November, 1917

Mrs. A.P.M.Wiese,
   "The Bungalow"
      Gawler Railway,
         SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dear Madam,

            No. 2294 Private C. H. Wiese, 48th Battalion

            We are in receipt of your letter with enclosure.

            As written you on the 16th inst., it is quite impossible
for you to forward a parcel to a Prisoner of War in Germany, same
being strictly prohibited by the Defence Department,

            As advised in our previous letter, our Red Cross
Commissioners forward every Prisoner the maximum amount of food
allowed by the Food Contorller, therefore these food parcels cannot
be abgmented.

            The cutting you enclosed referred to civilian
Australian Prisoners, and you will note therein that the Red Cross
Commissioners have been approached with a view of their assisting
civilian Prisoners in the same manner as military Prisoners.

            Yours faithfully,

No. 298L   26th January, 1918.

Miss Wiese,
        "The Bungalow",
            Gawler Railway,
                SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Dear Madam,

            No. 2294 Private C. H. Wiese, 40th Battalion.

                We are in receipt of information by letter from our
Red Cross Commissioners, concerning the above soldier, in which
they advise that Private Wiese has been transferred to Soltau
from Lazarett Verden, this being certified by German list dated
19th October, 1917.

                                Yours faithfully,

                                Honorary Secretary.

19th February, 1918

Miss Wiese,
  "The Bungalow"
    Gawler Railway,
      SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dear Madam,

<u>No. 2294 Private C. H. Wiese, 48th Battalion</u>

Our Commissioners have now advised us by letter that they have received a Post-Card, dated 9th October last, from the above soldier, who is interned at Soltau.   Private Wiese stated:-

"I am now in good health."

His address will be as follows:-

<u>British Prisoner of War</u>.
     No. 2294,
       Private C. H. Wiese,
         48th Battalion,
           Australian Imperial Forces,
            Soltau,
              GERMANY.
   c/o Australian Red Cross Commissioners,
        36 Grosvenor Place,
         LONDON, S.W.

Yours faithfully,

Honorary Secretary.

48th Battn   WIESE,
A.I.F.   C.H. 2294

               "Prisoner of War."

Interned Soltau Z Lager 1.

        "Parcels coming fairly regular. Am still on invalid list
but gradually improving."

Cert. by extract from Post card received from man dated 25.3.18.

London.
        17.5.18.   Off.M.

H.

No. 2981.   4th September, 1918.

Miss Wiese,
    "The Bungalow",
        Gawler Railway,
            SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Dear Madam,

            No. 2294 Private C. H. Wiese, 48th Battalion.

            We are now in receipt of a report by mail, from our Red
Cross Commissioners, concerning the above soldier, who is interned
at Soltau Z Lager.

            They advise that they received a letter from your
Brother, dated 25th March last, the following being a short extract:-

                "Parcels coming fairly regularly.   Am still on
        invalid list but gradually improving".

            We forward this extract to you in case letters from
Private Wiese have gone astray.

                    Yours faithfully,

                    Honorary Secretary.

2294 Private
Carl Herman Wiese

48th Battalion

2940403M

A.I.F. 48th Battn.   WIESE
                                                    C.H. 2294

"REPATRIATED PRISONER OF WAR"

Arrived Ripon 28/12/18
        Cert. by Information from A.I.F.Hqrs 30/12/18

L_{ondon}   OFF.H.
3/1/19

48th Batt,
A.I.F.

"Missing 11. 4.17"

Prisoner of War, - Interned at Res Laz Verden A/Aller,
    Cert, by Post-Card from Man dated 1.5.17. - Post-Card from
man not dated Post Mark 15.5.17 sent to A.I.F.Headquarters

                                                Off M

London
  21.6.17

48th Battn.
  B.Coy. 7th Pl.
      A. I. F.
                                        Wiese.
                                C. H.   2294.

                "Missing 11.4.17."
                                                        lost
Saw him in a dug-out, his leg was broken at Bullecourt. Ground was held.
I knew him very well. His brother was in same Battn. . Cannot give any
further information.

                Witness:-
                    Pte. C. Howe.
                        48th Battn. B. Coy. 7th Pl.
                            3rd Aust. Aux. Hpl.
                                Dartford.   Off.M.
  W. Owen
London.
  27.6. 17.

302

48th.Battn,
A.I.F.

Weise,
C.H.   2294.

"Prisoner of War"

Interned Reserve Lazarett Verden - "Still in Hospital but

doing well"

        Extract from Post-Card received from Man dated 22.8.17

London 24.9.17   Off M

48th Batt,
  A.I.F.

                                       Wiese,
                               C. H.   2294

                  "Prisoner of War"

Interned Soltau

"Am now in good health"

    Extract from Post-Card received from man dated 9.IO.17

London 15.11. 17

                                      Off M

48th Batt,   Wiebe,
   A.I.F.   C. H.   2294.

        "Prisoner of War"

Transferred Soltau from Lazarett Verden,

    Cert, by German List dated 19.IO.17

London 6.11.17   Off M.

48th Battn   WIESE.
A.I.F.   C.H. 2294

                    "Prisoner of War."

Interned Soltau Z Lager1.

        "Parcels coming fairly regular. Am still on invalid list
but gradually improving."

Cert. by extract from Post card received from man dated 25.3.18.

London.
        17.5.18.   Off.H.

Havre

48th AUSTRALIANS

WIESE, O.H. 2294
or   Wiese, R.G.W. 2507

X. 11.4.17.

Pte. H. Hewish of the 48th battalion, B Co.; 7th platoon,
told me that he saw one of the Wiese brothers lying in the
German 2nd line trench at Bullecourt on April 11th, 1917
with a broken leg. He put him down in a deep dugout and he
was left there when we retired the same day. We left about
50 wounded men in the same dugout.

Informant: H.G. Agett, 1625
48th Australians, B Co., 7th Pltn.,
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

RDM

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